

2 SAMUEL

1. Opening of the new king and new era

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A. INTRODUCTION

No question about it. King David remains in one of the brightest spots of the Bible except for Jesus. So significant was he that God set aside an entire Book of the OT to cover his 40-year reign that contains His highest pinnacle of achievement down to his lowest valley of misery and defeat. Without sparing any details of either extreme, the Spirit of God records the things that made David great and the things that led to his agony of soul. The Book of 2 Samuel, tracing 40 years of a colorful as well as a contrasting life, holds many lessons that we can learn from.

God picked out a young man named David who became so important that 62 chapters of the Bible mention some segment of his life. Furthermore, when the NT was written, he was referred to more than any other man or woman from the entire OT. It's no wonder he was called "a man after God's own heart" 2 different times in 1 Samuel 13 and Acts 13.

David is in focus the entire Book of 2 Samuel. Stop and think of all the things connected with David's name: the City of David, the star of David, the lineage of David, the seed of David, the key of David, the house of David, the tower of David, the throne of David, the Offspring of David, and the Root of David.

B. HISTORICAL SETTING

You might find it interesting that when the Books of the Bible were originally put together, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings were first named '1, 2, 3, and 4 Kings' until the Septuagint which is the Greek version of the Hebrew OT. These 4 Books contain the history and story of the kings who led the Hebrew people in ancient times.

The Book of 1 Samuel records the stories of Samuel and Saul. Woven into the account of Saul's life is the beginning of David's story. This young shepherd boy came on the scene as the anointed king-elect. However, David doesn't take the throne until we get to 2 Samuel. Remember, God had been preparing him for over 15 years. He had learned how to "take it" in the rugged, lonely hills of Judea as a young shepherd. Then, he had learned how to "king it" in the throne room of Saul. The death of Saul brought David out of hiding and paved the way for David's ascent to the throne.

God never employs useless afflictions. He never wastes those training years. He never wastes grief, a disappointment, a disillusionment, a sorrow, or a series of pain. All of that is part of His training program. That was surely true for David. At last, after more than a decade and a half of training, David took the throne and began to reign. What a day that must have been!

C. A REPORT FROM THE BATTLEFIELD

2 Samuel 1:1-10 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, on the third day, behold, it happened that a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he

came to David, that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. And David said to him, "Where have you come from?" So he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." Then David said to him, "How did the matter go? Please tell me." And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also." So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?" Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' And he said to me, 'Who are you?' So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.' So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

What do you get out of this?

The Amalekite's report of Saul's death is different from the account in 1 Sam 31:4, which states that Saul died by falling on his sword. It seems that his story was fabricated for a reward from David. But if his story was true, he thought that it would be a justification of killing the king of Israel.

He was expecting that David would be pleased to see his enemy's crown and arm bracelet. Instead of a set of wonderful presents, a sharp-edged sword fell on his neck. David finished what Saul didn't by killing this Amalekite.

Here is an Amalekite from the battlefield of Israelites and Philistines. Isn't it ironical for an Amalekite to bring the death notice of king Saul to David? What is a big deal about that? If you remember what king Saul was supposed to do with the tribe of Amalekites, you would understand it. In 1 Samuel 15:3, king Saul was told by God through prophet Samuel to completely destroy including infants and animals. Instead of following the order faithfully, Saul took king Agag alive as a victory trophy and choice animals for his own possession. To make the matter worse, he lied to Samuel and pretended to be spiritual.

If we don't take care of our sins by confessing to our God each time, they will find us out at the worst place and worst time.

Numbers 32:23 But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out.

D. DAVID'S GRIEF FOR THE FALLEN

2 Samuel 1:11-16 Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. Then David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?" Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD'S anointed.'"

Please give me your interpretation of this portion.

If an enemy who had opposed you for years was finally dealt with, what would be your first thought? I doubt it would be how to show kindness to that person or members of his or her family. Generally, we want to give the way that we get. If we get hit, we want to hit back – even harder. That is human nature.

David could have engaged in some big-time payback. But he did the very opposite. Even before all of the experts figured it out, David knew the power of forgiveness. Was David a perfect man? No. Did he have his flaws? Yes. But God loved David. And He uniquely described him as a man after His own heart.

David was legally bound to execute the Amalekite for two reasons: First, if his story was true, Saul was killed by him after the battle, not during the battle. Second, the execution was also wise politically. It showed that no one who killed a king of Israel could expect a reward.

David asked this young man how it was that he was not afraid to touch the Lord's anointed. David, as we remember, would not take Saul's life though he had a couple of opportunities. No one else had better touch him either, because God is the One who put the crown on his head, and God should be the One to take it off when the time comes.

There is danger in interfering with God's work. Anyone who attempts to interfere with God's work, God's program, and God's man, God moves in and judges. He has always done it.

This brings an important point that would apply to the current world:

1 Timothy 5:19-20 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. 20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

Church discipline usually goes to one of two extremes. First, there is no discipline at all, and the church suffers because of disobedience and sin. Or the church leadership becomes Gospel Gestapo to control the congregation with their power and wrong influences.

To handle this kind of situation biblically, first, the accusation should be carefully verified by two or three witnesses – not just two or three others who also heard the gossip or second-hand stories. The accusation can not come from the differences in personal preference, rather from the sin of the elder that would bring reproach to the name of God.

Second, when an accusation is made, witnesses ought to be present. In other words, the accused has the right to face his accuser in the presence of witnesses.

If leaders are in sin, it must be addressed with proper information in a timely manner to the entire congregation to promote a fear of sin among the leadership and the entire church.

It is sad when churches disobey the Word and listen to rumors, lies, and gossip. Many a godly pastor has been defeated in his life and ministry in this way, and some have even removed from the ministry.

"Where there's smoke, there's fire" may be a good slogan for a fire department, but it does not apply to local churches. "Where there's smoke, there's fire" could possibly mean that somebody's tongue has been "set on fire from hell."

If we do take the Amalekite's story as true, this is a chilling statement. Throughout the Bible, Amalek is commonly regarded as an illustration of our fleshly, carnal nature:

- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites focuses its attack on the tired and weak. – Deuteronomy 25:17-18
- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites has no fear of God. – Deuteronomy 25:17-18
- Like our fleshly nature, God commanded a permanent state of war against Amalekites. – Exodus 17:16
- Like our fleshly nature, the battle against Amalekites is only won in the context of prayer and seeking God. – Exodus 17:11
- Like our fleshly nature, God promises to one day completely blot out the remembrance of Amalekites. – Exodus 17:14
- Like our fleshly nature, Amalekites allies itself with other enemies in a battle against God's people. – Judges 3:13

E. THE SONG OF BOW

2 Samuel 1:17-27 Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son, and he told them to teach the children of Judah the Song of the Bow; indeed it is written in the Book of Jasher: "The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen! Tell it not in Gath, Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon— Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. "O mountains of Gilboa, Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, From the fat of the mighty, The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, And the sword of Saul did not return empty. "Saul and Jonathan were beloved and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions. "O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you in scarlet, with luxury; Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. "How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan was slain in your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; You have been very pleasant to me; Your love to me was wonderful, Surpassing the love of women. "How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

What is your interpretation of this?

David's sorrow was sincere, and it was deeply felt. He crafted a song to express the depth of his feeling.

We should not think that this book of Jasher is a "missing" book of the Bible because our Bibles are complete and divinely inspired.

All this is a powerful testimony of how David kept his heart free from bitterness, even when he was greatly wronged and sinned against. David fulfilled 1 Corinthians 13:5: "love thinks no evil."

Jonathan was David's best friend and partner in serving God. There is not the slightest hint that David and Jonathan expressed their love in a homosexual way. They

had a deep, godly love for each other – but not sexual love. Our present world has a hard time believing that love can be deep and real without having a sexual aspect.

In a magazine cartoon, a thief was wearing one of those “Lone Ranger” masks. His gun was pointed toward his frightened victim as he yelled, “Okay, put all your valuables into my sack!” The victim began stuffing all his friends into the sack.

Jay Kesler of the Youth for Christ once said, “One of my goals in life is to wind up with 6 men who are willing to carry one of my casket handles.” Someday, when you and I die, someone will speak for us and sing of us. Let’s think about what we’d like them to say and sing on that day in the future. Then let’s live like it today.

F. APPLICATIONS

1) If we don’t take care of our sins by confessing to our God each time, they will find us out at the worst place and worst time.

2) Let’s remember that there is danger in interfering with God’s work. Anyone who attempts to interfere with God’s work, God’s program, and God’s man, God moves in and judges. He has always done it.