

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Life of David
A Man After God's Heart
Lesson 3 – 1 Samuel 22-25

Chapter 22

David is now completely separated from Saul's court and is considered an outlaw and a rebel. David assembled a rag-tag loyal band of followers at the cave of Adullam, a crowd of 400 men that eventually grew to 600. He would want to protect his brethren since Saul might want to slay them as well as David. Certainly this "motley crew" illustrates the kind of people who flee to Christ for refuge: people in distress or in debt, people discontented with life. This period of persecution in David's life was a part of the preparation for the throne. He was already a great soldier; now he needed to suffer in the wilderness to learn *not* to trust men but to trust the Lord. All of us need "wilderness testings" to bring us closer to the Lord and to make us better equipped to serve Him.

Chapter 23

It was important that David live, for it was he who would deliver Israel, establish the kingdom in glory, and become the father of Christ in the flesh. Satan used Saul to seek to kill David, but God was too strong for the enemy. As long as David sought the mind of the Lord, God gave him protection and victory.

The Philistines were David's enemy and the enemy of Israel, so it was right for him to fight them. When the child of God is in the will of God, he may expect the help of God. So intense was Saul's spiritual blindness, that he did not thank God for David's victory, but instead came to fight the victor himself. How wicked is the human heart untouched by the grace of God.

Chapter 24 -25

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." God gave David the grace needed to show kindness to his enemy, and this is even greater than defeating the giant Goliath. Saul's men had been lying about David and telling Saul that David was trying to slay him. This experience gave David opportunity to prove to Saul and the leaders that he was not trying to slay Saul, but that he honored the king even though the king was out of the will of God.

Read 1 Samuel 22 and answer the following questions:

1. With what reasoning did Saul appeal to his officials to support him rather than David? What accusation did Saul make against the priests at Nob? (22:7-13)
2. On what grounds did Ahimelech maintain that he was innocent of aiding rebellion against Saul? (22:14)
3. Why, according to Ahimelech, did he not suspect that David was at odds with Saul? Why did David find himself in a dangerous situation in the very place he had sought refuge from Saul? (22:15)

Read 1 Samuel 23 and answer the following questions:

4. What was David's first response to the news that an Israelite town was being attacked by an enemy? Why were David's men hesitant to follow him into battle?
5. How did God reassure David when he came the second time for guidance? What was good about the way David made his decisions?
6. How would you compare the way Saul and David arrived at their respective decisions about what to do next?

7. Why do you think Saul continued to try to kill David, although he knew David was God's anointed?

Read 1 Samuel 24 and answer the following questions:

8. What did David's men tell him when they discovered Saul alone in the cave? What arguments did David give to prove that he was not conspiring against the king? (24:9-11)

9. For David, what was the authoritative proof that he was not an evil man? On what terms did Saul and David part after their meeting in the cave? (24:13-22)

10. What was the single most important reason David had for not harming Saul? When does restraint speak more loudly than action?

Read 1 Samuel 25 and answer the following questions:

11. What favor did David ask of Nabal through his representatives? How did David react to the message from Nabal?

12. What action did Abigail take when she heard about Nabal's blunder? How did David view the fact that Abigail came out to meet him?

13. How can we use the wisdom of Abigail in our present day living when dealing with difficult situations with people? How does 1 Samuel 25 reinforce the idea that our choices have consequences?

Pledging Allegiance 1 Samuel 24:5-6

David spared Saul's life twice. Once in the cave at En Gedi, and again in the wilderness of Ziph. Even though Saul was demented, unfit for office, and bent on destroying David, he refused to take his life because Saul was the Lord's anointed. In fact, David was troubled for having violated even the garment that Saul was wearing. It's similar to the way Americans "pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States, and to the republic for which it stands." To David, the robe of Saul represented the king.

David's respect for Saul's position serves as a model for the high respect that God's people today should have for the government and its officials. Like David, we may not care for the people in office or their actions, but we can at least respect the position since government is ordained by God. In fact, all officeholders, whether or not they are Christians or even God-fearing people, deserve our respect and prayers. A governmental position invested by the prayers of God's people, anointed by God's representative, and confirmed by an oath of office invoking God's help is an office undeniably God-ordained.