

Davids Great Comfort

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[0:00] Let's turn again just for a little to the chapter that we read in 1 Samuel chapter 18. Read verses 12 to 16 and then in chapter 19 verse 1.

Chapter 18 of 1 Samuel, Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him, but had departed from Saul. So Saul removed him from his presence and made him a commander of a thousand.

And he went out and came in before the people. And David had success in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him. And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him.

But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them. And then chapter 19 verse 1. And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David.

Nobody likes to be taken out of their comfort zone. We like to be where we're familiar. And we like to be with people that we're used to.

[1:13] Generally in life, we prefer things to be normal for us. And I'm sure that all of us, to one degree or another, have experienced times and situations where life has become incredibly uncertain.

All that we're familiar with seems to have sort of gone away for a moment. And the predictability of life as we know it has stopped. And we're just not sure where the next turn is going to take us or what exactly is going to happen next.

And all of a sudden, from what we're familiar with and what we're used to, there is this growing uncertainty and often accompanying it a growing anxiety.

And these are very distressing and very disturbing times. And life can be just for us, can become so difficult.

And when you come and look at the life of David, David's life was like that in the extreme. It was like being on a treadmill that was going ever faster and you just can't get off.

[2:21] Because when you look at David's life in these early days, certainly, his life seemed to be just a continual pattern of being lifted up and then being thrown down.

Of being pulled over to one side and then being thrown over to the other side. Of being greeted one day by people who seemed to be his best friend and then the very next day they become his real enemy.

So that David's life was a life where everything, nothing really seemed what it was. And if David was simply to look at things as they were, not only would he become incredibly confused, he wouldn't know where to look, he wouldn't know who to trust, he wouldn't know what life really was all about.

And so there is this incredible, it's like living in a whirlpool, where you're just being thrown round and round, you feel you're being sucked down, and maybe you're then thrown up. It was a very disturbing and distressing period in his life.

And we see here that David is being hounded by Saul, and Saul is trying to kill him. And yet it tells us something strange is that Saul was fearful of David.

[3 : 39] Because there was something about David's life that Saul didn't have, and Saul couldn't cope with. There was something about David that set David apart from Saul.

And because of the greatness that was in David, the jealousy, the fire of envy that was in Saul's heart, he wanted to destroy and kill David.

And we've got to always remember that envy, jealousy, is one of the worst poisons in this world. The hurt, the devastation, the destruction that envy has caused is quite extraordinary.

Where one person becomes envious of another, whether it is in a home, whether it is in a family, whether it is at work, whether it is in a church, whether it is in a community, whether it is in our leadership and government, wherever envy causes no end of havoc.

And when you look through the Bible, you see so often that people were hounded for no other reason than that one person was jealous of the other.

[4 : 51] And I would say to you, make sure that you guard against that spirit. If ever you find it rising up within you, the spirit of jealousy, ask God to help you to overcome it.

Because it's like a cancer that will destroy you. It eats up the passion who has this within it, this jealousy. And it ate up and ultimately destroyed Saul.

That was, you could almost say that was part of the self-destruct button that was within Saul as he was consumed by this jealousy against David.

His actions became irrational. There was only one thing. His government became distorted. Because all he could focus upon was, I've got to get David.

I've got to destroy David. And so we've got to be very careful that we don't allow this spirit to consume us. Now, I'm not looking this morning particularly at the two different characters, Saul and David.

[5 : 52] And yet, when you look at David's life, despite all the mounting pressures that were on him, and all the way that his own life seemed to be dismantling around him, yet there is a dignity about David.

Yes, he had his times of severe anxiety, times of real stress. There's no question whatever. But there's a sense of greatness and a sense of dignity that characterizes David's life during this period.

While on the other hand, Saul becomes paranoid. He begins to rage. He becomes so unpredictable. And in fact, you don't know with Saul whether his hand is going to be outstretched and welcome or hurling a spear at you.

That's how we find it. But when you look at these two men, you notice that God is with one of them in a very powerful way.

God is with David in a very powerful way. And that is at the heartbeat of the calmness and the dignity and the greatness that's within them. And on the other hand, Saul is somebody who is experiencing the influence of God departing from him.

[7 : 06] where God's influence for good is being withdrawn from Saul. And Saul has been handed over to himself. And ultimately, as Saul is handed over to himself, we find him later on that he begins to dabble in the yoke of, that he wants to, he's replacing what he knew with things.

He's still conscious that he's a spirit and that there is a spirit world. And while he's lost his way with God and God's influence, he still is trying to dabble into the world of the spiritual.

And we see him consulting mediums and so on later on in life. And so we see the two lives going, as it were, in different directions.

And I think we've got to take these things on board and realize the importance of having the blessing of God upon a place and upon a community.

Because there is no question whatever that when we have known God's help and God's grace and God's presence and then we lose that sense of God's favor and blessing on us, there is an incredible difference.

[8 : 28] we live in an age where society in a sense is a meltdown. Communities are breaking up. The old way of people helping one another.

The great way the way that communities were bound together. There was a and it was in the cities. We're not just talking about here. But you here are the older people talking about in the city.

The city, the tenements, all the people knew one another. People shared with one another. There was a bonding. There was a binding. But sadly, society is in meltdown.

And part of it, it is through the collapse of the community. Through the collapse of the family. Through the collapse of the community. And through our turning away from God.

Now, as we look at David's life here and just look at this very, very briefly, we see that David was a man who was all of a sudden he was elevated in life. Everything went for David initially.

[9 : 30] Because he became, it was very obvious, he became the nation's favorite son. I very much doubt that Israel was so passionate about celebrity as we are today.

But if there was any notion of celebrity, there's no question whatever but that David would have been the celebrity of the day. He was the one that the people seemed to be so fond of.

He was a person and we read about it that quite simply the nation loved David. And David, as you can see, that everything seemed to go for him. He was the nation's favorite son and initially he was Saul's favorite son.

That Saul had embraced him as it were into his family. In fact, he became Saul's son-in-law because Saul gave his own daughter to David to marry. So David became royal family.

He was promoted in the army. He became a chief within the army. And he was somebody who was given position. He was given security. He was given everything.

[10 : 36] And there's no doubt whatever that for a while David had all that we would say that people so often wanted. He had fame. He had fortune. He had power. He had influence.

He had all these kind of things. And side with that, he had the security of his own home and his own family and all these great blessings. And in fact, we would say that these blessings, the blessings of...

You know, the greatest blessings of all, I would say, in this life are to have our God as our God and to have the blessing of family and friends.

And David had all these blessings along with all the other things which were added to his life. But it was only for a little because everything that David had, everything that David was given, everything that he received was taken from him.

And we see David's life, if we were to follow on in these chapters, we would see David's life just simply collapse and dismantle. Because everything that was close to him was taken away.

[11 : 51] David, we see in chapter 19, Saul says, you've got to kill David. In other words, David became an outlaw. And when you become an outlaw, you lose every right, every privilege.

You're public enemy number one. Any person was free to kill David. So that meant that David could no longer live at home. So he was going to lose his wife.

He was going to lose his family. He was going to lose his friends. Yes, he had a great friend, Jonathan, who remained his lifelong friend. But yet, they couldn't meet with one another except very rarely, very occasionally, because of Saul's hatred to David.

And David lost all these things. He lost his popularity because the nation turned against him. And you know, it's amazing how people can be influenced one way or another because Saul, and you know, it's the way people often are.

People like to back a winner. And the nation thought Saul was going to win in this against David. And people would have backed Saul. Of course, that's not the way it turned out.

[13:03] But the influence of the nation was against David. So actually, when you look at his situation, having lost his wife, his home, lost everything, we actually find him in chapter 19 running to Ramah, to Saul, not to Saul, sorry, to Samuel, the great prophet, the prophet of God.

And this is almost like David's last resort. I must go to Samuel, the man who anointed me, this great figurehead, this Saul, Samuel, of course, represented the church.

And so there would have been this sense when David arrives at Samuel, at Ramah, oh man, this is great. But of course, word comes to Saul where David is.

And we find that David and Samuel run to Naoth. But even from there, Saul comes with his people to pursue after David, and David has to run away from Samuel.

So it's like his last, his last refuge is gone. The church is gone. His friends are gone. His home is gone.

[14:13] His family is gone. His position is gone. His money is gone. Everything is gone. David now is stripped of everything in this world. And he is now an outlaw where anybody and everybody is free to kill him.

And when you look at that situation, you say to yourself, that is just desperate. Now, as we said, I'm sure there are some people in here today, and your life is not as extreme as David.

But you might be hurting as well. Because in your own personal life, however it is, your life might be dismantling. And you are hurt.

You're hurting. It might be through the death of a loved one. It might be through the loss of a job or the loss of money. It might be through the breakup of some friendship or the breakup of some relationship.

But as far as you are concerned in your own personal world here, you are seeing your own situation breaking up before you. And you're experiencing the pain of it.

[15:16] And you're confused. And you don't really know who to turn to or what to do. That's why I think it's so important to look at David. Because however bad, and I'm not in any way minimizing your own hurt or your own situation today, David's situation was extreme.

What does David do? Well, it's not so much here that we're told. If we go to the Psalms of David, we discover how David dealt with these situations.

because David was at the lowest point of his life. Nowhere, nothing to go. Where does he go? He has nothing. He has nobody at this particular point.

And when you go to the Psalms, you will find that David puts his focus away from everything about him and focuses upon the Lord.

And I would say that the starting point is in Psalm 22. because although Psalm 22 is a messianic Psalm, it's a Psalm that is prophetic about the Lord Jesus Christ, it is also a Psalm penned by David.

[16:29] And David, although he is writing about experiences that go beyond anything that he experienced, yet there are areas and aspects of his own experience in it, but he goes beyond it, way beyond it, and it becomes purely messianic.

But after David gives that cry, which of course Jesus was to cry on the cross, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? We find that David turns his attention and he goes straight and says, yet despite this abandonment and forsakenness, you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

It's there that David views the perfection, the purity, the majesty, what we term the otherness of God.

And you know, if we are to get one little glimpse of this, of what David was able to glimpse and what God's people sometimes are able to glimpse, able to see that otherness of God, able to see him, enthroned in his majesty and in his glory, we look at life completely differently.

We begin to see that we actually compare to God and in the sight of God we're nothing. And we begin to realize that really we are sinners.

[18:03] It's there that we're brought to see our sin. You know, so often in life we don't see it, we can't see it because we, generally we have a reasonable impression of ourselves and a reasonable impression of one another.

And the vast majority, the vast, vast, vast majority of people are good, decent, law-abiding, upstanding people. There's no question about it. That's at a human level.

But we've got to go beyond that because God's word takes us to a level that goes beyond that. And God reveals to us that we're sinners through and through.

And it's when we are given a sight of who God is in his holy majesty that we begin to see that we are sinners and are crying out to him.

And then David goes on to say that where is God? He is enthroned in the praises of Israel or in the praises of his people. Where is God today?

[19:06] He's not in that temple made with hands. He is enthroned. Where is his throne? In the praises, in the heart and in the lips of his people who praise him.

And that is why it is so important that we praise God. And that's why Satan will want to keep you away from praising God. That's why he wants to keep you down and keep your head down and take your focus away from the Lord and to look at how everything's down and everything.

No, my friend, let's look up and let's praise God. Let's thank God. There is so much to praise him for for who he is. For his majesty, his glory, his dominion, his authority, his power, his rule, his government.

For his love, his grace, his mercy, his goodness, his patience, his long suffering. It's never ending the list for which we are able to praise and magnify the Lord.

And then we, the psalm we sung, 139. Again, there's David and David is looking at God's omniscience and omnipresence. He's looking at his wisdom that God is all wise.

[20:13] And David comes to an extraordinary understanding and he says, yes, there's all my enemies and here's me. But David says, you know, Lord, he said, before even a thought comes together in my mind, it's known by you.

And as David begins to think about God's knowledge, he says, you know, when I think about this, he said, this knowledge is too strange for me.

It's too high to understand. In other words, David said, I can't get my head around it. And neither can you or I. But that's how it is.

And so David is focusing upon God's wisdom and also his presence. Take I the morning wings, we sang.

Take I the morning wings and dwell in utmost parts of sea. Supposing I go to the furthest away place from where I am right now. Supposing I go there.

[21:12] Even there, Lord, shall I hand me lead. Your right hand will hold me. And so David's away. God's presence is everywhere.

There's nowhere I can go. But he's there. He's with me. Upholding me. Keeping me. These were all great comforts. And David going on in that psalm, he says, you know, even the darkness is like broad daylight to the Lord.

Nothing hidden to him. Again, we sang in Psalm 61. About God's protection and preservation. When my heart is faint, lead me to the rock that's higher than I.

And a rock is something we may love the sand on a lovely sunny day. And I'm sure we all do. We're surrounded by beautiful beaches here and sometimes it's a wonderful thing to be able on a sunny day or even on a sunset, as the sun sinks at night.

to walk along the sand. But the sand's no use when we want something firm under our feet. That's when we need the rock. And David was in this position and situation because life was like the sand for him.

[22:28] It was crumbling. It was shifting. And he needed the rock. And that's why he looked to the Lord and he says, Lord, you take me because you're my rock. If my feet are on you, then despite the uncertainty and the dangers, you are my security.

He talks about God being his refuge and being his shelter, being his shield. Beautiful words. That's what we want in the danger.

And then if we go to that, probably the best known of all David's psalms, we see that even in his dangers and all that's happening to him, even when he's in death's dark veil, the Lord is my shepherd.

What does a shepherd do? Shepherd tends to his flock. He feeds them, he waters them, he nourishes them, he protects them, looks after them, and that's what David is saying, the Lord is my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me lie down beside the green pasture. He's the one who tends to my soul. Even although there is a shadow of death hanging over, he is the one that will follow me with goodness and mercy all the days of my life.

[23:43] Isn't that wonderful? And that is why it is so important that we come back to God's word and understand who God is in this ever-shifting world.

A world that is becoming more and more uncertain. A world that is crying out for security and yet is feeling ever more insecure.

At various levels. today we are facing financial uncertainty. We face uncertainty at so many fronts and so many levels.

That's why it's so important that we look to the Lord who never changes. May we then seek to put our trust in him and discover like David did that God is able to do in us and for us far and beyond anything that we could even ask or think.

Let's pray. O Lord our God we pray that we may indeed look to the Lord and put our trust in him. That we may seek to believe in him with all our heart.

[24:49] We pray to bless us each one. Bless bless our homes our families bless those who are visiting with us today and to be with those from our own number who are away.

Bless the work of the youth camps at this time and bless all who are on holiday. May the safety and protection of God be known and experienced. Watch over us take us to our home safely.

In Jesus name we ask all. Amen.