**THUMBS AND GREAT TOES**

**Or A KING’S STRANGE HOBBY**

**TEXT:** *Judges 1:7a And Adonibezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table:*

**THESIS:** To show that we often reap what we sow.

**INTRO.:**

**A.** People often collect strange things… Plates from around the world, watermelon rind masks and helmets, life size dolls, traffic cones, umbrellas, soap bars, slippers, clocks, flip-flops, rubber ducks, etc. But one man, a King in our text named Adoni-bezek, had the most bizarre collection of 280 human thumbs and big toes!

**B.** Beyond that, he found his enjoyment in watching these mutilated men crawl around under his table trying to scrounge scraps of food he would throw for them. This was his entertainment. Sad! These men were kings themselves that he had captured and now used them for his amusement. Try to visualize these men who could not balance themselves due to the loss of their big toes and then trying to scrape up scraps of food with their hands which resembled claws!

**ILLUS.:** The first time I heard about this man and his strange hobby was right after I was saved as Evang. Oliver B. Greene preached from this passage in a message entitled “280 THUMBS AND BIG TOES”! in the tent crusade where I had received Christ. (I still have a copy of that sermon.) The Bible was all new to me and I thought this is weird! Even shocking!... that in a book that was supposed to be holy and God’s record of human history that it would include this strange story…

**I. THE SHOCKING SCENE: v.7a**

 **A.** The King’s Dining Hall:

 **1.** This was no doubt an elaborate setting…Adoni-bezek was a King himself

 **2.** Perhaps the gluttonous monarch sat stuffing himself with sumptuous food in the light of candles provided for light in this very large stateroom or dining hall.

 **3.** These 70 dethroned, debased, and disabled kings had to simply sit and watch as their captor entertained himself as he ate by throwing scraps on the floor, perhaps under heavy guard with whips in their hands.

 **4.** What we have here is a picture of how debased, unsaved humanity gets pleasure from watching others suffer.

**ILLUS.:** Adolph Hitler and his henchmen are classic examples of how low humanity can slide. (Some 55+ million people perished in WWII, many in unfathomable and inhumane conditions.) In fact, right now we are seeing a replay of the Nazi Holocaust being played out in the Ukraine as women are being raped, men tortured, people systematically starved and children butchered, as Vladamir Putin stuffs his face with the finest caviar, choice liquors and wines, etc. during the unprovoked attack in the Russian invasion and all-out war against a once peaceful people in the Ukraine. (There are at least 3 more wars in mankind’s future.)

 ▶People in our society, sometimes enjoy boxing, kickboxing, martial arts, football, and other potentially violent and bloody sports where young men (and women, these days!) are bloodied and beaten. Yes, our old nature enjoys the suffering and demeaning of others!

**II. THE SAVIOR WATCHES TOO: v.7b**

*Judges 1:7b …as I (Adonibezek) have done, so God hath requited me, and they brought him to Jerusalem and there he died.*

**A.** Payday Arrives:

  **1.** Apparently Adonibezek experienced personally what he had so much enjoyed.

 **2.** This man obviously knew something of the God of Israel…the One True God!

 **3.** But God always repays…often in kind!

*Numbers 32:20 And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war, 21 And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him, 22 And the land be subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. 23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out. (A sin of omission is still a sin and must receive just recompense at the Judgment Seat – or before!)*

  **a.** Adonibezek was not a heathen in the sense that he didn’t know about God and that he didn’t understand what he was doing.

 **b.** It doesn’t actually say that he too had his thumbs and big toes cut off…but maybe later…

 **c.** As a King, the head of a nation, a man of great authority, he could have done much good and influenced many in the right direction, instead of allowing his flesh such debased pleasure.

**QUES.:** As a believer, do you know of someone who is suffering, whom you could encourage with a call, a visit, or at least a card? Is there someone who is lost and on their way to hell and you could witness to them or give them a gospel tract? Have you ever given your neighbors one? Not to do so is a sin of omission and “be sure your sin will find you out!” (I am not just pointing a finger at you; I have 3 others pointing at me!) Is someone in your family, in your neighborhood, who could use a meal or even a snack or a simple word of encouragement?

 **d.** One of the most convicting verses in Scripture is found in the book of Ezekiel:

*Ezekiel 33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

**III. LET US ALSO VIEW THIS GHASTLY SCENE:**

 **A.** This Is No Fairy Tale

 **1.** These 70 Kings had once enjoyed feasting, entertainment, laughter, family, and friends.

  **2.** They too once had elaborate garments, encrusted with gold and jewels, but now they are nearly naked, dressed in bloody loin cloths from possible whip lashes by their guards…

 **3.** Maybe they too received entertainment at the expense of those of lower class over whom they ruled from their gold encrusted thrones?!

 **4.** Now they crawl on the floor, since they can’t walk without their big toes, and try to clutch some morsels of food with claws instead of hands!

 **a.** Today men drive expensive cars, wear expensive jewelry, indulge in sinful activities to their heart’s content.

 **b.** But as one great preacher. R.G. Lee shouted across our great land “PAYDAY’S A COMIN!”

**CONCL.:** Yes, “**PAYDAY’S A COMIN**” for the lost as they are cast bound hand and foot into the lake of fire, and it will arrive soon for the saved as well! What will YOUR payday look like? What will MINE be?

*Col 3:23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.*