

Sometimes Bad Things Happen to Good People

Scriptures: 1 Samuel 20, 21, 22

Even if you are with God, that does not mean that life on earth will be perfect, trouble-free, without any hardships at all. Today we will look to see what David does when life gets kind of crazy.

Saul is serious about killing David: (Picture 5-1) It was customary for Saul to have a meal at the new moon, with David attending. David knew that Saul wanted to kill him and he told Jonathan that he would not be attending the meal, but wanted Jonathan to excuse his absence to his father. (5-2) At the meal, Saul sat on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite him, and Abner sat by Saul's side. But David's place was empty. David did not go the first day or the second day. (5-3) When Saul asked Jonathan where David was, Jonathan answered that David earnestly asked to leave so he could go to Bethlehem, for he wanted to see his brothers. Saul was so angry at Jonathan that he raved at him. "As long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Bring him to me, for he shall die." Jonathan replied, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" (5-4) But Saul hurled his spear at his own son to try and kill him! Now Jonathan knew his father was determined to kill David.

(5-5) Jonathan and David had worked out a plan beforehand to let David know how Saul reacted to David missing the new moon feast. When Jonathan signaled to David that his father was angry, they knew David needed to go into hiding. But before David left, they wept with one another for they were close friends.

David flees to Nob: So where do you go when you are running from the king? David first went to Nob, the city of priests. He saw the priest Ahimelech there. David was able to get some holy bread that had just been replaced with fresh bread, along with the sword of Goliath. When David got these things, he left.

But Saul's herdsman, Doeg, saw that Ahimelech had helped David.

David runs to enemy territory: From Nob, David goes into enemy territory—to Achish, the king of Gath. Achish's servants asked, "Isn't this the man that they say has killed his tens of thousands?" Then David was afraid of Achish and changed his behavior and pretended to be insane. The king said, "Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

So, David fled from there.

David runs to the cave of Adullam: This time David goes to the cave of Adullam in Israel. When his brothers and all of his father's house heard of it, they went down there to him. Along with those who were in debt, distress or were bitter in their soul. David became their commander. There were about 400 men that came to him.

To Moab, and then the forest of Hereth: David took his mother and father to the king of Moab, to stay with him. And the prophet Gad, told David to go into the land of Judah and stay. So, David went into the forest of Hereth.

Killed for helping David: Saul found out about David. As Saul was sitting under a tamarisk tree with his spear in hand, Saul began speaking, "Will Jesse's son give you fields and vineyards? Will he make you commanders? Yet none of you is sorry for me or discloses that my son has stirred up David against me,

to lie in wait, as he is this day.” (Do you see the lie that Saul is using? He is saying that David is trying to kill him)

Doeg answered, “I saw the son of Jesse go to Ahimelech the priest, and he gave David provisions and Goliath’s sword.” So Saul had Ahimelech and the priests at Nob to appear before him. Saul asked Ahimelech, “Why have you conspired with the son of Jesse and gave him bread and a sword and risen against me, to lie in wait as at this day?”

Ahimelech said, “Who among you is as faithful as David? Who is the king’s son-in-law and captain over your bodyguard and honored in your house? This was not the first time I inquired of the Lord for him. I know nothing of this.”

Saul said, “You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and your father’s house.” Saul turned and said to his guard, “Kill the priests of the Lord, because their hand also is with David, and they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me.” But his guard would not strike the priests of God

Then Saul told Doeg, “You turn and strike the priests.” And Doeg turned and killed the priests and 85 men who served the Lord, along with Nob (the city of the priests). Doeg put to the sword both men and women, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep.

But one of the sons of Ahimelech escaped to David. His name was Abiathar. He told David all that Doeg had done. He stayed with David—for the one who was seeking the life of Abiathar was also seeking the life of David.

Bad things can happen to good people. Just because someone is with God, and God is with them, does not mean that nothing bad will ever happen to them. God allows people to make their own choices. Some of these choices are good choices. But some of these choices are bad and harmful and sinful. And they might harm someone who is close to God.

Just remember that this is not heaven yet. Heaven is where evil cannot exist. But this world is filled with good things and bad, righteous choices and evil. God is watching it all and will call everyone’s actions to account for what they did in this life.

Think about how Saul has fallen. When Saul was first anointed, God gave him another heart (God was helping Saul). But then Saul began to be disobedient to God. He offered a sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel. He saved out the best of the sheep to offer as a sacrifice to God instead of obeying God as he was told. When David killed Goliath, he became jealous of David, and stood in “fearful awe” of David. Saul became even more afraid of David as he saw his children, his countrymen, and even God love him. So Saul became David’s enemy continually. He tried to pin him to the wall, and then had one of his herdsman kill a whole town of priests just because one of them had given David bread and a sword.

Little by little, Saul’s choices led him further away from God. And many people were harmed because of his evil choices. But, even though David’s life was in turmoil during this time, David continued to look to God to help him throughout it all.