

Refusal to Compromise

Text: 1 Samuel 24: 1-22

Introduction

Where we have been, where we are now...

Goliath: a great season of victory during David's younger years

Palace: A shepherd boy lives in the Kings palace and serves Saul

General: David has been exalted in the military; he has become famous and is celebrated with songs

Son: He marries into and becomes part of Saul's family

Brother: David has a close brotherly relationship with Jonathan, Saul's son.

Nob: David goes from famous to fugitive and he enters the dark season of his life. He sins and lies to the priest with terrible consequences.

Gath: Flees to the place of his greatest victory, he is now hiding

Adullam: A group of misfits join David, in a shepherd's cave

Keilah: They save the city and flee to the "Rock of Parting"

Rock of Parting: "Sela Hammahlekoth"

1 Samuel 23: 26-29

"Saul was going along one side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his forces were closing in on David and his men to capture them,²⁷ a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Come quickly! The Philistines are raiding the land."²⁸ Then Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to meet the Philistines. That is why they call this place Sela Hammahlekoth.²⁹ And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi".

David and his men get a reprieve and this is where we begin:

1 Samuel 24: 1-7 Providence, Luck or a Test of faith

"After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the Desert of En Gedi."² So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crag of the Wild Goats.

David is in the "Crag of the Wild Goats" with 600 of his men. Saul is in pursuit to take David's life. In a place honeycombed with caves, David and his men are very vulnerable; Saul holds all the power...but that is about to change.

³ He came to the sheen pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul

about to change.

³ He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. ⁴ The men said, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

⁵ Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. ⁶ He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the LORD." ⁷ With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

Saul enters the one cave (of many) that David and his men are hiding in. He does so to "relieve himself", what are the chances that King Saul picked the very cave David was in? David in a moment has turned from vulnerable to powerful. Is this opportunity Providence? Is it luck? Or is it a test of David's faith?

David's men tell him that this is "God's plan". And that now is the opportunity to take Saul's life, and take the kingdom.

What do we do when we have been given power to change our circumstances?

David is about to do something violent and wrong.

Paul would tell us in Romans: *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good"*.

David uses a sword to cut the edges of Saul's robes. Numbers 14 gives instruction for how the king's robes in the corner should have distinct tassels. David uses a sword that represents violence, to cut the corners of the king's robes symbolically violently taking the kingdom away from Saul.

But something stops David in his tracks he is *"conscience-stricken"*.

We know God's will, by knowing God's word... pray and seek Godly Counsel.

Opportunity is not always God's permission

"Sometimes our gifts and talents open doors we shouldn't go through"

Verses 8- Risking All for Reconciliation

⁸ Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. ⁹ He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you'? ¹⁰ This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD's anointed.' ¹¹ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but

cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD's anointed.¹¹ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life.¹² May the LORD judge between you and me. And may the LORD avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you.¹³ As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you.

¹⁴ "Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Who are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? ¹⁵ May the LORD be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it; may he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand."

¹⁶ When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud. ¹⁷ "You are more righteous than I," he said. "You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. ¹⁸ You have just now told me about the good you did to me; the LORD delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me. ¹⁹ When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the LORD reward you well for the way you treated me today. ²⁰ I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.²¹ Now swear to me by the LORD that you will not kill off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family."

²² So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold".

Then David's conscience "is smote". He realizes that it is not for him to take this situation into his own hands, but for the LORD to provide. He even defends Saul from his own men. Further, he risks everything for reconciliation with Saul. Imagine that picture: Saul and 3,000 of his best soldiers surround David and his 600 misfits sitting in a cave. If something miraculous doesn't happen, David not only risks his life but the lives of all his men.

But something does happen Saul repents. His response is emotional and humble. He weeps aloud, and calls David affectionately, "my son". He then prophesies that David will surely be king over Israel... and asks for a favor "take care of my family when you do".

Although a picture of a very moving scene, David has learned his lesson. He stays in En Gedi, separating himself from his Father-in-Law.

But something seems forever changed in David.

Discussion Questions

1. How are we to know God's will? David's men not only interpreted the situation based on the circumstances then instructed David as to what he should do. Frankly, their argument seems to make good sense... But they were wrong. How can we know with certainty like David? (Page 3)

2. There is a delicate balance between faith and action (James 2:24). The

2. There is a delicate balance between faith and action (James 2:24). The Kingdom was promised to David, and David was promised to be king. Yet a timeline was never suggested, and the means were never told to him. These would be opportunities for David's faith to be tested. Have you had similar situations or maybe experiencing one right now, please share if so?

3. David may have acquired the kingdom if he had killed Saul in that cave, but it would have come with dire consequences. It's easy to see that David is at a watershed moment in his story and that this decision would change the course of his life. What did David do initially and eventually and what do you do when you have been given power to change your circumstances? Please share of times when you made the right decision/s and maybe learn when you didn't. (Pages 2-3)

4. Last week Randy spoke about how David made a decision to take his future into his own hands and the results were catastrophic. (For him and many others) In times like these talk about how important it is that we must submit and trust the Lord's provision for his promises. (On the contrary, David would become king, on the LORD's terms)

5. To wrap up this study let's look at and discuss a couple of core points: -- David learned to trust the Lord and allowed the Lord to fulfill his promises --David had developed in him a heart that would desire to not compromise. He would fail, again; but this would be his lifelong pursuit.

Final Application of the Text

“All is a picture of Jesus. He would be tempted to compromise but unlike David, he wouldn't give in. His refusal to compromise on the purpose and promises of God for his life would eventually lead him to another cave... a tomb”.

“Jesus would risk it all for reconciliation of sinners (as David did to Saul) to their Father in Heaven. He would be "humbled to the point of death" so he could be exalted to the highest throne of Heaven (David would be humbled, and would eventually become king of Israel). That one day every eye would see, knee would bow, and tongue confess that Jesus is King (Philippians 2)”