

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

March 27

MONDAY

After taking care of the Philistines, at least temporarily, Saul returned with 3000 men to hunt David down. He was tracking him through a remote, desolate area, when he came upon a cave. Saul entered it to take a nap, completely unaware that David and some of his men were hiding deeper in that very cave! David's men urged him to make good use of this "golden opportunity" and kill Saul. But instead, David sneaked up on the King and only cut off a piece of his royal robe.

READ: I Samuel 24:1-4

Notice how God controls situations and people in order to accomplish His program. He causes Saul to require a nap, and then to go into the same cave where David and his men were hiding. Imagine how stunned his men were when their enemy walked right into their hands this way! David might have assumed that killing Saul was according to the providence of God! But, it was not. The providence of God was to lead Saul into the cave so that David would not kill him! God is demonstrating in David what it means to honor the king and to obey God. It's all about obeying God!

TUESDAY

No sooner did David sneak up and cut off a piece of Saul's robe, than he was sorry. He knew that God had raised up King Saul, and he felt that what he had done was wrong. When David spoke these thoughts aloud, his men decided not to act against Saul either. Later, Saul woke up from his nap, went out of the cave, and started on his way. David came out of hiding, and from to the mouth of the cave, called out to the king, "My Lord the king!" Then he dropped to the ground and bowed to Saul.

READ: I Samuel 24:5-8

David had the chance to kill or capture Saul, but he did not. But do you wonder why David regretted cutting off a piece of the king's robe? It wasn't that bad a thing, was it? Yet, David seemed to have felt that even that small act was an affront to the office and to the dignity of the king - the king whom God had put on the throne. David's heart was so tender towards the things of God! The danger to himself was nothing compared to God's great purposes. I think we can say that David had a sense that God used all things for His glory, and to accomplish His purposes. And David wanted to be part of it all, and not fight against it. Is this not what we want as well?

WEDNESDAY

David spoke to Saul from the mouth of the cave. He asked him why he listened to his advisors who were telling him how evil and threatening David was. And he explained how Saul had wandered into the cave where he had been hiding, and how he had been given the perfect opportunity to kill him. But he didn't. And he held up the piece of Saul's robe which he had cut off to prove that what he was saying was true.

READ: I Samuel 24:9-11

David had good reason to suspect that Saul was hunting him purely from his own motives and jealousy. Yet he courteously raised the possibility that it had been his advisors on

whom the bulk of the blame should be laid. Or perhaps David was thinking of Saul's unseen advisors: for Satan is the "accuser of the brethren" and he places his agents in all places. They make it their business to convince rulers that God's people are their enemies, and a threat to their control and well-being. Recognizing this, as David perhaps did, will aid us in our defense, and in our determination to fight spiritual with spiritual, remembering that spiritual battles are the Lord's!

THURSDAY

David tried his best to convince Saul that he meant him no harm. He quoted an old saying of the day: *wickedness proceeds from the wicked*, meaning that he was not wicked and would not do wicked things. Specifically, he would not lift his hand against the king. He confessed himself to be little more than a flea on a dead dog, and asked Saul why he bothered with him at all?

READ: I Samuel 24:12-15

The old saying is a way of stating that bad people do bad things. David is saying that he had the chance to do an evil thing, but he didn't do it. "So you know I am not a evil person." In other words, you can tell a tree by its fruit. And a believer by his works. Isn't that what living for the Lord is all about for us, too?

FRIDAY

Saul listened to David's explanation and then responded, calling David his son. He cried some, and admitted that David was a better man than he.

READ: I Samuel 24:16-17

Just because Saul admitted that David was a man of more integrity than himself, does not mean that everything will be perfect. But it does point out what God looks for in his followers: he looks for right living. And David was recognized to be righteous even by his worst enemy! Saul had to confess to that even though it must have pained him greatly. The Book of Proverbs calls that pouring coals on his head and it is to be that same story for you and me today. Let's be sure we are coal pourers!

SATURDAY

Saul continued admitting his unworthiness. He confessed his conviction that David will one day be king. He pleaded with David not to kill all his family when that day came, and David promised him that he will not.

READ: I Samuel 24:18-22

Saul's confession that he knows David will one day be king is an amazing admission. For one thing, others are listening: certainly David's men and perhaps his own guards. But Saul could not deny the evidence: David cared for the people of Israel as a king should; he had been divinely protected by God; and he demonstrated a generous, kingly spirit in sparing Saul. Sooner or later, God will compel even non-believers to know and confess those whom God loves (Rev.3:9). The evidence will be undeniable. Think what God has done, and is doing in your life as the undeniable evidence of that!