

David Leaves Dealing With Saul to the Will of God

1 Samuel 24:1-22

- How long were you engaged? The longest engagement on record was between Octavio Guillan and Adriana Martinez. They finally took the plunge after 67 years in June 1969 (1902!) in Mexico City. Both were then aged 82.
 - Chapters 24-26 show that David doesn't seize the kingship the Lord promised, but waits for it to be given to him.
 - Though David is God's chosen and anointed king, and Saul has ruthlessly oppressed him though he has done nothing to deserve it, he refuses to take matters into his own hands by killing Saul when he has an opportunity. Instead, he trusts in God's timing and plan, his sovereign justice, and his promises, and this speaks to us.
- I. Vs. 1-3 - God's sovereignty continues to be evident in bringing Saul into the very cave where David is, and a recognition of this will continue to shape David's trust and actions.
- Saul returns from following the Philistines, hears David's in the wilderness of Engedi, and takes 3,000 men to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks. There are some sheepfolds and a cave, and he goes in to relieve himself, in the very cave where David and his men are.
 - No mention as to what happens with the Philistines. Engedi is on the western shore of the Dead Sea, with a perennial spring located several hundred feet up a large cliff. Caves. Minute precision - Saul relieving himself.
- II. Vs. 4-7 - It's clear God has brought this about to test if David will act on his own ambition and understanding, or wait on the Lord and his sovereign purposes and timing. Ultimately, David rests in the Lord's sovereign plan.
- David's men say this is the day the Lord said he'd give his enemy into his hand, and he will do to him as it seems good. (No record, but very true. Quiet conversation?). David stealthily cuts off a corner of Saul's robe (Imagine!). Afterwards, David's heart strikes him (The Spirit.). He says to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed (Reorientation and trust)." He persuades his men with these words and doesn't permit them to attack Saul. Saul leaves.
 - In 15:27-28 Saul's tearing of Samuel's robe signified the forfeit of his kingdom. It seems there's a connection, as David is staking his claim to the kingdom in cutting off a corner of Saul's robe. This may be a symbolic declaration of revolt, stemming from his frustration. But "David's heart struck him" (vs. 5). Even his symbolic action had gone too far.
 - Why is the anointed one considered "untouchable?" Once anointed, the individual consecrated and connected to God, much like holy vessels. To touch, defile, or attack the anointed one was to approach the Lord himself and to seek to defile, harm, and remove the Lord from his rightful place. This points to Christ, the truly anointed, set apart, holy one, who was "touched," as he "became sin (2 Co. 5:21)."

- Furthermore, David's Son faced the same test. The devil showed him "all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor, and said to him, 'All these things I will give to you ...'" (Mt. 4:8-9). What the devil offered him was the will of God for Jesus's life. Jesus knew that God had promised him all these kingdoms (Ps. 2:8-9). But God's will must come to pass in God's way - not by the devil's shortcut but through the humiliation of the cross.
- The end that God has ordained must be reached by the means that God approves. This doesn't negate God's sovereignty when we don't acknowledge this, but this is his command.
- This kind of test is not confined to David and Jesus; it comes again and again to us all. It is the temptation of the short cut, or our own understanding is better than God's (Pr. 3:5), or even a right thing but not in God's timing, or believing something clearly wrong is what God wants for us, or always believing we're right, or our own selfish ambition or desire clouding our perspective. or simply sin. It can be so subtle.
- How do we discern the difference between acting, or trusting the Lord to act? There is a category for "doing things," but it must be in the Lord's revealed will, discerned through his Word, prayer, council, grace, with intentions to glorify him, with the right motivations, with faith. Then, we do what we believe he wants us to do and trust his sovereignty.
- And overall, as 1 Samuel continues to emphasize, God's sovereignty is certain and good, without exception.

III. Vs. 8-15 - As David speaks to Saul to plead his innocence, he rests in the surety of the Lord's sovereign justice.

- Though he has not remained sinless in 1 Samuel, in this matter, he is 100% in the right. He has done nothing against Saul. He is the Lord's anointed. He seeks the Lord. In human thinking he might have every right to take matters into his own hands. Yet, after his immediate conviction, he calls on the Lord to plead his cause.
- David goes out of the cave and calls after Saul, "My lord the king!" Saul looks behind him, and David bows down and "pays homage (Vulnerability. No threat.)" He asks Saul why he listens to those who say David's trying to harm him (Not true. Saul's really the one propagating this.). The Lord gave him into David's hand in the cave (Recognizing God's sovereignty.). Some told David to kill him, but he spared him, because he's the Lord's anointed. He says, "See, my father (Relation and respect.), see the corner of your robe in my hand." Cutting off the corner of his robe and not killing him shows there's no wrong or treason in his hands. He hasn't sinned against Saul, though he hunts his life to take it (Understatement.). He states in vs. 12 and will again in vs. 15 the fundamental reality here: **"May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you** (Leaving things up to the sovereign justice of the Lord.)" The proverb he quotes, "Out of the wicked comes wickedness," marks him, and may refer to Saul also. He calls himself a dead dog and a flea (Genuine humility, though he is capable.), in comparison to the king. **May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."**
- There will be vengeance, but the Lord will bring it. The case is in the Lord's hands; he will judge it and decide it in David's favor. Therefore, David will await rather than grasp what he deserves. Ro. 12:19 -

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

- David leaving justice in God's hands points to Jesus: He never even had the fleeting sinful thought. He offers up his righteous record. Leaves vengeance to the Lord though reviled (1 Pt. 2:23 - When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.). And through all of this, in "gospel irony," he actually does the destroying as the one anointed one.
- This points to three elements of justice for us: 1) Justice and mercy in the gospel (Ro. 3:21-26). What David does to Saul is what Jesus does to us. In his hands, deserving death, yet we get mercy, so this can be the way we act. 2) Personal and comprehensive justice by him and not us - Stop always having to have the last word, inserting your opinion, get retribution when someone offends you, being right. Believe that he will finally right every wrong (Ro. 12:19). 3) The Lord, not we, pleads our cause (He. 7:25 - He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.).
- There's also an element of just simply giving our needs to the Lord and letting them go (1 Pt. 5:7).

IV. Vs. 16-22 - Saul's response details God's blessing and promises for David as he rests in God's sovereign plan.

- Saul asks if this is David's, his son's, voice (Past relation.), and weeps (What to make of emotion.). He admits David is more righteous than he is (Obvious.), for he's repaid Saul good, whereas Saul's repaid him evil (Understatement.). He recognizes the truthfulness and mercy of what David says he did when the Lord gave Saul into his hand, for usually if a man finds his enemy, he won't let him go. He calls on the Lord to reward David for what he's done. He knows that David will be king, and the kingdom of Israel will be established in his hand (Yes, but...). He then calls on David to swear by the Lord that he will not cut off his offspring and destroy his name out of his father's house (Ironic after what he did to priests and continued pursuit.). David does (True in 2 Sa. 9 and 21 with Mephibosheth, but for the sake of Jonathan and the covenant.). Saul goes home, but David and his men go up to the stronghold (Saul is speaking truth here, but this doesn't indicate he's repented. Chp. 26 - Final pursuit.).
- Saul, at least here, says that David is innocent, and he will be king. This demonstrates God's blessing and promises, on which David sets his hope. He can rest in the goodness of the sovereign purposes of the Lord (Je. 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.).
- 1) Be aware all the time of how God's sovereignty is so precise, comprehensive, and for our good. 2) Leave everything in the hands and timing of God in his sovereign purposes, rather than acting out of your own sense of what is best for you. 3) Remember that you are a beneficiary of justice being satisfied, and God's justice is sure, in personal matters and comprehensively. 4) Believe in the certainty of God's promises of blessing, because of the very fact that he is sovereign.