

What Have I Done?

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Date: 29 March 2026

Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0 : 00] 1 Samuel 29. Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek,¹ and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

! Aphek said to the princes of the Philistines, Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me these days or these years?

And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me. But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him. So the princes of the Philistines said to him, Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary.

For with what could he reconcile himself to his master if not with the heads of these men? Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying, Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands?

Then Achish called David and said to him, Surely as the Lord lives, you have been upright and you're going out and you're coming in with me in the army. It is good in my sight.

[1 : 29] For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me.

Nevertheless, the lords do not favor you. Therefore return now and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.

So David said to Achish, But what have I done? And to this day, what have you found in my servant, as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

Then Achish answered and said to David, I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come with you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart.

So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel. The word of God for the people of God.

[2 : 35] Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever. Let's pray.

Lord, we trust your promises. In this life, in this world, we do groan. We do mourn. We do fail. We are weak. But your joy comes in the morning.

We long for that day, Lord, when you will come in glory and in power, riding on the clouds with the host of heaven's army, the commander, Jesus Christ, the King of kings.

And until that day, Lord, we trust that you will preserve us by your Holy Spirit, by the righteousness of Christ. Your active obedience that you secured applied to us, your people, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Please do that, Lord, even through this faulty ministry of the word. I pray that your spirit will take the scripture and the truth of the gospel and the plan of redemption that you fulfilled and apply it to your people, this church today, Lord.

[3 : 46] For your glory we ask. Amen. Linguists use a helpful term.

Lexical stress. It's the relative emphasis or prominence given to a specific word within a sentence to distinguish that word from others.

Consider this sentence from verse 8. What have I done? Question mark. It can take on three different meanings based on emphasis.

For example, maybe some of you teenagers here in a soccer practice or jujitsu or maybe a class in school or maybe just as siblings, you all had to share in a consequence that everybody had to now do because of one or two troublemakers.

You might say, what have I done? Or maybe some of you are preparing a dish for our potluck tonight after the baptism and if you're like me that earlier this week you accidentally put in the wrong ingredient for one of the parts, you might say, what have I done?

[5 : 05] Or maybe you realize that you have hurt someone very badly. Your conscience asks you in silence, what have I done?

This question David asks of himself in this chapter and God's spirit asks that question of each of us from this chapter. With God's help I've been praying that he would cause us to understand the significance of the problems here at this point in redemptive history and even more than the problems to understand God through how God deals with it.

Look at verse 1. Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek. They're not in Jezreel yet. It's leading up to that.

And the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. So the Israelites are there and the Philistines are on their way.

Aphek we've heard this before. If we go all the way back to the fourth chapter of 1 Samuel Aphek was the place where the Philistines had first killed 4,000 Israelites and then to make matters worse with Saul trying to take things into his own hands or I'm sorry it was before Saul before Saul was even appointed the Israelites just wanted to do things their way.

[6 : 36] They wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant as their little war token and see if God would bless that and instead 3,000 foot soldiers of the Israelites were slain.

The Ark was captured and then remember the bad news comes back that Eli died when he heard about all of this happening and his failure and then one of his daughter-in-laws named her son Ichabod which means the glory of God has departed.

So by using this name of a place Aphek where the Philistines are passing through on their way to the battle we're reminded of this. In chapter 28 that we saw last time we were in this book is a very dark story leading up now it's not Eli and it's not all of Israel you know trying to manipulate God it's the king that God gave them a king of their own choosing like all the other nations Saul going to consult a medium like all the other nations do and it's said in contrast with chapter 29 side by side so that we can see a difference between these two kings Saul the outgoing king and David the incoming new king what will become of each of these two men in chapter 28 David was marching with the enemy at the beginning of the chapter you remember that and then it flashes to Saul from his perspective and we're left in suspense what's going to happen now with David he was stuck there we know from chapter 28 the glory of God departed from Saul

Saul got nothing no response from God God was silent toward him so he consults with the medium and God still prophesies judgment because the glory of God had departed from Saul but we're left wondering coming into chapter 29 has the glory of God also departed from David and is there no hope in any king that David David nor Saul can bring this to the nation maybe God's glory has departed completely from this nation we read in chapter 29 verse 2 our sermon passage for today the lords of the Philistines lined up some translations say the princes of the Philistines you remember the Philistines were a coalition of five city states that would work together but they didn't seem to want to submit one to another and they would keep each other in check most likely it's the entire nation joining along with King Achish they lined up by hundreds and by thousands this is why Saul is trembling and had that great fear in his heart but we read an interesting detail in verse 2 that David and his men where did they line up it says they lined up at the back in the rear with Achish in Bible study this was really helpful to clarify if you go back to chapter 28 look at verse 2 why is David this mercenary lined up at the back with the king with King Achish wouldn't it make sense to send this foreigner who's going to fight fellow Israelites out in front let's put him to the test first let's see if he really fights and then we got him flanked and if he's going to betray us we slaughter him along with all of

Saul's army but in God's providence chapter 28 verse 2 God had already caused Achish to appoint David to be his bodyguard to watch over his head do you remember that and so there's David now at the back the end of the line the end of the procession not having to go and be the front runners in verse 3 we read then the princes of the Philistines said what are these Hebrews doing here think about it from their perspective wait a second King Achish you see the foolishness in what you're doing here you're sending us out first then here's David with his 600 men plus all these mighty men that have been fleeing all the way to Ziklag what if David turns on us he's going to flank us now we're going to be trapped in the middle of this horrible confrontation with Israel this is not wise

there's no way we are doing that Achish says this is David the servant of King Saul of Israel yeah I'll acknowledge that but he's been with me all these days no it's been all these years now he's saying [10:56] I've tested him I've proved him he defected to me and I find no fault in him that's the first time Achish declares David's innocence in verse 4 the princes of the Philistines are angry make this fellow return that we may go back he may go back to Ziklag don't let him go down to battle with us lest in the battle he will become our adversary literally the word for adversary in Hebrew you know what this is Satan they're accusing David of being their Satan their adversary for with what could he reconcile himself to his master Saul you just Achish you just said Saul is David's real master if not with the heads of these men so the princes are saying he's remember what he did with Goliath's head he presented that back to King Saul as a trophy of war he's going to do that with our troops now our hundreds and thousands that are going out that's the only way he can gain back the favor of being an Israelite how else could he do this in verse 5 is this not David who slayed his ten thousands these same Israelites dancing singing mocking us for their great victory this is that same man and those were my brothers and my cousins that he took their lives he's going to do that next well that's from the

Philistines perspective now from David's perspective he's got himself into this situation if you'll remember because his relationship with Achish has always been based on manipulation and deceit first time he encountered Achish he pretended to be crazy he let drool and run down his beard and now he's been lying to Achish all along he's been going out and attacking the Amalekites and other people that are probably part of their caravans and going back and forth and he's bringing loot back and profit back to Achish and now they've established this relationship where David is successful but it's based on lies oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive David began this relationship with lies and the longer the relationship goes on the more entangled he becomes in this web of his own lies from David's perspective it's understandable to wonder have I spoiled

God's plan have I messed up God's promises will David die now with Saul and get the just judgment he deserves is this the end for David for Saul is this the end of God's favor on an entire nation is this the end of the plan of God's redemption what have I done well in verse 6 Achish called David and swore an oath surely as the Lord lives we don't know whether Achish knew Yahweh but the writer of the scripture knows Yahweh and it's breathed out by the spirit and he's appealing to David's God you David Achish says have been upright and you're going out and you're coming in with me in the army is good in my sight remember that phrase it was when after David defeated Goliath

Saul kept promoting him and David would go out and come in victorious and go out to fight and come back victorious over and over now it's that similar relationship but not with the king of Israel with the king of Saul's enemies the Lord blessed David his chosen servant even in exile just as God has a pattern of doing this doesn't he think of how God blessed Jacob even when he was in Laban's house how he blessed Moses and Joseph when they were in the palace of Pharaoh why does God do this he blesses his anointed servants even in exile it's not because any one of those servants is deserving but it's to accomplish God's decree what God has purposed from eternity past so to speak and that's to redeem a people for himself ultimately through his son our Lord Jesus Christ you see God's providence in this whole situation bringing it up to this point

I'm reminded of the New Testament when Jesus tells us you see who God is God doesn't change it's how he's always been in Matthew 10:29 not even one sparrow one small bird children falls to the ground apart from your father's will but the very hairs of your head are numbered all of them do not fear therefore for you are of much more value than many sparrows our confession of faith on providence chapter 5 paragraph 1 synthesizes what scripture teaches this way God the good creator of all things in his infinite power and wisdom upholds directs disposes and governs all creatures and things from the very greatest even to the least by his most wise and holy providence to the end for which they were created David was created for a purpose despite

[16:44] David's lies despite David's sin despite his failings the Lord would see that David would be directed and disposed and made fit to accomplish that very end for which God created David not because David deserves it because that's who God is and that's how God deals with sinners in this world like you and me well Achish in verse 6 tells David the lords the princes the other rulers of the Philistines don't favor you even though I've declared you innocent in my eyes verse 7 so return now and go in peace that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines what would you do if you

were David you were in the worst dilemma of your life the worst battle tactical layout you could ever mark up on a whiteboard and you just got a free pass you get to go David and my relationship with you stays good

I see you're innocent but it's them it's the lords just go now this tells us a lot about David look at verse 8 to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king that's a confusing response David seems to be complaining about not being made to go fight against his own nation what have I done wrong king Achish haven't I proven myself why can't I go fight against the enemies of my lord the king see David is so cunning and deceptive even we now with the help of the holy spirit and all of the bible completed we don't know what he's meaning here we don't know what he's trying to do doesn't he want to get out of there why does he seem to protest this

I don't have answers to either one of those you're just going to pray about it and you know the Lord can tell us in heaven one day I'm just telling you questions it raises for me it also raises two other questions when he says to fight against the enemies of my Lord the king here are the two questions who is this king he's thinking of and who are the king's enemies I think there's more than one possibility isn't there does David mean that Achish is David's true lord and true king when David uses these lines it's a strategic tool it's shifting throughout this book based on his survival needs and the context he said these words many times and there are several options for what it could mean the first option is what Achish believes he means that yeah he's referring to Achish as his lord and his king and the enemies must therefore be

Saul and the Israelites that's the implied meaning but the second option is to see how else has David used those exact same words and he's used them toward Saul my lord the king he's three times called Saul that already in chapter 24 and then twice in chapter 26 is it my voice or he says it is my voice my lord oh king remember when he yells that with the evidence that he could have taken Saul's life he says let my lord the king hear the words of his servant and if his lord the king is truly Saul then who are Saul's enemies that's who David should be fighting why won't I get to fight my lord the king's David is deceiving them the third option though we have to go beyond our passage and even beyond this book is that

David has a different lord and a different king than either Achish or Saul in Psalm 5 2 David addresses God this way give heed to the voice of my cry my God and my king for to you I will pray and then also in Psalm 145 1 we hear I will extol you my God O king and I will bless your name forever and ever if the Lord God is his king then who are the enemies Achish is just sworn by Yahweh David has a trusting relationship and at the same time Saul is the king that the Lord has anointed for now and that's why he won't take his life so who are the Lord's enemies I also wondered has David ever referred to himself this way as Lord and king and the answer was very clear from all I could tell he has never done that and never did it even after he became king this was interesting to me on

[21 : 55] David's use of words so for example in Psalm 21 1 there's only a couple times and every time he refers to David as the king it's never in your strength O Lord how greatly shall he receive in your salvation he will rejoice Psalm 18 50 God gives great deliverance to his king and shows mercy to his anointed so when he's thinking of himself as king it's always under God always subservient to God the king well I'm going to let some of those questions hang with you as they have with me for now and let's see how the rest of this chapter ends up in verse nine then Achish answered and said to David I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said he shall not go up with us to battle see despite what

David has done his lying and deceiving! Achish he's declared innocent by Achish three different times remember how the princes of the Philistines called David a Satan well here now Achish calls him as an angel from God verse 10 now therefore rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come with you as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light depart even though David seemed to protest and maybe that was just further deception to play it cool and act like he wasn't just so happy to get out of there he still gets this free pass God makes sure that David will not die in this battle and he sent away early in the morning what does this reveal to us about God who rules over all Ephesians 1 11 reminds us that God works all things according to the counsel of his will confession summarizes the teaching of scripture that

God does his will according to his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will to the praise of the glory of God's wisdom God's power God's justice God's infinite

goodness and God's mercy and so in verse 11 David and his men rose early they depart and they return to the land of the Philistines this is the land set apart for them Ziklag appointed for them to live and now the Philistines go on to Jezreel chapter 29 it's a flashback it's before or in parallel to all of those events in chapter 28 and it shows us that from Saul's perspective in 28 he's he's in Jezreel and he knows the Philistines are coming down to fight him and he assumes David with the 600 plus more are on the side of the Philistines and it's doomsday for him and that's what Samuel tells him is going to happen but now based on what we just read David left before the Philistines even descended to Jezreel it gives us more insight on the darkness that Saul was in spiritually that which Saul feared most which led him to consult with the witch turns out to be unfounded David wasn't even with them the Lord delivered David out of this decision how foolish I was how can I deliver myself David had to think but God did it see God is sovereign even over David's weakness over his failures and even his sins God determined to set David on the throne and nothing will deter God from accomplishing what God has decreed God is with David still the glory of God has not departed not because of David but despite David because of God God is the one who will see it through we've reached the end of this chapter and you see how even though it's short in these 11 verses the glory of God shines brilliantly we've revealed the mercy and the providence of a loving father that will accomplish his decree he will fulfill all of his promises it's God's mercy that finds David and saves David again and again and again God's inexhaustible mercy never runs dry it reminds me of Joseph remember when his brothers were trying to you know kill him and send him away and basically his whole life in prison because of their cruelty but God's providence sustained Joseph in Genesis 50 verse 20 Joseph says what you intended for evil God superintended for good through the evil through the brokenness our Lord accomplishes his purposes our confession again in paragraph 2 on providence although all things come to pass unchangeably and certainly in relation to the foreknowledge and the decree of God who is the first cause so that nothing happens by chance or outside his providence yet by the same providence [27 : 30] God orders them to happen according to the nature of second causes either necessarily freely or contingently this is saying that those wicked brothers of Joseph these Philistine princes that are about to go and kill Saul they are the secondary means God used to redirect David to go fight who are his real enemies the ones the Lord had told him to wipe out which we'll read about next chapter even these Philistine pagans the Lord can use to accomplish his decree we read this morning Psalm 30 and we just saw at the end of this chapter early in the morning David is sent out after being in a terrible dilemma and this Psalm is a wonderful anthem when we see the Lord despite us and our weakness and our sin it says you have turned for me my mourning into dancing you have put my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness to the end that my glory may sing praise to you and not be silent oh Lord my God

I will give thanks to you forever some of us today are maybe in that dark spiritual state when is the morning going to come for me when will all of these mistakes and sins and problems that I feel so gravely right now when will they find resolution have I ruined God's plans for my life you may be asking yourself that same question David asked what have I done and it's good to reflect on that that's what God asks Eve in the garden you remember after they sinned the Lord God said to the woman what is this you have done the Lord does that to open up our hearts like a surgeon to cut us open to get to the heart and to expose we have done evil against our Lord we deserve his wrath and judgment the purpose of the

Lord in doing that is so that he can then apply the balm the healing ointment of the gospel of Jesus Christ the enemy wants to accuse us and never let us get healed accusing us of sins we've committed what have you done while the enemy has has no power over us there's a true conviction by the Holy Spirit to think about my life think about my actions 2 Corinthians 7 10 says godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation our confession in chapter 15 paragraph 3 summarizes the gospel response this way when this godly sorrow is being applied to us by the spirit it's a saving repentance in an evangelical grace to us it means that this person is being made sensible by god of the many evils of his sin by the holy spirit and by faith in christ we are brought to humble ourselves for our sins with godly sorrow with detestation of our sin with self abhorrence and we pray for pardon and for strength of grace with a purpose and endeavor by the power of the spirit to walk before god in all well pleasing in all things what have i done for many of us it might be a similar guilt we feel like we've missed so many opportunities for good works and the enemy wants to accuse you have not done enough well ephesians 2 8 and 9 remind us that it's by grace that you have been

saved not by works lest anyone should boast even our best works the scripture teaches they cannot merit the pardon of sin or eternal life from the hand of god why can't our good works secure salvation for ourselves it's because of the great disproportion between our works and the glory to come and the infinite distance between us and god as far as these works are good they proceed from god the holy spirit however as they are performed by us they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of god's judgment we have not done enough we need an alien righteousness and at the same time we have done great evil we deserve just punishment for the sins we've committed our gracious lord god the only king says to you and me no matter what you have done no matter what you have not done look to christ see what he has done for you jonathan pointed out in our bible study the parallels are at least foreshadowing possibly by the supersession of the holy spirit in a previous chapter david stood before the priest and the priest declared david to be innocent and in the morning the priest released david now achish has done the same thing he's declared david innocent even though david is guilty i believe and in the morning he released david and what a great reversal of our lord jesus christ brought before the sanhedrin before pilot our lord jesus truly was innocent yet he was condemned to be crucified after going through trial all night sent to die like a criminal taking the wrath of a wicked man like saul that he deserved we sing of god's grace to us in many of our favorite hymns and songs and spiritual songs nothing can for sin atone nothing but the blood of jesus not the good that i have done nothing but the blood of jesus it's the life of jesus his active obedience that we need to cover all that we have not done and won't do in this life and it's also the precious blood of jesus shed for us on the cross that covers the great evil the sins that we have done in this life we sing what love could remember no wrongs we have done omniscient all-knowing he counts not their sum thrown into a sea without bottom or shore our sins they are many his mercy is more god's mercy found david to save him again and again and because god is mercy he finds you and me for whom jesus christ died and rose to save us he finds us again and again and again may he find you today with his mercy and i invite you on behalf of the church on behalf of christ come come oh sinner come and mourn for he calls your sins his own do you feel the weight of justice served he suffers the wrath that you deserve so come come oh sinner mourn for he bears the curse for all you've done let's thank our lord jesus for his life and also for his death we no longer have to ask ourselves what have i done we can now look to our lord jesus christ and thank him for what god has done let's pray oh lord you are faithful you are merciful you are sovereign over all we praise you for who you are lord and how you've revealed yourself to us so clearly in the gospel of our lord jesus christ we pray that you will apply your truth powerfully lord to us your people for your glory we ask amen