

# IS IT CHRISTIAN TO REJOICE IN OSAMA BIN LADEN'S DEATH?

By Pastor Jeremiah Sargent

On May 2, 2011, the United States of America won a huge victory in the war on terror. Under the direction of President Obama, U.S. Forces entered Pakistan to apprehend a wanted terrorist: Osama bin Laden. According to news reports, Osama bin Laden was shot and killed during the operation. Credit should be given to our President and to our military for a job well done. As a nation we can now rejoice that justice has finally been served and that good triumphed over evil. For years this man planned and carried out heinous acts against our citizens, our military personnel, and numerous innocent people around the world. He deserved to be brought to justice and I am thankful that his reign of terror has come to an end.

But now all across our nation, people are questioning whether it is right or wrong to celebrate his death. Interestingly enough, people—both Christians and non-Christians—are divided on the proper response. Some celebrate in the streets, while others say it is wrong to rejoice over anyone's death. The question has even been raised "Should a Christian rejoice over Bin Laden's death?" I would like to briefly address that question from the Word of God.

First, it is natural to rejoice when evil behavior is stopped and justice for wrong doing is enacted. Osama bin Laden was an evil man; he boasted over his murderous actions on September 11<sup>th</sup>, and constantly portrayed himself as an enemy against our nation. There is little doubt that his only purpose in life was to harm and kill innocent people. Celebrating his defeat is appropriate! When we look to the Word of God, we find numerous examples of God's people rejoicing over their enemy's downfall. Moses and the people of Israel sang in celebration after Pharaoh's army were drowned in the Red Sea (Exodus 15); Deborah and Barak praised the Lord in song after Sisera was killed (Judges 5); even David rejoiced after hearing of Saul's death (II Samuel 22). Not once do you find God condemning their actions.

But like in all things, a Christian should have a proper biblical balance. Yes, we can rejoice in that an evil man was brought to justice, but we must never forget that all men have souls. Osama bin Laden, although wicked, was still a soul that Christ loved and died for. His death does not rejoice the heart of God. In fact, the Lord said in Ezekiel 33:11 "*I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.*" Why? Because when a soul enters eternity without Jesus Christ, he or she is turned into Hell. God's greatest desire is that **ALL** men everywhere repent of their sins and turn to His Son for salvation (II Peter 3:9). The death of a sinner ends any opportunity for them to come to Christ.

We may rejoice over an evil man being stopped, but let's not allow our hearts to become so hardened towards our enemies that we forget they are precious souls that Jesus Christ died for. Osama bin Laden's death is a reminder of our world's greatest need — Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace! After all, if Christ lived within each person, we would not have these depraved acts of terrorism taking place. Rejoice over our country's victory, but let us not forget to pray for the salvation of our enemies!