

Message #43

I Samuel 18:10-16

There is an interesting story that came from the life of George Whitefield, the English revivalist of the 1700's. Whitefield was supposed to take a sizeable sum of money to a widow, who had a large family, so he asked a friend to accompany him.

They both got on horses and started to head toward the widow's home, which was located quite a distance out of town. As the two were traveling, they were approached by a robber who stopped them and demanded their money.

Whitefield gave the man the money which was supposed to go to the widow. Well his friend was totally distraught, but Whitefield said it is better for him to rob us than for him to break into the widow's home to rob her.

As they continued on toward the widow's home, the robber returned and said he also wanted Whitefield's coat, which was much better than his coat. Whitefield gave the robber his coat and the robber put it on and threw down his old coat. Well it was a cold day, so Whitefield picked up the old ragged coat and decided to wear it until he could get back to town to get another one.

As the two men continued on they noticed that the robber was galloping toward them again. This time Whitefield felt that he was coming to kill them because they could identify him. They both spurred their horses into a gallop and quickly got to a residential area that featured many homes and people. The robber stopped short and took off.

When Whitefield took off the robber's coat, he discovered that in the pocket was the money he intended to give to the widow. What looked to be major trouble and serious threat turned out to be a true blessing of God. In an amazing display of God's sovereignty, what was intended for evil turned out to be something good.

That kind of thing happened often to David. When we come to this section of Scripture, it appears to be an unexplainable, evil hassle. This makes no sense. But behind the scenes here was the sovereign hand of God, directing, molding and bringing David to precisely the spot He wanted him to be. David was God's man. David was God's king. Nothing could stop God from bringing David to the place God wanted him to be. That is clear from this text.

What we see here from the life of David is this:

GOD IS COMPLETELY SOVEREIGN OVER EVERYTHING AND HE WILL SEE TO IT THAT HIS MAN CONTINUES TO SURVIVE AND SUCCEED EVEN WHEN THOSE IN AUTHORITY ARE DOMINATED BY EVIL AND WANT TO SEE HIM DESTROYED.

When you are where God wants you to be, don't be surprised if someone hates you and is out to ruin you. When this happens there are two things to remember:

- 1) God is still sovereign and will use this to develop you.
- 2) God will see to it that their evil plans will not succeed.

God will look out for His leader, He will protect His leader and He will eventually topple those who are against His leader.

David was God's man and even though there were those who made his life miserable, God was still sovereign and they would not succeed. When you know you are where God wants you and you know you are doing what God wants you to do, there will be enemies and hassles. Don't forget God is sovereign and He is protecting you and looking out for you.

That is clear from this story that comes from the life of David. Keep in mind at this point that God is with David and has departed from Saul. So this is not just some personality clash, this is God-versus-Satan.

There are three main narrative observations we may see:

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #1 – Saul had a Satanic reaction to David. **18:10-11**

We saw last time that Saul was angry with David (18:8). He had an envy and jealousy and temper problem because the people were excited about David. He became suspicious of everything about David (18:9). His view of David was colored and skewed by his own jealousy. He is not thinking right about David and he is not even dealing with facts. He is inventing things in his own mind.

That is what happens to those who are jealous and envious; they invent things in their own minds.

Now the day after David returned from a successful war against the Philistines and was honored by all Israel, God sent an evil spirit upon Saul. This entire episode is controlled by the sovereignty of God. God is sovereign over humans and angels, including Satan and demons. When a person is possessed by an evil, demonic spirit, that person is still under the umbrella of the sovereignty of God. What God is going to do here is to show David the true colors of Saul and show him that He is caring for him.

David was playing his harp. David had been promoted to live with Saul and his family. He went wherever Saul sent him and he prospered. So as he is playing the harp, life for David appeared to be good.

As usual, Saul was sitting there listening with a spear in his hand. Some have suggested that the spear was in his hand because it was a scepter symbol of royalty and others believe it was in his hand as a symbol of his paranoia.

It is certainly possible, since this is a time of war, that Saul was armed for protection as one might be who carries a concealed weapon. In this case, it was an open carry. It does seem odd that Saul is sitting in his own home armed with a spear in his hand and it may be this was due to his paranoia. It does seem that Saul was very paranoid and always wanted a weapon with him at all times.

Saul had a spear in his hand when having dinner (20:27, 33). He also had a spear in his hand when talking to his own servants (22:6). He also had a spear in his hand when he slept (26:7). He would stick his spear in the ground by his head when he slept so he could have quick access.

While David was playing his harp for Saul, Saul threw his spear at David, thinking he would kill him and stick him to the wall. According to **verse 11**, he did this at least two times. Both times David was able to get away by sovereign protection of God (19:10). Both times the “spear” (bullet) missed him.

Those who are demonic want to destroy those who have God’s hand on them. People who are demon-possessed look normal, but they hate and attack one innocent for seemingly no reason. But there is a reason. Their reason is a Satanic jealousy. When these things happen, remember God is still sovereign and they will not succeed, and in the end they will be destroyed.

We have a President who is the most pro-Israel, pro-life, pro-Christian President in history. He is hated and I believe much of it is Satanic. What he needs to know is he will be attacked and the reason is a Satanic jealousy. But he also needs to know that if God has put him there, they will not succeed and in the end they will be destroyed. God will sovereignly see to it. This is what happened to David.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #2 – Saul was afraid of the presence of David. 18:12-13

Saul was afraid of David. Saul had a sense that God was with David and he also had a sense that God was not with him.

There are two different words in Hebrew used in this context to describe the fact that Saul was afraid of David. The first “afraid” (yareh) (**v. 12**) is a word that means to be so reverently fearful of someone that you tremble (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 364). The second word “dread” (gur) (**v. 15**), is a word that means to be so afraid of something that you want to avoid it or get away from it (*Ibid.*, p. 164). If you have ever faced something you think may kill you, such as a Grizzly or Lion or enemy in war, you can relate to the emotion of Saul.

Saul was terrified of David. He was shaking in his boots. The ultimate reason for this was due to the presence of the Lord. When a person, who is close to the Lord, gets near those who aren’t, there is something they sense.

What exactly did David do that should cause Saul to feel this way? The answer is nothing.

- 1) He fought and beat Goliath.
- 2) He brought confidence to Israel.
- 3) He served and respected Saul.

David had done nothing but good for Saul, but Saul is dominated by Satan and he does not see it or sense it.

According to **verse 13**, Saul took two actions in regard to David:

(Action #1) - He removed David from his presence. 18:13a

Saul was afraid of David so he removed him from being his minister of music. He got him out of his house. This initially probably seemed to be a real demotion to David. This would appear to be somewhat of a set-back. This is an amazing moving of the sovereignty of God because God is getting David relocated so Saul cannot kill him and Saul doesn't even know it.

We must wonder how many times God has done that for us. He has taken someone out of the picture or moved us on to protect us. God does protect those right with Him everywhere they are.

(Action #2) - He promoted David to a military position. 18:13b

Probably Saul thought there might be a chance in the military that he will be killed. Actually he will be heroic. David is given a military promotion over 1,000 men. He used his men to go in and out on various military campaigns. He would go out and come back victorious and all the people saw it and knew it.

What God is doing here is allowing David to be brought to the public eye in a very positive way, because David is God's choice to be King.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #3 – God was prospering David. 18:14-16

God was with David. In everything he did, he prospered. He goes out with his men and to some battle and comes back with victory. Even though Saul wanted David dead, he could not lay a finger on David.

When you are where God wants you to be, there may be those who are jealous of you and behind the scenes are actually your enemy. They will not be able to stop you. God is still sovereign even when people turn against you. Stay faithful and do your job and watch God work.

There are two different responses to David's prosperity:

(Response #1) - Saul responds to David's prosperity. 18:15

Saul saw David's prosperity. He knew that God had prospered him. There was no getting around that. He dreaded David. He lived in fear of David. He knew God was with David.

(Response #2) - Israel responds to David's prosperity. 18:16

The people of Israel loved David. They saw his success. The nation loved him and there was not one thing Saul could do to stop it.

PRACTICAL LESSONS:

- 1. God is totally sovereign when negative things happen to us that we cannot explain.**
- 2. God sovereignly works behind the scenes for our good in intimidating situations.**
- 3. When you are right with God, someone will be jealous of you and hate you.**
- 4. No enemy will be able to stop God's child from accomplishing His will.**
- 5. In the end, the enemy will fall and one right with Him will be exalted.**