

Saul wants to kill David

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Date: 10 December 2023

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[0:00] Sermon. What kind of love seems most attractive to you? Top Gear, Land Rovers, Lamborghinis, electric vehicles, things. Are you excited by that?

! Rom-coms. There's a whole TV channel with Christmas rom-coms where City Girl moves to the country, falls in love with a handsome farmer and then there's another rival from the big city comes and says, well, you're engaged to me. And anyway, you've seen those rom-coms? Are you a rom-com person?

That's a seaver, this rom-com romantic love. The sort of love that people apparently fall into as if they couldn't do anything else. Is that sort of love that... I don't know what enthusiasm for that. But children, grandchildren, I know there is a lot of love for children and grandchildren. Do you build your life on that love? I wonder. Which love brings security into your life? Because love is an important thing for human beings, isn't it?

We love. We want to be loved. I mean, if we're not loved, it's a terrible life. That's one of the things about a Christian community. We are actually commanded to love one another.

[1:28] And very much, I think, that's the reality, that there is love. But the Bible has a lot to say about another way of loving, which has some of the elements of what I've just said, but includes another C, commitment. A committed love. A promised love. A love you can depend on.

A love which uses vocabulary like, I promise, or I swear to, so on and so on. Well, there's a lot of that in this chapter, as we shall see.

So let's turn to the chapter. Where are we now in the story? We have God's king over God's people. And this is in the time before Jesus came.

So we're back in Old Testament history. And just to recap the story, if you're not familiar with it, God's people were looking for a king. And they had King Saul, who, cutting a long story short, was chosen wrongly.

But he was chosen. He is a failing king. In particular, he's been told by God that he will no longer be able to be king. His kingship is going to be removed.

[2:38] And his dynasty, his son, will not succeed him as king, nor his son's son, no, as it goes on. So that will not happen. So we have a king who is sort of ruled out.

But he's still king at the moment, as we were in the story. We have David, the young man who God has actually chosen, and has been anointed as king.

But he hasn't sort of taken up his post. He's in waiting. So we have David in the story. And the kingship is sort of transferred from Saul to David.

The spirit of the Lord has departed from Saul and has rested on David. And we also have in the story Jonathan, who is Saul's son. We've seen that he's a brave man. He's a faithful, believing man. And normally he would be the next king. But God says that's not going to be the case. So we've got Jonathan. And the kingship would, by natural descent, have come to him.

[3:39] But that's not going to happen either. So let's wipe that out. So we've got those three people in the story. It's a bigger story than just chapter 20, because it's actually part of a whole huge story of our history, of our world.

God's plan is to have a king, but not just over ancient Israel, but over the whole world. A king who rules cosmically. A cosmic king who brings the whole universe into subjection to himself.

And all things find their center and fulfillment in him. So this king will not just defeat some odd tribes and Philistines and other peoples whose names are difficult to pronounce if you're asked to read them out in public.

But to defeat the spiritual enemy, the adversary, the devil. And to bring all the nations into his kingdom.

So the snake gets crushed. And all nations, not just Israel, but come to worship this king. Not just to restore geographical extent and political and economic posterity, but to bring about a whole new world, a resurrection world, filled with the life of God, the blessing of God, and the presence of God. [4:55] And that is the program that Jesus is undertaking. That is the program that God has in store. And we're looking at a little bit of that larger story.

And for Christian people, we must keep our eyes on that larger story as well. On the real king who comes to fulfill this large agenda, of which chapter 20 and thereabouts is sort of a foretaste and a miniature version.

So let's look at the basic story. So you have your Bible here. I'm going to invite you to look for some threes. I don't know why they're there, but it's just a little exercise.

There are several threes in this. So David goes from Naoth to Arama. He's fleeing. He's escaping. And David started off, we were introduced to him as the giant slayer.

And it all seems so easy. Five stones, whoosh, bang, amazing. But actually, the spiritual life is not always as simple as that, is it?

[6:01] And as David gets older, he hopefully becomes wiser. And he learns other things. And he learns here fleeing. In the next little bit, David and Jonathan form a plan.

So it says David went to Jonathan and he asks something. So they make a plan. And their plan is to test out what Jonathan's father Saul really has in mind.

They have a conversation somewhere, presumably, I don't know, in the city. And then in verse 11, it says, let us go out to the field.

So they move location for their conversation. They go out to the field. And they make a plan. And it involves three arrows. Now, where does it say that?

They make a plan for the third day, the day after tomorrow. And verse 19 and 20, yeah, this plan, I will shoot three arrows, verse 20. Verse 19 says the day after tomorrow.

[7:04] That's the third day. And in verse 20, I will shoot three arrows. Why does it say three? I don't know. Then having made their plan, David remains in hiding.

Jonathan goes back to meet his father at this feast. So Jonathan and David plan is the first thing. So Saul and Jonathan argue is the next thing.

And David's left in the field in verse 24. And it says the king sat down to eat. So this is the new moon festival. I don't know what that would have been like. Maybe you know more about it than I do.

But let's imagine a big feast. And we have something about day one. And we have something about day two. We never actually get to day three because Jonathan gets very angry and leaves the feast.

However, on day three, we have David and Jonathan who meet up in order to part. And that happens in verse 35. In the morning, Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting with David.

[8:10] And they end up, sadly, saying goodbye to each other. So those are the sort of three scenes. David and Jonathan planning. Saul and Jonathan arguing. David and Jonathan parting.

And there's another three there. Verse 41. David bowed down before Jonathan three times. So the way it's told is there's threes embedded in it.

So we'll look at David and Jonathan in planning. There's David running away. There's Jonathan who isn't the king. Saul and Jonathan arguing. So there's Saul who has his spear.

And he's not going to be king either. And the question, I suppose, is where's Jonathan standing in all this? Because his father is king. His friend is sort of king-designate.

And there's a little bit of a question how Jonathan is going to react to this, isn't it? And the third thing, David and Jonathan parting. And there's tears. Okay. So that's, does that make sense,

setting the scene?

[9:14] That's where we're going. Three scenes. And before we just launch into it, please notice the mood of this chapter. It's not a calm chapter. In verse 1, David is indignant, isn't he?

What have I done? Well, what's my crime? How have I wronged against your father that he's trying to kill me? You know, there's agitation and alarm there, isn't there? And then Jonathan expresses agitation.

Verse 2, never. God forbid. Certainly not. What are you talking about? And then he says the same thing in verse 9. Never. No, that's not going to happen.

So there's, you know, it's not a calm chapter. It includes deception, actually, doesn't it? Tell your father I'm off to Bethlehem. I'm not off to Bethlehem. But I'm going to be hiding around to find out what he says.

But it's got deception in it, hasn't it? And it's got anger in it. Verse 30, Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and said, you son of a perverse and rebellious woman. What are you doing?

[10:18] Telling me that sort of thing. How is that going to end up with you in your life? What are you talking about? You see this anger there, isn't it? And then Jonathan gets angry. How dare you treat my friend like that? Call yourself a king.

You see, it's really sort of quite agitated, isn't it? And there's violence. I don't know whether you ever got on well with your dad or whether you do get on well with your dad.

But has your dad ever tried to kill you by holding a spear at you? Because that's what happens in verse 33. Saul hurled his spear at his son Jonathan to kill him. You stupid boy!

Get out! Like that. I mean, that's... It's not calm, is it? And then at the end, in verse 41, David got up from the south side of the stone and bowed before Jonathan three times with his face to the ground. They kissed each other and wept. And there's these grown men who sort of hug each other. I'm not going to see you again. You mean so much to me. You know, there's a lot of emotion there, isn't there?

[11:23] So it's a... And another thing which I think is there, that there's lots of times that the Hebrew expresses a sort of... You know that in Hebrew, when you double something, it means you really mean it.

Like, dying, you will die. You will surely die. And there's a lot of that in here. I'll just give you one example of it. In verse 6, David earnestly asked my permission.

Asking, he asked my permission. And there's... I won't bore you with all the times that it's... There's repetitions to give emphasis to the different things that people say.

And notice one of the things that is going on behind it is this matter of love. There's two words for love. Two words used here.

One of them is a choosing love. It is like you would also use it for the love of a wife and husband. And that is in verse 17.

[12:28] Just notice there's three here. Jonathan made David reaffirm his oath out of love for him because he loved him as he loved his own soul.

That's a very strong statement, isn't it? Of love. Of one man for another. A deep love.

It's three times. Out of love for him. For he loved him as he loved his own soul. As a choosing love. And there's also a love which has this commitment aspect to it because the choosing love spills over or expresses himself as a committing love.

So it's worth really noticing this. So when it was said, verse 17, out of love for him because he loved him as he loved himself, what has previously happened is Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David.

A covenant is like a, I don't know, a contract, an agreement, a relationship, a bonding relationship written out in words or expressed in definite provisions.

[13:47] And what you do with a covenant, you don't write it and sign it. You cut it. I won't stop to explain why you cut it, but you do. You cut a covenant. And there is a covenant which has already been cut.

It was cut back in 18.2.4. Worth looking at that, please. 18. Chapter 2. Sorry. Chapter 18, verse 2. From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home.

And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. So that covenant reaches back a few chapters. It's already in existence, but it gets sort of revamped and reaffirmed. And interestingly, Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David along with his tunic, his sword and his belt. Something about clothing, royal clothing being given to somebody else, sort of denoting a conferring of royal status on the person who receives the royal clothing. So that's already happened in chapter 18. But let's come back into chapter 20 and notice that in verse 17, Jonathan, I think it is here, cuts a covenant with the house of David.

[15:04] And in verse 42, this is at the parting, they say, go in peace because we have a sworn friendship.

We have made an oath. We have committed in a serious promise to one another, a sort of unbreakable promise. It's made before the Lord.

It says in the name of the Lord. So we've made it knowing that God is watching. The things we have committed to, God has heard and will hold us to account. So we've sworn friendship.

Now, verse 8. As for you, show kindness to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with you before the Lord.

There is another piece of vocabulary here, which is the love that the covenant commits people to. The Hebrew word is *hesed*.

[16:09] This in English gets translated different ways. A good translation is steadfast love, promised love. Here it's translated kindness.

Not the best translation, I would have thought. Verse 8. As for you, show me steadfast, promised love to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with yourself.

And I can't really emphasize how important this theme in the chapter is. And actually, it's a theme in the spiritual life. Steadfast love. The steadfast love of the Lord lasts forever.

It's a strongly dependable love. A love that will not let me go even when I'm in a hole and don't deserve to be rescued.

That's a great sort of love, isn't it? Abraham, I think I'm correct in saying, says this to Sarah, his wife, when he says, I'm in a hole here. Here I am in Pharaoh's court.

[17:12] He's going to kill me. Please, can you help me in this? Show me steadfast love and say that you're my sister. You know, dig me out of this hole because I just need somebody I can depend on.

That's the sort of love that's talked about here. And it's actually not just these characters. It comes from the God who's behind the whole story.

When God is asked, or is requested of him that he says who he is, he says this, I am the Lord, abounding in steadfast love.

And that's just a wonderful thing about the Lord God, that he is full of this stuff, steadfast love. The sort of love that when he's got somebody in covenant with himself, if they're in a hole, count on me, says the Lord, I'll dig you out.

You know, even if you're silly enough to have got into that hole through your own stupid fault, my steadfast love will not let you go. And I think that's an amazing thing.

[18:20] And if that's all you remember, just remember that about the living God who abounds in steadfast love. Anyway, with that in mind, let's come and look at the story. So it starts off with David believing that Saul is trying to kill him.

Now he's quite right in believing that, but Jonathan isn't convinced. And David then starts up saying, you know, what have I done? What's going on? Have I done something wrong? You know, have I offended him?

Have I put two sugars in his coffee when I didn't want any sugar? You know, what's going on? What have I done? And this is, you notice that Jonathan says, now that's not true.

No, come off it. My dad won't do that to you. But in verse 3, David took an oath. So here's one of the first oaths in this chapter, or the first oath. A first repetition as well.

Your father knows very well, knowing, your father knows knowing that I have found favor in your eyes. And has said to himself, Jonathan must not know this or he'll be grieved.

[19:24] And actually, Jonathan, as the Lord lives, and as surely as you live, there is just a step between me and death.

And you notice that's what he's swearing. He's not swearing friendship here. He's swearing, I'm really in a hole here. And I think perhaps it's worth stopping and thinking about spiritual realism, about risk or threat.

I think David's right to be fearful. I think he would be foolish to say, oh well, it'll all blow over. The Lord will protect me.

It doesn't matter what I do really. He's wise enough to realize he's got a problem. And I think perhaps that's a little thing for us to realize that there are risks and issues in the Christian life. And not to say, oh well, it'll all be okay. But to say, I need help with this. I need to pray about this. I need to be careful about this. For example, in Romans 11.20, he says, don't be arrogant, but tremble.

[20:45] Or in another place it says, he who is proud, take heed lest he fall. Something like that.

You know, I can cope with all this. It's not a problem. Not always the right attitude. Here's something I do need to pray about.

Here's something I need to be careful of. Here's something I need to do something about. So I think he's got some spiritual realism. However, having said that, he says there's just a step between me and death.

I mean, he might have said there's just like a cigarette paper between me and death. Just a step. Or it might say my life hangs by a thread. But the thread never broke.

The step, the lethal step was never taken. The Lord did protect him. But he was right to say, I'm in a place of risk. The Lord, and Daniel took us, I think it was last week, through the way that the Lord protected David.

[21:51] Sometimes in an obvious way. Sometimes in a supernatural way. Sometimes in a very peculiar way. The Lord did protect him. But the risk was real. And for Christian people, we live in an ongoing spiritual battle.

And we're told to be mindful of that. And we're told to put on armor, aren't we? We're not to go just blasé in our lives, fighting the devil in our own strength, thinking that we can manage.

Put on the full armor. You know, faith, obedience, trust in God's word, prayer. All these sorts of things are important in our situation.

Anyway, David and Jonathan are planning. David said, I'm at risk. And Jonathan says, that can't be right. Because the father reveals everything to his son.

Now where does he say that? In verse 2, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without letting me know. Actually not true. True of Jesus, of course.

[22:59] The father showed him everything. I just reflect on a father-son relationship. What would have been nice if it were for Jonathan and Saul but wasn't, is actually really fulfilled in the father-son relationship of Jesus and his heavenly father.

Now David says, the reason Saul doesn't say anything, because he knows that you and me are together on these things.

And that's why he wouldn't tell you. But let's put it to the test. So Jonathan says, whatever you want me to do, I'll do for you. And David makes up this plan.

So verse 5, David said, look, tomorrow is the new moon feast. I'm supposed to dine with the king, but let me go and hide in the field until the evening of the day after tomorrow. If your father misses me at all, tell him, David earnestly asks me permission to hurry to Bethlehem, his hometown, because an annual sacrifice is being made there for his whole clan.

Now if your father says, oh, that's good, then your servant is safe. And the word used there is peace. It's a sort of stronger word, isn't it?

[24:16] If your father says good, then that's peace. Well, amen to that. That would be great. But if, and there's another doubling here, if he gets angry, if he loses his temper, you can be sure that he is determined to do evil to me, to harm me.

So he proposes that test. David will be absent. Jonathan is asked to tell this story. I'm not quite sure that it's a lie. It's certainly not true.

But David is saying, now, can you tell, you know, set this situation up? Peace, if Saul is good with it. Dangerous, Saul is angry. And David says, now, don't let me down on this.

Will you please do this for me? Verse 8. As for you, show kindness to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with you before the Lord.

If I'm guilty, kill me yourself, or I hand me over to your father. So David is calling on the chesed of Jonathan. Don't let me down. Help me out on this.

[25:25] And we'll just stop and think of the chesed of the Lord Jesus towards us. He didn't lie for us.

He died for us, didn't he? Help us out of this hole. Yes, says the Lord Jesus, count on me. I will not lie for you, but I will die for you.

That's wonderful love, isn't it? Love that I don't deserve. Steadfast love. Strong love. Committed love. That's amazing. I'm so grateful for that.

I'm sure we all are. So Jonathan says to David, count on me. I will let you know. Verse 9. If I had the least inkling that my father was determined to harm you, wouldn't I tell you?

So they, now then, how are we going to sort this out? How will, who will tell me if your father answers you harshly? And Jonathan says, let's go out into the field. So they go out together. Then Jonathan said to David, I swear by the Lord, the God of Israel, that I will definitely find out, sound out my father by this time, the day after tomorrow.

[26:41] That's the third day. If he is good towards you, if he is favorably disposed towards you, will I not send word and reveal it to you? But if my father intends evil to you, may the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely.

If I don't share that with you and tell you, be open with you, reveal it to you and send you away in peace. There's the word peace again. Okay, so he says, count on me.

I will help you out. And then we start looking towards the future. Verse 14, show me, you show me the unfailing kindness.

That's the hesed word again. Like the Lord's kindness. That's the hesed word again. As long as I live so that I will not be killed. Now, why is he bringing this up? Because he knows that for sure David will be king.

He trusts God's word in that. And he also knows that when David is king, he, Jonathan, will be a living threat to the throne of David.

[27:45] Because that's what they used to do. If you had people who were in line for the throne, but you were on the throne, the people who were in line to the throne, you just killed them off.

And Jonathan is saying, I know you're going to be king, but please don't kill me off. And please don't kill off my children and my children's children.

Now, kings would normally do that pretty ruthless, eh? But he said, please don't do that to me. And to be sure of that, we have a covenant. And keep that covenant. And show me hesed, steadfast love, and not kill me.

And, verse 15, do not ever cut off your kindness from my family. From my seed, I think is what it says. Not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth. Don't treat me as an enemy or my children as an enemy. Because we have a covenant between us. And that is not going to be broken. So that's the future.

[28:45] I and my family count on you. I will not claim the throne. My and my family will be potential enemies. But you are promising hesed for the far distant future. And notice Jonathan's faith.

I know you'll be king. I know you'll be king one day. And I'm thinking, how things will be on that day? I want to be safe on that day. Let's put something in place now that means, on that great day, when you deal with your enemies, I'm going to be safe.

Protect me when you come into your kingdom. That's what the thief on the cross said to Jesus, isn't it? He said, Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom.

That's a proper Christian thing to say, isn't it? Lord, one day you're going to be king. Lord Jesus, you're going to be king over all the earth. And reign and defeat all your enemies. Lord, remember me.

I've called on you here and now. I've put my trust in you here and now. Remember me on that great day. And Jesus said, do you remember what Jesus said to the thief on the cross?

[29:51] Well, actually, today you'll be with me in paradise. What a wonderful, kind promise of the Lord Jesus, wasn't it? Today, you thief, you terrorist, whatever you've done, whatever you've done, yeah, I'll remember you.

You'll be with me in paradise. Great promise, isn't it? And, you know, it might not seem so intense today, but there'll be a day for all of us when that promise will be intensely real.

Jesus saying, today, you'll be with me in paradise. paradise. And, you know, I could ask you, couldn't I, have you got that sort of thing going with the Lord Jesus?

That you've asked him that? That you've settled that matter? That you've said to him, I do want to be right with you on this. I want us to be in a covenant together that I know.

I want to hear you tell me even now on that day, I will be with you in paradise. It's not so difficult to get into that relationship with Jesus. He's very willing to enter into such an agreement.

[31:06] But you have, it's not automatic. You do need to ask him about it. And if you haven't done so, please do so without delay. So David, so another thing about what Jonathan is doing here, he's laying down his own claim to the throne in favor of the true and chosen king.

I suppose Jonathan could have done it a very different way, couldn't he? He could have said, actually, David, you know, I think you're great with the sling and arrow and all that sort of stuff.

And I really, I've got all your CDs. But, actually, I'd like to be king. I'd like to be king.

And you're the blockage in this. And maybe Jonathan would say, okay, well, I think my dad's got a fair idea on this, actually. You are a blockage.

And I don't want you to be king. But he doesn't say that, does he? He says, I could be king. But I lay down my right to that.

[32:08] You're king. I'm happy with that. It's not me being king, but you being king. And, you know, that is just the same movement of faith as becoming a Christian, isn't it?

It's saying, up to this point, I've been king, queen, over my own life. I've done exactly what I wanted. I've chosen, you know, and I'm the special person in the middle of my life, and everything happens to do to suit me.

I'm king. And coming to a point of saying, Jesus, actually, you're the true son of David. You're the one who deserves to be king.

And I relinquish my crown to you. You're the king of my life. That's very simple, isn't it? But actually, it's very profound.

Because at that point, you're saying to the Lord, I want you to be in charge of my life. Whatever that means, whatever that costs, whatever the implications, I fully accept all of that because I want you to be king.

[33:20] And you could put it in terms of not just a one-off decision, but of a whole lifestyle. What is the direction of your life? Jesus puts it this way.

He says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these other things will be added. And somewhere, maybe I'm going to repeat myself, but I mean, that does have applications, doesn't it?

Be in charge, Lord, of my future. Be in charge of my relationships. Be in charge of my possessions. Be in charge of my ambitions.

Be in charge of everything. I give it to you. You make of it what you will. Let's move on. So they come, so how are we going to know the response?

Well, this is the plan now. Where have we got to? I got to verse 15. Verse 16 says, Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, may the Lord call David's enemies to account.

[34:34] And Jonathan made David reaffirm his oath, swear, out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself. Then Jonathan said to David, tomorrow is the new moon feast.

You'll be missed because your seat will be empty. The day after tomorrow, towards evening, go to the place where you hid when this trouble began. Wake by the stone, Ezell.

I will shoot three arrows, there's three, to the side of it as if I was shooting at a target. And I take a little boy with me and say to him, go and find the arrows. And if I say to him, this way, this way, the arrows are on this side of you.

Bring them here, then come, because as surely as the Lord lives, it is peace. It is safe. There is no danger. But if I say to the boy, further away, that way, beyond you, then that will be sort of a code, isn't it?

You must go, because the Lord has sent you away. And about the matter you and I discussed, remember the Lord is witness. It doesn't actually have the word witness. The Lord is between you and me forever.

[35:41] So, here's the arrow code, there's the target. If the arrows go over the top, far away, then you're sent away. If they come near, it's peace and come back.

So, that's the code and that's all set up. So, let's see what happens now. You understood that, didn't you? That was fairly obvious, isn't it? Verse 24. So, now we move to this, the new moon feast came and the king sits down to eat and on day one, David is absent.

So, Saul, let's get this right, David hid in the field when the new moon feast came. The king sat down to eat. He sat in his customary place by the wall opposite Jonathan and Abner sat next to Saul but David's place was empty.

Just like to sort of visualize that. You know, you go to, like we did, the sportsman and we're sort of lined up in rows and somebody is sitting there with a place for his spear.

You know, is there a spear holder? Have you got a spear holder? Oh yeah, here we go. There's a spear. I can just imagine sort of sitting down to eat with somebody who's got a spear already. That's how it was here. Okay. Saul said nothing that day for he thought something must have happened to David to make him ceremonially unclean.

[37:02] Surely he's unclean. Second day, second day of the month, David's place was empty again and Saul says to his son Jonathan, why hasn't the son of Jesse come to the meal? Notice he doesn't call him David, he just calls him the son of Jesse.

Why hasn't he come to the meal either yesterday or today? So, David's absent, Saul asks why and Jonathan tells the story. David earnestly asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem.

He said, let me go because our family is observing a sacrifice in the town and my brother has ordered me to be there. If I have found favor in your eyes, let me go to see my brothers.

That is why he has not come to the king's table. So, he tells the tale and what is Saul's reaction?

Well, he goes through the roof, doesn't he? Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, you son of a perverse and rebellious woman, don't I know that you have sided, you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame than the shame of the woman who bore you?

[38:08] As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now, send someone to bring him to me because he is a son of death. I mean, he does go over the top, doesn't he?

I mean, he's really annoyed at this. I don't know why he has to be so disrespectful to Jonathan's mother but he is. I mean, it's just going all over the place.

This is, so he's got his spear and he's full of hot anger. There's a sort of heat word there. Verse 30, his anger flared up.

He had hot anger and then Jonathan says, why should he be put to death? What has he done? Jonathan asked his father and Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him.

Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David and Jonathan got up from the table and then hot anger, in fierce anger, on that second day of the feast because he was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David.

[39:08] So, actually, Jonathan now has no doubts as to his father's attitude and he's angry too and he's angry at the shameful treatment of Messiah because that's who David is.

He's the Messiah, isn't he? He's the Christ. He's the anointed one. I mean, he's in hiding but this is how the Messiah is being treated and Jonathan is indignant about it and of course what happened is that Saul is now filled with this anger, murderous anger against David.

He is seeking to kill the anointed one and far from being the king who crushes the snake he's sort of turned into the snake himself, hasn't he?

It's a really strange what's the word? Reversal contradiction. I suppose Christians can do that too for moments can't they?

Remember Jesus saying to Peter get behind me Satan you're thinking the wrong way you're going on the opposite side when the snake becomes the king you really have got problems.

[40:30] Anyway, Jonathan and Saul argue. Saul knows that David stands between him and his plans and he is intent on murdering the Messiah to stop the plans of God and if you put it like that it seems a remarkably stupid policy, doesn't it?

Is it not pointless to fight against God? In Psalm 2 the kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers against the Lord and his anointed let's get rid of their chains let's bring God down and the one who sits enthroned in heaven laughs.

You know what a stupid idea to think that you can stop the plans of God to think that you can fight against God and have got the slightest chance of anything apart from just being humiliated.

I mean what is Saul up to? It is stupid isn't it? It's pointless. And I'd just like to encourage us not to take on that same pointless policy that we should be saying well I'm not going to fight against your will Lord I'm not going to fight against your plans I'm going to accept your will and your plans I mean would we say this I'd rather be within God's will than against God's will I'd rather be in a difficult employment in God's will than in an easy well paid employment if it was not God's will I'd rather be in a little church like this one where everybody has to pull their weight if it's

God's will than to be in a big fantastic church where everything's done for you if it was not God's will I'd rather be in the committed relationships that I'm in if it's God's will than to break those chains if it's not God's will yeah I want my life to be in line with God's will not fighting against him I'd rather be stuck with this illness or this condition in God's will than be full of health and vitality if it's not God's will because in God's will he works all things together for good for those who love God that's a safe place to be isn't it so let's see what happens after this so

[43:33] Jonathan gets up from the table in fierce anger verse 34 on that second day of the feast he did not eat because he was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David so now we're on the third day in the morning Jonathan went out things happen on the third day don't they have you noticed anything else that happened on the third day a big thing that happened because I can think!

of something in! the morning! Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting with David he had a small boy with him he said run and find the arrows I shoot as the boy ran he shot an arrow beyond him when the boy came to the place where Jonathan's arrow had fallen Jonathan called out after him further away beyond you over there go and then he shouted!

hurry quickly don't stop now the boy picked up the arrow and returned to his master the boy knew nothing about all this only Jonathan and David knew Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and said go back to town after the boy had gone David came out from the south side of the stone and bowed down to Jonathan three times there's a three David emerges from hiding he bows down three times and they kiss other it isn't actually but I guess they're thinking that David got up from the south side of the stone bowed before Jonathan three times interesting the mutuality of this David's going to be the king but several times David refers to him as Jonathan's servant so there's a mutual humility here he falls to the ground before Jonathan three times with his face to the!

and they kissed! and wept but David wept the most I don't think I can capture that scene maybe you can imagine it the emotion of this meeting which is going to be their parting so there's tears and David leaves and off he goes and he's fleeing and I think we'll be finding that word again fleeing escaping that's what David's going to be experiencing from now on and Jonathan just goes back home but even as they part the covenant that binds them together remains so I've just put that red mark to show a covenant that binds them together and there the chapter ends but I'd like us just for one moment to go ahead in history and go to the future when David has come to the throne and on the scene is

Jonathan's son Mephibosheth who accidentally got dropped when he was a baby damaged his leg walks with a limp is lame so I just tried to draw that he's lame and in that future situation he's very much at risk because he's one of the people who would get wiped out if David did things the way

that kings normally did with their rivals and enemies he's helpless but Mephibosheth this lame helpless guy is actually safe because he's caught up in a covenant made by two other people several chapters before I don't know was it before he was even born I didn't work out the arithmetic but let's say for the sake of argument before he was born there was a covenant to keep him safe even though he might otherwise be regarded as the king's enemy and he's safe

[47:27] I'm not going to ask if there are any other people here who are descended from Jonathan or Mephibosheth because that would be a real stretch of your ancestry subscription but I don't think that's the important question the genetic link between beneficiaries of the covenant is certainly there in the old testament but it seems to me that when we come into the new covenant that's what Jesus brings the new covenant it doesn't work by genetics it works by another link not looking on your birth certificate to say am I descendant of Jonathan what it says is do I have faith in Jesus and it's those who are of faith who are the children of Abraham as it were and there is a covenant where you could use that expression there's certainly an agreement made between two people made between Jesus and the father if I can put it that way and here's a little extract from it there's much more than this but Jesus says here's an agreement all the father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me

I will never drive away I will raise them up at the last day and that's a if you like a covenantal agreement the father and the son have agreed together the father says if I give those people to Jesus they will come in faith to him and whoever comes in faith to Jesus will never be driven away and Jesus is tasked and has promised and has undertaken to raise those people on the last day and not lose a single one that's security isn't it that's security and it's not based on us it's made by the people who made the covenant before we were even born we're if you like mephibosheths lame unable to move to Jesus unable to survive without help there's us but we're caught up in this love this covenant of committed love which brings peace to us and security it was made elsewhere it was made a long time ago it was made in Jesus that security is something worth having is it not amen a long