

“And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the grove.” (2 Kgs. 23:7.)

This was pursuant to the wholesale moral and spiritual clean-up being conducted by good king Josiah, the young king of Judah, whose fierce devotion to the Lord his God should serve as a model for all mankind — young and old. *“Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose any like him.”* (2 Kgs. 23:24,25.) And so it was. Not since King David was there arisen the likes of young king Josiah, who did boldly and fiercely take the battle to the gates of the enemies of God. Beloved, we must glorify and praise and give thanks to the Lord our God.

“Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens. Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein. Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord.” (1 Chron. 16:23-36)

Beloved, let me repeat, that we must make a conscientious daily effort to glorify and praise and give thanks to the Lord our God. The verses quoted above are but a small percentage of Bible passages that make it crystal clear, that nothing makes the dear Lord happier than to hear his sheep expressing their intelligent, warm-hearted thanksgiving for all His goodnesses to them. Sometimes I think we ought to run out of words and phrases making the effort to thank and praise the dear Lord for all He has done for the folks at the Westboro Baptist Church. Every day!

For example, this morning's Kansas City Star, front page, bore a blessing above the fold; to wit: "Alcohol Abuse In Military Is Crisis." God is destroying America and the American Military, — because they lifted up their bloody hands in a dastardly, and shameful attempt to destroy Westboro Baptist Church. And why? You may ask? Because they do not like the Old Baptist preaching of WBC. Here is the plain, operative verse that is cooking the goose of America and her godless Military; to wit:

***“He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.”
(1 Chron. 16:21,22)***

Beloved, the incident giving rise to this everlasting proclamation and warning from God Almighty — to all mankind of every nation, kindred, tongue and tribe — to keep your hostile, heathenish hands off God’s Elect. Period. I say, the incident took place immediately following the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, which was recorded in the 19th chapter of Genesis. A careful examination of the passage will yield an abundance of comfort from our Father in Heaven — for the Elect on earth. The incident involves interplay between Abraham (God’s Elect) and Abimelech (king of Gerar, a Heathen king). The story is told by the Holy Ghost, entirely within the 18 verses that make up the 20th chapter of Genesis; to wit:

“And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham (strangely) said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife. But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother; in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? And what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife’s sake. And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother. And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other; thus she was reproveth. So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham’s wife.”(Gen. 20:1-18)

Beloved, this is a truly remarkable and comforting passage of Scripture. It may be the only place — or, at least one of the very few places — where John Gill hauls off and calls one of God’s saints a liar; to wit: *“And said of Sarah his wife, she is my sister. This he gave out in all*

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conversation he came into, and said it to every one who asked who she was, WHICH WAS LITTLE BETTER THAN A LIE; it was at least an equivocation and deception and not at all justifiable, and tended to expose his wife's chastity, and discovered a distrust of divine Providence; the same infirmity he had given way to, and the same evil he had fallen into in Egypt, and therefore was inexcusable now; good men not only fall into sin, but have their relapses." (Gen. 20:2.)

But here, we have father Abraham pursuing a pattern and practice of cowardly and deceptive conduct — and dangerous conduct — especially dangerous for Sarah, the wife of his bosom, whose safety Abraham has sacrificed for his own safety! The case against Abraham — simply put — could hardly be made too strong. No wonder the atheist Royal Bob Ingersoll said that the heathen philosophers were more noble than the favorites of Jehovah like Abraham. Beloved, I believe that the dear Lord deliberately made the case against Abraham exceedingly strong — downright embarrassing. And the Holy Ghost appears to have repeated the punch line twice — for additional emphasis — within powerful contexts — teaching His little sheep precious lessons of divine comfort that they could get no other way.

The punch line listed prominently by the Holy Ghost may be found as follows; to wit: 1.) *"He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."* (First Chronicles 16:21,22.) 2.) *"He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."* (Psalms 105:14,15.) Not so much as a jot or a tittle in these two versions. So, What's the punch line? Is it not this? No matter what the circumstances are, keep your bloody hands off my little sheep. Those are the apple of my eye. Don't talk to me about the iniquity in Jacob, or the perverseness in Israel. I have not beheld it. To wit:

***"God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and will he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them."*(Num. 23:19-21)**

There may be iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord. But I have not seen it. It's covered by the blood of the Lamb. There may be perverseness in Israel; saith the Lord. But it's settled by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant. There may be enough wrongdoing by Abraham in his dealings with the pagan king Abimelech to doom a thousand worlds of better men than Abraham — but, *"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."* (Rom. 8:33,34.)

***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*(Rom. 8:35-39)**

Beloved, such language is hard — maybe impossible — to find. But to the dying soul, no other language will do. Pity the poor self-deluded atheist, or agnostic, when an angry God rings the doorbell of death; to wit:

"But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Lk. 12:20,21)

Royal Bob Ingersoll and Mark Twain were two famous agnostics who made millions of dollars writing and speaking against the Bible and Christianity. When asked if he kept a Bible at home, Ingersoll replied in the affirmative and produced a fine leather-bound volume inscribed "The Inspired Book." When opened, the volume turned out to be nothing but Shakespeare. Opening another volume, he added, *"and here is our prayer book,"* — all with blank pages as they are found in a regular Bible for the recording of births, weddings, and other family data. The two contained all the religion the agnostic wanted; and, even with that, it is probably more than the average so-called Christian, world-wide, wants or feels the need for.

Now listen to the testimony as to how the wild man on the stump came to accept Shakespeare as his savior, and to worship the likes of Mark Twain; to wit: *"One night I stopped at a little hotel in Illinois, many years ago, when we were not quite civilized, when the footsteps of the red man were still in the prairies. While I was waiting for supper, an old man was reading from a book. I was filled with wonder. I had never heard anything like it. I was ashamed to ask him what he was reading; I supposed that an intelligent boy ought to know. So I waited, and when the little bell rang for supper I hung back. I picked up the book; it was Sam Johnson's edition of Shakespeare. The next day I bought a copy for four dollars. My God! more than the national debt. You talk about the present straits of the treasury! For days, for nights, for years, I read those books. Other writers are like a garden diligently planted and watered, but Shakespeare is a forest where the oaks and elms toss their branches to the storm, where the pine towers, ... while Burns was the valley, here was a range of mountains with thousands of such valleys; while Burns was as sweet a star as ever rose into the horizon, here was a heaven filled with constellations. That book has been a source of perpetual joy to me from that day to this."*

Can you imagine that, Beloved. That a mortal man would exchange the blessed Bible, the undoubted Word of God, for the Johnny-come-lately English pervert — Shakespeare.

"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."
(Titus 3:10,11)

These verses apply, strictly, to Mark Twain and Royal Bob Ingersoll. Having blasphemed God grievously, Twain thinks he can formulate a benediction, from his bowels of Hell; to wit: *"It is true, that which I have revealed to you, there is no God, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell. It is all a dream — a grotesque and foolish dream. Nothing exists but you. And you are but a thought — a vagrant thought, a useless thought, a homeless thought, wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!"*

I love you.

Amen.