

The King Is Dead...Long Live the King

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[0 : 00] Tonight, let's open our Bibles to the second book of what?

Right here in my copy of scriptures, the second book of Samuel.

Now, the author, the author of Samuel, whoever he was, or they were, and I'll mention that here in a little bit.

The author of Samuel doesn't really skip a beat. It doesn't even pause. It just kind of goes right on in to second Samuel. Samuel, and so it's just kind of the ongoing story here.

So I don't need to spend a lot of time introducing this book. I spent some time, although it's been a while, and you probably don't remember everything that I said in my introduction of 1 Samuel.

[1 : 17] I even had to go back and see what I had said about that, just to refresh my memory, looking at that again. But everything I said about the first book is the same for the second book, all right?

So nothing new there. But to give us a little bit of a refresher, the date, really not so much the date of when the book was written.

A little difficult to determine that. But the date of the events that are recorded in these two books, 1 and 2 Samuel, begins around 1100 B.C., if you care about these things.

Kind of pinpoint the time period here. 1100 B.C., 1100 years before Christ, with the birth of Samuel. That's how 1 Samuel begins, remember, with the birth of Samuel.

And it ends, that is, 2 Samuel ends, really just before the death of David. All right, so very near to the end of not only David's reign as king of Israel, long reign, beloved reign, but also his death.

[2 : 28] And that's approximately 135 years. So two books here, 1 and 2 Samuel, span a period of time, 135 years, which I don't know about you, but to me that sounds like a lot.

A little better than a person's lifetime, at least by today's standards. The title of the book, I mean, it's not a very creative title, but the title comes to us from the Hebrew Bible.

And originally, I think you might remember I said this, originally, before it was revised at some point, it just appeared as one book.

1 and 2 Samuel were just simply one book, not two separate books, at least by title. Later, when the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, when it was translated, Hebrew Bible, into Greek, the book, these two books were entitled the first and second books of kingdoms.

All right, so the name Samuel doesn't even appear in the title. But the Hebrew Bible has been retained in our Bibles today, and so it's divided into two separate books, 1 and 2 Samuel.

[3 : 47] And why Samuel? Well, because Samuel was the one who anointed the first two kings of Israel, the two principal characters of both 1 and 2 Samuel, right?

The first book, the principal character being Saul, the king, first king of Israel, and the second book, of course, being David, the second king of Israel and the most beloved of the kings.

The authorship, we don't know. Don't know who wrote it. We only have one little blurb about authorship in 1 Chronicles 29 and verse 29, and really that's all.

From that passage, we could possibly assume or gather that Samuel wrote, you know, the better part of 1 Samuel, that part of it up until his death, of course.

And that would be the first 24 chapters of the book of 1 Samuel. And then the remaining chapters, and then all of 2 Samuel, obviously Samuel didn't write.

[4 : 56] And so who did write it? Well, 1 Chronicles 29 and 29, if you will remember, says, Now the acts of King David, first and last. Indeed, they are written in the book of Samuel, the seer.

All right, referring to it as one book, 1 and 2 Samuel. Samuel the seer, in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.

All right, so kind of possibly implying that there were two other authors involved, Samuel first and Nathan and Gad.

And really that's all we can say about authorship. So that's just a refresher on the introduction to the book. So Saul was the first king of Israel, right?

King, you know, like every other nation. This is what Israel wanted. They didn't want judges anymore. They wanted a king.

[5 : 55] They had been talking about having a king for centuries. We want a king just like every other nation. And that's exactly what they got. They got Saul. And so he rules Israel throughout the better part of 1 Samuel, all the way to the end of the book.

So from his anointing as king to his death on the battlefield takes us up to the end of 1 Samuel. David rules Israel throughout 2 Samuel and a little bit further than that, on into the first few chapters of 1 Kings.

And so starting, of course, shortly after Saul's death. Really, we don't have David as the official king at the beginning of 2 Samuel, as we shall see.

But very shortly after, he will be. And so that's why I've entitled my message tonight, The King is Dead, Long Live the King. All right? That famous kind of line.

The king is dead, long live the king. Kind of a traditional proclamation that has been used. You know, we normally associate it with the British, you know, England.

[7 : 08] But it really was a term that came from the French to begin with. But what does it mean? Well, the first phrase of it, the king is dead, is meant to announce the death of the previous monarch.

In this case, Saul. And the latter part, the second half of the phrase, Long Live the King, was used to assure the people that their nation would not be going on, you know, without leadership, without a king.

And so it was meant to salute the new monarch. In this case, it would be David. And yet, as I've already said, we don't start out 2 Samuel with David as the king, per se.

Not officially. And actually, all the people were not rejoicing David as their next king. Not at first, anyway. And so it was not exactly, and we're not going to see this tonight.

We'll get into this next time, next couple of times. So it was not exactly a smooth transition from Saul to David as the king. Almost as bad as the transition from Obama to Trump has been a little bit rocky.

[8 : 27] And it certainly was a little bit rocky here with David coming to the throne. We'll get to that next time. All right, so tonight, I want us to look at 2 Samuel chapter 1, and we'll take all of chapter 1 tonight.

And I want to read the better part of it. Actually, I'm going to eventually read all of it, but to begin with, I want to read the first 16 verses. Okay, so follow along in your Bibles if you have them open there.

2 Samuel chapter 1, verse 1. 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? And 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.

[9 : 45] 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.

So when he looked behind him and saw me and called to me, and I answered him, Here I am. 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. Therefore David took hold of his clothes, his own clothes, and tore them.

[10:51] 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?

And 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.

So we'll stop right there and leave the rest of it, which is really a song that David wrote. We'll leave the rest of that to the end. So the king is dead.

Saul is dead. And before we really delve into the passage, I think it would be good for us to go back and read the account of his death. And why is this important?

[12:01] Because we need to compare two accounts here. We have the account that's given to us in the last chapter of 1 Samuel. And then we have this account that is given to us by this alien, this Amalekite, an account that actually got him nothing for it other than death.

All right? So we need to compare the two. I think it's important for us to do that. So go back just a page or two in your Bibles, maybe just one page. And look at chapter 31 of 1 Samuel.

Let me read starting with verse 1. Now the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa.

Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. And the battle became fierce against Saul.

The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer, Draw your sword and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me.

[13:16] But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died with him.

Now, you know, right off, and we'll get to this in a minute, a little bit of a difference in the two accounts, isn't there? And we'll talk about that here in just a minute. But looking at 2 Samuel chapter 1, which again is just a continuing story from 1 Samuel, there are four things I want us to see very quickly tonight.

And here's the first one. What I would call a spurious report, a false report, that this Amalekite, we learn that he is an Amalekite.

He admits that himself. And he gives this report. All right, so again, 2 Samuel continues without any real break in the story, perhaps only a short, maybe, digression, very short little digression.

In fact, really, it's just simply a reminder that takes the reader back to what has happened before. And so this is how the chapter begins. Now, it came to pass after the death of Saul.

[14:34] And, of course, not only Saul, but also his three sons have died in battle. All right, so the report comes to David about Saul's death and the death of his three sons.

And where is David at the time? This is kind of helping us to tie all of this together. Remember the kind of progression of the history here.

David is in Ziklag. You remember Ziklag, right? A Philistine city. A Philistine city that had actually been given to David, granted to David by the king of Philistia.

Achish. You remember that part of the story. And perhaps you also remember that David had really fled Israel in despair because of Saul, because of his attempts to take his life.

And David had really kind of lost faith, lost faith in God also, I believe. I mean, he had despaired of life. And so he just leaves Israel and goes over to the Philistines.

[15:37] And you remember that story. And Achish grants him the city of Ziklag. And we remember also as a part of the story that David had allied himself with the Philistines.

David and his 600 men. But God had plans for David, right? No matter how much despair David experienced and no matter what his actions were, God is not going to allow this alliance, at least not for very long.

And certainly what was going to ultimately happen if he maintained this alliance, which would have put David and his men in the very battle in which Saul and Jonathan and Saul's sons were killed.

In fact, David might have even found himself on the wrong side. Well, he was on the wrong side, but may have found himself even doing battle against his beloved friend Jonathan.

But God was not going to allow that. God had plans for David, no matter what decisions David made. All right, so God prevented the alliance.

[16:48] And he allowed David, same time, allowed David and his men to suffer a great loss. A loss of their city and the captivity of their women and children and others.

And this, by the way, if I would remind you, is what it took to bring David back to God. You remember what he said in 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 6.

David, or what the Bible says, David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. I mean, you know, he and his men come to the city and it's burning ruins. And all of their people are gone and their possessions have been taken captive by the Amalekites.

And even his own men are about to revolt against him. He had gotten so far from God, he had lost all credibility. And yet, David once again found his strength with the Lord.

So that's just a kind of short little blurb there to remind us that David came back to God. He turned back to God. And so David led his men to pursue the Amalekites.

[17:57] I'm just kind of reviewing all of this, remember? He pursued the Amalekites who had taken their people captive. And they caught up with them and they destroyed them all except for 400 who got away on camels.

Yeah, I'm trying to imagine that. That's a lot of camels. 400 people fleeing from David and his men on camels. I guess camels can go pretty fast.

It doesn't say anything about David and his men having horses or any other kind of mode of transportation. And so they were able to get away. So 400 of them. The Bible is very specific about that. Maybe one day when I have time I'll delve into the significance of that.

I don't think there's any significance to it. But he destroyed all the rest of them and recovered all of their possessions and, of course, their wives and children, their families and so forth.

So 2 Samuel then begins with David and his men having returned to Ziklag from the battle of the Amalekites.

[19:01] Returned to Ziklag. And, by the way, just to kind of help you understand the chronology here, this battle against the Amalekites that David won decisively, that is taking place simultaneously with the battle between Israel and the Philistines in which Saul is killed and Israel is defeated.

And they flee, all right? So they return to Ziklag or what was left of it because the Amalekites had burned it. And so here comes the bad news.

So they're back to Ziklag. It's been a couple of days. They're probably kind of picking up the pieces, finding some kind of shelter, seeing if there's anything of value left. And, you know, they've been back for a couple of days.

And on the third day, here comes this guy with bad news. And, by the way, David knew immediately, even before the man spoke, that he was bringing bad news.

And why would he know that? Because of a couple of things about this man's appearance. His clothes were torn and he had dirt on his head.

[20:17] All right? And it's very specific there. Clothes torn, dust on the head or dirt on the head. And this was the traditional expression of mourning for the dead.

And that's why the Bible mentions it just that way. And you find other examples in Scripture. In fact, we can go back to 1 Samuel early on in chapter 4 and verse 12.

And then it's Eli. You know, he's sitting on his porch there. Big, fat Eli. Couldn't even walk anymore. Become so lazy. And so we have the story there.

That news is being brought to him that his sons have been killed. And not only that, but the Ark of the Covenant has been captured. And this is what the Bible says.

Then the man of Benjamin, a man of Benjamin, ran from the battle line the same day. Same day the two sons are killed and Ark is captured.

[21:19] And came to Shiloh. This is where Eli is. Sitting on his front porch. Well, so to speak. Came to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dirt on his head.

All right? So Eli could see him coming and he knows that he's coming with bad news. And the kind of bad news that he's coming with pertains to death. It's a sign of mourning for death.

In 2 Samuel, the book we're just now delving into later on in the book in chapter 13 and verse 31. News is brought to David that Absalom, one of his sons, had murdered Amnon, another one of David's sons.

Though Absalom and Amnon were just kind of half-brothers. But the news has been brought that Absalom has murdered, has killed David's oldest son Amnon.

Do you remember why he had killed him? Well, because Amnon had raped David's daughter Tamar. Do you remember that story? So Absalom, who is Tamar's brother, not half-brother but full-brother, is taking vengeance.

[22 : 34] Took vengeance against Amnon, his half-brother. And so he had him killed. Had him killed. And so after the news comes to David, the Bible says he arose and tore his garments and lay on the ground.

It doesn't say he put dirt on him, but it's implied here. He put dirt over the top of him. He was on the ground. And all of his servants stood by with their clothes torn as well.

So it's a sign, an outward expression of mourning for death. And I'll give you one more example. It's in Job. Job. In Job chapter 2 verse 12, after God allowed Job to suffer tremendous loss.

And you know the story. He lost nearly everything. And after that, the three, quote, friends, unquote, of Job, the Bible says they lifted their voices and they wept.

They saw Job coming. They knew what he had lost. And they lifted up their voices and wept. And each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. Though I think in this case it was probably more symbolic.

[23 : 43] I don't know if they were all that genuine about it. But still, it's an outward sign, an expression of tremendous grief or mourning over death.

And so as soon as David saw this guy coming, he knew. He may not have known the specifics. I don't think he did. But he knew it was bad news. Very bad news.

And he knew that it meant that someone or ones, some ones, had died. And indeed, that, of course, was the news, wasn't it? And so what does David do?

He asks, where have you come from? And the guy says, from the camp of Israel. And David asks, how have things gone? All right. How did it go, the battle?

And the man said, the people have fled from the battle. Many have been fallen, have fallen, and are dead. And Saul and Jonathan are dead also.

[24 : 42] And David asks then, how do you know this? I mean, he's not just going to take this guy at his word. Just, he doesn't know the guy. I mean, you know, there could be reasons why an enemy might lie about such a thing.

And he's not going to discourage David or whatever. And so he asks, how do you know it? How can I want to verify this? And so, in verse 10, if you look at that again.

Verse 10, the guy's very specific. He says, actually, not just verse 10.

Yeah, starting with verse 7. Or maybe verse 6.

He said, as I happened by chance. And you really need to note that. Just by chance. To be on Mount Gilboa. That's where the battle took place.

[25 : 46] Between Israel and the Philistines. There was Saul. Leaning on his spear. And indeed, the chariots and the horsemen followed hard after him. So he's saying, I was an eyewitness.

I was there. I saw this. Perhaps implying that he was part of the battle. Or, you know, he was fighting also for Israel.

Which was a lie. And so when he looked behind. That is when Saul looked behind. He saw me.

Called me. I answered, here I am. And he said to me.

Who are you? So I answered him. I am an Amalekite. And 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.

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 arms. And have brought them here to my Lord.

[26 : 41] Here's proof. I mean, I have the crown. I have the bracelet. And David could verify this is the crown. Of the king. No doubt about that.

And he's got the bracelet. And so this would be proof positive. Now, you surely remember the account of Saul's death.

Because that's why I read it a minute ago. So we can compare the two. Remember that back in chapter 31. In verse. Or chapter 31.

Yeah. And throughout the first part of it. Verses 1 through 6. All right. So you can hopefully recall some of the specifics about that. And so now we have this Amalekite's testimony.

And if you just take it literally. Face value. Both stories. Both accounts. Did it happen exactly the way the Amalekite said? Not according to chapter 31.

[27 : 42] It didn't. Now, sure, the battle did go against Israel. All right. That part's true. And, sure, many Israelites did flee.

Many did fall in battle. That part's true. And, sure enough, Saul and Jonathan were killed in the battle. And, apparently, I mean, he has proof of it.

The man had been on the battlefield. And he has Saul's crown. He has the royal bracelet. I saw that much is true. If you just compare the two accounts.

But the rest of it, not so much. Not so much. You know, this was really kind of the National Enquirer version of the story. Okay.

You ever notice that? The cover of National Enquirer. I've never opened one of those to read any of them. But sometimes you'll be, you know, I'll be in the grocery store line.

[28 : 39] And you can't help but see the headline there. And sometimes weird pictures. And, you know, I've been told that in every article that appears in the National Enquirer, there is some grain of truth in it.

It always has some amount of truth. But added to that, you know, always grandiose lies. Beyond imagination.

Sensational kind of falsehoods. And it's to lure you in to read their article. So it starts with a few basic facts. And the rest of it is just sensational falsehood.

And so that's what we have here. All one has to do is just go back to chapter 31 and read the account there. And you see that there's a difference here.

There's a contradiction on some very important points. And, you know, reading ahead, I think we could safely say that this Amalekite would have wished that he had told the truth.

[29 : 45] You know, from the very beginning. So what's going on? Well, I think some of this we just have to speculate on. Likely this Amalekite was a scavenger for the battlefield.

Which would be very common. After the battle is over. Very soon after the battle is over. And especially the enemy that has to flee. Who's not able to come back and gather up their dead, their wounded, and their possessions and so forth.

So, you know, their scavengers move into the battlefield, the fresh battlefield, and just scavenge for anything that they might find of value. It's very likely that these kind of people, and this is an Amalekite here, that they would be waiting, you know, observing the battle, able to see what's going on.

And so, very likely, I mean, it's conceivable that this guy actually witnessed Saul's end and all of that. And so he's going to take credit for himself.

And so maybe he saw all this happening. And then after it's over, he goes in. And he happens to be the one to get there first to get that crown and the bracelet. And that would have been, you know, pretty valuable plunder in and of itself.

[31 : 09] And so the Amalekite's story that he had killed Saul himself. If you just take the story, not try to read something into it, maybe find some way that this could be true.

You just take it at face value. It's a lie. It's a lie. A lie that I think he thought would get him in solid with David.

I mean, everybody knew that Saul had been David's enemy. Everyone knew that David had fled for his life from Saul. And so perhaps this guy just thought David would give him some kind of huge reward for the crown and the bracelet.

And also the man might have thought that he would get a huge reward for ending Saul's life, taking care of David's archenemy.

And so it was a spurious report, wasn't it? A false report that he thought he might gain from.

[32 : 16] And I don't know if he had any time to rethink it, but if he had time to rethink it, he regretted the live course.

All right, so that leads us. We'll get back to this Amalekite a little bit later in the account. But that leads us next in the story, David's response. And it was a sorrowful response.

So that's number two, a sorrowful response. Look again at verses 11 and 12. Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and tore them. We've already talked about what that is symbolic of.

And so did all the men who were with him. All of his men did the same. 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, they had fallen, Saul and Jonathan had fallen by the sword.

Now why Saul and Jonathan? Well, Jonathan would be Saul's heir. He would be heir apparent to the throne. It was part of the dynasty. So they mourned for Israel because of the end, not only of Saul, but also of any heir to take his place.

[33 : 35] All right. Now, if you think about this, and you really don't have to think very hard about it, this is pretty incredible, that they would respond in this way.

David would respond this way. And even his men would respond this way. They, David included, it says here, mourned and wept and fasted until evening for who?

Saul. Saul and Jonathan. But for Saul? I can understand David mourning for Jonathan. You know, their souls were knit together.

They were the deepest of friends. I can understand that. But mourning for his mortal enemy, Saul. I mean, that's pretty incredible, isn't it? You know, because, think about it, because of pure jealousy. I'm talking about Saul.

[34 : 34] Pure jealousy. Or petty jealousy, really. Hatred. Turned into hatred. And all of that. Saul had taken from David his family.

Not that he killed them, but he kept them apart. Took his home then. Took his country. His career. His security. Even tried to take his life. And Saul was completely unrepentant. And he said, well, I think the Bible says that he did repent a couple of times.

It wasn't real. It wasn't true repentance. He was unrepentant to the very end. See, David really was a man after God's own heart.

And why? Well, you know, God said, love your enemies. Remember Matthew chapter 5, verse 44? Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you.

[35 : 35] Pray for them that despitefully use you. Talking about something hard to do. David's a perfect example of the truth of this passage.

Obedience to this precept in Scripture. He says, you know, pray for them that despitefully use you. That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. You might be just like God. Exhibit his character. Matthew 5, verse 44. And really, here's the lesson I think that David teaches us. And it's taught other places in the Bible. But when it comes to anger and hatred and bitterness and unforgiveness.

Those are all choices. Nobody causes us to do that. We choose to do that. Nobody can make you be hateful.

Nobody can make you be unforgiving. Regardless of what they've done to you. They can't make you do that. You choose to do that. Revenge, which David, you know, we could say he, you know, if he'd been vengeful and sought revenge, we would say he's justified in it.

[36 : 46] But revenge is a choice. A choice that David chose not to make. Unforgiveness is a choice that we make.

And David chose to become better than Saul rather than bitter towards Saul. And now third, the severe retribution. This is number three as we move along here.

A severe retribution. And what we have next is David acting like the king that he is. He's the king. And so he's going to act in judgment, which is the purview of a king. And David really didn't give this guy a chance to change his story, did he?

He didn't say, well, you want to change your story on that? Actually, how could David have known that it went any other way than this man's testimony?

[37 : 45] And so he took it for the truth. Took the man's testimony for the truth. Ironic, I think, that David had this man executed on the basis of a lie.

You say, well, that's not just. Well, need to talk to this Amalekite about that. You know, why did he lie? And so he executed him on the basis of a lie, a lie that he took to be the truth.

The man lied against God's anointed, his anointed king. Kind of reminds me, in a sense, some things are similar when you look at Ananias and Sapphira.

Ananias and Sapphira, who, because of pride and the desire for self-aggrandizement and the praise of man, they lied.

Remember? About giving. They said, we've given everything. When they had only given a part of it. And the irony of it is, you know, if they had just told the truth, everything would have been fine.

[38 : 52] But Peter said, remember, you didn't lie to me. You lied to the Holy Spirit. You lied to God himself. And they dropped dead, both of them. And that's somewhat what happened to this guy.

He didn't have a chance to change his story. And what was his crime? Was it lying? No. His crime, and David names it there in verse 14, he put forth his hand to destroy the Lord's anointed.

That's what David said. Now, actually, the truth is, he didn't. But he said he did. And David's going on that as truth.

You put forth. I mean, weren't you afraid? He said, were you not afraid to put forth your hand against the Lord's anointed, that is, the Lord's king? Weren't you afraid to do that?

And so he had one young man strike him down. He did, immediately. And perhaps as the man is dying, he said in verse 16, your blood is on your hand, your own head.

[39 : 56] For, and this is interesting, your own mouth has testified against you, saying, I have killed the Lord's anointed. I don't need to call witnesses.

There were no witnesses there. The only witness that could have testified was Saul's armor bearer, who saw that he was dead. Saul was dead, and then he killed his own self.

But he's dead, so he can't be a witness. But you don't need a witness. This is by your own testimony. By your own mouth, you have killed the Lord's anointed. You know, this man claimed, what this man claimed to have done, he didn't do.

He didn't do. But he claimed to have done it, and that was enough. And what he claimed to do, David never did do, and never would have done.

That is, to stretch out his hand against God's anointed, even though David had numerous opportunities, didn't he? In fact, we could even possibly give David a buy on this, because in David's case, he could have killed Saul on the basis of self-defense.

[41 : 10] And yet, even then, David chose not to. Even going above the standard, what God would have required. He would not strike God's anointed king.

And it shows us, I think, something else, that David's mourning for Saul was genuine. This wasn't just a kind of ceremonial thing, you know, where he tore his clothes, put dirt on his head, and commanded all the rest of them to do it.

It wasn't just going through some motions. It was not just some ceremony. He really was mourning for Saul's death.

Otherwise, why would he have this self-admitted killer of Saul executed? He was genuine in it. And also, I think we should understand that, except for justified killing, in war, self-defense, lawful criminal execution, except for those three.

It's God's job to end a life. And we learn this from this passage. So, a spurious report, a sorrowful reaction, severe retribution, and then one more.

[42 : 26] And all we have to do is just read the rest of it, a sincere respect. Respect that David had for Saul, the first king of Israel.

David respected Saul. I mean, he was his arch enemy. That is, Saul wanted to snuff David's life out. And yet, David had respect, and his respect for Saul was real.

It was authentic. So much so that he wrote a song. A song that would be sung for generations. In fact, the author here even tells us it was placed in a book of songs.

Possibly not all written by David, but many of them perhaps were. And that's not a book that appears in our scripture, so it's not part of the inspired text. At least one song in this book of Joshua is, by the way, inspired.

At least one of them. The one we have recorded right here before us. And so this was placed in a book for everyone to remember, not forget the things that had transpired, and not to forget respect for their king, regardless of what kind of character he may have had.

[43 : 45] And so they were to remember. I was reading a story, by the way, about, oh, it was back in the middle, late 1980s, when Chinese were rebelling against their government and atrocities and overbearing government.

Remember that scene of that student standing before a tank, and they're on Tiananmen Square. Sharon and I have been to Tiananmen Square. It's huge.

And just the thought of that huge place being filled with tanks. And this student standing there halting the tank. Well, the tank, of course, ran over the student, squashed the student.

And, but it became such a iconic picture of protest against a communist government.

Well, I was reading some famous journalist many years later. I was in China, and interviewing Chinese people who were, you know, would have been young at the time, and also interviewing young Chinese students about that incident.

[45 : 05] And he said the vast majority couldn't even remember it. They didn't even remember it. Nor could they remember the reason for it. And that's something.

And so what does David do? He writes this down. This kind of song to remember Saul as the line says, How the mighty have fallen.

In fact, let me just read it. Verse 19. The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places. That'd be the Mount Gilboa. 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.

[46 : 10] 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've been very pleasant to me. You love, your love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women. How the mighty have fallen and the weapons of war perished.

[47 : 07] Can you imagine being David and spending, you know, a number of years fleeing from Saul and having on several occasions near misses, Saul very nearly killing you and having to go out into exile because of Saul and all of that and losing all that David lost during that time.

And then when Saul, your enemy, dies, writing something like this about him. Can you imagine doing that? Well, the grace of God that was present in the heart of David.

Thank you.