

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 02 October 2022
Services: *Across the Diocese*
Series: 1 Samuel – In search of a King
Passage: 1 Samuel 18-31
Title: The King is dead – Long live the King

What is the passage about?

✘ *"Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands."*

- it was a **massive jubilant cry** – with **singing** and **dancing** and **tambourines** and **flutes**.

*"Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands."*

- And like a **poison** slowly finding its way **through** the **body**, this **refrain ate away** at **Saul**.
- We read in ✘ 1 Samuel 18:3-4 *Saul was very angry; **this refrain galled him**. "They have credited **David** with **tens of thousands**," he thought, "but me with only **thousands**. What **more** can he get but the **kingdom**?"⁹ And from **that time on** Saul kept a **jealous eye** on **David**.*
- And that sets up the **incredible account** that is described across our closing chapters – 18-31 – of **Saul seeking to kill David**.
- David – the **shepherd boy cum music therapist**; **David** who saved the **day** by killing **Goliath** with a **stone** and a **sling shot**... **David** – **close friend** of Saul's son **Jonathan**.
- Is now seen as a **threat**...
- A **pretender** to the **throne**.
- A **contender** for the **affection** of the **people**. ///
- Let me show you just how **badly** Saul wants **rid of him**...
- **18:10** – he tries to pin David down with his **spear**... **David's** too **quick**.
- **18:12** – Saul makes David a **unit commander** in the army hoping the **Philistines** will **kill him**
- In **18:17** he offers his **daughter** in marriage hoping that will **distract** him in battle, so the Philistines **kill him**... David didn't take him up on the offer.
- **18:20** he is given **another chance** to become the king's **son-in-law** because **Michal** is in **love** with him. The bride price set by Saul? **100 Philistine foreskins** – Saul again hoping that David would **fall** by the **hand** of the **Philistines**.
- **No such luck**. David turns up not with **100** Philistine foreskins but **200!**
- Then comes this **summary statement** at the end of ch **18** : *28 When Saul realised that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, 29 Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days. 30 The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul's officers, and his name became well known.*

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- **19:1** – Saul tells his son **Jonathan** to kill **David** – but he **won't** and instead **warns David** of his father's **intentions** and **defends** him to his **father**
- **19:9** Saul **again** tries to pin David to the **wall** with a **spear** – but he **misses**, and this time **David** runs for his **life**.
- **20:32** sees Jonathan **again** defend David before his father – '**what has he done?**' – '**why should he be put to death?**' – and this time **Saul** tries to pin **Jonathan** to the **wall**.
- And from that point on – they go on the **road** – **Saul chasing** him around the **country**,
- In **ch 23** David saved the town **Keilah** from the **Philistines** and when Saul heard he was **there** he hurried to get there because he thought he'd be able to **trap** him in within the **city walls**.
- **But David escaped**. A summary statement in ✠ **23:14** *David stayed in the desert strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but **God did not give David into his hands**.*
- Or this ✠ **23:25** ²⁵ *Saul and his men began the search, and when David was told about it, he went down to the rock and stayed in the Desert of Maon. When Saul heard this, he went into the Desert of Maon in pursuit of David. ²⁶ Saul was going along **one side** of the mountain, and David and his men were on the **other side**, hurrying to get **away** from **Saul**.*
- **That** was all called **off** because Saul received a **message** to say the **Philistines** were invading the **land** – so **Saul** went back to **fight them!**
- When **that battle** was finished, Saul was told ✠ (24:1) that David was in the **Desert of En Gedi** – so **off Saul goes there**.
- David had opportunity to take **Saul's life** at this point because he and his men were in a cave when Saul went in to **relieve himself**... He cut off a **corner** of his **robe** but he **didn't kill him**.
- ch 26 - **again** David has opportunity to kill Saul – he creeps into his camp at **night** – the Lord having thrown **Saul** and **his men** into a **deep sleep** – and he removes Saul's **spear** and **water jug**.
- For a **moment** Saul sees his foolishness – but such **repentance** only lasts a **short while**.
- At the beginning of chapter ✠ **28** the Philistines are gathering to **attack again**.
- **Saul is terrified** but there is no answer from the Lord... and he contacts **Samuel** who **died** at the beginning of **chapter 25** – he contacts **Samuel** by means of a **medium**.
- It's a **strange account** – but **Samuel** makes it **clear** that Saul has reached the **end of the road**: ✠28 ¹⁶ *Samuel said, "Why do you consult me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and become your enemy?" ¹⁷ The LORD has done what he predicted through me. The LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbours—to David. ¹⁸ Because you did not obey the LORD or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this to you today. ¹⁹ The LORD will hand over both Israel and you to the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also hand over the army of Israel to the Philistines."*
- ²⁰ *Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel's words.*
- And sure enough in the **ensuing battle**, the **Philistines** kill Saul's sons **Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua** and Saul is **critically wounded** ...
- Saul asked his **armour bearer** to draw his **sword** and **run him through** so he wouldn't end up **abused** by the **Philistines**.

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- And when his armour bearer **refused**, Saul took his **own sword** and **fell on it**, his armour bearer following his example **minutes after**.
- And so **ends** the **sad** and **sorry downfall of Saul** – AND the book of **1 Samuel**. *////*
- So that is what these chapters are **about** – so to our regular **second question** – ‘what does this teach us **about** God?’ –

2) ✕WHAT DOES IT TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

a. ✕ Jealousy is a curse

- There were **two interrelated problems** for **Saul** – one was his inability to come to terms with the fact that the kingship had been torn **away** from him – so an inability to accept **God’s will** – more of that in a minute – and then the **consequential problem** that **David** – a **young lad** – **David** – his **armour bearer** and **harp player** – **David** the **giant killer** was getting all the **attention**.

*Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands*

- And this **terrible, terrible jealousy** – as you **saw** – **ate away** at him.
- He became a completely **driven person** – **driven** by the desire to **remove David** – to remove this **threat** to his own **person** – and to his **kingship**.
- What a **sad tragic end** to his life... **consumed** with **anger** because **David** had what he **wanted** – the **attention** – the **acclamation**, the **affection** of his **people**.
- He thought of **nothing else!**
- Jealousy **does that**.
- It **eats away**. It **consumes**. It brings out the **worst** in us. **Anger**. **Revenge**. **Striking out**.
- It can turn us into **quite twisted people**.
- Saul became **paranoid**. He **had** to get David at **all costs**.
- Use his **daughters** as a **distraction** for **David**? **No problem**.
- **Kill** some along the way who had **helped David**? **No problem**.
- Was he ever going to get **close** to what he **wanted**? **No!!**
- Because **God** was in **charge**... His problem was **fundamentally** a failure to **trust God**.
-and the light of **eternity** – it will all mean **nothing**. We **all leave** here with the **same amount**. And we have to **let go** of our **jealousy** before it **gets us**.
- It’s in the same category as **hate**, as **unforgiveness**, as the desire for **revenge** - **all of these** will only **tear apart** and **destroy** those who **hang on** to them... **as jealousy did Saul**.

b. Sweet revenge?

- ✕Did you notice though the complete **contrast** between **Saul** and **David**...
- **Some** of David’s **psalms** tell us of the **hardship** and **trauma** David felt as was being **pursued** by **Saul**...
- **How David** would have loved to be **free** of Saul...! **Free** of the **relentless pressure**.
- But **what** does he **do** when he has **opportunity** to **end it all** by taking **Saul’s life**? //

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- ...when Saul came into the **cave** where David and his men were, and once when David **crept up** on his **camp**...
- It would have been **so easy**... and he **knew** he was the **new King**... but it wasn't **David's way** – he **trusted** the Lord to bring about things **His way**... **couldn't bring** himself to take the **life** of one **anointed by God**...
- Friends – some of **us** have been dealt **terrible blows**. From **family** or **former spouses**. And **without a doubt** – **humanly speaking** – some of us have been **ripped off**....
- **Revenge is mine** says the Lord – how we have to learn to leave **justice** to **God** and let **go** of wanting to bring it about **ourselves**!
- **Jealousy** is a **curse**? – absolutely. **Revenge sweet**? – **only** when it is the **Lord's**...
- And the **last thing** we learn re **God** from these chapters? – has to do with the >>>

c. The trouble with not being King

- ✕That is what **Saul** had to **contend with**...
- He had been **cast** from his **throne**... and it was something he hadn't really come to **terms with**.
- In fact the late **Samuel** – by means of the **medium** – reminded him again of why he had been **rejected** as **King**... - because he did not **obey** the Lord or carry out his **wrath** against the **Amalekites**.
- **God was King all along**... that is what we have been **seeing** in this **series**... and **Saul** had to come to **terms** with it...
- **AND SO DO WE**... We are those who have **humbled ourselves** – taken ourselves **off** our **throne**... We've **woken up** to the fact that we are no **longer King**...!
- And the trouble with not being **King** is the constant challenge of **trusting** in and **surrendering** to the one **who IS King**...
- Everyone now and then we have ourselves **on** again **don't we** – and **want to play King**!
- And that is **when** - like **Saul** – we **usually** get into **trouble**! //
- And our **third** and **final question**?

3) ✕HOW DOES IT POINT US TO JESUS?

a. The cost of following King David

- ✕In these chapters, people had to make a **decision** about **David**... and **count** the **cost**.
- Let me show you what I mean...
- Jonathan was forced to make a **choice** – **loyalty** to his father **Saul** – or to **David** – not only as **dear friend** – but **King**! – even risking his **life** at one point for his **defence** of **David**.
- And then there were those who **told David** about **Saul's movements** -
- There was **Ahimelech** the **priest** who gave David and his men some **bread** and gave David's **Goliath's** sword for **battle**...
- And for **that loyalty** – he, along with his **family** and **other priests** – a total of **85** were put to **death** because they **helped David**.
- Loyalty to **God's King** – was **costly**.

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b. The cost of following King Jesus

- ✕As these chapters confront us with the **choice** people had to make about **David**, and the **cost** that would **involve**... so they point us forward to the one in the **line** of **David**... the one whose kingdom is **everlasting... the perfect King**.
- Loyalty to God's King **TODAY** – is **costly**.
- we are called on to make a **choice** – **who is King**.
- Then we called on to be **loyal** to the **King**.
- And **that loyalty** may be **costly**.
- It may cost us **friends**, it may cost us **family**, it may cost us in our **career**, it may cost us in **personal hardship**, and as we've shared together before – it may in fact cost our **lives!**
- There is a **call to make** and a **cost to count**.
- Everyone watching must make the **call** – **who is King?**
- And then **count** the **cost**.
- If **Jesus** is **King** – he is **King** – and our **loyalty** to him must be **unswerving** no **matter** the **cost**.
- **Have you made the call?**
- **Is Jesus King?**
- **Is he YOUR King?**
- Have you **counted the cost**...? and decided – **no matter what it is** – I'll serve him as **King**. He is a **good King**. A **wise King**. A **mighty King**. A **merciful King**. A **loving King**. What **ever** he brings my **way** – I'll **trust him**. **Honour Him**. **Serve him!**