Lesson 73 – The Magnanimity of David Part II

based on 1 Samuel 24-27.

In the last lesson, David had Saul in his sites and could have ended his life and been free from being hunted. When David's men saw this they urged their leader to kill Saul. The fact that the king was now in their power was interpreted by them as certain evidence that God Himself had delivered the enemy into their hand, that they might destroy him. David was tempted to take this view of the matter; but the voice of conscience spoke to him, saying, ***"Touch not the anointed of the Lord."***

Saul rose up and went out of the cave to continue his search, when a voice fell upon his startled ears.

1) Who spoke to him?
   1 Samuel 24:8-9 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and _____ himself. And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy _____?
   1 Samuel 24:10-11 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had _____ thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor _____ in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

When Saul heard the words of David, he was humbled and could not but admit their truthfulness. His feelings were deeply moved as he realized how completely he had been in the power of the man whose life he sought. David stood before him in conscious innocence.

2) What did Saul concede?
   1 Samuel 24:16-17 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art more _____ than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee _____.
   1 Samuel 24:18-19 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had _____ me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee _____ for that thou hast done unto me this day.
   1 Samuel 24:20-21 And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be _____, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my _____ after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

While David and his men were in the wilderness of Paran, they protected from the depredations of marauders the flocks and herds of a wealthy man named Nabal, who had vast possessions in that region. Nabal was a descendant of Caleb, but his character was stingy and churlish.

Churlish is an adjective that means rude, surly, mean-spirited, or lacking civility and graciousness.

It was the time of sheepshearing, a season of hospitality. David and his men were in sore need of provisions; and in accordance with the custom of the times, the son of Jesse sent ten young men to Nabal, bidding them greet him in their master's name.

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3) What did they ask for?
1 Samuel 25:6-8 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we _____ them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find _____ in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: _____, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

David and his men had been like a wall of protection to the shepherds and flocks of Nabal; and now this rich man was asked to furnish from his abundance some relief to the necessities of those who had done him such valuable service. David and his men might have helped themselves from the flocks and herds, but they did not. They behaved themselves in an honest way.

4) Did Nabal appreciate David's service?
1 Samuel 25:10-11 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that _____ _____ every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I _____ _____ whence they be?

When the young men returned empty-handed and related the affair to David, he was filled with indignation. He commanded his men to equip themselves for an encounter; for he had determined to punish the man who had denied him what was his right, and had added insult to injury. This impulsive movement was more in harmony with the character of Saul than with that of David, but the son of Jesse had yet to learn of patience in the school of affliction.

5) Word got back to Abigail, Nabal's wife. What did she wisely do?
1 Samuel 25:18-19 Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred _____, and two bottles of wine, and five _____ ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told _____ her husband Nabal.

Abigail revealed the strength of her devotion to her household; and she made it plain to David that the unkind course of her husband was in no wise premeditated against him as a personal affront but was simply the outburst of an unhappy and selfish nature.

6) Among other things, what did she tell him?
1 Samuel 25:28 I pray thee, _____ the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and _____ hath not been found in thee all thy days.

Abigail presented by implication the course that David ought to pursue. He should fight the battles of the Lord. He was not to seek revenge for personal wrongs, even though persecuted as a traitor.

7) What did she add to that?
1 Samuel 25:29-30 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of _____ with the LORD thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee _____ over Israel;
1 Samuel 25:31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor _____ of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then _____ thine handmaid.

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These words could have come only from the lips of one who had partaken of the wisdom from above. The piety of Abigail, like the fragrance of a flower, breathed out all unconsciously in face and word and action. The Spirit of the Son of God was abiding in her soul. Her speech, seasoned with grace, and full of kindness and peace, shed a heavenly influence. Better impulses came to David, and he trembled as he thought what might have been the consequences of his rash purpose.

8) What were David's thoughts as he contemplated her wise reproof?
Psalm 141:5 Let the righteous _____ me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil…
9) What happened just a few days later?
1 Samuel 25:36-38 And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very _____: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had _____ him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he _____.

Nabal was a coward at heart; and when he realized how near his folly had brought him to a sudden death, he seemed smitten with paralysis. Fearful that David would still pursue his purpose of revenge, he was filled with horror and sank down in a condition of helpless insensibility. After ten days he died. The life that God had given him had been only a curse to the world.

10) What did David do at the death of Nabal?
1 Samuel 25:39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from _____: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to _____.

David afterward married Abigail. He was already the husband of one wife, but the custom of the nations of his time had perverted his judgment and influenced his actions. Even great and good men have erred in following the practices of the world. The bitter result of marrying many wives was sorely felt throughout all the life of David.

After the death of Samuel, David was left in peace for a few months. Again, he repaired to the solitude of the Ziphites; but these enemies, hoping to secure the favor of the king, informed him of David's hiding place. This intelligence aroused the demon of passion that had been slumbering in Saul's breast. Once more he summoned his men of arms and led them out in pursuit of David.

11) David found the camp of Saul, what did he do?
1 Samuel 26:7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

Hidden by the deep shadows of the hills, David and his attendant entered the encampment of the enemy. As they sought to ascertain the exact number of their foes, they came upon Saul sleeping, his spear stuck in the ground, and a cruse of water at his head. Beside him lay Abner, his chief commander, and all around them were the soldiers, locked in slumber.

12) What did Abishai suggest?
1 Samuel 26:8 Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me _____ him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.
13) What was David's reply?
1 Samuel 26:9-11 And David said to Abishai, _____ him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless? David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The LORD _____ that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the _____ that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

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14) What did David do when he was a safe distance away?
1 Samuel 26:13-14 Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill _____ off; a great space being between them: And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who art thou that _____ to the king?
15) What was David's reply to Abner?
1 Samuel 26:15-16 And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not _____ thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye are worthy to _____, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD'S anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster.
16) How did Saul respond to David?
1 Samuel 26:17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my _____ David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king.
17) David's reply to Saul was…
1 Samuel 26:18, 20 And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I _____? or what evil is in mine hand?... …Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a _____, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

The second instance of David's respect for his sovereign's life made a still deeper impression upon the mind of Saul and brought from him a more humble acknowledgment of his fault. He was astonished and subdued at the manifestation of such kindness.

18) What did Saul tell David that day?
1 Samuel 26:25 Then Saul said to David, _____ be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

David's conclusion that Saul would certainly accomplish his murderous purpose was formed without the counsel of God. Even while Saul was plotting and seeking to accomplish his destruction, the Lord was working to secure David the kingdom. God works out His plans, though to human eyes they are veiled in mystery. Men cannot understand the ways of God; and, looking at appearances, they interpret the trials and tests and provings that God permits to come upon them as things that are against them, and that will only work their ruin. Thus, David looked on appearances, and not at the promises of God. He doubted that he would ever come to the throne. Long trials had wearied his faith and exhausted his patience.

19) Where did David go in his despair?
1 Samuel 27:1-2 And David said in his heart, I shall now _____ one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand. And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto _____, the son of Maoch, king of Gath.
1 Samuel 27:3-4 And David _____ with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife. And it was told _____ that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

David was a brave general and had proved himself a wise and successful warrior; but he was working directly against his own interests when he went to the Philistines. God had appointed him to set up his standard in the land of Judah, and it was want of faith that led him to forsake his post of duty without a command from the Lord.

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God was dishonored by David's unbelief. The Philistines had feared David more than they had feared Saul and his armies; and by placing himself under the protection of the Philistines, David discovered to them the weakness of his own people. Thus, he encouraged these relentless foes to oppress Israel.

Furthermore, the impression was received by his brethren that he had gone to the heathen to serve their gods. By this act he gave occasion for misconstruing his motives, and many were led to hold prejudice against him. The very thing that Satan desired to have him do he was led to do; for, in seeking refuge among the Philistines, David caused great exultation to the enemies of God and His people.

20) Where did David settle?
1 Samuel 27:5-6 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the _____, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee? Then Achish gave him _____ that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

David was cordially received by the king of the Philistines. The warmth of this reception was partly due to the fact that the king admired him and partly to the fact that it was flattering to his vanity to have a Hebrew seek his protection. David felt secure from betrayal in the dominions of Achish. He brought his family, his household, and his possessions, as did also his men; and to all appearance he had come to settle permanently in the land of Philistia. All this was gratifying to Achish, who promised to protect the fugitive Israelites.

At David's request for a residence in the country, removed from the royal city, the king graciously granted Ziklag as a possession. David realized that it would be dangerous for himself and his men to be under the influence of idolaters. In a town wholly separated for their use they might worship God with more freedom than they could if they remained in Gath, where the heathen rites could not but prove a source of evil and annoyance.

21) When Philistia went to war, what was David doing?
1 Samuel 27:8-9 And David and his men went up, and _____ the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt. And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman _____, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.
22) What did David TELL Achish he was doing?
1 Samuel 27:10, 12 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to day? And David said, Against the south of _____, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites… …And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to _____ him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.
23) What did this belief on the part of Achish bring David to?
1Samuel 28:1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with _____. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

David had no intention of lifting his hand against his people; but he was not certain as to what course he would pursue, until circumstances should indicate his duty.

David's faith had staggered somewhat at the promises of God, he still remembered that Samuel had anointed him king of Israel. He recalled the victories that God had given him over his enemies in the past. He reviewed the great mercy of God in preserving him from the hand of Saul and determined not to betray a sacred trust. Even though the king of Israel had sought his life, he would not join his forces with the enemies of his people.

What would come next?

Can you see God can still use people who make mistakes? **Would you like be safe in the arms of Christ?**

When is it time to humble yourself before the LORD?

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