



God's Love Overcomes

The largest mass execution in our country's history took place in Mankato, MN. It started in August of 1862, with the terrible treatment of the Sioux Indians. The Sioux were starving due to a severe winter coupled with a poor corn harvest. In an agreement with the government they were owed an "annual annuity" for selling their lands to the state of MN. The annuity was overdue and went unpaid. With the lack of food from the severe winter and draught, plus the delay in their "annual annuity", the Sioux were unable to purchase goods. One of the white store owners is quoted as saying, "As far as I'm concerned, if they are hungry, let them eat grass." The Sioux were enraged.

On August 17, 1862, four Sioux entered a home in Acton, MN and shot and killed 4 white settlers. The four Sioux ran to their chief, Little Crow, and demanded the tribe go to war with the white man. Little Crow agreed, not because he thought they could win, but because of the deep hatred of the white man and his Christianity.

Within a month the Sioux had killed 100's of settlers throughout MN with many other settlers finding refuge in the forts. The governor of MN responded by raising an army to put down the Sioux uprising.

1,700 Sioux warriors were imprisoned and 300 sentenced to death by hanging. Pres. Lincoln intervened and reduced the number to 38, who were hung the day after Christmas 1862 in Mankato, MN.

So far the Sioux uprising is filled with nothing but sinful hatred, racism and selfishness and it is without compassion, forgiveness and love. But the week after the execution, Thomas Williamson, a missionary to the Sioux, held an outdoor service in the snow and preached about God's plan of salvation for all tribes, languages, peoples and nations. Dr. Williamson spent that winter preaching and teaching the gospel to the Sioux prisoners. Soon the prisoners began singing and praying together to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hundreds who had refused to listen to the gospel because of the sinfulness, hatred and racism of the white man, were eagerly listening and asking for the gospel from a white man. What a tremendous power the good news of God's Love is to overcome all the dark vile hatred in a human heart!

In the spring of 1863, the Sioux prisoners of Mankato were taken to a prison in Davenport, Iowa. With only a few exceptions all confessed to be Christians. Every morning and evening they sang and prayed together as God's forgiven family. The Sioux Uprising is a dark day in the history of our country, vividly displaying the sinfulness of Americans – hypocrisy, racism and ugly bigotry. Yet in the face of the worst of mankind, the Lord overcomes and brings forth a story of His great love and mercy for all languages, peoples, nations and tribes. Thank God for his powerful love to overcome the dark cold sinfulness of all tribes, especially our own. Jesus Christ died for every Sioux, every Jew, every American, and every sinner that has ever lived. May we all learn to love each other as God has loved us.