

*1 Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is not David hiding on the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?" 2 So Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having with him three thousand chosen men of Israel, to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph. 3 And Saul camped in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, beside the road, and David was staying in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness, 4 David sent out spies, and he knew that Saul was definitely coming.*

Ziphites previously had given David over to Saul earlier **23:19** but he escaped. Now they do it again. These were David's kin, brothers from tribe of Judah giving him up to a paranoid king. They knew Saul was obsessed w/ David out of jealousy. *Jealousy is as unrelenting as Sheol. Its sparks are fiery flames, the fiercest blaze of all.* Knowing Saul's murderous ways & not wanting to be on his bad side like priest of Nob they give David up again. **Or** they flat out hated David for whatever reason. Some people don't need a good reason to hate. *They repay me evil for good, and hatred for my friendship.*

There are perennial haters of Christianity & the church & what they stand for. *75-year-old woman Paulette Harlow in Washington was sentenced to two years in prison for praying & reportedly in hindering those entering an abortion clinic to kill their babies. Pr 24:11 Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.*

*Micah Price had his diploma w/held because he went off script in his commencement speech telling his classmates to seek Christ, "He is the light. He is the way, the truth and the life," At Christmas Empress light up w/ moving manger scene.*

*5 David then arose and came to the place where Saul had camped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army; and Saul was lying in the circle of the camp, and the people were camped around him. 6 Then David answered and said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, saying, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" And Abishai said, "I will go down with you." 7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night, and behold, Saul lay sleeping inside the circle of the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people were lying around him. 8 Then Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hand; now therefore, please let me strike him with the spear to the ground with one stroke, and I will not strike him the second time."*

You wonder what David's initial intent was. Impressive enemy 3K chosen soldiers, who try to intimidate. **Devil like Puffer fish** *No weapon formed against you shall prosper Is 54:17* Fool hearty to go into the camp, soldiers wake up & David dies. But if Lord said to him go down into the camp & I will show you what to do & have one of your men go w/ you. God only gives direction for his plans one step at a time. We want the whole plan but that would not be faith....we walk by faith not sight.

Testing David as prepares for throne & Abishai trusting God & not his flesh **more caught than taught** he became one of David's most trusted & loyal commanders. **Venture of faith**, inspires his men to higher levels of faith.

Abishai knew David would not lift his hand against Saul, **even felt guilty cutting corner of robe**. Abishai volunteers to do it himself. Not all that follow a good leader has the same heart as that leader or same values. What David wouldn't & couldn't do, Abishai would and could.

**9 But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be without guilt?" 10 David also said, "As the LORD lives, surely the LORD will strike him, or his day will come that he dies, or he will go down into battle and perish. 11 "The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed; but now please take the spear that is at his head and the jug of water, and let us go." 12 So David took the spear and the jug of water from beside Saul's head, and they went away, but no one saw or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a sound sleep from the LORD had fallen on them.**

David shows mercy then instructs...**as woman caught in adultery 'I don't condemn you go & sin no more'**. Killing God's anointed brings w/ it guilt...let God deal w/ him, strike him as Nabal, dies natural causes, killed in battle but *God forbid*....God doesn't want me to take out what He has put into office.

Now God's plan comes into focus--take spear (Saul's defense) & jug of water (sustains & refreshes) & go back top of hill. God put army & Saul into deep sleep as part of his plan for David's. *Didn't God blinded eyes of Syrians who came to arrest Elisha, He shut mouth of lions when Daniel thrown into den, He parted Red Sea so Israel could pass, then closed it drowning Egyptian army....and here a deep sleep.....is anything to difficult for Lord.... when we willing to do God's will.*

*13 Then David crossed over to the other side, and stood on top of the mountain at a distance with a large area between them. 14 And David called to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Will you not answer, Abner?" Then Abner answered and said, "Who are you who calls to the king?" 15 So David said to Abner, "Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came to destroy the king your lord. 16 "This thing that you have done is not good. As the LORD lives, all of you must surely die, because you did not guard your lord, the LORD's anointed. And now, see where the king's spear is, and the jug of water that was at his head." 17 Then Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And David said, "It is my voice, my lord the king." 18 He also said, "Why then is my lord pursuing his servant? For what have I done? Or what evil is in my hand? 19 "Now therefore, please let my lord the king listen to the words of his servant. If the LORD has stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering; but if it is men, cursed are they before the LORD, for they have driven me out today that I should have no attachment with the inheritance of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' 20 "Now then, do not let my blood fall to the ground away from the presence of the LORD; for the king of Israel has come out to search for a single flea, just as one hunts a partridge in the mountains."*

For a second time David states his case before Saul w/ a safe distance away--showing Saul's spear & jug of water, proof of being in Saul's unguarded camp unwilling to kill him & questioning why he is coming after him. David says I pose no threat but I'm like a single flea. He chides Abner for not guarding the king's which amounts to a death sentence for all of them.

*15 Are you not a man* is a rebuke to Abner's office, head of 3K men, all asleep on duty. Your soldiers are supposed to look up to you, *are you not a man?* Graded F for failure of duty--dishonorable discharge.

Saul again w/ his fake regret & pandering sorrow *'my son David'*. David asks reasons for Saul's pursuit of him a *servant* of Saul. If the Lord told you then let me make an offering to set things right but if it's men, may God curse them, they've separated me from the presence of the Lord in the land of Israel and driven me to pagan lands wanting me to turn from the God and follow false gods.

*21 Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will not harm you again because my life was precious in your sight this day. Behold, I have played the fool and have committed a serious error." 22 And David answered and said, "Behold the spear of the king! Now let one of the young men come over and take it. 23 "And the LORD will repay each man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD delivered you into my hand today, but I refused to stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed. 24 "Now behold, as your life was highly valued in my sight this day, so may my life be highly valued in the sight of the LORD, and may He deliver me from all distress." 25 Then Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, my son David; you will both accomplish much and surely prevail." So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.*

David's mercy softens Saul's hard heart. *Kindness of God leads to repentance'* Saul uses a tender term *'precious'* in contrast after listening to those who said he was hated by David. *"I have played the fool' :21*

Saul promises not to harm David if he returns. Repentance is a change of heart, about face. Getting caught is not repentance but sorrow of the world, uncomfortable, humiliating.

David appeals to God to judge the situation puts himself and Saul before the court of heaven. Scary to a godless person. *Ps 28:4 NIV Repay them for their deeds and for their evil work; repay them for what their hands have done and bring back on them what they deserve.* They went their opposite ways

If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do...David is discourage...in his wandering he joins the enemy...[Like Peter warms fires enemy](#)