

1st Samuel Chapter 20

- Chapter 19 ends with Saul seeking to kill David, first through his “messengers”, then he went to Ramah personally, only to find the Holy Spirit waiting for him.
- Saul is overcome by the Holy Spirit, he begins to praise and to worship God, to prophesy. He removes his kingly robes, because in God’s sight he is no longer king, Saul is thus thwarted in his attempt to seize and kill David.
- God shows Himself strong on behalf of David, protecting him.

Psalm 62:6 “He only is my Rock and my salvation: He is my Defense; I shall not be moved.”

V: 1 Given what has just transpired, with God protecting David, why is he fleeing?

- It might be fear, or it might just be the smart thing to do. Saul up to this point has tried to kill David 4X’s. Saul took an oath not to kill David which he promptly broke so it may not be entirely unreasonable for David to scam.
- David, like us, when things are falling apart, when he’s fearful, and in the midst of the trial is asking penetrating questions. Why me? Why is this happening? What have I done wrong?

Psalm 139:23-24 ²³Search me, oh God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: ²⁴and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

- Sometimes it’s not about what we’ve done wrong, it’s about what God wants to accomplish in us as He works in and through our lives.
- Another question that we should all ask during these times is “Lord, what are you trying to show me? What am I supposed to learn?”

James 1:2-4 ²My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; ³knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. ⁴But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

V: 2-3 Jonathan responds with “God forbid” that David should die – which is true, but not because Saul will cease his attempts.

- God is with David, protecting him, even if it doesn’t “feel” like it.
- Jonathan reiterates that whatever he learns from his father, he will relate to David.

- David is none too reassured; “there is but a step between me and death” – one wrong move, one wrong step and I’m done for.
- David is conscious that his life is seemingly hanging by a thread; but that is true of all of us – we just don’t always realize it, not aware of it.
- Sometimes the only thing between us and death is 3 inches of yellow paint...
- Why is David suddenly aware of this danger, after all he’s a man of war, seemingly accustomed to danger? He’s aware of it, focused on it because he’s taken his focus off of the Lord.

Philippians 4:6-8 “⁶Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

- There is wisdom in the recognition that our lives are truly in the hands of God, and we don’t know at what time the Lord may withdraw His hand of protection from us and allow us to be taken home to be with Him – which should keep us mindful of the eternal, living with the consciousness the eternal, which in turn should motivate us to serve Him and to seek to be pleasing in His sight, living each day as though it were our last.

1 John 3:2-3 “²Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. ³And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”

V: 4-10 David is fearful and Jonathan is trying to minister to him.

- David suggests a “fleece” type of test, using his absence at Saul’s table to sort of test the waters and see what Saul’s intent is.
- It may appear as though David is asking Jonathan to lie for him, but I don’t think he is.

1 Samuel 20:19 It appears that David runs home to Bethlehem, then back to Gibeah of Saul and to the field where he meets up with Jonathan again.

- This is all part of what God would allow in David’s life, a time of testing and trial some of which God allowed, some of which David brought upon himself.
- David reminds Jonathan of the covenant between them.

- David declares that if there is iniquity in his actions that Jonathan should slay him now as opposed to betraying him to Saul.
- Jonathan affirms his loyalty and determines to keep David informed of his father's intentions.

V: 11-17 Jonathan acknowledges that David will be the next king of Israel; and he is seeking assurance that David will show kindness to his family when he comes into his kingdom.

- Newly crowned kings often times eliminated any potential rivals to the throne, and Jonathan's family could be considered in such a way.

V: 18-23 They will put their plan into action to gauge Saul's demeanor, and devise a method of notification where Jonathan can communicate to David in an indirect way.

V:19 David went home then came back on the 3rd day.

- Ezel means stone of memorial, or stone of remembrance – reminding us of our stone of remembrance – “do this in remembrance of Me.”
- Jonathan gives David good advice, essentially he tells him stay by the rock, stay close to the rock.

Psalm 62:7 “In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.”

Jesus tells us the same thing:

John 15:5 “I am the vine ye are the branches, he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, apart from Me ye can do nothing.”

V: 24-29 Being on a lunar calendar, the new moon was the beginning of the month, with a corresponding feast – for which the participants must be ceremonially clean to participate in.

- Sadly at least with Saul things had degenerated to the point that merely being clean on the outside was good enough – much like the situation that Jesus confronted with the religious leaders:

Matthew 23:27-28 “²⁷Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. ²⁸Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

1. Day 1 of the feast, Saul notes David's absence but doesn't think much of it.

- V: 25 Saul's back to the wall, his general (body guard) at his side – not paranoid...not...
- 2. Day 2 he again notes David's absence and immediately asks his best friend of David's whereabouts.
- V: 27 "son of Jesse" – David had made a name for himself, but Saul wouldn't utter it.
- Saul is speaking derisively of David, referring to his lowly birth, not as the hero of Israel.
- Jonathan refers to him as "David" giving Saul the agreed upon excuse and that he had allowed David to go to his family.

V: 30 Saul's anger is immediately aroused, revealing what was in his heart – then in cursing Jonathan Saul invokes his mother's reputation – who was seemingly being blamed for Jonathans "perverse" "rebellion".

- Saul knows that Jonathan has chosen David to his own confusion – to his own shame and that of his mother.
- But to understand it correctly: Saul's words describe Jonathan in the lowest terms.
- According to Saul, Jonathan's treachery in befriending David indicated that he was not really Saul's son at all, but the son of some other man, for a true son of Saul would never betray his father.
- Therefore Jonathan was slandering his own mother and saying she had been unfaithful like a common prostitute, a perverse and sinful woman!
- You're no son of mine! You must be illegitimate!

V: 31 Saul tells Jonathan that as long as David lives, he / Jonathan will not inherit his kingdom.

- Jonathan has already reconciled himself joyfully that he will never be king, acknowledging God's anointing upon David.
- Saul has yet to acknowledge that his kingdom has been taken from himself and from his descendants.

1 Samuel 13:13-14 ¹³And Samuel said to Saul, thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom

upon Israel for ever. ¹⁴But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart..."

1 Samuel 15:26, 28 ²⁶And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." – ²⁸And Samuel said unto him, the Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou."

- Saul then orders Jonathan to go and get David and bring him to Saul that he may kill him.

V: 32-34 Jonathan, still being an up-right and righteous man and challenges Saul asking him why should David be killed, what has he done?

- Saul gives Jonathan a pointed response that is consistent with his murderous heart.
- That is what people do when they can't give a rational response, they resort to name calling and violence.
- Jonathan leaves angry without eating – grieved for David, angry because of Saul's behavior toward himself, having shamed him.

V: 35-40 the next day as planned, Jonathan takes a little kid and goes out to the field where David is hiding.

- Then the signal, Jonathan shoots the arrow beyond the kid and David and yells out "is not the arrow beyond thee? Make speed, hast, stay not."
- All of this to mean that David needs to beat feet and get away.

V: 41-42 As soon as the little boy was gone, the two men come out to meet each other. David bowing down in acknowledgment of the warning given, a tearful goodbye and a parting.

- This would not be their final meeting, but a tearful farewell.
- They would meet again in about 10 years just before Jonathan's death.
- Jonathan's last words to David, "go in peace."

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- We might ask; was David in God's will? How can someone set out on such a bleak difficult road and be in God's will?
 - God often has us travel in difficult places, difficult journeys – like David to a place where we would have to completely depend on God alone, not ourselves, not Saul / world, not our friends like Jonathan – places where we would not, could not depend on anyone except the Lord himself.

- This difficult road was important in the development of the future king who was described as a man after God's own heart – yes I believe he was in God's will.

Allan Redpath: The Making Of A Man Of God, Studies in the life of David.

“Let God empty you out that He may save you from becoming spiritually stale, and lead you ever onward. He is always calling us to pass beyond the thing we know into the unknown. A throne is God's purpose for you; a cross is God's path for you; faith is god's plan for you.”

Romans 5:3-4 *“³And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; ⁴And patience, experience; and experience, hope:”*