

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

CC. God's Use Of Entrapping Trials To Separate Us From Ungodliness

(1 Samuel 29:1-11)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many times people today can feel like they have been trapped by the trials they face:

(1) According to the lead editorial, "State remains in disarray," in the December 31, 2016 Republican-American, Connecticut's residents face such an entrapping trial when it claimed, "Exactly a year ago, this column noted 2015 had been a difficult period for Connecticut. We referenced economic and budget troubles, controversies at the University of Connecticut, and a continuation of the state's 'Corrupticut' reputation. Unfortunately, these issues persisted in 2016 . . . We hope 2017 is better for Connecticut. Indeed, the state of affairs has no place to go but up."

(2) We face it nationally: Veronique De Rugy's op-ed, "An economic wish list for the new year," *Ibid.*, held, "I usually don't feel I can realistically add big, sweeping changes to my list" of new year's resolutions, but "I'm going to dream a little . . . (a) Reform the corporate income tax . . . (b) Repeal the Affordable Care Act . . . (c) Deregulate . . . (d) Drain the swamp by ending all subsidies to private businesses . . . There is so much more to do . . . But I will keep that on my wish list for next year . . ." Ms. Rugy's reference to such commonplace desires we hear from people all the time as being items she as a voter has on a "dream" list indicates how many feel entrapped by such issues.

(3) We face it as believers on the local level: as we will note in the conclusion segment of this sermon, people in our Church along with me have faced trials that have left us cornered in various realms in life.

Need: *So, we ask, "Why do we face trials that leave us cornered in some realm, and what should we do about it?!"*

- I. David became trapped in a big trial due to his own weak faith, 1 Sam. 26:1-25; 27:1-12; 28:1-2; 29:1-2:**
 - A. We before learned that though God had faithfully delivered David from Saul while he stayed in Judah (1 Sam. 26:1-25), David eventually succumbed to his fear of Saul by relocating to Philistine country, 1 Samuel 27:1-4.
 - B. We also learned that while he was in Philistine country, David lived a deceptive life, slaying innocent Gentiles to pretend to be killing fellow Hebrews so as to live at peace with the Philistines, 1 Samuel 27:5-12.
 - C. However, such a way of life led David to be obligated to join his Philistine master in battle even if he fought against Israel, a big trial for David, 1 Samuel 28:1-2; 29:1-2: if David chose to help Israel in the battle, he could be killed by the Philistines, but if he helped the Philistines, he would be fighting against the people God wanted him to rule one day, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 1 Samuel 29:11.
- II. What had FUELED this entrapment for David was another big entrapping trial created by the singing of Israel's women that contrasted David's greater battle prowess to that of Saul's, 1 Samuel 18:6-9:**
 - A. After David had slain Goliath and Israel had subsequently defeated the Philistines, Israel's women had sung of their victories with the lyrics, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," 1 Sam. 18:6-7 KJV.
 - B. These words upset Saul since they left him viewing David as a threat to his throne, so he looked on David with suspicion from that day forward, leading to Saul's many pursuits of David to kill him, 1 Samuel 18:8-9.
 - C. Thus, under prolonged pressure from Saul's pursuits of him, David had finally chosen to relocate to Philistine territory outside of Saul's reach, and this led to David getting trapped to join the Philistines to fight Israel.
- III. However, God had anointed David as a king who would be SEPARATE from SIN unlike Saul or the Philistines, so God had sovereignly let Israel's women sing their provocative lyrics to SEPARATE DAVID FIRST from UNHOLY SAUL and LATER from the UNHOLY PHILISTINES, 1 Samuel 29:3-11:**
 - A. The Philistine lords doubted that David would remain loyal to the Philistine army once he faced battle against Israel (1 Samuel 29:3), and they expressed this doubt based on two reasons of concern, 1 Samuel 29:4-5:
 1. First, the Philistine lords realized that if David switched sides in the battle and slew Philistine soldiers, he could thus be reconciled to Israel's king Saul at the cost of a lot of Philistine lives, 1 Samuel 29:4.
 2. Second, the Philistine lords knew that David he fought against them, he could be their most formidable foe, for they had heard of and recalled the lyrics of Israel's women about David's having slain his ten thousands versus Saul's thousands, 1 Samuel 29:5.
 - B. Though David's Philistine master Achish, one of the Philistine lords, believed David was truly loyal to him, Achish yielded to the wishes of the other Philistine lords for the sake of unity in the Philistine army. He told David to return to his home and not fight in the Philistine battle against Israel, 1 Samuel 29:6-7.

- C. David offered a weak objection to Achish's words to keep him thinking that he was still loyal to the Philistines (1 Samuel 29:8), but Achish insisted that David go home, and Achish told him to leave early the next morning before the other Philistines arose to protect his honor in not appearing to be fleeing from war, 1 Sam. 29:9-10.
- D. Achish's thoughtfulness in making this recommendation about David's early departure revealed he believed David was loyal to him, so, confident he had Achish's trust, David went home the next morning, 1 Sam. 29:11.

Lesson: *Though the lyrics of the song by Israel's women that lauded David over Saul had fueled David's many cornering trials with Saul, God had sovereignly let that song be sung to SEPARATE David as a HOLY future king not only from an UNHOLY king SAUL, but also LATER from the UNHOLY PHILISTINES.*

Application: *If we sense we have been cornered in life by a trial or by a series of trials, may we (1) trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) Then, (a) may we consider the entrapping trial(s) to be divinely allowed to separate us from unholiness or from unholy associations, (b) that we then heed the Lord's lead through His Word to separate from such ungodliness or ungodly associations.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) In regard to the cornering trials we mentioned in our introduction that we face at the state and national levels, the sense of entrapment these trials have brought were allowed by God to drive us believers to shift our confidence away from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of God to come! David was led of God through entrapping trials to part company both with Israel's unholy king Saul as well as with the pagan Philistines, and that in view of his **future** reign as a righteous king, so we believers must shift our focus and confidence from the unholy kingdoms of this world to the coming kingdom of the **Ultimate** Son of David, **Jesus Christ**, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.

(2) In regard to cornering trials we believers personally face at the local level, (a) one of our members two weeks ago told me in Fellowship Hall how relieved he had been when he was so ill that he could not attend the Christmas program in an area evangelical church even though he had relatives who attended there. He relayed how he knew that that evangelical church has held a joint worship service with an apostate church in its town, and he had left such an apostate church's religion upon coming to our Church and learning of the Biblical truth here.

I recalled how others in our Church had likewise withdrawn from that same evangelical church for the same reason, and it "cornered" me in a trial I now face: 2 John 9-10 with Galatians 1:8-9 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 teach we must practice "second degree separation" and part company with believers who violate first degree separation from apostates. If other Christians in our Church have come to see the error of the apostate religion to where they have separated not only from its system in "first degree separation," but also from the compromising evangelical church that has held a joint worship service with the apostate church in "second degree separation," I as pastor of this Church am now "cornered" into guarding their consciences (1 Corinthians 8:1-3) with my conscience (1 Timothy 1:19) in parting from those in the same area compromising evangelical Church in "second degree separation"!

Consequently, I now avoid all gatherings of fellowship that I know that members of that area evangelical church attend in order to heed Scripture's first and second degree directives. The hope is that those in the erring evangelical church will see the error of their way and correct it in defense of the Gospel, 2 Thessalonians 3:15.

(b) Another member recently told me of his concern over an issue regarding "Christian counseling," what we have long taught is the mix of errant secular ideology with some Christian views. When this member expressed his concern, though I have never sought the services of any "Christian counselor," I recalled that every exposure I have had to the unsolicited "ministry" efforts of such parties has produced only unbiblical effects and trouble in my life! Also, Scripture teaches the Bible alone is our sufficient guide for all inner man needs, 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

Thus, regardless of the cost, I now avoid all "Christian counseling" and the ministry of "Christian counselors," and will continue to teach that we must rely on Christ alone, the Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 8:19-20; 9:6), the Word of God personified (Revelation 19:11-16), for His all-sufficient diagnoses and solutions to the problems of the inner man! Scripture and reliance on the Holy Spirit to apply God's Word aright and for the power to live it is sufficient for all our such needs (2 Tim. 3:15-17; Isa. 8:19-20; Rom. 8:3-4).

[In making this claim, we must add that **if** one has **physical** needs, he should seek the help of a **qualified medical physician**. However, if physical issues are not the problem, the problem is one of the inner man that needs to be addressed by the directives of God's Word and Holy Spirit!]

If facing trials that "corner" us, may we (1) trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we heed God's lead to shift our thinking and relationships to greater holiness in line with God's will.