

November 2

Scriptures: Read 1 Samuel 26 & 27

Key Verse: “Why does my lord thus pursue his servant? For what have I done, or what evil is in my hand?” (1 Samuel 26:18)

Overview

Once again, while David was in the wilderness of Ziph, the Ziphites betrayed his whereabouts to Saul (23:14,19). The unrelenting king was still against David, even after he had spared his life at En Gedi (24:18). Again David had the opportunity to slay Saul but would not. He still respected Saul’s position and believed that, since God had put Saul in that office, it was also His responsibility to remove him (26:9-10).

The fact that David was able to take Saul’s spear and water jug is attributed to the supernatural help of God (26:12). David wanted Saul and all the people with him to know that he was innocent of any wrong (26:18). Why then should he be exiled from enjoying the blessings of the Lord in the land of the inheritance of the Lord when there was no justification for Saul to kill him? (26:19). In metaphorical language, David explained that, because it was not God’s will, Saul’s search for him was in vain. A modern-day equivalent of David’s words would be that for Saul to find him would be “like looking for a needle in a haystack” (26:20).

Saul admitted his guilt and foolishness in what appears to be a true confession. However, this must not have been sincere, or possibly it was due to his unstable mental condition, for Saul soon forgot. Again David had to flee from Saul’s continued pursuit to find refuge among the Philistines (27:1), where he would wait faithfully on God to accomplish His plan. Achish, king of Gath, permitted David and his men to remain with them because, like himself, he thought David was an enemy of Saul and of Israel, and he wanted them as an ally. He granted them permission to live in the Philistine town of Ziklag in the south, where they stayed for 16 months. Ziklag had originally been allotted to the tribe of Judah, under Joshua’s administration (Joshua 15:31), yet Judah never fully conquered this territory of their inheritance.

From Ziklag, David could move about more freely while not under the eye of King Achish. Though in exile, David continued to be used by God to be the deliverer of Israel, raiding and utterly destroying the various surrounding enemies of Israel such as the Geshurites, Girzites, and the notorious Amalekites, those longtime enemies of Israel that Saul was ordered by the Lord to utterly destroy but did not (15:3; Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19). David, however, was faithful to accomplish the plan of God.

David deceptively led Achish to believe he was attacking Israelite cities. These lies of David are definitely not up to New Testament standards, yet we today should not be quick to condemn him. David was imperfect, as we all are, yet God was able to use him to save Israel because he was faithful to Him. Now that we have the fuller revelation of God in His Son Jesus and the New Covenant writings, how much more can we be worthy vessels which God can use for His glory?

Prayer

O Lord, help us not to compare ourselves with others or even David; but help us to use as our standard of behaviour the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please change us from day unto day, making us more like Him.