

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

I. 1 Samuel: From Samuel To The Death Of Saul

V. Overcoming Impulsively Harmful Reactions To Crises By Heeding God's Biblical Precedents (1 Samuel 21:1-22:23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

When crises arise in our lives, the temptation often rises with them to react impulsively and thus harmfully:

(1) It is currently happening in the realm of our nation's politics: on the October 14, 2016 "The Talk of Connecticut" radio talk show, legendary host Brad Davis mentioned that day's lead story in The Wall Street Journal that noted the great stress the current election is having on American voters. One of his callers, clearly disturbed by it all, politely but movingly told Brad that he was really bothered that the mainstream media is not giving an accurate report about the candidates, that it is often "shaving" the truth to fit their obvious political bias, and that doing so fails to equip voters with the information they need to vote intelligently in the democratic process.

(2) Brad said that due to this upheaval in his listeners over the election, he is hosting a special forum with local influential political, news and talk show personalities to debate the whole matter for the information of his listeners.

(3) We saw this crisis in our Adult Sunday School Class last Sunday: the question of how to vote with any certainty of God's sanction surfaced in the class time, and I myself admitted I was then unsure of how I would vote!

The danger in all of this, as often occurs with any crisis we face in life, is that we can tend to react impulsively to the crisis, to do something rash in the voting booth that results in harm rather than what is good.

Need: *So we ask, "If I face crises in life that tempt me to react impulsively and harmfully, what should I do?!"*

I. When David learned that Saul truly intended to kill him, he fled in impulsive reaction, producing great harm to others and himself, 1 Samuel 21:1-15; 22:6-19:

- A. David reacted to Saul's threat by impulsively lying to the high priest, leading to the slaughter of many priests:
 - 1. After learning of Saul's plan to kill him through the test Jonathan and David had conducted on Saul, David came to the priestly city of Nob to meet with Ahimelech, Israel's high priest, 1 Samuel 20:1-21:1a.
 - 2. Ahimelech was afraid to see David come to him without the army, for his loneliness was unusual and thus foreboding (1 Sam. 21:1b), so in his hurry to flee from Saul with his need for supplies, David impulsively **lied**, telling Ahimelech that he was on a secret mission for Saul and thus needed provisions, 1 Sam. 21:2-5.
 - 3. The high priest believed David and gave him and his men the hallowed bread in the emergency (1 Sam. 21:6) and Goliath's sword that had been kept in the tabernacle after David's defeat of the giant (1 Sam. 21:8-9), but Doeg the Edomite, Saul's head herdsman who was detained at the tabernacle for some Biblical reason (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Samuel 21:7), witnessed this event, 1 Samuel 21:7.
 - 4. Accordingly, Doeg later told Saul of Ahimelech's help to David, so a paranoid Saul directed Doeg to slay Ahimelech and the whole city of priests and their families and animals at Nob, 1 Samuel 22:6-19.
- B. David reacted to Saul's threat by impulsively fleeing to Gath, leading to a threat to his life, 1 Samuel 21:10-15:
 - 1. Fleeing with Ahimelech's provisions, David wanted to make sure that he avoided Saul's reach, so he went to Achish, the king of the Philistine city of Gath, 1 Samuel 21:10.
 - 2. However, Gath was Goliath's hometown (1 Samuel 17:4), so with Goliath's sword strapped to his side, marking him as the giant's slayer (Ibid., ftn. to 1 Sam. 21:10), the servants of Achish noted David was the man of whom Israel's women had sung that he had slain his ten thousands (1 Sam. 21:11 with 18:7), and this exposure of his identity in Gath left David terrified for his life, 1 Samuel 21:12!
 - 3. Since insanity in that era brought a sense of "evil portent" so that the insane were not harmed by others for fear that the gods might be provoked (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 451), David acted as if he were insane, effectively persuading the Philistines not to harm him, 1 Samuel 21:13-15.

II. God then graciously led David into the right path in life that he was to take, 1 Samuel 22:1-5, 20-23:

- A. First, God led David back to the land of Judah where he would be more accessible to Israel's people:
 - 1. David left Gath for the cave of Adullam on Judah's border (Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to 1 Sam. 22:1) where Israel's people began to come to him as they started to shift their allegiance from Saul to David, 1 Samuel 22:1-2.
 - 2. He also moved his family in Judah out of Saul's harmful reach, relocating them in the land of his great grandmother Ruth, the land of Moab, 1 Samuel 22:3-4; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to 1 Samuel 22:3.
 - 3. God's prophet Gad then told David not to stay in Adullam, but to return to Judah, 1 Sam. 22:5.

4. David obeyed God, moving several miles east into the forest of Hareth; Ibid., fn. to 1 Samuel 22:5.
- B. Then, when he learned from Ahimelech's sole surviving son Abiathar that Saul had slain the priests, David admitted that his impulsive lie to the high priest had given occasion for the slaughter of the priests, for David had seen Doeg at the scene, and knew he would give a bad report about Ahimelech to Saul, 1 Sam. 22:20-22.
- C. Acknowledging his error, David had Abiathar stay with his band for protection from Saul, 1 Samuel 22:23.
- III. However, David would have avoided making any impulsive reactions to Saul's threat that produced so much harm had he focused on and acted in line with God's Biblical precedents, 1 Samuel 19:18-24; 7:10:**
- A. 2 Timothy 3:14-7 calls us believers today to heed the precedents of what God has let us learn and become convinced was true as it was taught to us by our godly teachers of our past and ultimately by Scripture.
- B. If we apply this directive to David's case, we note that God had given him sufficient precedents for the crisis he faced so that he would have avoided making any impulsive reactions that led to so much harm (as follows):
1. When he had fled from Saul's effort to kill him in his home in 1 Samuel 19:11-17, David had gone to God's prophet Samuel in Naioth where Samuel and the school of the prophets were used by God the Holy Spirit supernaturally to protect David from Saul's repeat and extensive efforts to kill him, 1 Sam. 19:18-24.
 2. This event in turn fit an earlier precedent of God's use of Samuel in 1 Samuel 7:10 to protect Israel supernaturally from a Philistine attack when Samuel offered up a sacrifice unto the Lord.
 3. Also, God had directed Samuel to anoint David as king in secret without Saul's knowledge in 1 Samuel 16:1-3 under the protective cover of celebrating a sacrifice with David's kinsmen in Bethlehem.
- C. Had David relied on these precedents in facing Saul's threat, he could have avoided a lot of harm:
1. Upon leaving Jonathan, David could have once again gone to see Samuel for help up in Naioth where God could direct him through Samuel to hide in southern Judah like the prophet Gad later told David to do.
 2. Also, as God did at David's anointing, He could have used Samuel to tell David how to get his needed supplies for his flight without lying, but in a way that was hidden from Saul that he not harm anyone else.
 3. In this way, David would have avoided facing danger in Philistine Gath and preserved the city of priests!

Lesson: *David's failure to heed God's Biblical precedents in his life led to his reacting to the crisis of Saul's threat on his life in impulsive ways that proved to be very harmful for others and himself.*

Application: *If facing crises in life, (1) may we trust in Christ to be saved and come under God's "much more" care, John 3:16; Romans 8:32. (2) Then, to react productively to the crises we face, (a) may we recall God's Biblical precedents for us and thus (b) function in alignment with them for blessing!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We noted in our introduction that we may be tempted to take impulsive action in the voting booth over the tumultuous presidential election crisis we face. Yet, in applying this sermon, God has precedents for us both by way of reputable Bible teachers of the past in concert with Scripture in accord with 2 Timothy 3:14-17 to guide us on how to vote, and that without our having to name any candidate or political party from the pulpit (as follows):

(1) First, the current state of affairs was foretold in a dream God gave Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon 2,620 years ago (604 B. C., Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Dan. 1:1 with Dan. 2:1-45), and it was interpreted by the prophet Daniel as follows: (a) four consecutive Gentile kingdoms would rule the nation Israel before God set up His Messianic Kingdom, they being Babylon (gold), Medo-Persia (silver), Greece (bronze) and Rome (iron). (Dan. 2:31-44; Ibid., ftns. to Dan. 2:37-38; 2:39 and 2:40) (b) Each Gentile kingdom, seen as one part of an image of a man that is composed of metals of consecutively declining value, predicted growing deterioration in Gentile kingdoms. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1333) (c) The final iron-mixed-with-clay parts comprise the feet and also the toes, the toes being the Revived Roman Empire of the still future Great Tribulation (Ibid., fn. to Dan. 2:42). The iron and clay mix signals strength mixed with weakness, and the peoples involved staying divided, Dan. 2:42-43. (d) Thus, the **feet** that exist **before** the **toes** of the future Revived Roman Empire of the Great Tribulation era represent what is **today** developing in the Western nations that rose out of the initial Old Roman Empire -- and that includes our nation!

(2) Second, 2 Thessalonians 2:6 claims the Holy Spirit restrains the growth of evil on earth until the rapture of the Church before the Tribulation. (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to 2 Thess. 2:7; C. C. Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, 1973, p. 56-58)

(3) Thus, we believers should vote in a way that best aligns with the Holy Spirit's work of restraining the growth of evil, specifically, voting in favor of the nation's initial strength and social order of its past heritage.

If facing crises, may we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we look to God's Biblical precedents for us for guidance in adjusting to the crises without resorting to impulsively destructive reactions.