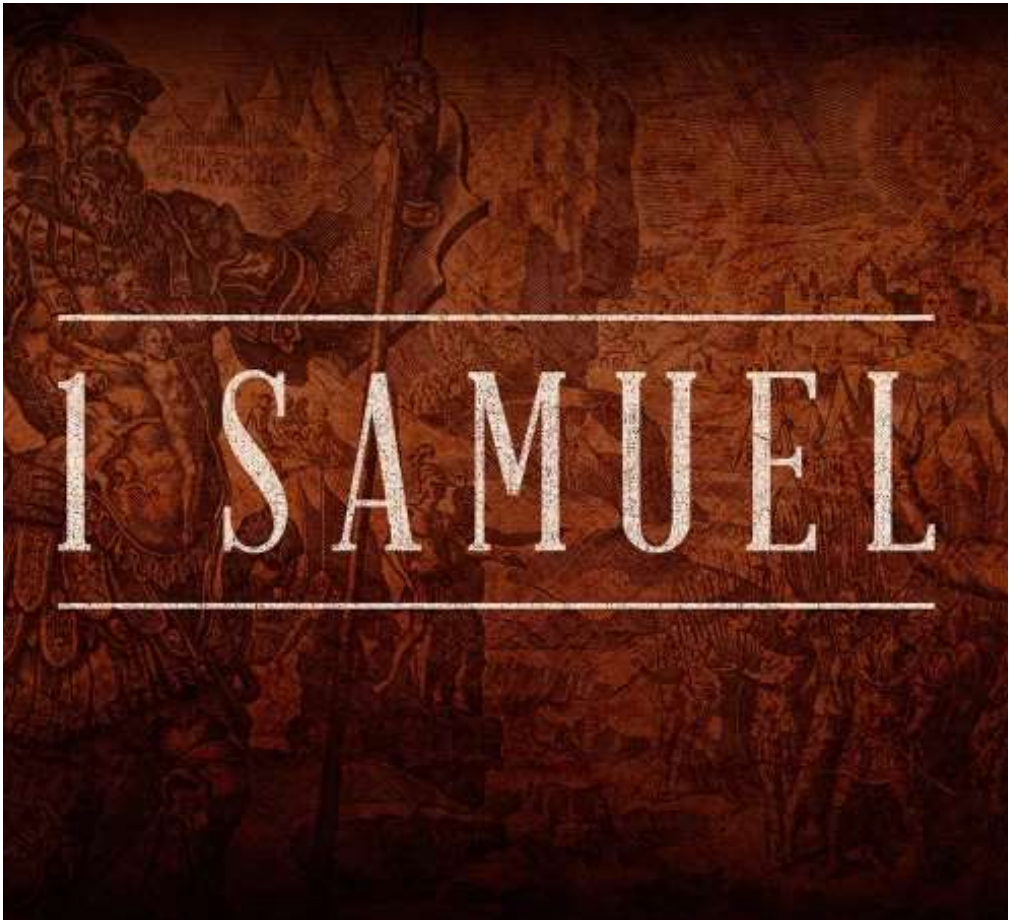


# Let's Worship God

19th-24th October 2020

1 Samuel



# 1 SAMUEL

## **Monday - 1 Samuel 26 - Deja-vu, Duplication or Deliberate?**

You might be excused for thinking you had deja-vu today as you read chapter 26 - that, as yet unexplained, sensation of thinking you've experienced something before. It seems like we've been here before, namely, chapters 23-24. At the start of chapter 26 David is back in the Wilderness of Ziph when the Ziphites come to Saul and tell him that David is hiding among them. He is located on the hill of Hachilah at Jeshimon, and Saul sets out with 3,000 chosen men. It's like we're back at the end of chapter 23!

The story unfolds like a re-run of chapter 24. David is presented with an opportunity to kill his pursuer. He is urged by his companion to do it, encouraged that it is God's doing. David again refuses to stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and he prevents his men from striking Saul. Having taken something from Saul he confronts him, urging his innocence and implying Saul's guilt. Saul expresses regret, speaks well of David, and calls off the hunt. We have a strong sense of deja-vu!

A strong enough sense that some scholars say that this is the same incident told from different angles, and none of the final editors of 1 Samuel noticed the duplication. There are many things we could say in response - we could highlight the differences in the stories, and give examples from history where, if we didn't know otherwise, we'd think reports of separate incidents were describing the same thing. But I think it's enough to say: do we think the original editors were that dull and shoddy that they didn't notice a duplicated story! This is not deja-vu or duplication, this is deliberate ordering of repeating history by God. The lessons of chapters 24 and 26 are being underlined and put in bold. God is reinforcing these truths and putting them at the heart of his story of raising up his King. So listen up!

## **Questions**

1. What do you think are the key lessons of chapters 24 and 26, underlined by repetition?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for ears to hear the repeated chorus notes of chapters 24, 25 and 26 this week.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

“The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed.” 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise: Psalm 54 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# 1 SAMUEL

## **Tuesday - 1 Samuel 26:1-12 - Rest in the LORD's Justice**

Once again David finds himself confronted with his enemy at his mercy. Saul could be easily dispatched - he and his army are sleeping like babies, and David and Abishai are standing in the middle of them. It is another open goal, and Abishai pleads with David to do it (verse 8). He even offers to do it so that David's hands will be clean. With one stroke they can go home, take the crown, and have the throne. Abishai's "God has done this" plea is pious, plausible, and true (verse 12)! But opportunity is not always guidance. God has opened a door for David, but he does not want him to step through it, for vengeance is not David's to take, but God's.

Verse 10 shows that David has learnt the lessons of the events with Nabal. The man had insulted David, and David went to avenge himself. It was only the intervention of the wise and beautiful Abigail that kept him from avenging by his own hand (25:33). Instead, God struck Nabal (26:38). Now David says, "God will strike Saul... or he'll die some other way." Justice is the LORD's. David knew this truth in the cave, God pressed it home through Abigail and Nabal, and David lived it out in Saul's camp. This is a truth God wants us to know.

Maybe we overlook its centrality for the Christian church. We are not on the receiving end of many injustices. Our buildings aren't knocked down without warning, nor our services interrupted by violent mobs. Our loved ones are not kidnapped and held hostage, nor our pastors interrogated and beaten. However, for the majority of the world's Christians this is the reality. This is a truth for them to hang on to - wrongs will be put right, evil will be called to account, and nothing will be forgotten or overlooked. Justice is God's. When we pray for the persecuted church we should pray that they will be able to rest in God's justice, like David.

## **Questions**

1. What indication is there in the passage that God has opened this door of opportunity?
2. Why is it not a door to be stepped through?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Pray that the persecuted church will be able to rest in God's justice.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

"The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed." 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise: Psalm 10:1-2, 8-9 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# 1 SAMUEL

## **Wednesday - 1 Samuel 26:1-12 - Rest in the LORD's Justice, Closer to Home**

Saul is undoubtedly a wicked man. His tears of 24:16 were short lived, and soon he is chasing innocent David again. We can easily imagine the frustration and anger David would have felt. How enticing then to have God deliver his enemy into his hand once again. Yet David stands firm in the face of this God given opportunity. It was an opportunity to sin, a test that had to be evaluated in light of God's Word. Picture David standing over Saul - the nights in dark caves, the moments of frightened flight, the desperate fear of being in Gath, the righteous rage at the slaughter of the priests of Nob - all the injustices pass before his mind's eye. But David rightly passes by the opportunity, despite all the injustices that Saul had inflicted on him. Vengeance is God's to bring, not David's, so he rests in the LORD's justice.

As we thought yesterday, there are precious lessons and prayers for the persecuted church in this. But, we need them too! We suffer injustice, maybe not for our faith, but in our personal lives. People make unfair assumptions about our thoughts, motives and actions. People believe and spread things that are not true about us. People say things that we are not able to correct. In all these personal injustices, we are to leave justice in God's hands. That doesn't mean standing waiting for burning brimstone to rain down. It means waiting for God to vindicate us, either in this life or on the judgement day. It means waiting for God to make sure someone pays the price for sin - either the offender, or the substitute Jesus. As David says in verse 23, "the LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness."

David's test here is to skip the suffering and take the easier road. We too face the temptation to avoid difficulty. Perhaps by speaking a word out of place, or removing the obstacle, or totally ignoring the situation. But the harder road, if ordained by God, is always the better road. Instead of making an easy route for ourselves, we should look to God to make the route.

### **Questions**

1. Where are you being tempted to take matters into your own hands and avoid difficulty?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Make the second part of verse 24 your prayer: "May my life be precious in the sight of the LORD, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation."
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed." 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise: Psalm 17:1-2, 9-11 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# 1 SAMUEL

## Thursday - 1 Samuel 26:13-25 - Respect the LORD's Anointed

Today we move closer to the heart of the matter, as highlighted by the structure of 1 Samuel and by this chapter. In chapter 24, why won't David strike Saul? Verses 6 and 10: he will not put out his hand against the LORD's Anointed. In chapter 25 he is going to stretch out his hand and strike down Nabal, because he is not the LORD's anointed. In chapter 26 we're told four times that David will not strike down Saul because he will not put out his hand against the LORD's anointed (verses 9, 11, 16, and 23).

There is something special about Saul - he is not any old man, nor merely any old king. He is the LORD's anointed; chosen, appointed, blessed, and empowered to represent God, the ultimate king. Thus, David will not strike him, and Abner's life ought to be forfeited for not protecting him (verse 16). Saul is like the special crystal we had growing up - it was not to be touched and played with by little boys because it was Granny's crystal and it was too precious and important. Saul is not just any man, he is God's king, ruling for God himself. To strike at him is to strike at God, to rebel against the rule of God, and to insult God.

It presents us with a huge question: do we likewise respect the LORD's anointed? David, the next anointed king, passed his throne down through the generations to his greatest Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah / Anointed one) - he is God's king. Every time we sin we take the spear and aim for his head (like David refused to do). We need to see our sin as a personal strike at King Jesus. Our 'big' sins and our 'little' sins - they are all strikes at the sovereignty of king Jesus. Whoever we are, and wherever we are from, we need to respect Jesus as King, stop rebelling against him, and submit all we are to him.

### Questions

1. Can you picture yourself swinging the sword at Jesus' royal head every time you sin? All sin is this serious.

### Prayer Points

1. Ask to see the true colours of sin.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

“The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed.” 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise:** Psalm 2:1-4 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.

---

# 1 SAMUEL

## **Friday - 1 Samuel 26:13-25 - Establishing a Dynasty**

Today we come to the big point of these incidents. Why are they recorded and put together like this? They stand as the climax of David's wilderness years and struggle. After they part in verse 25 David and Saul will never meet again. Why is this the crucial part of this story of the rise of the king?

Let's consider the origins and purpose of 1 Samuel. There's evidence that some parts were written early and existed individually during the reigns of David and Solomon, before being compiled and edited no later than the 900s BC. What this means is, that at latest, David's grandson is on the throne, perhaps even Solomon or David himself. It is the beginnings of a new royal dynasty, which needs to be established in the face of competing claims and its credibility secured. There has already been bloodshed in the transition (2 Samuel 2-4), and the new rulers need to vindicate themselves and give the people assurance that this is God's will. What better way to do that than tell the truth of the dynasty's rise. David is a man of God, appointed by God, with God on his side; but the people of Israel need to be assured of that. By publishing this story of his rise the people hear of how he had opportunity to dispatch Saul, yet how he respected the Lord's anointed, leaving vengeance with God. Though, he had to learn this lesson the hard way, being restrained by the actions of a wise and beautiful woman.

What sort of picture emerges from David's wilderness years? He is upright - there is no shady assassination attempt of the incumbent king. He is gracious to his enemies - he will not wipe them out at first opportunity, and even his enemies end up blessing him (verse 25). He is above reproach and suspicion. God's king is an upright king, who can be trusted, rested upon, and looked to.

### **Questions**

1. If this was written to establish David's dynasty, how do we know it's not merely propaganda? See John 17:17

### **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks that God established David's dynasty, which led to Jesus coming.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed." 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise: Psalm 119:Part 20 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# 1 SAMUEL

## **Saturday - 1 Samuel 26 - Rejoice in the LORD's Rule**

These chapters at the climax of David's wilderness years paint him as an upright king, who can be trusted, rested upon, and looked to. David has the privilege of painting the character of God's ultimate king, Jesus. He is an upright king, above suspicion; one who can be trusted, rested upon, and looked to. We want to see past David and see Jesus here.

Perhaps you are feeling hard done by; you are in circumstances that you are not happy about. You feel that king Jesus has given you a raw deal. See the portrait of him in David. He is an upright king, greater than David. All his dealings are fair, good, and pure. His rule over your life is to be rejoiced in. There is no need to be suspicious of him, nor to fear his plans and purposes. Trust and rest in him; rejoice in all he is doing in your life. It takes faith to believe this when we are in the metaphorical wilderness, when the pressure is on, when things look bleak, or our troubles keep returning (like Saul!). To rejoice in his rule is an act of faith.

As with David, even his enemies will one day acknowledge his kingship (verse 25). Even his enemies will admit that he is the Blessed one, every knee bowing and every tongue confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10). Like David, he is gracious to his enemies, sparing them until God deals with them. More than just sparing them, he offers mercy and the chance to enjoy his blessed rule to all who will repent and believe.

## **Questions**

1. Are you able to rejoice in God's rule, even in 'wilderness' years?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for an upright king who does good and shows mercy.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

“The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed.” 1 Samuel 26:23

**Praise: Psalm 66 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that  
Ezra read from  
the book of the Law  
day after day  
and that  
the people of God  
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced  
by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

If you have any queries please contact - [rpchurchscotland@gmail.com](mailto:rpchurchscotland@gmail.com)