

The Kingdom of David
1 Samuel 24
5/2/10

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David spares Saul's life

When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks. And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.' " Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe. And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. He said 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." So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.

1. *When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks.*
 - A. The time factor between the end of Chapter 23 and now is unknown
 - B. Who told Saul about David's whereabouts is unknown
 - C. With a large force, he undertakes another expedition to locate David and his men at a place known as the Rocks of the Wild Goats.
2. *And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.' "*
 - A. Saul enters a cave in order to relieve himself, unaware that David and his men were also in the cave.

- B. David's men see this as an opportunity to kill Saul and remind him of what the Lord had said to him (*Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'* ")
 - i. This has no Biblical reference, per se
 - ii. Is noteworthy that the Lord said *you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you*
- 3. *Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe.*
 - A. This is apparently what 'seemed good' to do.
- 4. *And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. He said 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."*
 - A. David is convicted of the sin of his action against Saul
 - i. David's sensitivity - [2 Sam 24:10](#)
 - ii. Josiah's sensitivity - [2 Ki 22:8-20](#)
 - B. David understands that an attack on Saul is an attack on the Lord (*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.*)
 - i. [Rom 12:14-21](#); [13:1-2](#)
- 5. *So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.*
 - A. In this manner, Saul is spared.

David confronts Saul

Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage. And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your harm'? Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.' See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you. As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you. After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! 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."

1. *Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage.*
 - A. David pays proper respect to the king - *My lord the king!* and David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage
 - i. [Rom 13:7](#); [1Peter 2:17](#)
2. *And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your harm'?"*
 - A. [Prov 16:28](#) - The speaker of evil words
 - B. [Prov 17:4](#) - The hearer of evil words
 - C. [Prov 29:12](#) - The result
3. *Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.' See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it.*
 - A. David attributes Saul's coming into the cave to God's sovereignty.
 - B. David tells Saul that he did not kill him, even though some of his men urged him to so do. As proof, he shows Saul the corner of this robe that he had cut off.
 - i. Addresses him as 'father', as Saul was indeed his father-in-law - [1 Sam 18:27](#)
 - ii. Uses this to stress that he is not involved in wrong or treason
 - iii. Contrasts his not sinning against Saul to Saul's trying to take David's life
4. *May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you. As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you.*
 - A. David makes the following points:
 - i. Let the Lord be the judge between him and Saul
 - ii. Let the Lord avenge David against Saul
 - iii. David's hand will not be against Saul (as opposed to the proverb which he quotes).
5. *After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! 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."*
 - A. David's question as to whom Saul pursues contrasts a man (and his life) to a dog (and his fleas)
 - B. Asks that the Lord
 - i. judge and give the sentence between the two
 - ii. plead his (David's) cause
 - iii. deliver David from the hand of Saul

As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house." And David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1. *As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept.*
 - A. Saul is obviously greatly moved when he hears David speaking - *Saul lifted up his voice and wept*
2. *He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe?"*
 - A. Saul makes several observations
 - i. *You are more righteous than I*
 - ii. *you have repaid me good*
 - iii. *I have repaid you evil*
 - iv. *you have dealt well with me*
 - v. *you did not kill me*
3. *So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house."*
 - A. Saul then makes several requests
 - i. *may the LORD reward you with good*
 - ii. *to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me*
 - iii. *that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house.*
4. *And David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.*
 - A. Although David swore to Saul that he would not destroy his offspring or his name, nonetheless, when Saul goes home, David returns to the stronghold

Application

1. Both parties of a controversy may think that the Lord is on their side
2. Outward repentance may not be true repentance.

The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both *may* be, and one *must* be wrong. God can not be *for* and *against* the same thing at the same time.