

Sermon Notes for August 15, 2010

Sermon Series On David
A Life Of Great Success And Great Failure
“How David Dealt With Revenge”
I Samuel 24

There is a story of a **truck driver** sitting in a restaurant minding his own business when a motorcycle gang came in and began to harass the trucker! One biker in particular, got right up in the trucker's face and said, "**You think you're a big man when you're in that 18 wheeler. But you get out of that truck and you're nothing but a wimp.**" The trucker just ignored him and kept on eating. Finally after some more verbal abuse that the trucker disregarded, the gang member took his orange juice and poured it all over his food and said, "**How do you like that?**" The trucker just pushed himself back from the table went over to the cash register, paid and walked out. The biker looked at the waitress and said, "**He's nothing. Once he gets out of that truck he's not much of a man is he?**" And the waitress who was looking out the window said, "**No, and he's not much of a truck driver either. He just ran over 6 motorcycles on the way out of here.**"

Introduction

A. EXAMPLES OF REVENGE

1. Pearl Harbor

- a. a surprise attack on December 7, 1941
- b. 2390 people died
- c. most died in the first 15 minutes of the attack

2. Hitler killed some 6 million Jews during World War II

- a. How many fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers were intentionally killed in concentration camps?
- b. What if that were your relatives who were brutally murdered? Wouldn't you want revenge?

3. How many were killed on 9/11?

In total **3,497** people died in the attacks on September 11, 2001

- **2735 civilians in the World Trade Center**
- **87 passengers** and crew members aboard **American Airlines Flight 11** that hit the North Tower
- **60 passengers** and crew aboard United Flight 175 that hit the South Tower
- **343 New York City firefighters** and rescue workers and **23 New York City law enforcement officers, 47 Port Authority workers** and **37 Port Authority Police Officers**, lost their lives when they rushed in to save the victims in the World Trade Center
- **36 passengers and crew** aboard **United Flight 93**, who gave their lives stopping four hijackers over Pennsylvania
- **64 passengers** and crew aboard American Airlines Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon, killing them and **125 people in the building**

4. However, all of these numbers of murders “pale in comparison” to these murderers:
 - a. **Joseph Stalin murdered 23 million people**
 - b. **Mao Ze Dong murdered between 49 - 78 million people**

B. EXPECTATION OF REVENGE

1. References to revenge in the Scriptures:
 - a. **Psalm 137:7-9** – “Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!" O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, **happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us--he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.**”
J. V. McGee – “The Jewish writer sees how the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem. And then happened a frightful and awful thing. His wife was holding their precious little baby. Then, that great big, brutal Babylonian soldier came to her, wrestled the baby out of her arms, took it by the heels and with her screaming, hit its head across the rock, killing the baby right in front of her.” Finally, the Psalmist says, in **Vs. 8** - “**O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us.**”
 - b. **Psalm 73:1-14 (read)**
2. Our own feelings
 - a. How many people have I counseled over the years that have been wronged, abused or hurt?
 1. they say, how dare you tell me to forgive what that person did to me!
 2. **I CANNOT LET THEM OFF OF THE HOOK THAT EASILY!**
 - b. My own story in Junior High (Boy Scout Camp)
3. In a sense, they are saying, “I want them to pay! I want to get even!”

C. ENCOURAGEMENT IN REVENGE

1. I want you to know that Scripture CLEARLY speaks about revenge and how to deal with it
2. Today, we want to look at how someone in Scripture dealt well with revenge, King David
 - a. once again, David was not a model for us in many areas of his life.
 - b. But, David was indeed a model for us in how we should deal with those who have wronged us

I. A TALE OF REVENGE

A. The Cause OF THE REVENGE

1. This story of revenge all started at the confrontation between David and Goliath
 - a. for 40 days, there was a “Mexican stand-off” between the Philistines and the Israelites in the Valley of Elah
 - b. a giant named Goliath taunted King Saul to come forth to fight him; this taunting went on twice a day for 40 days
 - c. until a young shepherd named David arrived at the battlefield with food for his 3 oldest brothers

- d. when David arrived, he was overwhelmed that the giant could make those statements and that **NOBODY MADE HIM STOP!**
 - e. as soon as he could, David made it clear that **HE** would fight the giant
 - 1. David boldly approached Goliath and with one smooth stone and threw the stone to Goliath's head and killed him.
 - 2. David then took Goliath's own sword and cut his head off
 - f. David's defeat of Goliath was the single greatest victory in the history of Israel
 - 1. so much that the people began to chant:
I Samuel 18:7 – "As they danced, they sang: "**Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.**"
 - 2. upon hearing this chant, King Saul was very angry
I Samuel 18:8-9 – "Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" **And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.**"
 - g. from that time on, King Saul made plans to kill David who he perceived was a threat to his throne
2. It eventually became obvious to David that Saul was intent on killing him.
- a. Saul amassed an army of 3000 men and began his pursuit to kill David
 - b. David had his own army of some 600 men
 - c. Knowing that he was in danger, David and his men were hiding in a desert area called The En Gedi
I Samuel 24:2 – "So Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the **Crag of the Wild Goats.**"
 - 1. this mountainous area was near Bethlehem, where David had kept his sheep
 - 2. the area was so difficult that only mountain goats could live there
 - 3. but, David knew the area well and knew where to hide

B. The CONTINUATION OF THE REVENGE

- 1. King Saul was determined to kill David and get rid of any threat to his throne
- 2. **PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT DAVID HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG TO DESERVE SAUL'S WRATH!**
 - a. GOD had anointed David to be the next king of Israel **BECAUSE KING SAUL HAD DISOBEYED GOD!**
 - 1. David had no idea that he would be anointed the next King of Israel
 - 2. David was, in fact, the youngest of 8 sons – he was "merely a shepherd."
 - b. David went to the battlefield because he had simply obeyed his father to take some food to his brothers
 - c. And **BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE FOR GOD, DAVID, AMONG ALL OF ISRAEL'S FINEST SOLDIERS, FOUGHT GOLIATH.**

- d. SO...WHAT IS DAVID GUILTY OF?
 1. of simply of being an obedient son
 2. of having so much love and trust in God that he would fight and kill a 9-foot giant
 3. how would David know that they would “make a record” about his victory and play it on every station on the radio?

II. A TEMPTATION TO REVENGE

A. SAUL’S PLAN TO KILL DAVID

1. Saul was on his way to kill David when he was called away to fight the Philistines; after the battle Saul resumed his pursuit of David.
2. Saul probably did not know how many soldiers David had, so he made sure that he could win any battle with his 3000 soldiers
3. as Saul and his army came to the area where he thought David was, Saul’s army stopped their pursuit so that Saul could go into a cave and use the bathroom.
 - a. **I Samuel 24:3 – (KJV) – “And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet:”**
 - b. **The Bible in Basic English – “And on the way he came to a place where sheep were kept, where there was a hollow in the rock; and Saul went in for a private purpose.”**
 - c. **NIV – “He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself”**

B. DAVID’S POSSIBILITY TO KILL SAUL

1. **WHAT SAUL DID NOT REALIZE WAS THAT DAVID AND HIS ARMY OF 600 MEN WAS IN THE SAME CAVE!**
I Samuel 24:3 – “He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave.”
2. **WHAT A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR DAVID TO KILL HIS ENEMY!**
 - a. here David and his men were in the darkness and Saul walked right in. HOW PERFECT A SITUATION WAS THIS?!
 - b. **had God delivered Saul into the hands of David?**
 1. David had done nothing wrong
 2. Saul was a maniac who was trying to kill David
 3. and Saul walked right into David’s hands!
3. Please notice two responses to this situation:
 - a. the **soldier’s view** - David’s soldiers believe that God had set this up
Vs. 4 – “The men said, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'"
 1. “David, God has brought your enemy to you. Kill him! “
 2. **oh**, how many times I have heard this kind of thinking!
 - a. “The Lord opened a door and I went through it”
 - b. “I know that the Lord wants us to get a divorce”
 - c. Paul Little – “Finding God’s Will”
 1. “She has a peace”
 2. “And I am left with the pieces”

d. Gordon Keddie

“Many a modern Christian would point to these circumstances, saying that **‘Everything is working out’ and that ‘It seems to be the Lord’s leading’ that I take the indicated steps to secure the necessary solution to my problem. But an ‘open door’ is not, in itself, proof of God’s will.** Circumstances, in God’s providence, are **not** a substitute for the principles he has revealed in his Word, the Bible. The **‘open door’ is susceptible of serious misinterpretation.** At most it is a trying of your faith – a means of making you think about the path of obedience to the Lord’s will! **A. W. Pink** wisely points us to the answer: “An accurate knowledge of God’s Word, a holy state of heart. . . a broken will, are absolutely essential in order to clearly discern the path of duty in important cases and crises. **The safest plan is to deny all suggestions of revenge, covetousness, ambition and impatience. A heart that is established in true godliness will rather interpret the dispensations of Providence as trials of faith and patience, as occasions to practice self-denial, than as opportunities for self-indulgence’**”

e. “God is leading us to leave the church.”

b. **David’s View - NOTICE WHAT DAVID ACTUALLY DID!**

1. it seems that Saul took off his outer, kingly robe and laid it on a rock as he was going to the bathroom.
2. although his soldiers felt that David would be justified in taking the golden opportunity to kill Saul, David, instead, simply took his knife and cut off a piece of his robe.
 - a. did David do this to scare Saul?
 - b. did David do this to embarrass Saul?
 - c. did David do this to send to Saul?

III. A TENDERNESS IN REVENGE**A. The IMMEDIACY OF DAVID’S CONSCIENCE**

1. Please notice that **AS SOON AS DAVID CUT OFF A PIECE OF SAUL’S ROBE THAT HIS CONSCIENCE “WAS STRUCK”**

I Samuel 24:5 – “Afterward, **David was conscience-stricken** for having cut off a corner of his robe.”

- a. to strike, give a thrust
- b. wound
2. why did David’s conscience “strike him”?
 - a. what had he done wrong?
 - b. he had an opportunity to kill his enemy
 - c. perhaps God actually gave Saul into his hands
 - d. all that he did was to cut a piece of his robe off

1. think about what David “could have done” to Saul
2. he only “sent Saul a message”

B. The INDICATION OF DAVID’S CONSCIENCE

1. Why did David feel so badly about cutting off a piece of Saul’s robe?
 - a. **One**, David’s goal may have to embarrass Saul
 1. David had a “golden opportunity” to kill Saul
 2. but, instead of killing Saul, David wanted to teach Saul a lesson
 - a. “Saul, I had you, but let you go”
 - b. “Saul, what kind of power do you really have?”
 - b. **Two**, David knew that Saul was God’s anointed King
I Samuel 24:6 – “He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, or lift my hand against him; **for he is the anointed of the LORD.**”
2. This response of David tells us a great deal about this man and why he was “a man after God’s own heart.”

C. The IMPLICATION OF DAVID’S CONSCIENCE

1. We learn from this incident that David had a very sensitive conscience
 - a. we saw the sensitivity of David’s conscience when he first heard Goliath’s taunts to the army of Israel
 1. he was greatly offended that Goliath would say these things about God and the army of Israel
 2. and that NO ONE would stand up to him
 - b. and we see David’s conscience as he cuts off a piece of Saul’s robe
 1. what made David “so sensitive”?
 2. **NOW APPARENTLY, NO ONE IN ALL OF ISRAEL HAD SUCH A CONSCIENCE!**
 - a. no one in Israel’s army responded to Goliath’s taunts
 - b. and none of David’s soldiers looked at this situation like David did
2. How do you develop a sensitive conscience like David?
 - a. God has given us a conscience to tell right from wrong
 - b. there are three “types” of conscience:
 1. a “**clear**” conscience
 - a. the Apostle Paul talked about his conscience being “clear” or “clean”
 1. **Acts 23:1** – “Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, “My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in **all good conscience** to this day.”
 2. **I Timothy 1:5** – “The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and **a good conscience** and a sincere faith.”
 - b. one develops a clear conscience when they walk with the Lord and have no unconfessed sins

2. a **“guilty” conscience**
 - a. **Hebrews 10:22** – “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a **guilty conscience** and having our bodies washed with pure water.”
 - b. the guilty conscience is one who is living with unconfessed sins
 1. they are guilty of sins that they are not willing to confess
 2. or they are unwilling to reconcile with another
3. a **“seared” conscience**
 - a. **I Timothy 4:2** – “Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, **whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.**”
 - b. this is a person who has lived a long time with unconfessed sins
 - c. to the point that they no longer feel guilt at all
 - d. mafai
- c. the only way to develop a conscience like David:
 1. is to walk daily with the Lord
 - a. how do you think that David wrote all of those Psalms?
 - b. David was a consistent worshipper of God
 - c. the constancy of God’s Word “reveals” sin in your life
 1. if you do not spend time in God’s Word, your conscience will begin to harden
I Timothy 3:9 – “They must **keep hold of the deep truths of the faith** with a **clear conscience.**
 2. notice Paul’s CONSTANT Commitment to a clear conscience
Acts 24:16 – “**So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.**”
 2. in order to have a clear conscience, we must confess your sins **AS SOON AS YOU COMMIT THEM!**
 - a. each of us will commit sins
 - b. however, we are to be “quick to repent:” quick to reconcile
 - c. my own story
 1. a heaviness
 2. a loss of peace
 3. a wall between God and me
 4. inability to sense God’s power in preaching
 5. avoid sin on the Lord’s Day
 - d. David in **Psalm 32:3-5** – “**When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin."

IV. The TRAGEDY OF REVENGE

A. DAVID'S CONFESSION TO SAUL

1. As soon as Saul exited the cave, David went to the front of the cave and called out to Saul
 - a. David was not content to simply feel sorry about what he had done
 - b. He had to speak to Saul personally and tell him what he had done.
2. Notice David's words to Saul **EVEN THOUGH SAUL WAS TRYING TO KILL HIM**
 - a. his **respect of Saul**
Vs 8 – "Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "**My lord the king!**" When Saul looked behind him, David **bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.**"
 1. his verbal respect; "**my lord the king**"
 2. his physical respect; "**David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.**"
 - b. his **reasoning with Saul**
Vs. 9-11 – "He said to Saul, "**Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you'?** This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed.' See, my father, **look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you.** Now understand and recognize that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life."
 1. despite repenting to Saul, **David clearly wanted to tell Saul that he meant him no harm**
 2. David would not simply allow Saul to ride away without the facts
 3. in a way, Saul may sense a "rebuke" from David
 - a. David not only told the truth
 - b. But David showed Saul that he was telling the truth **AS HE HELD UP THE PIECE OF SAUL'S ROBE THAT HE HAD CUT OFF!**
 - c. **Chuck Swindoll** – "From a lesson like this, it would be easy to conclude that when we're injured or misunderstood, we're to sit back and swallow it. **But the truth is, we do have a responsibility to confront, to stand up and declare the truth – not to get even, but to clear our conscience.** The hard part comes afterward, when it becomes our responsibility to sit down and let God work in the other person's heart to make it right."

c. his **relationship with Saul**

1. David wanted Saul to know who he was in relation to Saul
Vs. 14 – ““Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? **A dead dog? A flea?**”
 - a. a dead dog
 1. dogs were not respected; usually because they were wild dogs
 2. and David called himself less, a dead dog
 - b. a flea
 1. so small
 2. that you can barely see them
2. Even though David had done nothing to merit Saul’s anger:
 - a. David was not only showing Saul great respect
 - b. David was totally humbling himself before this man who is trying to murder him!
 - c. **WHAT A GODLY HEART DAVID HAD!**

B. SAUL’S CONTRITION BEFORE DAVID

1. You might have thought that Saul would have reveled in David’s humility
 - a. David was standing before Saul in a position of great humility
 - b. David had confessed that he had done wrong
2. **BUT, NOTICE WHAT THIS CRAZY, MURDEROUS KING SAID:**
Vs. 16-21 – “When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud. **"You are more righteous than I,"** he said. **"You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly.** You have just now told me of the good you did to me; the LORD delivered me into your hands, **but you did not kill me.** When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? **May the LORD reward you well for the way you treated me today.** I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands. **Now swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family."**
3. Notice what Saul did and said in response to the humble approach of David
 - a. he wept
 - b. he admitted that David was guiltless in the whole matter
 - c. he knew that he was spared by David
 - d. **HE KNEW THAT DAVID WOULD ONE DAY BE KING**
4. This is a classic example of what we should do when we face someone who has wronged us
 - a. we do not try to argue with them
 - b. we do not try to embarrass them
 - c. we do not try to get them to confess their guilt
 - d. instead, we come with a humble heart and an open hand
5. This is “how you deal with one who has hurt you”
 - a. **Proverbs 15:1** – “**A gentle answer turns away wrath,** but a harsh word stirs up anger.”
 - b. David was practicing
Proverbs 25:21-22 – “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. **In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.”**

V. The TRAGEDY OF REVENGE

A. THE LACK OF REPENTANCE BY SAUL

1. You would think that this episode in the life of Saul would have convinced him that he should stop trying to kill David.
 - a. Saul confessed that David was guiltless
 - b. Saul confessed that he had done wrong
 - c. but. . .Saul also confessed that he knew that David would one day be the king of Israel
2. **HOWEVER, SAUL DID NOT STOP TRYING TO KILL DAVID**
 - a. in **I Samuel 26**, Saul resumed his mission to kill David
 - b. with all of his 3000 men
3. David would deal with Saul's attempt to kill him one more time
 - a. Saul and his army had set up camp in the pursuit of David
 - b. the soldiers were arranged in a type of "wagon wheel" around Saul, to protect him
 - c. while Saul and his entire army were asleep, David and one of his soldiers, Abishai, sneaked up to Saul and took his spear and water jug that was "near Saul's head" and then walked back out of the camp
 - a. when David got far outside of Saul's camp, he called in a loud voice to wake up the entire camp

I Samuel 26:12-20 – **"So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left.** No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the LORD had put them into a deep sleep. **Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them.** He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, "Aren't you going to answer me, Abner?" Abner replied, "Who are you who calls to the king?" David said, "You're a man, aren't you? And who is like you in Israel? **Why didn't you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. What you have done is not good. As surely as the LORD lives, you and your men deserve to die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord's anointed.** Look around you. **Where are the king's spear and water jug that were near his head?"** Saul recognized David's voice and said, **"Is that your voice, David my son?"** David replied, **"Yes it is, my lord the king."** And he added, **"Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of?** Now let my lord the king listen to his servant's words. If the LORD has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, men have done it, may they be cursed before the LORD! They have now driven me from my share in the Lord's inheritance and have said, 'Go, serve other gods.' Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the LORD. **The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea--as one hunts a partridge in the mountains."**

4. and . . . **ONCE AGAIN, NOTICE SAUL'S COMMENTS:**

I Samuel 26:21 – “Then Saul said, “**I have sinned**. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, **I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have erred greatly.**”

B. THE LACK OF REPENTANCE BY OTHERS

1. **PLEASE LEARN A LESSON FROM DAVID'S DEALING WITH SAUL: IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER THE PERSON WHO WRONGED YOU IS REPENTANT OR NOT!**

- a. **YOU** are called to be repentant and humble before that person and the Lord
- b. notice what God's Word says:
Romans 12:18 – “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”
2. That person is not your problem – their problem is between them and the Lord.
3. Psychiatrist in an elevator

C. The LOSS OF LIFE OF SAUL

1. What even happened to this unrepentant king, Saul?
 - a. did he ever repent?
 - b. did he quit pursuing David?
 - c. did God even deal with him?
2. After a tragic battle with the Philistines, all of Saul's sons were killed, including Jonathan, and Saul was mortally wounded
 - a. Saul feared what the Philistines would do to him if he were found alive
 - b. so, Saul fell on his sword and committed suicide
 - c. it is my belief that even as Saul died, he had a desire to kill David

Conclusion:

1. What did we learn from David about revenge?
 - a. None of us can control another person, especially the one who has wronged us.
 - b. And there is a great possibility that the one who has wronged us will never repent of what they have done to us
 1. their hard heart allowed them to sin against you in the first place
 2. why do you think that they would even change?
 3. when you live for revenge, you become the loser
 4. repent, forgive and forget revenge
2. **Let me assure you, God will avenge for all of those who have sinned against us**
Romans 12:17-19 – “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.
 - a. **Vs. 17a** – “Do not **repay** anyone evil for evil.”
 1. repay: pay off
 2. discharge what is due
 3. render an account
 4. **present active participle**

- b. **Vs. 19a** – “Do not take **revenge**, my friends,”
 - 1. avenge, revenge
 - 2. to vindicate one’s rights
 - 3. to punish a person for a thing
 - 4. **KJV** – “vengeance is mine, saith the Lord”
 - 5. **present active participle**
- c. **Vs. 19b** – “Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to **avenge**; **I will repay**," says the Lord.”
 - 1. repay
 - 2. to regulate
 - 3. to pay off; discharge what is due
 - 4. future active indicative