

## 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel Ch 27

Continuing our studies in this extended period in the life of David whereby he's on the run from King Saul we come to a place in his life where like in any of our lives there's seasons of high highs, just sold out to Jesus and living powerfully and boldly for the Lord. And then there's those valley like experiences where we feel run down and tired and just at the end. And we would really prefer if people would just keep their magnifying glasses away from the parameters of our lives because we're not exactly the brightest star in the sky at the moment. And chapter 27 through the next few chapters is one of those places in the life of David that we would consider to be a spiritually low time in his life.

Now later on in his life he would glean that insight and word from the Lord that would say to him regarding his relationship to God, *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you."* Ps 32:8-9 You see a horse can have the tendency to be impulsive and rush heedlessly in reckless abandon if caught off guard or somehow spooked. But on the other had the mule has the tendency to be stubborn and not easily moved or persuaded but rather they hold back, in either case there's a need for forced control. And there's no doubt times that we each have fallen into either one if not both of those categories, either skittishly jumping into something with out hearing from the Lord, or, knowing what God would have us do yet being so overwhelmingly reserved that He has to get out the bit and bridle and for all intents and purposes force us into submission, into that direction. But God doesn't want to deal with us the way that we have to deal with horses and mules, He wants there to be that intimacy that's there even from a parent to a child. And sure there are times when the child needs to hear explicit directions, but there are other times when the child can just look at you, and being close enough to see the countenance of your face, he/she knows what's going on in your heart and you can direct them even with the glance of an eye. If you're countenance is soft, the child can receive your approval by a glance, if it's a bit more harsh then they know they better stay put, or change directions lest they get themselves into more trouble.

And this is the way that the Lord wants to direct you and me, through that intimate, loving guidance. But unfortunately these next few ch reveal a portion of David's life whereby he's slipped from that position of intimacy from the Lord. Again, I can't emphasize enough the need to be near to God, and safeguard that relationship with Him from day to day, because we can slip in a moment. Our attitudes, and moods can change day-to-day, hour-to-hour, and sometimes minute-by-minute. That's why it's so critical that we learn to operate in our relationship with God not by the emotional drive of the moment, but upon the basis of His word, persevering by faith.

Chapter 26 reveals David still doing well, but really beginning to wear down. Saul was given into his hand, yet he spared him once more. Then as David revealed himself to Saul he began Pleading with him to cease pursuing him because he's getting tired of running, and if Saul keeps it up, he'll catch David because David confesses, "I'm worn out." So Saul confessed his error, returned to his place and David went his way; and we read in verse 1 of Ch 27.

Vs1

And so as we follow the flow of the context from chapter 26 to chapter 27 we can see and almost hear in David's voice the downward progression of a man who's just really discouraged, despondent, downtrodden and depressed. He's tired of running, he's been living on the run, in the woods and in caves leading the lifestyle of a fugitive literally for years and he just doesn't see any end in sight.

We read in Ps 13, "*How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?*" Ps 13:1-2 And you can just sense the despair in his voice, and let me tell you that things like depression, despair, and discouragement are powerful weapons in your enemies arsenal, and we do well not to be ignorant of his devices. And in the midst of our down times may God help us to maintain the eternal perspective, the fact that, "*All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*" Rom 8:28 Not just *some things*, *all things* are working together for the eternal best interest for those who love God, for those whom He has called from darkness to light according to His purpose. And thought it's an area of scripture that's quoted often it's one we do well to keep near to the surface of our hearts for immediate recall when certain situations and scenarios seem to plague us. Because sometimes it seems like it's never going to end, and we lose sight of the goodness of God. It's like when Jacob thought that Joseph had been ravaged by a wild animal when in reality his brothers sold him off as a slave. And over time God raised Joseph up in Egypt to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> most powerful man in all the earth, now Joseph was Jacob's favorite son, the thought of his death was almost more than he could bare. But he tool solace in one thing, he had one more younger son from the same mother, Benjamin, "The son of my right hand." Well you know what happened, years went by and a famine came over all the earth. And the older brothers were forced by circumstances to go to Egypt in order to buy grain and who did they encounter with out even recognizing him? Joseph, and Joseph began to question them, and to make a long story short he put one of them in prison and said unless you bring your youngest brother to me, I'm going to take you all for spies and if you ever show your face in the land again it'll be the last thing you do! So they go back to Jacob their dad and begin to tell him what's happened and we read where he cried out, "*And Jacob their father said to them, 'You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me.'*" Gen 42:36 You see all he could see was what was happening right in front of his face, and by all common reasoning his life was going from bad to worse, for all he knew his son Joseph was dead, Simeon was as good as dead, and now his only comfort Benjamin was going to be taken from him.

But were all those things really against him? No, as a matter of fact they were all working together for him, God was orchestrating the big picture, and soon he would see not only Benjamin and Simeon, but Joseph would be reunited to him and he would be blessed in a measure that he could never have comprehended. But sometimes we can't see the forest for the tree in front of our face.

And David can't see where this is ever going to end. Now we know, having the advantage of hindsight that he's roughly within 3yrs or so from being free of this fugitive/exile type state that he's been subjected to all these years. But in the words of Jacob all he can see for the moment is how, "All these things are against me." But they're not against you David, they're working for you, to prepare you to be the greatest King that Israel would ever know outside of the greater than David, the Son of David, Jesus Christ

But the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 words of this vs set the stage for this backslide in David's life. "And David said in his heart," I can't express to you the impact on our lives that takes place based upon the resolve that we come to in our hearts. He may've never said it out loud, or even whispered in his closest friend's ear, but he said it in his heart. Now don't misunderstand me, I don't subscribe to that wind of doctrine that blew through the church and to a real degree is still out there that has to do with the power of confession.

Speaking things into existence by the power of the tongue; that has more to do with mind science type religions than biblical Christianity and if that were the case than David should've died at the hands of Saul because this is a negative confession if I ever saw one. "I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul." But David wouldn't die at the hands of Saul no matter what he may've confessed, but having said that I'm not going to take away from the radical impact that can be made in our lives by the resolve in our heart.

When you come to a certain conclusion, not so much in your mind, but in your heart, it then has a tremendous power to shape our actions, our thinking, and possibly even our entire destiny. For instance, if someone says in their heart, "God doesn't *really* care about me." and they've resolved that in their heart, is that going to make a difference in their lives? If someone says in their heart, "It's me 1<sup>st</sup> in this life, I'm here to look out for #1" will that make a difference in how they lead their lives? The matters that you allow to find resolve in your heart will have a radical impact on your life and possibly even an impact which is eternal. Listen to this, "*How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*" Why? "*For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.*" Isa 14:12-15

See how important it is the way we settle things in our hearts. Now on the other hand if someone says in their heart, “I’m confident that God loves me, and I don’t have to do anything, nor can I do anything to earn it, I just receive it by His grace.” Will that make a difference in their lives? If they say in their hearts, “I’m so thankful for each breath of life that God gives me and each and every blessing that He’s bestowed upon me.” That to is going to create a certain demeanor of life, and of course, “*If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*” Rom 10:9

So guard carefully the resolve of your heart because it’ll shape your entire life. David said in his heart, “I shall perish someday at the hand of Saul.” Yet God had promised him the throne of Israel, and had delivered him faithful from each of Saul’s pursuits. But we see here how discouragement can have this tendency to sort of erase from our memory God’s deliverance and faithfulness in our lives.

What else does he say in his heart, “There is nothing better for me that that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines.” Now this was his worst fear in the last ch, all he wanted to do was go to church and worship with the people of God. And now he’s saying, “Looks like the best thing for me to do is just split.” He’s willing to leave Israel to go and worship where the Philistines are, in a pagan land, and he says there’s “nothing better” for him, nothing better in Israel amongst the people of God than there was in the world with people who have no regard for God whatsoever. How quickly depression robs us of the reality of God’s goodness, and grace, and mercy and compassion. The bible says, “*Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression.*” Prov 12:25 Before David was trusting in the Lord to work it all out in his timing, for his glory. Now he’s all anxious about his situation no longer looking at his circumstances through God’s eyes, but allowing his circumstances to overwhelm him, and so he feels the need to try and reconcile the situation, or take care of it on his own.

And finally he said in his heart, “Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand.” Well 1<sup>st</sup> of all if David leaves Israel, the last thing Saul will do is despair, he’ll rejoice. David’s the one who’s despairing, and 2<sup>ndly</sup> what’s this, “So I shall escape out of his hand” bit? David has a track record of trusting the Lord to rescue him from the hand of Saul, now he just sort of throws all that in the trash and takes matters into his own hands.

And as if it weren’t bad enough to leave the land of promise, if it weren’t bad enough that he said, “Sayonara” to the people of God, the whole clincher is that he ceases to trust in the Lord with all his heart, leaning not on his own understanding, but in all his ways acknowledging Him, trusting God to direct his paths and he seeks refuge (not in the Lord) but in the world, with the Philistines.

David Guzik makes this comment, “In his discouraged despair, David is at a place that many find themselves at some point in their lives. He says, ‘I give up. I can’t take this anymore. The stress of trusting God is too much, and I have to find protection somewhere else.’” And I want you to see this before we move on, though his exterior enemies could never drive him away, Saul wasn’t about to push him back, time and time again he’d stood in Saul’s face with the confidence of Heaven at his side and in his heart. So though Saul personally couldn’t move David, despair and discouragement could. We talked about this Sunday morning, what will it take to move you? Depression, despair, and discouragement could drive David to do something that Saul never could, now remember the roots of all this, “David said in his heart.” When I was preparing for this I was reminded of Prov 13:12, “*Hope deferred makes the heart sick.*” David here just seems to give up hope for a window of time in his life. This is why it’s so important that we not just ignore the things that are swimming around in our hearts, but rather that we deal with them swiftly, bringing them into subjection of the council of the Word of God, for David it only goes downhill from here.

Vs2-4

What are we seeing here? Again, that though sin may seek to isolate us, it never impacts just us. The resolve that David made in his heart impacted the lives of 600 other men. He led them out of the land in which God had intended for them to dwell into the land of the ungodly. But it doesn’t stop there, his sin continued to permeate into the homes of all of those men’s families, wives and children alike. Now once before David fled to this city to seek refuge and it all went south. You recall that he had to fake insanity in order to be put out of the country lest he was assassinated, so he’s been this route before on his own. But now he’s taking 2-3,000 other people with him, with different results as well, this time the king receives him. Why, probably because the 1<sup>st</sup> time his motives were unclear, and he didn’t know the enemy that David had in Saul, all he knew was that the song that swept the charts in Israel had to do with David killing tens of thousands of Philistines. But now, “Hey, any enemy of Saul’s is a friend of mine.”

And in verse 4 we find what I’m sure that David sees as some form of justification. Regarding Saul we read, “So he sought him no more.” So though David got some immediate peace in the situation and the end which he was seeking, we’re going to find that the means will not serve to justify the end. Because David had to compromise to get this temporary release from his predicament, in his case to the extent that he would submit himself and seek the favor of the ungodly. Paul wrote to the Galatians saying, “*For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.*” Gal 1:10 Or to understand that another way, if I’m consumed with what man thinks and trying to gain the favor or approval of man, it will be a snare to my relationship with God. It’ll derail my seeking to please God, and gaining the approval of God, and this is what David’s doing, he’s seeking the approval of this king and in doing so engaging in that which is disapproved of by God.

And so there was some immediate short term benefits to his logic, in the long run it was way more destructive than what he could've ever known, sure he got a little relief from the pressure he felt like he was under, and as a musician (though this may not mean much to those of you who aren't) but he even got to learn some hot licks on a new instrument while he was there.

Ps 8 begins, "*To the Chief Musician. On the instrument of Gath. A Psalm of David.*" Ps 8:1 So on the surface it really seemed to work out, but there are no recorded Psalms ever written during this period in David's life when he was there, and all that is recorded is compromise. He fled Israel because he felt like he needed some security, but in reality where are you more secure, in the middle of God's will with the absence of emotional security, or in the midst of compromise with the sense of emotional security? And David went from seeking favor in the eyes of God, to seeking favor in the eyes of the ungodly, notice vs 5.

Vs 5-7

Couple of phrases to quickly notice; David says to Achish, "If I have now found favor in your eyes." Seeking the approval of the ungodly at the expense of the approval of God, how many times we find ourselves in a pinch and we're stuck in an awkward position and rather than seeking the approval of God, in order to gain emotional peace and security we seek the approval of man. 2<sup>ndly</sup> David refers to himself not as God's servant, but as the servant of Achish. What does the bible say, "*For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.*" 2 Peter 2:19

The last thing I'd have you notice in this portion is that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines for a year and 4 months. This wasn't just a season that David was seeking to somehow rationalize; he established a home there, now he lives in a fortified city. But he'll find that he's safer in the open with the Lord as his shield, than in the midst of a secured city in compromise.

Vs8-9

Now again David may be rationalizing this by thinking that he's wiping out the enemies of Israel, but did God tell him to do this? He's fighting for profit, not the glory of God, he's killing entire villages, taking any treasure and getting back to base.

Vs10-12

Did you catch that? David's getting out there, killing all of these Philistine or Canaanite villages and when he reports back to Achish he tells him that he's waging war on Israelite cities and the king thinks he's burning his bridges at both ends. And in order to cover his tracks he kills everyone in each city he attacks because that way no one can rendezvous with the king to tell him what he's doing. So not only is he murdering, but he's lying about it, deceiving the king of the country in which he's staying. Now there's going to come a time in his life when he'll get involved with a married woman, and to try and cover his tracks he'll have her husband murdered. And I suggest to you that all that type of reasoning stems from this point in David's

life when he seems to himself to be getting away with it but you can, “*Be sure your sin will find you out.*” Num 32:23

And that stem finds it’s roots where, “and David said in his heart.” Is it any wonder that the bible exhorts us, “*Keep (or guard) your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.*” Prov 4:23

We’re all human, and even the best men are at best men, even the man after God’s own heart has seasons of failure. And the bible is honest enough to show us their humanities and God’s willingness to use imperfect people to accomplish His perfect will. I don’t really have anything positive to pull out of David’s conduct here, there’s no justifying his actions. But I can tell you that where sin abounds grace abounds still more and no matter what we’ve done or where we’ve been if we’re willing to humble ourselves and turn to God, He’ll use our lives once again for His glory. God had a plan for David’s life, and He has a plan for yours as well, but be careful to guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.