

I Samuel Lesson 26

I Samuel Chapter 26

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Memory verses for this week: *Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about the story of Nabal. David was insulted by Nabal, and intended to bring vengeance upon him and his men before Nabal's wife Abigail interceded and convinced David to not bring judgment upon the man. She was correct and God did the avenging and the man died within 10 days. Abigail was a wise woman, and David was so impressed by her that we closed Chapter 25 with David taking her to be his wife.

I. David Spares Saul a Second Time

1 Sam 26:1 And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?

1 Sam 26:2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

The Ziphites bring word to Saul that David is staying near the hill of Hachilah. David had returned to this area which was in the wilderness of Ziph where he had been earlier. When Saul got word of this, he chose 3,000 of his best men and went to seek David again.

1 Sam 26:3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

1 Sam 26:4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

1 Sam 26:5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

Saul made his camp in the hill of Hachilah where the Ziphites had indicated David was staying. This land lay before Jeshimon and was a wilderness area. David and his men stayed in the wilderness, and David sent out spies to watch Saul and to keep up with his movement. When Saul made his camp, he prepared

his defenses and David came and saw where Saul lay.

1 Sam 26:6 Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

1 Sam 26:7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

David asked two of his men if they would go down to Saul's camp with him. His nephew, Abishai, volunteered to go down with him to the camp of Saul. The men come into the camp and find Saul, Abner the captain, and all of his men asleep in the trench they had created for a defence. Saul was asleep with many of his men around about him. Saul lay with his spear sticking by his bolter it says in verse 7.

1 Sam 26:8 Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.

1 Sam 26:9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?

1 Sam 26:10 David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

1 Sam 26:11 The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

Abishai encourages David to allow him to kill Saul while he had the opportunity. He says that God had delivered David's enemy into his hand. He says that he could easily kill him by striking him with the spear. He would not have to do it twice, but would finish the job with the first thrust. David refuses to harm Saul in anyway, and says that none could stretch forth their hand against the Lord's anointed and remain guiltless.

David said he was sure that the Lord would smite Saul at the proper time. Either God would take him by natural causes or he would perish in a battle. David tells Abishai to not harm Saul, but to take his spear and his cruse of water, and they would leave the camp. Abishai follows his instructions and they returned to their camp.

Matthew Henry said that the recent problem with Nabal had taught David to trust the Lord in an even greater way.

Abishai's request to David for a commission to dispatch Saul with the spear that stuck at his bolster, which (now that he lay so fair) he undertook to do at one blow, v. 8. He would not urge David to kill him himself, because he had declined doing this before

when he had a similar opportunity; but he begged earnestly that David would give him leave to do it, pleading that he was his enemy, not only cruel and implacable, but false and perfidious, whom no reason would rule nor kindness work upon, and that *God had now delivered him into his hand*, and did in effect bid him strike. The last advantage he had of this kind was indeed but accidental, when Saul happened to be in the cave with him at the same time. But in this there was something extraordinary; the deep sleep that had fallen on Saul and all his guards was manifestly from the Lord, so that it was a special providence which gave him this opportunity; he ought not therefore to let it slip. *IV. David's generous refusal to suffer any harm to be done to Saul, and in it a resolute adherence to his principles of loyalty, v. 9. David charged Abishai not to destroy him, would not only not do it himself, but not permit another to do it. And he gave two reasons for it:-1. It would be a sinful affront to God's ordinance. Saul was the Lord's anointed, king of Israel by the special appointment and nomination of the God of Israel, the power that was, and to resist him was to resist the ordinance of God, Rom. 13:2. No man could do it and be guiltless. The thing he feared was guilt and his concern respected his innocence more than his safety.*

2. It would be a sinful anticipation of God's providence. God had sufficiently shown him, in Nabal's case, that, if he left it to him to avenge him, he would do it in due time. Encouraged therefore by his experience in that instance, he resolves to wait till God shall think fit to avenge him on Saul, and he will by no means avenge himself (v. 10): "The Lord shall smite him, as he did Nabal, with some sudden stroke, or he shall die in battle (as it proved he did soon after), or, if not, his day shall come to die a natural death, and I will contentedly wait till then, rather than force my way to the promised crown by any indirect methods." The temptation indeed was very strong; but, if he should yield, he would sin against God, and therefore he will resist the temptation with the utmost resolution (v. 11): "The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed; no, I will never do it, nor suffer it to be done." Thus bravely does he prefer his conscience to his interest and trusts God with the issue.

II. David Rebukes Abner the Captain

1 Sam 26:12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

1 Sam 26:13 Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off; a great space being between them:

1 Sam 26:14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who art thou that criest to the king?

From the top of a hill, David cries out to Abner. It appears that Abner did not immediately respond. When asked why he did not respond, Abner cried out "Who art thou that criest to the king?"

1 Sam 26:15 And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

1 Sam 26:16 This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD'S anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster.

David replies and mocks Abner as being a valiant man. He tells him that he was a failure when it came to keeping a watch over the king to protect him from his enemies entering the camp. David goes on to tell him that one had come into his camp to destroy the king, and for him to allow this was not good. Because of his carelessness, he was worthy to be put to death. He reminds Abner that the king's spear and cruse of water was in David's hand, not theirs. This proved David's claim about coming into the camp undetected. Verse 12 says that the Lord had caused the deep sleep to fall on all of Saul's army.

J. Vernon McGee said David was being sarcastic with Abner at this time.

Frankly, I think David is being sarcastic with Abner, who is Saul's captain and should have been protecting him. David is ridiculing Abner. David is telling him that the king could have been destroyed. About this time the king and his men begin to wake up, and they wonder what has happened. Then David says, "Where is Saul's spear and cruse of water? They are gone." David probably held them up and said, "Look, I've got them. I could have slain Saul, but I did not." And that is the important thing: David did not slay the king. He had a wonderful attitude about the whole thing. God was going to handle this affair as far as David was concerned. It may be easy for us to criticize David, but do we today let God handle our enemies? We try to take things in our own hands and try to answer our accusers and deal with them ourselves. God says, "Let Me handle the situation, and you walk by faith. Trust Me." We are going to find out that David trusted the Lord, and He took care of Saul in time.

III. Saul Recognizes David's Voice

1 Sam 26:17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king.

1 Sam 26:18 And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand?

1 Sam 26:19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the LORD; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.

1 Sam 26:20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of

the LORD: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

Saul cries out and asks if it was David to whom he was speaking. David acknowledges that it is he, and again rebukes the king. He demands to know what his crime was that caused Saul to seek his life. Why did Saul continually pursue him when he meant no harm to Saul. David proposes that they make a sacrifice unto the Lord if it was the Lord who had stirred up Saul's animosity. David says if it is men who had stirred up Saul against him, it was wrong because it was forcing David to live in exile, and it encouraged him to serve other gods. David simply wanted to get along with Saul and to serve the true and living God. David asks Saul to spare his life, for he was no more than a flea or a partridge of the mountains that Saul had come out to seek.

1 Sam 26:21 Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

1 Sam 26:22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

1 Sam 26:23 The LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into my hand to day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed.

This humbled Saul, and confessed that he had sinned, and swore to seek David's harm no more. Saul tells David to return because he had spared Saul's life and he was thankful for that. In verse 21 he states that he had played the fool and had erred exceedingly. David answered Saul and tells him to send one of the young men over to fetch the king's spear. Saul recognized that David had been in the camp, and could easily have killed him if he had so desired.

1 Sam 26:24 And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

1 Sam 26:25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

David points out again that he would not raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, and wanted Saul to return this favor back to him and not take his life. Saul pronounces a blessing on David and swears that he will no longer seek to harm David. Saul says "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt do great things, and also shalt still prevail." As before, it appears David does not trust Saul, and goes on his way, refusing to return to be with Saul.

David learned a lot of things from the months he spent running from Saul. He

learned patience, and he really learned to trust the Lord.

Charles Spurgeon once said in one of his messages that the child of God in the perfect will of God will totally trust God, and will seek to glorify Christ with his or her life.

Beloved, the grandest facts in all the world to a truly spiritual man are not the rise and fall of empires, the marches of victory, or the desolations of defeat; he cares neither for crowns nor mitres, swords nor shields; his admiring gaze is wholly fixed upon Christ and his cross and cause. To him Jesus is the center of history, the soul and core of providence. He desires no knowledge so much as that which concerns his Redeemer and Lord; his science deals with what Jesus is and what he is to be, what he has done, what he is doing, and what he will do. The believer is mainly anxious as to how Jesus can be glorified, and how sinners can be brought to know him.

That which concerns the honor of Jesus is our chief concern from day to day; as for other matters let the Lord do as he wills with them, only let Jesus Christ be magnified, and all the rest of the world's story has small significance for us. The Beloved is the head and front, the heart and soul of the Christian's delight when his heart is in its best state. Our text is the portrait of a heavenly-minded child of God, or rather, it is the music of his well stringed harp when love as minstrel touches the tenderest chords: "My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies." We shall note then, first, that here is *a delighting to have Christ*; secondly, *a delighting to belong to Christ*; and thirdly, *a delighting at the very thought of Christ*.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.