

David Spares Saul Again – 1 Samuel 26:1-25

Introduction:

David had the opportunity to kill King Saul, the man who was pursuing him and seeking to kill him, but he refused to “touch the anointed of the Lord.” His men said this opportunity was the Lord’s doing, but David did not see it that way. But what if a second opportunity arises to kill your enemy? Surely, God must be speaking to you and offering you another chance to avenge yourself.

This is what happens in this chapter. David gets another chance to kill King Saul. It would be so easy to justify this act of murder as the will of God, since who else but God could orchestrate not one, but two chances to kill the king? How will David respond? What kind of man is David – really? This is the theme of this study.

King Saul Pursues David – 1 Samuel 26:1-5

1. This chapter opens with the mention of a certain group bringing information to King Saul about the whereabouts of David. Who is this group? Note chapter 23:19. Who betrays David’s whereabouts? (Note: some scholars want to claim that the events of chapter 24 and 26 are the same story that changed in the telling. However, there are too many differences to justify that conclusion)
2. Gibeah (King Saul’s hometown) is in north Israel, while the wilderness of Ziph is in the far southern extreme of the country. Once again we see how determined Saul is to capture and kill David. Who does King Saul take with him to seek David (v.2)?
3. King Saul camps on the hill where he was told he would find David (Hachilah), but where does David go (v. 3)? Why?
4. Does David simply keep on running, or does he do something to protect himself and his men? What does he do (v. 4)?
5. When David hears about the camp of the king, he goes to see it for himself. What does he see when he gets there (v. 5)? Is Saul safe?

David Sneaks into Saul's Camp – 1 Samuel 26:6-12

6. David proposes a suicidal plan, and invites two men to join him. What was the plan, and who is invited to join him (v. 6)? Who agrees to join him?
7. David and Abishai make their way into the camp of King Saul. How close do they get to the king (v. 7)? Where have we seen the king's spear before?
8. What does Abishai conclude (v. 8)? What does he want to do?
9. How does David respond to the plan of Abishai (v. 9)? What are the thoughts of David in regards to taking revenge into your own hands (vss. 9-11)?
10. Though David will not take the life of the King, what does he take (v. 12)?
11. We are told the reason why David and Abishai are able to sneak into the middle of King Saul's encampment (v. 12). How could that happen?

David Confronts King Saul, Again! – 1 Samuel 26:13-20

12. David is ready to confront King Saul. Where does he position himself (v. 13)?
13. Why is David addressing Abner (v. 14)? How does he taunt Abner (vss.15-16)? What should Abner look for (v.16)?
14. Who recognizes David's voice (v. 17)? What does he call David?
15. How does David address the king (v. 17)?
16. What does David ask of the king in verse 18?
17. David suggests two possible reasons why the king was pursuing him: God stirred him to do this or men stirred him up. What does David suggest be done in each case (v. 19)? What is the consequence of the second option?
18. What is David asking the King to do in verse 20?

King Saul Responds to David – 1 Samuel 26:21-25

19. What does King Saul confess in verse 21? What invitation does he give?
20. What action does David take in verse 22? Is this important?
21. What is David affirming in verses 23-24?
22. What does King Saul do for David in verse 25?

Conclusion:

Once again opportunity knocked on David's door. He could have killed the king and stopped running. But David would not do that. He would rather trust himself to the Lord, and do what was right than to try and wrestle the power away from King Saul by his own devices. David knows that if he gained the throne with a sword he could just as easily lose the throne the same way.

We are reminded of something Jesus said to his followers many years later:

“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” (Matthew 6:26)

Power and riches would be David's when he became king, but if he obtained them in ways that violated God's laws, then he would lose everything – he would lose his soul.

David once again shows us what a man after God's own heart should do. May we learn to be patient, wait for God's timing and put God's agenda before our own agenda.