

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

A Biblical Perspective on Death, Terrorism, and the Middle East, Pt 2

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

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Muhammad said that the Jews had been rejected by Allah and cursed. And Muhammad said the duty of the Muslims is to subjugate everybody to Allah, including the Jewish infidels if needed by holy war. Obviously through the years and centuries it's not all people who believe Islam are vicious and killers, not all of them, by far. But Muhammad was a very evil person and a very aggressive, in fact a deadly person. And so there is plenty of warrant in the system for those people who want to conduct themselves in that fashion. One of the Islamic leaders of our nation said the other day on television, "These radicals have literally hijacked the entire religion for their own ends." But they can find in it a justification for what they do because it is inherent in Islam that they must make people convert by whatever means. The truth of the matter is that as we live today Islam is currently the most powerful system on earth for the destruction of biblical truth and Christianity and is the main persecutor of Christians all over the world...in the Middle East and in Africa. Thousands of Christians are dying under this persecution.

You see, for Islam the world is divided into two parts...Dar el Salaam, house of peace, where Allah rules. And Dar el Harb, house of war where infidels live. It's either peace, you succumb to Allah, or it's war.

In 1948 Israel, that infidel people, invaded the house of peace and turned it into a house of war. That's why Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization said, quote: "Peace for us means the destruction of Israel." That is the only condition of peace in the thinking of these extreme Islamic leaders. In fact, I just went back into some of the history, when Israel won its first battle with the Muslim/Arabs, they started to take back the land, it was a defeat for Allah. And Ayatollah Khomeini, the Iranian Ayatollah, said that Israel's presence in the Arab land, Israel's presence...and this is really pretty amazing...is due to the backslidden condition of Muslims and Allah is greatly displeased. The defeat of Israel, therefore, said the Ayatollah, will become the sign of Allah's pleasure with Muslims. So if you want Allah's pleasure, you have to defeat Israel. That turns everything into a holy war, a jihad.

One Egyptian Islamic fundamentalist said, and I quote, "Islam grows on the back of the severed limbs and blood of martyrs." They don't mind spilling their blood to accomplish their ends. War is a language they understand and every war is a holy one. The Koran even teaches that Abraham was not a Jew, he was a Muslim and the Koran teaches, listen to this, the disciples of Christ were Muslims because Jesus was a prophet of Allah. In Algeria in the past two years somewhere between three

and six thousand people have been killed in trying to turn Algeria into an Islamic state. Twenty-nine women have been killed for being unveiled, they vow to kill more. Throughout the history of the hand of these people has been against the Christians. From 1894 to 1918 Muslims in Turkey persecuted Armenians in what remains history's greatest atrocity against Christians. The Muslim's savagery surpassed even the Roman Empire's brutality in the first three centuries of Christianity. The Muslim Turks almost succeeded in exterminating the Armenian race. Through the process of starvation, deportation, disease, beatings and murders a million Armenians were killed and 1.5 million fled the country. One author wrote, quote: "In less than a year the Armenians of Turkey to the number of about a million old and young, rich and poor, of both sexes had been collectively drowned, burned, bayoneted, starved or otherwise tortured to death or else deported on foot, penniless and without food through the burning Arabian deserts," end quote.

This is just to indicate that this is not new. Now for 800 years the Muslims had great power in the Middle East. From the time of Muhammad on. And then came the Roman Catholic Church and then came the Crusades. You remember when the Roman Catholic crusaders took back the land of Israel in the great Crusades? And, of course, there was later on a defeat and Islamic countries rose to power in the Middle East until 1948 when Israel re-established itself. The Arab world right now is back, it's back and it has a great agenda, and that is to conquer for Islam, to conquer for Allah and to rid the land of all infidels. The modern rise...the modern rise of their power began on May 26, 1908 because drillers struck oil at Mosjed-e Soleyman in Iran. Took them until 1970 to get the power from the oil, and now they have it. I mean, it's a pretty simple principal. The energy consumers are at the mercy of the energy producers. Money has literally flooded into the Middle East, massive wealth to finance whatever wars and terrorism they want. In fact, it came into the Middle East so fast that in one article in the London Economist they wrote that they could buy the Bank of America in six days, the IBM Corporation in 43 days and all the major companies on the world's stock market in 15 years. Massive wealth, more than half the world's oil resources, close to the surface, easy to drill, close to the sea for piping and shipping, excellent quality, low in sulphur. One well brings 80,000 barrels a day. The wealth of the world is there and the world is energy dependent. And so they now have the money to fund the jihad and this is the religious reason behind all of this.

Just to let you know how serious they are, in a CNN interview with Osama bin Laden, he said this, "We declare jihad against the United States government because the US government is unjust, criminal and tyrannical. It has committed acts that are extremely unjust, hideous and criminal whether directly or through the support of the Israeli occupation. For this and other acts of aggression and injustice we have declared jihad against the United States because in our religion it is our duty to make jihad so that God's word is the one exalted to the heights and so that we drive the infidels out." Straightforward, that's Front Line on PBS, Public Broadcasting System, September 11.

On February 22, 1998 bin Laden issued an edit calling for a tax on all Americans, including civilians, announced the creation of the International Islamic Front for jihad against the Jews and crusaders in association with extremist groups from Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The following quotations are taken from that edit. Quote, "For over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of

Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors and turning its bases in the peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples. Despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusaders Zionist alliance and despite the huge number of those killed which has exceeded one million, in spite all this the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed against the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation. We with God's help call on every Muslim who believes in god and wishes to be rewarded to comply with god's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on Muslim leaders, youths and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's US troops and the devil's supporters aligned with them and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson. The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies, civilians and military is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it in order to liberate the Al-Aqsa mosque...that's in the middle of Jerusalem...and the holy mosque in Mecca from their grip and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim," end quote. I mean, that's about as clear as it can be.

CNN reported that he said, "Thousands of millions of Muslims are angry. Hostility toward America is a religious duty and we have to be rewarded for it by Allah. We are confident that the Muslim nation would rid Islamic countries of the American and the Jew."

This is the religious reason why it happens. You free up evil people to do evil, they'll do it. And then you tell them by doing this evil they're serving God, and you have given them the greatest justification possible.

Now let's go back to theology for a minute. There's one way a Muslim can be sure of heaven. And I've read through a lot of their literature this last week. There's one way a Muslim can be sure of heaven, die in a jihad. Here's what it says in the Koran. "If you are slain or die in god's way, it is unto god you shall be taken. As for those who are slain in the cause of Allah, he will admit them to the paradise he has made known to them." The only way that I can find in their literature that a Muslim can know he's going to heaven for sure is to die in a holy war. It further says, "The unbelievers are your enemies...and I'm quoting...seek out your enemies relentlessly, you shall not plead for traitors, Allah does not love the treacherous or the sinful. O believers, when you encounter the unbelievers marching to battle, turn not your backs to them. Who turns his back that day to them, he is laden with the burden of god's anger and his refuge is Gehenna, or hell." You fight, you go to heaven. You run, you go to hell. That's the only way you can know. You get in a holy war, you give up your life and you can be sure of heaven.

This is the religious fight. There's even something beyond that, I'll call it the sensual reason. This is so bizarre...the sensual reason. How do you take...the literature I read says essentially 64 percent between 18 and 23 and all them under 30, they're young single men, they may in their clandestine operations when they come into the United States appear to have families, but there is evidence

surfacing that that is only an appearance. It may be true that some of them do but it seems to be part of their cover. Single men. How do you possibly motivate a young person? Suicide bombers are recruited as young as 13. How do you recruit people? How do you get a single person to blow himself up? How do you get a single person to fly an airplane into a building? What is the motivation?

Well first of all, if he's genuinely Islamic he wants to know he's going to heaven. There's a terrifying reality in Islam about hell, they have a real hell. But there's something even beyond this that's real bizarre. Wouldn't it be easier to just go to battle and kill an infidel and then you know you would go to heaven? What are you going to do this for? Why do you have to kill yourself?

There's a lot behind it. Palestinian suicide bombers were first carrying out their actions against Israel in 1994. In the past 11 months 15 suicide bombers occurred in Israel. And some Muslims say that such suicide bombings are forbidden. It is a debate going on among Islamic leaders. And the reason they say it's forbidden, it's not forbidden to die in a holy war, it's not forbidden to die as a martyr, it's the noblest thing you could do and it's a guarantee to heaven, but there are some Islamic leaders who think that self-killing, suicide is forbidden. However, Sheik Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Egypt's most highly respected Muslim cleric said, "The rulings against suicide bombers were made by people alien to Islamic law and religion." And Jerusalem's top Muslim agreed that suicide in a holy war is a noble act. Hamas and Islamic jihad, two radical Islamic groups, have carried out multiple suicide bombings and they say they have absolutely no shortage of volunteers. These are young men, they can be started at the age of five in the training process. They are virtually unemployable because they have basically been programmed and brainwashed for one thing, single men with a bleak future looking for heroic death and entrance into eternal paradise. Support in the Islamic world for suicide bombers has increased in one year, the last year from 25 percent of the population to 70.

So it's become the dominant popular view that it's okay to do this. It promises heroism. It promises heaven. In fact, one Palestinian psychologist said, "It's no wonder that some people are doing it. We should wonder why everybody isn't doing it." It's a way to heaven. There are plenty in line. Abu Shanab hit the issue, one of their spokesman, he said, quote: "There's not a single person in Israel whom we don't view as a usurper of our land." That just keeps being the issue, and as we support Israel we become the big Satan.

Now the training for this begins early. Mohammed al-Durra was killed in terrorist action in Israel. I read the article about it. His mother said, quote: "I am happy he has been martyred." She gave him a snack before he went to the shoot out. In sending your children at the age of 13 or any age into some kind of battle overrides natural parental instincts.

Vamik Volkan, Turkish-Cypriot psychoanalyst and psychologist had some interesting things to say about this in a book he wrote called Bloodline which studies the history of these bombers. Typical recruits are 17 to 23, isolated boys locked into adolescent struggles. The boys are divided into small secretive groups where they collectively read Koranic verses such as...Think not of those who are

slain in god's way as dead, they live finding their sustenance in the presence of their lord," there's the promise of heaven. He goes on, "An almost mystical sense of togetherness is created which undoes the adolescent isolation these boys feel. The same mechanisms that pull together a football team is used to create a terrorist group. Most of these boys are instructed to suppress their sexual urges, not watch television but are promised unlimited sexual activity in heaven with virgins should they become martyrs. And there's the sensual motivation.

Let me get specific. They are promised that when they die they will not only go to heaven but when they get to heaven there will be 72 black-haired virgins waiting to have eternal sex with them. Here they are with a pent-up sexual desire and a very sensual thing. By the way, the Koran says that Muslims can only have four wives. Muhammad had 16 and at least 22 named women that he cohabitated with. There was a sensual element in this. And the carrot they hang out in the face of the suicide bombers is not just heaven but eternal sex with 72 virgins. A recent review of 140 school text books of the Palestinian authority showed that all subjects are used to teach Palestinian children to admire the shaheed, that's the martyr. The great eight literature text books are filled with songs and poems glorifying child death...quote: "Draw your sword, death will call upon you and your sword will go wild. Palestine, the young will redeem your land." In a grammar text the following question is asked, quote: "Mark the subject and object of the following sentence," here's the sentence in a grammar book, quote: "Jihad, holy war to spread Islam is the religious duty of every Muslim." Another one says, "Cherish the jihad fighters who quench the earth of Jerusalem with their blood." This is in a grammar book, pick out the subject and pick out the object.

Palestinian Sesame Street teaches children the virtues of killing the ??? powers of Jerusalem with guns and stones. Chief Mufti of the Palestinian police Sheik Abd Al-Salam Skheidm specified the rewards according to Islamic tradition, and I quote, "From the moment his first drop of blood spills, the martyr feels no pain. He is absolved of all his sins. He seals his seat in heaven and he is spared the tortures of the grave. He is spared the horrors of judgment day. He is married to the black-eyed virgins and...here's another thing...he can vouch for 70 of his family members to also enter paradise." So if he does this, when he gets there he can pick 70 people out of his family who are going to get salvation out of his sacrifice.

A week before the suicide bombings in the Tel-Aviv Palestinian authority, the same kind of authority, Al Mufti Sheik Ikrima Sabri discussed this issue in the Al-Aqsa mosque right there in Jerusalem, it was broadcast on the Voice of Palestine radio May 25 of this year, this is what he said, "The Muslim loves death and martyrdom, just as you Jews love life. There's a great difference between he who loves the afterlife and he who loves this world. The Muslim loves death and seeks martyrdom."

Sure, you go to heaven and you get eternal sex. What a perverse perspective. That's the final carrot that hangs over these disenfranchised single men, lured by lust. The Koran describes these women, quote: "Beautiful like rubies, with complexions like diamonds and pearls." The martyrs then will,

quote, "Delight themselves lying on green cushions and beautiful carpets." USA Today, Jack Kelly, the writer, July 5 of this year, just a couple of months ago, wrote in Habos run kindergartens there are signs on the walls in the Palestinian area, here are the signs, "The children of the kindergarten are the Shaheeds the holy martyrs of tomorrow." They start with kindergartners. Another sign, the classroom signs at Al Najjar University in the West Bank in Gaza, it's an Islamic university said, quote: "Israel has nuclear bombs, we have human bombs." At an Islamic school in Gaza City run by Homos(?) eleven-year-old Palestinian students, Ameds, small frame and boyish smile are deceiving. They mask a determination to kill at any cost. Quote he says, "I will make my body a bomb that will blast the flesh of Zionists the sons of pigs and monkeys." The reason he says that in the Koran it says Allah turned Jews into pigs one time, another time he turned them into monkeys.

Little 11-year-old Amad said, quote: "I will tear their bodies into little pieces and cause them more pain than they will ever know." Eleven years old. His classmates all responded, shouting in response: "Allahu Akbar, God is great. The teacher yelled back, "May the virgins give you pleasure." And so it goes.

Now in the end will Islam win the jihad? No. I can tell you how it ends, isn't that good to know? I can't tell you the end of a football game but I can tell you the end of this one. Turn to Ezekiel 36 and I'm not done so rest comfortably. I have three pages left out of 18...so you can calculate. Ezekiel 36:1, "And you, son of man, prophesy in the mountains of Israel, speak to the land, speak to the land, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord." What's going to happen? What's the message of God to the land? "Thus says the Lord God, because the enemy has spoken against you, Aha...that is to say we have you...and the everlasting heights have become our possession. The enemy is ours, we've got him, all we need is that one little piece of Israel, got all the rest, it's ours." They have it, they have Lebanon, they have Syria, they have it all. And then east. "Therefore the prophets prophesy and say, Thus says the Lord God. For good cause they have made you desolate, crushed you from every side, from the north, from the south, from the east they've crushed Israel. The Jew shall become a possession of the rest of the nations. You have been taken up in the talk and the whispering of the people..." I mean, it goes on all the time. It's all talk against Israel. "Therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God."

What does God have to say to this, right? What does God have to say? "Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, the hills, the ravines, the valleys, all that land, the desolate waste, the desert, the forsaken cities which have become a prey and a derision of the rest of the nations around about you, therefore thus says the Lord God, surely in the fire of My jealousy I have spoken against the rest of all the nations." God has set Himself against those nations. They are idolatrous. And against all Edom, representing all Israel's enemies, "Who have appropriated My land for themselves."

God sets Himself against those nations who take His land. It became for them a possession with wholehearted joy and with the scorn of soul they drive it out for a prey. And that's just exactly the

attitude...scorn and get the Israelites out of this land. "But I have set Myself," He says, "against these nations. Therefore prophesy concerning Israel...verse 6...and say to the mountains and the hills and the ravines...thus says the Lord God, say to the valleys, Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and My wrath because you have endured the insults of the nations." Isn't that...God says some day...the day is going to come when you're not going to take any more insults, Israel, you're not going to take any more insults. "Therefore thus says the Lord God...in verse 7...I have sword that surely the nations which are around you will themselves endure their insults, but you, O mountains of Israel, you will put forth your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel, for they will soon come. For behold, I am for you." Oh what a statement!

Who is God for in this battle? Israel. And this is amazing because Israel's in unbelief. But they are God's covenant people and He's going to bring them to salvation. God's for Israel. I don't know about you, but I want to be for who God's for. God's for Israel, I'm for Israel too. "I'm for you, I'll turn to you and you'll be cultivated and sown and I'll multiply men on you, all the house of Israel, all of it and the cities will be inhabited and the waste places will be rebuilt and I'll multiply on you man and beast and you'll increase and be fruitful and I'll cause you to be inhabited as you were formerly and I'll treat you better than at the first." Isn't that something? "And thus you will know that I am the Lord," it's not Allah. "And I'll cause..." he's talking to the land here. "I'll cause men to walk on you, My people Israel, to walk on you and possess you, you'll become their inheritance and never again bereave them of children."

I'd say that's pretty clear, isn't it? Do you have any question of who's going to win? I don't have any question. Look at verse 22, this is the amazing grace of God to keep His promise. In verse 22, "Say to the house of Israel," let's talk to the land. God gave a message to the land. Now let's talk to the people, verse 22, "Thus says the Lord God, it's not for your sake, O house of Israel that I'm about to act, but for My holy name which you have profaned among the nations where you went." And here He says you're not worthy of this, you've profaned My name. "But I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations which you have profaned in their midst." That's where the sad thing, isn't it, today about Israel? Secular...indifferent to God and the Messiah of God. It's not going to stay that way.

"The nations...verse 23...are going to know that I am the Lord when I prove Myself holy among you in your sight." That's the salvation of Israel that's coming. "I'll take you from the nations, I'll gather you from the lands. I'll bring you into your own land." Guess what? It's happening, they're there.

Then this is going to happen. Oh, watch this. Verse 25, "Then I will...what?...sprinkle clean water on you, you'll be clean, I'll cleanse you from all your filthiness, all your idols, I'll give you a new heart, put a new spirit within you. Remove the heart of stone from your flesh, give you a heart of flesh. Put My Spirit within you. Cause you to walk in My statutes and you'll be careful to observe My ordinances and then you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers. Then you'll be My people and I will be your God and I will save you from all your uncleanness and I will call for the grain and multiply it and I will

not bring famine on you and I'll multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field that you may not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. You will remember all your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations and I'm not doing this for your sake, you don't deserve it. I'm doing it for My sake."

Verse 33 He says, "I'll cleanse you from all your iniquities. I'll cause the cities to be inhabited, the waste places to be rebuilt, the desolate land will be cultivated. Instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passes by they will say the desolate land, look at this, has become like...what?...oh, the Garden of Eden. And the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fruitful and fortified, inhabited. Then the nations that are left around you will know it's not Allah but it's I the Lord that have rebuilt the ruined places and planted that which was desolate. I the Lord have spoken and...what?...I'll do it. I'll even increase their men like a flock," verse 37. And at the end of verse 38, the end of the chapter, "Then they will know that I am the Lord."

That day's coming, beloved. I don't know when it's coming but it's coming. It's...can't be too far, they're gathered there. But until that day there's going to be war. Until that day there's going to be conflict, escalating, escalating, escalating. And now we're dragged into it, half a world away and we're dragged into it.

You say, "Well why we dragged into it?" I told you why. What should be our response? We should do what is just. We should do what governments are designed by God to do. What are governments designed by God to do? To bear a sword, Romans 13, and not to bear a sword for nothing. Civil government is not a pageant. Why do we bear a sword? To punish evil doers, to protect innocent people. And a war of protection and a war of punishment is a just war. If I have four children in my house and a man comes in and kills two of them, what do I do? Negotiate? What do I do? I stop him from killing the rest if I can. Sacrifices have to be made for the greater good. Evil has to be punished. Even human goodness has to be protected.

Civil government, folks, get it straight, is not primarily here to provide Medicare and Social Security. I hate to tell you that. Certainly doesn't exist for the redistribution of wealth. It exists to threaten evil doers with death and protect the people who obey the law. The noose, the guillotine, the firing squad, the gas chamber, the electric chair as well as the sword, the gun, the rifle, the canon, and the missile stand behind the stability of a civilization because people are killers. A just war is a war called for by the scale of the crimes. This isn't personal vengeance, it is national protection by the punishment of those who do evil and by stopping them permanently from doing more of it.

A lot of people have said to me...Is this an end time scenario? I don't think that the plane crash into the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, I don't think that's apocalyptic. I don't think that's anything that indicates the end time. Well we know there are biblical signs at the end, Israel is in the land.

That's true. The world is moving toward one world religion that Antichrist could rule and that Islam is moving in that direction. I've been so fascinated over the last ten years to watch the Roman Catholic Church making its overtures to Islam. We can see that. Weapons of mass destruction are not available and in the book of Revelation it says in the end of the age one third of the population of the world will die and one fourth will die. That will take weapons of mass destruction. You couldn't do that with knives, and bows and arrows. Also it tells us in the end time, Daniel 9, there will be so much turmoil in the Middle East that they'll need a peacemaker...the peacemaker will be the Antichrist. While they have the turmoil, it's a perfect scenario for a false Christ to come and establish a false peace. I'm always watching whoever goes to the Middle East to negotiate to see if it's the Antichrist.

What have I given you? I've given you a natural reason why this happened...the evil depravity of man's murderous heart that has to be kept in check by fear and retribution, or he is a killer. I've given you historical reason why that happened...the deeply imbedded hatred for the Arabic world toward Israel and the long millennia of conflict between those people over the land. And America has been drawn into it because America is an allied-infidel nation. I've given you a religious reason why it happens. The theology of Islam allows for no assurance for salvation from hell except when one dies as a martyr in a holy war. Satan, of course, is behind that. I gave you a sensual reason as well as a religious reason why this happens. Self-killing suicide bombers working for eternal sex.

I'm going to give you one last reason and this is the real reason we need to understand. Theological reason...why did it happen? Why did all those people die? I'll tell you why, because the wages of sin is death. That's why, because it's appointed unto men once to...what?...die. I don't know how else to say it. Nothing happened to those people on Tuesday that wasn't going to happen anyway. They were all going to die, just not then, they thought. Nothing extraordinary about people dying. Are you ready for this? Since Tuesday 50 thousand Americans have died...since Tuesday. Have you been concerned? Fifty thousand. This year, 2.5 million will die. And eventually everybody will die, that's reality. We feel much more comfortable when they die one by one. We don't like it when they die 250 at a time in a plane crash. Sometimes a few thousand die in a Third-World flood, Third-World earthquake, volcanic eruption. Rarely do 5,000 people, or 10,000 people die and never in America. Oh, but everybody dies. Fifty thousand Americans die every week. Are we so concerned? We just go on blissfully living our lives with little regard for the fact that 50,000 Americans die every week? Amazing. As long as everything is kind of comfortable and we don't have to see that, we don't see mangled airplanes and mangled trains and mangled buildings, we're okay. It keeps death at some distance.

They died because everybody dies. They just didn't expect to die when they died. And you know, people say, "Well why did God let that happen?" It happens to everybody. The wages of sin is death. The bigger question is not why did God let it happen, the bigger question is why do any of us live? We should all be dead. The wages of sin is...what?...death. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The big question is not why did God allow those people to die, the bigger question is why does God allow you to live...and me? You know, we live under constant mercy so that when justice shows up we're

shocked. We get so used to grace that we don't understand justice. Every once in a while, every once in a while God draws back the grace and a deadly disaster happens and we're shocked. Our shock should be that we're reminded of what we deserve.

People say, "Well what is God saying?" I'll tell you what He's saying. He's saying, "People, you're going to die and you don't have control of it. This is a reminder, I give you life, I give you love, I give you happiness, I pour out all the common grace and make life rich and rewarding, full. I do everything I can. I'm patient. I'm forbearing. I'm merciful. I'm gracious. But once in a while I have to show you a stark illustration of where you're going."

So we think it's our right to just live. We think the key to our life is exercise, diet. It's not your right to live, it's God's grace that gives you life. And when God allows a startling and dramatic tragedy to occur, don't question His fairness, thank Him for His grace.

Turn to Luke 13. Here is the definitive passage, this is the last page, we're there. Luke 13, "Now on the same occasion, an occasion when Jesus was teaching a large crowd, there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." Boy, that was a strange thing. Pilate was the Roman procurator, the Roman governor of occupied Israel. The Romans occupied Israel. The Galileans were Jews from the north part of the land and they were making sacrifices. They were at the temple. This is the only place in Israel you can make sacrifice so some people came down from Galilee, Jesus was a Galilean so were all the apostles. Came down to make sacrifice. Went into the temple, went in there making sacrifice, religious, dutiful, doing what the Old Testament told them to do, doing what God had revealed they should do. And Pilate mingled their blood with the sacrifice.

What does that mean? Pilate sent men in there to slice them up, kill them. This is just...I mean, these are religious people. And it says in verse 2 He answered and said to them, they didn't even ask a question, but He knew what was in their minds. "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this fate? Do you think God did this because they're worse than everybody else?" I mean, see the question in their mind is these people are religious, these people are down at the temple, they're doing what they should be doing, what the Old Testament tells them to do. What is the deal? Why would God allow Pilate to go in there and kill them so that their own blood is mingled with the sacrifice? Very vivid. Why did this happen to these religious people? Well, they must have worse than everybody else.

No. Verse 3, "No, but unless you repent you'll all likewise perish." What is that? That's the message, folks. People die. Because they die doesn't mean they're worse than anybody else. God wasn't somehow judging people who worked in that building, or those buildings because they're worse than other people. No. No. They're not any different than anybody else. Jesus said Pilate didn't go in there, God didn't allow him to send in his soldiers to kill those people because they were worse than anybody else. The point is, you better repent or you will perish when you die. This is...what is God

saying to this nation in this? He is saying you better repent because you don't know when you're going to die. If you die without being prepared, you will perish.

And then even a more vivid one, verse 4. "Do you suppose that those eighteen people on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem?" Now they've got another question. Hey, they had their own trade center, the tower in Siloam. It fell over one day. It wasn't hit by an airplane but probably poor construction, maybe an earthquake, it fell over. Eighteen people were walking down the street, the tower falls on them, kills them all. And the question in their minds is...why does this happen to these people? Are these people worse than all the rest of the people who live in Jerusalem?

Jesus answered, verse 5, "I tell you no, no. They're not any worse than you, but unless you repent you will also perish." People in the Pentagon, people in those World Trade Center towers perished...I'm sure some of them were believers, some were not and the ones who were not perished, went to hell forever without God, without hope. They weren't worse than anybody else. You'll perish too if you don't repent. That's the message, that's God's message. See, the difference in people is only the difference in degree, it's not a difference in kind. We're all sinners. And death and judgment is sure. But you're not dead. You weren't in those buildings. You weren't in those airplanes. You're alive and the message from Jesus is...repent of your sin, embrace Christ so that when your day does come you won't perish, you'll go into His presence.

And then in verse 6 Jesus tells a story. A certain man had a fig tree. He planted it in his vineyard. And he came looking for fruit on it, didn't find any. And he said to the vineyard keeper, the man he had hired to take care of it, "Behold, for three years I've come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down. Why does it even use up my ground? It's pointless."

"He answered and said to him, Let it alone, sir. But this year, give it one more year and let me dig around it and put in some fertilizer and if it bears fruit next year, fine. If not, cut it down."

Oh, is that vivid? We're living on borrowed time. God could say to us...cut it down. Say to you. But God in His grace says we will wait. Just give me a little more time to see if it bears fruit. This is the heart of God. This is the heart of God. And the message is to repent of sin and embrace the gift of forgiveness and the gift of salvation in Christ.

Let me tell you something, folks. Two and a half million Americans are going to die this year and some day all of them are going to die. It's really time for people to take life and death more seriously, don't you think? Enough of the parties, enough of the games, it's time to repent and call on God to save you from eternal hell. You're living on borrowed time. It's as if Christ is saying to the Father...Well just another...let me work on it another year. I think it's time for preachers to stop the theatrics, the psycho babble and funny stories, the trivial entertainment and speak of life and death matters in biblical terms and rescue the perishing, care for the dying. It's time for you to make your life count as a gospel witness. What else matters?

Let me tell you where to start. Show some love and give the gospel to a Muslim. They need Christ, they're not your enemy, they're your mission field. You should have no attitude toward them except compassion and love for people in a religion of deception and damnation. If you know Arabic people, if you know people who are Muslim, tell them there is a Savior. Tell them there is forgiveness. You're missionaries and in this day I think we've got a stark realization to the fact that the world ahead of us isn't going to be like the world we've just come out of. It's time to be serious about eternal things.

>A Biblical Perspective on Death, Terrorism, and the Middle East, Pt 1

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