

(1-7-24) Rebellion Meets Mercy

2 Samuel 1:1-27.

Big Idea of the Series: The establishment of Israel under King David is the theme of 2 Samuel. In this eight-part survey, we examine some of the major events that formed the kingdom and learn how those formations shaped David into a person after God's own heart. Each week also connects those lessons to believers today, examining how we too can develop a close-knit relationship with our Father in Heaven.

Big Idea of the Message: David begins to serve as the sole king of Israel, and he shows a dedication to and respect for the anointing of God—even though the anointed one (Saul) tried to kill him.

Application Point: David's first act as the king of Judah was to recognize the anointing God had placed on his predecessor.

Why is gloating or rejoicing over your enemy or rival's misfortune or mistakes dishonorable and displeasing to God?

David's response to the death of Saul amazes me. **Proverbs 24:17, "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;"**

This is soooo contrary to our human nature. Don't we love it when the bad guy gets what's coming to him? "My only regret is that I can't kill you seven more times!" (lines from a movie)

Every time I read **2 Samuel 1**; I am dumfounded. I have studied the life of David; he didn't deserve any of Saul's wrath. He did all he could to find favor in Saul's eyes. But Saul's jealousy wouldn't allow him to see David properly. Saul's own son Jonathan couldn't get him to see more clearly.

For 10 years David was an exile with a price on his head, fleeing from Saul and waiting for the time when God would put him on the throne of Israel. Now his time has come.

How does the saying go? "The enemy of my enemy is my....?"

I. **The Enemy of Your Enemy is Not Your Friend: He's a Backstabber**

• **Read 2 Samuel 1:1-10.**

- In truth, the enemy of your enemy has his own interest, and not yours or God's interest, at heart. The saying "He who lies for you, will lie to you" is more accurate.
- Scripture gives us three accounts of the death of Saul and his sons: **1 Samuel 31:1-13**, the report here in **2 Samuel 1:1-10**, and the record in **1 Chronicles 10:1-14**.
- According to **1 Chronicles 10:4-5**, Saul killed himself by falling on his sword, but the messenger said he had killed Saul to save him from experiencing further agony and humiliation.
- **1 Chronicles 10:14** informs us that was God who killed Saul for his rebellion, especially the sin of seeking guidance from a medium. When you read all the scriptures it appears likely the man is lying.
- The Amalekite was an opportunist, a liar and a mercenary who apparently turned the death of Saul to his advantage and profit. The true version in **1 Samuel 31:1-13** portrays Saul dying from a battle, but the second version (his version) depicts Saul perishing without a fight. The latter version was concocted and designed to please the new king - to score points, curry favor and shine shoes. Note the Amalekite called David "**my lord**" (v 10).
- The Amalekite didn't know either King Saul or David. There is no way that King Saul went out without a fight. Begging and pleading for someone to put him out of his pain and anguish. **Read 2 Samuel 1 verses 6-9.**

- There is no way King Saul said, **“Please (Amalekite, whom I was told to wipe out by God and didn’t) stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.”** This guy should be part of the guild writers for Hollywood.
- King Saul was not a wimpy cowardly man, **1 Samuel 31**, says it took archers to bring him down, not just one archer. And being the prideful person Saul was I believe his response in **1 Samuel 31** is more accurate. **Read 1 Samuel 31:3-6.**
- The only reason for the Amalekite’s discovery of Saul’s personal items, if they were really Saul’s to begin with, was that he recovered the items before the Philistines reached the area. If the Amalekite’s account was true, he had the opportunity to save the body of Saul, not just keep the crown on his head and the band on his arm, from suffering further humiliation at the hands of the Philistines, who cut off Saul’s head and fastened his body to the wall (**1 Sam 31:9-10**).
- According to **1 Samuel 31:8**, the Philistines did not find Saul’s body until the next day; the Amalekite could at least bury the body so that enemies could not use it as bait or sport. When the Amalekite confessed to striking the king and taking his items, he inadvertently acknowledged that saving the crown and bracelet of the king was more important than saving the life and body of the king. Unlike Saul, the Amalekite had no class, respect, or integrity.
- We can see how this plays out in our everyday lives today. We have someone in our lives we don’t care for and along comes their “enemy” and we become besties. Together, we enjoy and ruble in all problems that come their way. We can even believe that God has sent this person into our lives as a comfort, they know the struggle, they have been hurt or wronged too.
- Let me just say from experience and what God’s word shares over and over, the enemy of your enemy is not your friend, they are a back stabber. They will turn on you. They could even use anything you share with them against you.
- It happens in families, in schools, at work and in church. This point crosses all walks of life.
- Example of when we lost our pastor at Sara Bay.

II. The End of Your Enemy is Not Your Bliss: It’s a Bereavement

• Read 2 Samuel 1:11-16.

- I had a million questions about my parents’ divorce, and how my childhood unfolded that I wanted to ask my father, and mother, and some of the questions I did. But the death of my mother taught me a far more important lesson: the answer was not in them, but in me. How I live in the present and the future surpasses and alleviates what I know about the past.
- When my mother died (December 20th, 2021), the hurts of childhood, divorce or abandonment did not matter anymore. Neither did the version of who was right and who was wrong. Those were adult problems, secrets, and heartaches. To continue to ponder and try to make it all make sense seems so trivial, secondary, and petty. All the past was gone with the wind, buried with the dead and best to be history and forgotten.
- Not only did the Amalekite’s story appear dubious, his behavior too aroused suspicion. Everyone except the Amalekite cried that day. David and his men ripped their clothes off (**2 Sam 1:11**), cried their eyes out (**2 Sam 1:12**) and declared a village fast (**2 Sam 1:12**). They wept personally for Saul but mourned together for him. David and his men tore their hair and beat their breasts in grief, the type of mourning intended only for a beloved or revered national or symbolical figure. Up to now, only Sarah (**Gen 23:2**), Jacob (**Gen 50:10**) and Samuel (**1 Sam 25:1, 28:3**) were **“mourned”** in their death. Abraham mourned for Sarah, Jacob’s family mourned for him, and the Israelites mourned for Samuel.

- David and his men lamented the loss of their king but the Amalekite, who was the son of an Amalekite resident alien in Judah (**2 Sam 1:13**), had no regard for his adopted king's family, his adopted country's army, or his adopted people's welfare (**2 Sam 1:12**).
- True, the foreigner tore his clothes and sprinkled ashes on his head, but he was there to pay honor to David (**2 Sam 1:2**), not Saul, and he did not shed a tear when David and his men flooded the village with their tears. The Amalekite did not even show crocodile tears or, as the Chinese say, "cat tears for a mouse."
- Further, the foreigner had no intention of leaving until he was rewarded or tipped (**2 Sam 4:10**). Night had arrived (**2 Sam 1:12**) but leaving before dark was never his intention. Turning in a crown and a bracelet (**2 Sam 1:10**), he expected something more from the new king. He loitered around, killed time, and waited indefinitely, doing nothing to help but getting in the way. David exposed the Amalekite for the looter, predator, and vulture he was.
- By his own account, the Amalekite thought he was doing David a favor by killing Saul, but the last thing on David's mind was to celebrate his mentor's death, leaving his wife fatherless and David without his best friend Jonathan.

A certain Duke of Milan was so hated for his unbearable cruelty that everybody prayed day and night for something bad to happen to him. Someone noticed that every day at sunrise a decrepit old woman entered a church and prayed to God that He gave the Duke health and long life. The Duke, hearing about this and knowing very well that he did not deserve that for his virtue, sent for the old woman and asked her why she prayed to God for him every day.

"I admit," she said, "that I have done this until now for good reasons. This is because I was a young girl and the Milanese had a very cruel lord, and I wished that he would fall from power and die. After he died, he was succeeded by another who was no better than he, wherefore I believed once more that it would be to our advantage if he were killed. Now you are our third lord, and you are more wicked and cruel than the first two. I fear, therefore, that after your death you will be succeeded by someone worse than you are; and so, I never stop praying God to let you live for a long time." The tyrant was too ashamed to put to death that little woman who was so bold. (Paul Lee Tan, 7,700 Illustrations # 3214, Garland: Assurance Publishers, 1979)

- The end of your enemy does not necessarily mean things will get better; matter of fact they may just get worse.

III. The Errors of Your Enemy Are Not Your Bother: It's God's Business.

• Read 1 Samuel 1:17-27.

- David and his men did not dance at Saul's death, call him a coward or spit at his name. They mourned for the loss of a human life, of Israel's first king and of the first family.
- David was not interested in writing a tell-all book about Saul's personal life, his double life and family life or publishing an eyewitness account of how the sick king treated his son Jonathan, his daughter Michal, and his son-in-law – himself.
- He left the evaluation to the historians, the theologians, and the Lord. He did not diminish or disparage Saul's legacy when he had the chance.
- He had nothing but good to say about the man who hated him, humiliated him, and hunted him. He lost his first wife, his best friend, and his army job because of Saul. His parents and brothers had to flee with him (**1 Sam 22:1**) and people with him had to leave the country (**1 Sam 27:1**) and lived as exiles.

- Instead, David penned for Saul a beautiful eulogy, which is the first record of a lamentation (**v 17**) in the Bible and encouraged future generations to think of the good Saul had done and the things he had accomplished (**v 18**).
- He eulogized Saul as the Lord's anointed (**verses 14, 16**), Israel's glory (**v 19**), "**warriors**" or "**the mighty**" - four times (**verses 21, 22, 25, 27**), loved and gracious, swifter than eagles and stronger than lions (**v 23**).
- David even coined for Saul the word "**gracious**" (**v 23**) or "**pleasant**," which occurs for the first time in the Bible. Of course, readers know that Saul was anything but gracious or pleasant to David, but David chose to view Saul's legacy, and not with a grudge. Undoubtedly, the best fighting unit in Israel's history was the tandem of Saul, Jonathan, and David.
- David was Saul's enemy (**1 Sam 18, 29, 19:17**), but Saul was never his enemy. He loved Saul, but Saul hated him. David called himself Saul's servant five times (**1 Sam 17:32, 34, 36, 19:4, 26:19, 29:8**).
- He did not rejoice when the king died. Saul's enemy was himself and his vendetta was against David, and not the people or David's men. Saul did not mistreat his citizens, lose many battles, or invite a rebellion. No matter what Saul did to him, David could not rejoice with Saul out of the picture, especially over the circumstances of his death. In fact, he could and would not rest until he found out the how the king died. David was never jealous, angry, or spiteful.

Conclusion

Life is sacred and precious in God's sight – even in old age or in poor health. It is a gift from God and a loan from God. Your body – weak or strong, young, and old, fussed over or frowned upon by you - is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you.

You are not your own boss; you were bought at a price. **"Therefore honor God with your body." (1 Cor 6:19-20)**

Also, the Bible says, **"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Rom 12:15).**

Do not wish upon your worst enemy what you decline, exclude, or shun for yourself.

Do you pray for your worst enemies?

Have you become hardened and sour by the circumstances you face?

Are you affected by the loss of a friend, a stranger, a relative, a neighbor and even an enemy?