

David's Wilderness Experiences (Part 7)

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[0 : 00] 1 Samuel chapter 26, and you can turn to that.

I'm going to read that chapter here in just a moment. And I'll go ahead and tell you this, as soon as I begin to read it, possibly you're going to be thinking, well, now, wait a minute.

That sounds pretty familiar. Haven't we already covered this before, this passage? And indeed, it will sound very familiar. But I assure you, we've not studied chapter 26.

I haven't lost my place in repeating myself, though I have been known to do that on occasion. But we're going to go ahead and launch into it. I'm going to read the chapter.

It's, what, 25 verses? So follow along in your Bibles as I read. Now the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, Is David not hiding in the hill of Hakila, opposite Yeshima?

[1 : 10] Then Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having 3,000 chosen men of Israel with him to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul encamped in the hill of Hakila, which was opposite Yeshima by the road.

David stayed in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. David therefore sent out spies and understood that Saul had indeed come.

So David arose and came to the place where Saul had encamped, and David saw the place where Saul lay. And Abner, the son of Ner, the commander of his army.

Now Saul lay within the camp with the people encamped all around him. Then David answered and said to Ahimelech, this is a different Ahimelech, by the way, who was a priest.

That guy's dead. This is a different Ahimelech. Ahimelech, the Hittite. And to Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, brother of Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?

[2 : 20] And Abishai said, I will go down with you. So David and Abishai came to the people by night, and there Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head.

And Abner and the people lay all around him. Then Abishai said to David, God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear right to the earth.

I will not have to strike him a second time. That's pretty amazing. But David said to Abishai, do not destroy him, for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?

And David said, furthermore, as the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish.

The Lord forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed, but please take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head and let us go.

[3 : 26] So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got away, and no man saw or knew it or awoke, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

Now David went over to the other side and stood on the top of a hill, far off, a great distance being between them. And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Do you not answer, Abner?

Then Abner answered and said, Who are you? Calling out to the king. So David said to Abner, Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel?

Why then have you not guarded your Lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your Lord the king. This thing that you have done is not good.

As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is and the jug of water that was by his head.

[4 : 31] Then Saul knew David's voice, and he said, Is that your voice, my son David? David said, It is my voice, my Lord, O king. And he said, Why does my Lord thus pursue his servant?

For what have I done, or what evil is in my hand? Now therefore, please let my Lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord has stirred you up against me, let him accept an offering. But if it is the children of men, may they be cursed before the Lord. For they have driven me out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods.

So now do not let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord. For the king of Israel has come out to seek a flea, as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains.

Then Saul said, I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes this day.

[5 : 31] Indeed, I have played the fool and erred exceedingly. And David answered and said, Here is the king's spear. Let one of the young men come over and get it. May the Lord repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness.

For the Lord delivered you into my hand today, but I would not stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed. And indeed, as your life was valued much this day in my eyes, so let my life be valued much in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

And Saul said to David, May you be blessed, my son David. You shall both do great things and also still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

Okay. And so I think if you were here several, several, several weeks ago, I'm not sure when we were in chapter 24, but you already have thought about the similarities between these two stories, and indeed there are some similarities.

You know, not every detail is the same, but there are some striking similarities. For example, Saul is informed of David's location, just like back in chapter 24.

[6 : 53] And Saul then musters 3,000 choice soldiers, just like he did back in chapter 24, to go out and seek David to, you know, obviously to kill him, to get rid of him.

David has an opportunity to destroy his enemy, just like he did back in chapter 24. In chapter 24, he was inside of a cave where Saul was taking care of some things and didn't know David was there. Here it is in his camp, and he's asleep. But still similar, kind of similar set of circumstances. And then also, David shows proof that he had the opportunity but didn't take that opportunity to get rid of his enemy.

In chapter 24, he carved off a piece of Saul's robe, remember. Took it with him, and then he showed it as proof. And here, of course, he takes his spear and his jug of water.

So, similar elements to the story, both stories. And also in both stories, we have Saul being somewhat remorseful.

[8 : 09] I've come just short of using the word repentant because he never really was that, not in the true biblical sense. But he was certainly sorry and remorseful.

And also, in both instances, he promised reconciliation. He said, I'm not going to seek to kill you anymore. It's all over. You're welcome back, and so forth.

And I guess we could also say that in both cases, chapter 24, chapter 26, even though Saul promised the cessation of hostilities, David didn't believe him.

He didn't return to Saul's household. So, we have all those similarities. And so, of course, you know, as is always the case, the liberal scholars, they like to jump on that.

Like to say, well, see here, there are mistakes in the Bible. And what they do is they try to claim that the writer had made a mistake here, that he's actually retelling the same story, but he's changing some of the details.

[9 : 14] Perhaps he made up the first story, and the second story is the true story, or maybe it's vice versa, you know. True story mixed with fiction.

And then we're telling it again, and this time because he can't remember what he said the last time he's going to change. It's ridiculous, isn't it? But this is what they say. And so, you know, primarily to support their theory that the Bible's full of mistakes.

And they cite this repetition of stories as an example. Now, you know, the liberal scholars, they always want to sound very intelligent.

You know, as if those who are conservative scholars, what they lack is intelligence. I mean, they're uneducated, you know, they'll walk around barefooted, you know, whatever, you know.

And so they want to sound very intelligent in this. And so to do so, what do they have to do to those who contradict them? They have to kind of show us to be dumb, you know.

[10:21] You know, and they really assume, I think, even in their own minds and thinking. They assume that we're dumb. And not only that, but they also assume, have to assume that the Bible authors were also dumb.

I mean, you'd have to assume that the author of 1 Samuel, I mean, if indeed, you know, mistakenly, he's telling the same story over again, but he's getting some of the facts mixed up, you have to assume he's stupid.

I mean, in order to believe what the liberals are claiming. Because obviously, if a man sought to write a book, and he's writing a book on, say, like in this case, the life of Samuel and David, Saul, and if he has a desire to sort of promote it as an inspired book, inspired of God, then, you know, he would not be so dumb as to include divergent accounts of the same event.

If he did do that, then he's just stupid. He's stupid. And he's not. It's kind of ridiculous, Stephen, to go this direction.

And, you know, I think he would at least have as much sense as the liberal scholars who are studying the book in our day. And really, I think it seems to me that he has a whole lot more sense than the liberal scholars do in our day.

[11:52] And not only that, but isn't it possible, and if we just think about this, isn't it possible that God allowed these two things to happen more than once?

That David would have this opportunity to snuff out the life of his enemy, the one who had been pursuing him, and also a man who, in his pursuit of David, had really unjustly murdered many, many other people.

You think about all the priests of Nob and so forth. And so isn't it possible that God allowed these things to happen more than once? And we have recorded two times here.

And the details are different. I mean, they really are, even though there are some common denominators. The details are different enough to allow us to believe correctly that David's opportunity to kill Saul occurred twice.

And especially when you see clear indications, and we certainly do in this second example, this second story, clear indications that God was at work in this, leading this, orchestrating it, making David's opportunity to come so close to Saul that he could kill him, and making that opportunity possible for him.

[13:11] And we certainly see that here in this story. Remember verse 12? I mean, they were able to, David and Abishai were able to go all the way to the sleeping Saul and didn't wake up anybody.

How's that even possible? Well, verse 12 tells us, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them. So I don't have any problem believing that this opportunity, this very unique, very amazing opportunity for David to take care of his enemy.

That happened twice. You know, there's some common denominators. The details are still quite different. Now, looking at the text, the first several verses of the passage, I think we could use to set the stage, set the stage for some, I think some pretty significant points of instruction for us.

So let's just kind of set the stage. Verse 1, if you look at that again, the Ziphites, they came to Saul like they had done before. As a matter of fact, if you go back to chapter 23, they did the same thing back then, informed on David.

So the Ziphites came to Saul. And where is Saul? He's at Gibeah. That's his hometown. It's his home. And they came to him saying, is David not hiding in the hill of Achaelah?

[14:34] And actually, it's not really a question. They're actually saying, they're informing him. This is where David is. All right? And again, where is Saul at the time? He's at home.

He's in Gibeah. Saul, as a matter of fact, has been home since the last encounter. The similar encounter with David in chapter 24.

We get to the end of chapter 24. It says, and Saul went home. And that's where he's been, apparently, ever since. Been home. Which has led some to surmise that maybe Saul has just given up on this endeavor.

And perhaps he had. I don't know. I think with me, the jury is still out. But I have read some highly respected people who really think that it came to a point where Saul had kind of let it rest, let it go. But somehow or someone had stirred it all up again. The great F.B. Meyer, good old Southern Baptist pastor, preacher, and has done a lot of preaching.

[15:47] A lot of his sermons are in print and commentaries. And F.B. Meyer believed that Psalm 7, I'm not going to go back and read it.

You can look at Psalm 7. But he really saw Psalm 7 as the background for this passage that we're studying here tonight in chapter 26.

This is the event in the life of Saul. David and Saul. David wrote about it. He wrote a song about it. And you can look at the psalm and you can see some things that seem to ring true with not only the events, but also some things that David even said, recorded that David said in 1 Samuel.

Alexander McLaren, another very famous preacher preacher of years gone by. And, you know, all of his, pretty much all of his sermons, by the way, expository sermons through books of the Bible are in print for us today.

And Alexander McLaren also tied Psalm 7 with this event in David's life with Saul. And when you look at Psalm 7, you know all the psalms, most of the psalms have a little bit of an introduction to the psalm.

[17:09] And there it names, it was written because of a guy by the name of Cush, the Benjamite. And so Alexander McLaren has conjectured that this Cush, this man named Cush, was the one misinforming Saul about David, misrepresenting David before Saul.

And he was poisoning Saul's mind and keeping him stirred up with anger and so forth. In fact, and we'll get to this in verse 19, David does mention the possibility that Saul is angry and pursuing David because of someone else, because of something that someone else has said.

And we'll look at that in verse 19 when we get to it. All right, so let's then continue. Verse 2, we're kind of setting the stage here for some important instruction. Verse 2, then Saul arose.

All right, so he's been informed of David's location. And so Saul musters his army. He arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph.

And again, 3,000 soldiers to essentially kill one man. All right, now David, of course, did have some men surrounding him.

[18:25] Abishai, one of his mighty men. And so maybe they needed, he thought he needed 3,000 soldiers to take care of David's 600.

All right, so he gets his soldiers together and these are his crack troops. They're the best of the best and they go down there to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

But David saw them coming. All right, either he was informed ahead of time and really verse 4 suggests that, that David therefore sent spies out.

And he understood that Saul had indeed come. So he either got word that Saul had come and then he sent spies and they confirmed that he had come. And then the Bible tells us that apparently from a position on high ground, he was able to look down upon the camp, some position of relative safety, perhaps there was a ditch, a ravine or valley between David's hill or high ground and he could look down upon the encampment of Saul and his 3,000 soldiers and he could look down there and see what was going on.

And David could see it all apparently and David could see even from his vantage point, he could see where Saul was and he could see that the entire camp, all 3,000 were kind of surrounding him all around Saul and they were asleep.

[20:00] All right, so this is at nighttime. And verse 5 says, Saul lay within the camp with the people encamped all around. This would be a very usual way. They didn't set up any tents apparently, nothing said about tents.

Temporary kind of encampment and so they're all sleeping on the ground and Saul, the king, is in the very middle and all these 3,000 are lying on the ground all around him.

So you can kind of picture that. This is what David saw. And verse 7 says, Saul lay sleeping within the camp with his spear stuck in the ground by his head and Abner, Abner, he's introduced here as the captain but he is sleeping right beside Saul so he is Saul's bodyguard.

And David's able to see this. He knew who Abner was. All right, so David makes a decision. He wants to go down into Saul's camp while they are all there sleeping.

And why in the world he would want to do that? I don't know. I don't know. And Abishai, one of his mighty men, leader of one of David's mighty men, he volunteered to go along with him.

[21:19] David asked for volunteers and Abishai was the first one to speak up. He volunteered to go. This was a suicide mission. It could not possibly have been thought of in any other way that this was going to be suicide to go actually walk into the very camp of Saul and 3,000 of his best troops.

All right, now, I wonder if you can picture this. Well, I know you can. In the first place, I got to thinking, what would it be like to try to sleep with 3,000 men?

I mean, think about it. I don't know how many of them snored, probably most of them. Now, we were talking about snoring a while ago. Sherry and I and some of the members of our church in South Haven, this was after Katrina, and we took a team down to work to help some people out from their flood damage, and we all stayed in the gymnasium of a church there in Bay St. Louis. And there were women there too, but men and women, and you have never heard such a racket at night. I mean, goodness. I wish everybody, every man was like me, never snores.

Isn't that right? Can I get a testimony? Sherry? No. But can you imagine that? I mean, you're walking, well, first of all, just imagining trying to sleep with 3,000 men on the ground, flat on their back, you know, can you imagine what that would be like?

[22 : 57] But, of course, can you imagine trying to walk through that kind of maze of men lying on the ground? Now, if my wife had been with me, and we'd walk up, and there'd be someone snoring, she'd probably kick him, say, turn over, you know.

That's what she does to me. Oh, I just said I don't snore. Well, then I just blew that, didn't I? And so, here they are, I just imagine, tiptoeing, you know, between people, and maybe some guy is sleeping, and he turns over, and his arm falls in the pathway, you know, they've got to step over that arm, and I don't know what kind of care they took.

Reminds me of the time that I had the privilege, actually, it turned out not to be a privilege to teach January Bible study, Brother Willard, in Wyoming, and I stayed in the house of this couple there in the church, and they gave me a spare bedroom, and then they had one other bedroom in the house, and it was theirs, and there was just one bathroom in the house, and it was in their bedroom, and, you know, I'm just one of these guys that's got to get up and go to the potty more than once through the night, can I get a witness about that?

And so I'm, you know, I don't want to wake them up, and so I'm kind of tiptoeing, and there's just a little path about this wide between their bed and the hallway or the bed and the wall that leads back to the bathroom, and so I'm just very quietly going back there to the bathroom one and two and three times in the night, and one night I go into the bedroom and I'm walking quietly, and her husband has his arm out over the, in the way, and I kid you not, I stepped over his arm to get to the bathroom.

I'm just trying to picture what this would be like. Thankfully, the Lord was the one that gave them this sleep, you know. they weren't going to wake up.

[25 : 11] Now, I don't think David knew that or Abishai. I don't think they were necessarily privy to that, and so they're being very careful, and they're making their way through this maze, again, this maze of sleeping soldiers, and they finally get to the very center of it where Saul is, and Abner, who's lying right beside him, mighty, mighty man of war and valor, and I can't really say so much about Saul in that way, but he's the king, and they make it all the way there, and so the Bible says in verse 7, and there Saul lay sleeping.

He's sleeping there within the camp, and he has his spear stuck there in the ground right by his head, which would have been, by the way, customary.

If they had been in tents, then the king's tent would be in the center as well, and the spear would be stuck in the ground right outside the doorway to his tent, and that would identify, you know, the location of their commander-in-chief, their king, and that was very important.

So here is the sword stuck in the ground and a jug of water. Every man would have had a jug of water for their needs. And then, Abishai, and you really have to love this guy.

Well, at least you have to respect him. There's quite a bit recorded in Scripture about Abishai, especially in 2 Samuel, that would cause you to respect him.

[26 : 53] In fact, in 2 Samuel, chapter 23, and verse 18, it records there that Abishai killed 300 with just his spear.

Killed 300 of them. And other examples. I mean, he was apparently a mountain of a man. And he eventually became the leader of David's mighty men.

And so, here's Abishai, and I want you to look again at what Abishai says in verse 8. Then Abishai said to David, God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day.

Look, see, right here, it's clear to see. Now, therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear. His own spear.

Let me strike him with the spear right to the earth. All right, ladies, means all the way through to the ground.

[27 : 55] And Abishai said, it'll only take one time. You know, just one plunge and it's all the way through. No doubt in his mind. I mean, here's a guy who killed, later killed 300 with just a spear.

And I'm sure he had to have made pretty short work of each of those 300 or he'd be continually dealing with the same guy over and over. So it was just one and done. And we're off to the next one.

And so, this is Abishai. All right, so this kind of sets the stage for what David is going to say in response to Abishai's request and what Saul also is going to say.

And so, I want to point out three things from this story that I think are instructive. that we can glean something very instructive. And the first one is what David is about to say, what he's going to say in response.

And so, I want to call it his reasoning. The reasoning that proves something. And it proved David's integrity. So that's the first thing I want you to see. David's reasoning that proved his integrity, his integrity, his spiritual integrity, his biblical integrity.

[29 : 09] integrity. All right, so notice the marked difference. I've already read verse 8, but notice the marked difference between the reasoning of Abishai and the reasoning of David.

I mean, given the set of circumstances, the situation, the what we might call prime opportunity, and you have two different responses, two different reasonings about what to do, what to do next.

Quite different. Abishai, what does he do? He interprets the will of God based on the circumstances. That's important to note.

Now, based on anything else other than this must be the will of God because we have the opportunity right here before us, the circumstances dictate what is the will of God.

David, on the other hand, David interpreted the will of God based upon the word of God, the word of God, the scriptures. Abishai said in verse 8, God has delivered your enemy right here into your hand this day.

[30 : 26] The circumstances are just right. This must be the will of God, right? right? And now, what about David?

David says in verse 9, do not destroy him for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?

Totally different perspective, isn't it? Now, was Saul worthy of death? Perhaps. Look at all he had done. Worthy of death?

Probably so, but not by David's hand. Not by David's hand. And David went on to say in verse 10, as the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him. It's God's business to do this.

So he's not basing the will of God on the circumstances, but really on the word of God, the very heart of God, the very nature of God. He said, as the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or, if not, his day shall come to die.

[31 : 32] He's going to die someday. Or, he shall go out to battle and perish. The Bible says, vengeance is mine, says the Lord.

I will repay. The application here is simply this, there are people who think that circumstances are the most reliable guide for determining, finding the will of God.

God. That circumstances are right. And so if they can find some set of circumstances that seem to approve or allow a certain course of action, then they say this must be the will of God because the circumstances are just right for it.

And it just doesn't work that way. it reminded me of something that happened when we lived near Memphis. I don't remember if this happened while we were in West Memphis or South A.

It doesn't matter, but this took place in Memphis. And it was on the news and the report was that one of these armored trucks, you know, had an accident and turned over and the contents had spilled out all over the ground, all over the place.

[32 : 53] In fact, I think, as I recall, it was not even on a main highway. It was a terrible kind of accident. But then there's money everywhere. And they actually had TV reporters out there filming people gathering up all that money and even interviewed one lady who attributed it to God.

God's provision. Look! I mean, how ridiculous. And that's probably a very obvious example. example and some of the other examples where we allow circumstances to somehow lead us to believe that this is the will of God are much more subtle.

David is teaching us that when seeking guidance from God, the teaching of his word is far more reliable and every time will override circumstances.

Circumstances in life. All right, so first, the reasoning that proved David's integrity. Second, the rebuke. There's a rebuke here. In fact, a series of them.

The rebuke that proved David's innocency. I looked it up. That is a word, by the way. A rebuke. All right, so David did not take Saul's life, had the opportunity, but he did not.

[34 : 20] Right? Just like back in chapter 24, had the opportunity, and who would have blamed him, but he didn't do it because it wasn't his place to take the life of God's anointed, to strike God's anointed.

It was up to the Lord. He kind of further clarifies the truth of this here in the example here in chapter 26. So he has the opportunity, but he doesn't take it. But he did take an opportunity to do something.

And what did he do? He took, really we could say, he took the very symbols of the king's power and life. I mean, the sword symbolizes the power of the king.

I mean, it represents him. It's stuck in the ground there, right beside where he's lying, or if he had been in a tent, right at the doorway of the tent, and it symbolizes his royalty, his authority, his power. Everyone knows that where that spear is, that's where the king is, and it represents his power. And David took that representative, that symbol. It also took his water, which is life-giving to the king.

[35 : 27] And so he didn't take his physical life, but he took something that was symbolic of his life. He couldn't survive without water. And that's what we read about here in verse 12.

So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got away, and no man saw it or knew it or awoke.

And it gives the reason why. It was supernatural, for they were all asleep, because the deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them. Now, why did David take Saul's spear and his jug of water?

We could say his royal cup, his royal water. Why did he take those things? Well, at the very least, he did for the same reason that he cut away a piece of Saul's robe back there when he had the opportunity to kill him inside that cave.

In a sense, I mean, in a very real sense, very basically for the same reason. He's going to use it as proof of his innocence.

[36 : 33] of his innocence, that is, concerning any notion that David was Saul's enemy, that David would have Saul kill or they would kill him himself.

He took these things to prove his innocence. And it's interesting that David uses this opportunity to rebuke several people. To back up what he is saying here, he shows them the spear and the jug, saying, I was this close to the king, but I did not kill him.

So he rebukes, in fact, there are three rebukes here. First one, David rebuked Saul's men. You see that in verse 13.

Look at it. Chapter 26, verse 13, David went over to the other side and stood on the top of the hill far off and great distance between them, so he's at a safe distance.

And it says in verse 14, David called out to the people, that would be Saul's camp and the people of the camp, called out to the people and to specifically to Abner, the son of Ner, saying, do you not answer?

[37 : 53] And he says, don't you hear me? Abner? Then Abner answered and said, who are you calling out to the king? So David said to Abner, are you not a man?

And who is like you in Israel? And really that was a true statement. Abner was a great mighty man, mighty soldier. Who's like you in all of Israel?

Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? Almost sounds a little snide, doesn't it? Why didn't you guard your king?

For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king and it's true, right? And it wasn't David, it was Abishai. In fact, I really think that David wanted a volunteer to go with him because he knew exactly what he was going to do.

He was going to go in there, get evidence that he'd been there and come out and he could say then to Abner and really by extension all of Saul's soldiers that you can trust me even more than you can trust your own bodyguard.

[39 : 07] Someone came in to kill your king and he did not. David wouldn't allow Abishai to do that. So he's kind of rebuking Abner here.

In verse 15, so David said to Abner, or verse 16, this thing that you have done is not good. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die.

And technically he did. In fact, I read a story about Saddam Hussein and someone had been able to get in and attempt to kill one of his sons.

sons. And, you know, his endeavor was thwarted but he was allowed to somehow get in there. And Saddam Hussein had all of his son's bodyguards put to death.

We say, that's terrible. Well, it is terrible. But this is common practice. I mean, if the king has his circle of soldiers and it is their job to protect the king and and he has the captain of his guard right there beside him and it's his job to be his bodyguard.

[40 : 17] And if someone was able to get in and just kind of touch the king and then go out and say, look what I did, then Abner would be worthy of death, execution, because he did not fulfill his duty.

And that's pretty severe but then the next guy who's the bodyguard takes his job pretty seriously. And so he said, you know, you didn't do good here.

And because you have not guarded your master, the Lord's anointed, and now see where the king's spear is and the jug of water that was by his head.

I can almost imagine that Abner is standing right there. You know, I think David got him up. You know, it's probably still a little bit dark. That's why he couldn't see who it was talking.

And so they're standing up. They've got torch lights by now maybe and so David mentions the spear and the jug and maybe both Abner and Saul looked down at the ground and they're both gone.

[41 : 20] They see the hole where the spear used to be and a little indentation in the sand where the jug was and they knew what had happened. So he's rebuking Abner but his intent is in rebuking Abner he is revealing his personal innocence.

He said you know king I had the opportunity to kill you but it did not. And in reality you can trust me even more than your own bodyguard. And then second David rebuked some unnamed instigator.

This goes back to what I was saying about Psalm 7 and this guy by the name of Cush the Benjamite. I don't know if that's necessarily true but I think it is true that there were voices around Saul who were poisoning his mind toward David.

And Saul was able to do it all his own without any help but to further poison his mind and make him resolved and if he kind of slacked off a little bit they'd be quick there to remind him of David and all of that and I think that's what happened but David says here in verse 17 then Saul knew David's voice and he said his is that your voice my son David?

David said it's my voice my Lord oh king very respectful and he said why does my Lord thus pursue his servant? What have I done? What evil is in my hand?

[42 : 49] Now therefore please let my Lord the king hear the words of his servant if the Lord has stirred you up against me if the Lord is behind this because something I've done I mean he's just saying if I'm the sinner and the Lord has stirred you up against me then what's what's the prescribed action for something like that?

It's to give an offering alright so I'll give an offering if that's the case but and this is what I want you to see if it is the children of men some other person some other man or men or people if they're the ones who stirred you up against me may they be cursed before the Lord for they have driven me out this day from sharing in the inheritance of the Lord saying go serve other gods and David didn't go serve other gods it's not that he would be tempted to even but the fact that he would be exiled from the worship of Israel is the point that he's making so he's rebuking some people or person for continuing to poison Saul's heart toward David and then third he rebukes Saul himself verse 20 so now do not let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord for the king of

Israel has come out to seek a flea just harmless as a flea man why are you doing this I'm innocent I'm just a flea insignificant of course he's not of course he will be the next king David even though he knew that he had no malice in his heart towards Saul no idea of any insurrection in the kingdom no ideas of usurping Saul's throne no no ideas whatsoever of putting him out of the way killing him poisoning him whatever it wasn't anything that David was thinking man so why are you doing this and he further says in verse 22 and David answered and said here is the king's spear let one of the young men come over and get it may the Lord repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness for the

Lord delivered you into my hand today but I would not stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed then one more thing and we'll be finished and this with this we turn to Saul and what I would call the reply so Saul replies to all of this the reply that really proved Saul's insanity he was

insane he was mad and in a sense and in this same sense though maybe not as severely as it was with Saul everyone who rebels against God every sinner is mad insane there is really the madness of lostness and so again in verse 21 Saul said I have sinned they say well that didn't sound like something bad

I mean sounds like he's come to grips with the truth right what's insane about that what's mad about that well these words by the way and the life that that contradicted it afterward these words are some of the last words recorded in scripture last of Saul's words in fact I was looking again the next time Saul speaks and recorded scripture he's asking for some witches some medium to come and connect him with the dead and then the very last words Saul says is right before he dies and he commits suicide by proxy he commands his armor bearer to take his sword and kill him so here Saul is saying I've sinned but he didn't really mean it not in the right way not in terms of true godly sorrow not with a true heart and life of repentance you know there is such a thing as this madness madness and insanity of lostness where lost people say things do things it just it doesn't make any sense it is not irrational not even logical like like those who deny the bible or deny the creation or deny some doctrine of scripture and they don't even do it on any intelligent basis they're mad they're insane we had dinner over at the

[48 : 09] McNeil's last night with several others and Danny and Julia Crouch were there and they were telling us about the event took place over at Oklahoma Wesley and it was kind of a constitution kind of conference not conference but the focus was on the constitution and they had a keynote speaker who was the former fire chief of the city of Atlanta big position in fact at one point he was even invited as a political appointee to be kind of the fire chief over all fire chiefs in the nation and then he went back to Atlanta because they wanted him back there named Kevin Cochran and in 2015 he wrote a bible study for his church it was a men's bible study and in that he was teaching how marriage is between a man and a woman and there are no exceptions to that according to scripture it's just a men's bible study he was writing and the city of

Atlanta fired him pressure from the gay community it's madness absolute madness but there is this madness of lostness and Saul was insane his rebellion had taken him so far he wasn't even thinking right and so he he's not really repenting here any more than Judas who betrayed Jesus actually repented even though he said that he was a sinner and Judas said he was a sinner for doing what he did he said for betraying innocent blood and Judas went out and hung himself committed suicide which by the way is itself an act of rebellion against the Lord now pride you see here's the deal pride which Saul was eat up with it pride is such a diabolical sin it's insane it's madness what it will do to a person and so in reality sometimes a person will accuse himself or herself of sinfulness and do so out of pride you say that doesn't make any sense at all does it and yet it happens all the time you know it's a prideful thing can be a very prideful thing to admit sinfulness have you ever heard anybody boast about their sinfulness

I'm just a sinner and yet you observe their life and they continue to sin so are they really are they really repentant or are they prideful about not about their sin but about their admission of guiltiness you know to go around telling people how bad you are and how sinful you are that somehow it's a point of pride for people it puffs you up far more than the person who resists you know admitting their sin alright so it makes you feel spiritual in fact we can be prideful spiritually it's like we're some spiritual giants because you know I'm the chief of sinners just like Paul you know so in Saul's case when he says I have sinned don't think that this is a confession of sin or repentance the fact is Saul's life after this indicates clearly that it was not legitimate repentance what else did Saul say he said return my son

David for I will harm you no more because my life was precious in your eyes this day that sounds very good doesn't it but it's not he's not saying because he's not doing this because it's the right thing to do in the first place but really because one good turn deserves another do you see because my life was precious in your eyes this day because you spared my life I will spare yours even though there was never ever any justification for seeking David's life in the first place that's not true repentance that doesn't indicate or sound like that Saul truly believed that he had sinned and then finally Saul said indeed

I have played the fool and erred exceedingly this is the best part of it well this is the saddest part someone had said that if you were looking for a one liner that would give the life story of Saul the first king of Israel it would be that I played the fool played the fool and he did many many counts Saul played the fool by allowing his feelings kind of his flesh control him rather than God it's always

to play the fool when you do that Saul played the fool by listening to false representations of David and Saul clearly did that Saul played the fool by acting really taking action against his conscience against his conscience what was right what he knew was right he acted against it he played the fool by making really what you could say good resolutions but then breaking them he played the fool by expecting success as a king by expecting success and happiness and fulfillment without holiness somehow he could have all that without being holy before God and we too can play the fool sometimes on some of these same areas and Saul stands [54 : 52] I think forever as an example to us Thank you.