

# 1 Samuel 23:14-24:22

10-31-10

## “Another Tear in the Robe!”

### I. **INTRO:**

A. **Sweet Revenge:** Chicago Cubs outfielder *Andre Dawson* paid a \$1000 fine for disputing a strike called by umpire *Joe West*. On the memo line of his check Dawson wrote:  
*“Donation for the blind.”*<sup>1</sup>

1. **Ever felt like taking revenge?** Your boss takes full credit for the project you slaved over. Your professor unfairly gives you a failing grade. Your business partner sets you up to bear the brunt of his shady dealings. Your so called friend betrays a confidence & spreads lies about you. Your spouse runs off w/ someone else, leaving you w/no income & no place to live.<sup>2</sup>
  - a) **Oh, to get even!** - Often we wont use the unpleasant **Revenge** word. We won't say *“I'm going to get you!”* we say, *“I'm just standing up for my rights.”* Or, we'll call it **Justified Retaliation!**
  - b) **Settling the score becomes a moral obligation.** We take the law into our own hands.
  - c) **Whatever we call it, God calls it *revenge*.** Rom.12:19-21 **Beloved, never *avenge* yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”** To the contrary, **“if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
    - (1) **Not** talking about defending ourselves as individuals or as a nation;  
**Nor** seeking justice through the legal system;  
**We're** talking **personal vendettas** & **taking the law into our own hands.**
  - d) **We cannot make anyone live in peace w/us, but we can make sure *the path to peace* is clear on our side!**
2. **This week** we'll see David had the perfect opportunity to avenge himself against Saul. **The temptation to get even was strong.**

### II. **BUT GOD! (23:14-29)**

A. **BUT GOD!** (14,15)

B. (14) **But God** - Those 2 words represent a **contrast**.

1. **In the opening verses of Eph. 2 it shows us what the condition of man is, as God sees him, as he actually is in life.**

<sup>1</sup> Galaxie Software. (2002; 2002). *10,000 Sermon Illustrations*. Biblical Studies Press.

<sup>2</sup> Chuck Swindoll: *David A Man of Passion & Destiny*; p.60

2. In **contrast** to that gloomy picture the apostle says, "**But God, ...**"
- We were dead in sin, **BUT GOD** made us alive with Christ.
  - We were captive to the prince of the power of the air and enslaved to the course of this world, **BUT GOD** raised us with Christ and made us sit with him in the heavenly places.
  - We were children of wrath and deserving of an eternity in the torments of hell, **BUT GOD**, instead of pouring out wrath, will spend eternity showing the immeasurable riches of his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
- (1) Brothers and sisters, this is good news!
- Once we were **dead in sin**, **BUT GOD** made us **alive!**
  - Once we were **captive to Satan**, **BUT GOD** made us **free!**
  - Once we were **children of wrath**, **BUT GOD** has promised to spend eternity unwrapping the riches of his **grace** in kindness toward us!

C. **A DEVOTED FRIEND!** (16-18)

D. Dad wants to kill him, son wants to encourage him.

- How tragic that Jonathan's hopes for the future were destroyed by his fathers sins. **Jonathan was willing to be 2nd man.**

E. **FROM ZIPH TO MAON!** (19-23)

F. Ziph belonged to Judah, so the citizens should have been loyal to David.

G. **TIMELY INTERVENTION OF A SOVEREIGN GOD!** (24-29)

H. Maon about 3 miles south from Ziph.

I. God used an invasion of the Philistines to rescue David when it looked as if Saul's forces would win.<sup>3</sup>

- No matter what **men** may do, **God** works out His purposes, & His providence does not fail!
- Prov.19:21 **There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the Lord's counsel - that will stand.**

J. (28) **The Rock of Escape** [הַמַּסְלֵעַ הַמַּחְלִיקוֹת] *Sela Hammahlekoth* rock of parting

- The Hebrew carries the idea of *a smooth rock*, i.e. *a slippery rock*. **In other words, the rock of slipping away!**

K. Here's what David wrote during this time - **Read Ps.54:4-7**

<sup>3</sup> Warren Wiersbe: With The Word; p.175

### III. **A TREATY OF NON-AGGRESSION! (ch.24)**

- A. **ANOTHER TEAR IN THE ROBE!** (1-7)
- B. (1,2) **En Gedi** - Lit. *the Rocks of the Wild Goats*. An oasis on the Western side of the Dead Sea. Best source of fresh water in the wilderness area.
- C. Compare vs.5 (torn robe) with 1 Sam.15:26b,27 (torn robe)
1. His conscience was tender enough to trouble him.
    - a) **Why was this wrong?** He was humiliating the king.
      - (1) David knew he should respect authority.
      - b) A sensitive conscience is a *great treasure & a valuable guide*. Don't lose it!
- D. (3) **To attend to his needs** - a euphemism lit. "*to cover his feet*". Like in Judges 3:24 (Eglon, fat, king of Moab, stabbed by Ehud) to perform the necessity of nature (i.e. when nature calls; doing your business!)
1. Deut.23:13,14 **Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; and you shall have an implement (shovel) among your equipment, and when you sit down outside (squatty potty), you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.** (Why?) For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.
  2. Does not mean to sleep.
- E. (4) **Careful**, friends that love you might encourage you to *cut on* another friend.
- F. (5) **What's the big deal?**
1. It was an act of disrespect that would **humiliate** Saul.
  2. It might have **reminded** Saul of ch.15 tearing of Samuels robe & thus his kingdom being torn away.
  3. It might have looked like David was declaring that by tearing his robe the kingdom was now **transferred** to him.
- G. (7) **David restrained his servants** - **What virtue shines out of this situation?**
1. Self restraint/self control; the ability to show mercy;
  2. Rom.12:19 **Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."**
  3. Because David **refuses to get even** w/Saul, God blesses him.  
Prov.16:7 **When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.**

- H. Since we all battle with revenge, retaliation, getting even what do we do?
1. Understand **the urge to get even is not the same as retaliating!**
    - a) When we're aware of what's going on inside, we have time to **feel & pray & think** & then **choose** a course of action *that reflects our trust in God.*
    - b) Refuse to fight in the flesh! - Make up your mind in advance to leave things in God's hands.
- I. Can you imagine if you catalogued **all your injuries in life**, how long the list would be!
1. Think all the way back to the playground in kindergarten. [The friend who said let's ride swings together at break, only to run off w/someone else] **How many have there been?**
  2. Some injuries were **minor bumps** that healed w/o a scar.
  3. Other injuries, though, have **never completely healed.**
  4. A few may still be **open & very tender wounds.**
- J. Good reminder to us all: *Even if you can't respect the man or woman in office, you must show respect to the office!*
1. David showed his respect by calling Saul **my master(6); the Lord's anointed (6,10); my lord(8,10); the king (8,14); my father (14).**
- K. **DAVID'S VINDICATION!** (8-15)
- L. David's logic was irrefutable! He had the ability to kill Saul & refused to do so.
- M. (11) **The corner of the robe - Was this Saul's [צִיצִית] tsee-tseet tassel?**
1. If so, he just cut off what might have been Saul's last reminder of God's laws.
    - a) Numb.15:38-40 **Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after. So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God.**
- N. (13) **Wickedness proceeds from the wicked** - a familiar proverb of his day. **Simply means that character is revealed by conduct.**
- O. (14) **A dead dog & a flea** - well, fleas & dogs do go together.
1. **A dead dog** - David was humbling himself, as a dog was a term of reproach in those days (eg: Goliath, **am I a dog that you come to me w/sticks?**)
  2. **A single flea** - something harmless, elusive, unimportant. **And like David, jumping about** from one place to another.

- P. **TEMPORARY TRUCE!** (16-22)
- Q. Saul's **tears** were **superficial** & his **conviction** temporary.
1. His tears never brought about repentance or a change of heart! :(
- R. (20) Now Saul openly confessed that he knew David would be the **next king**.
- S. (21) Saul's greatest concern was that David spare his descendants, which David promised
1. He had already made this covenant with Jonathan & he was willing to make the same promise to Saul.
  2. **However**, it was **Saul's sins**, **not David's revenge**, that destroyed his family.
  3. Saul's concern was for **his own name & descendants**, **not the spiritual welfare** of the people.
- T. (17-22) 3 possible levels of life:
1. **Divine Level** (17,18) - where we return good for evil.
  2. **Human Level** (19,20) - where we return good for good, evil for evil.
  3. **Demonic Level** (21,22) - where we return evil for good.
- U. **Illustration: An artist** had a dog that meant more to him than anything in the world. One day he broke his leg and the artist was panic-stricken. He ran to the telephone and called an acquaintance, **a famous surgeon**. "It's an emergency," he yelled, "a matter of life and death. Come quick!" The startled surgeon dropped everything and rushed to the home of the artist, expecting the worst. When confronted with the dog, the surgeon, with masterful self-control, said not a word but proceeded to treat the dog with the same skill he would have used on a human being. Then he picked up his instruments and left. **Weeks passed**, the dog got well, yet the artist never received a bill from the surgeon. The longer he waited the more guilty he felt. Surely he had lost the surgeon's friendship forever. A few days later, therefore, he made his way to the surgeon's office, intending to pay all that was asked. **The surgeon** would not accept his check. "You're a painter, aren't you?" he asked. "Certainly." "Very well, if you will just put a coat of white paint on that cabinet over there, we will call the debt settled." The artist, a good-natured man, was amused by the doctor's clever idea of revenge. He smiled and started to work at once. But when the job was completed, instead of a coat of white paint, the panels of the surgeon's cabinet bore two of the artist's greatest masterpieces, worth thousands of dollars apiece.
- V. David had won many battles, but one of his greatest victories occurred in that cave when he restrained himself & his men from killing Saul.
1. Prov.16:32 **He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.**
    - a) What a **good example** for all of us to follow!
- W. **Revenge is as old as human nature** (think Cain & Abel) - If you're plotting revenge, however small & insignificant you may think it to be, **surrender it now!** - Release your grip on your *get even scheme*, & place the control in **God's** hands.