

**Title:** Mourning for God's People

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 1

**Series:** God, the True King!

1. Introduction:

- a. Our last sermon finished the book of 1 Samuel. We closed the book with great sadness:
  - i. The people of God had been destroyed
  - ii. The leadership of God's people had been decimated.
  - iii. The land of Israel had been conquered.
- b. However, our chapter ended with a glorious ray of hope. With the death of Saul, an earthly king, we can now expect the rise of David, a godly king. David's Kingdom would be the vehicle by which the Messianic promises would be established. From the line of David, we receive the King of kings, Jesus Christ the righteous.
  - i. Therefore, not all was as bleak and dark as it seemed.
- c. Our current chapter raises the question we have looked at before in 1 Samuel 24-26. How is the kingdom to come into David's hands? Will David wait for it to come as God's gift, or will he seize it by his own power? Our chapter answers this question.

2. Verses 1-10: Sin's bitter defeat: After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking down the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. (2) And

on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage. (3) David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." (4) And David said to him, "How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead." (5) Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" (6) And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. (7) And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' (8) And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' (9) And he said to me, 'Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' (10) So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

a. Our passage opens with an Amalekite making an 80-mile journey from the battlefield to David. He arrives on the scene, and his appearance is immediately alarming. His clothes are torn, and dirt covers his head. These are the traditional signs of great mourning. A feeling of foreboding grips David and his men.

b. The news that the Amalekite brought was dire:

- i. King Saul was dead.
  - ii. Jonathan, David's best friend and servant of the Lord, was dead.
  - iii. Saul's two other sons were dead.
  - iv. The Philistines (a picture of the world) had utterly defeated Israel (God's people). The earth was soaked with their blood.
  - v. The Philistines had taken over part of Israel.
- c. In regard to Saul's death, the Amalekite tells David that Saul, after having fallen on the sword, was somehow still alive and agonizing. 1 Samuel ended with what seemed to be Saul's suicide, but here we read that he was actually euthanized.
- i. We have two interpretive options to consider.
    - 1. First, Saul fell on the sword and was dead for all intents and purposes, meaning he would die eventually from his mortal wounds, but the Amalekite finished the job first.
      - a. If this is true, there is much irony in our story. Saul is killed by a man that he should have destroyed in 1 Samuel 15 (when the Lord had sent him to destroy all the Amalekites and Saul had disobeyed.) Disobedience to God produces grave consequences.
    - 2. The second interpretive possibility is that the Amalekite found Saul already dead, and thinking that he would gain favor with David, he lied about finding Saul alive and killing him. He assumed David would

honor him for killing his most bitter enemy and delivering the crown.

- a. One thing is sure, and there is no doubt that this Amalekite killed or would have killed Saul. We get a glimpse into his sinful heart.

d. So the beginning of our chapter teaches us the bitter consequences of sinful living. The Bible is correct when it says in **Romans 6:23A** For the wages of sin is death.

- i. Saul, a self-directed and disobedient man, comes to the end of his sinful life. He has lived on his terms and not in obedience to God's Word. Beloved, look earnestly! Listen to God the Holy Spirit speak to you and me through this passage. We cannot confess God as Savior and yet disobey His Lordship. That type of living leads to death and ruin. This is what our passage teaches us.

1. **1 John 2:3-4** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. (4) Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,

- a. Notice that confession is meaningless without regeneration that leads to holiness.

- ii. The people of God are known for their love for God. Saul had no such love. He was defeated not by the Philistines but by his own sin.

3. Verses 11 and 12: Sin causes miserable grief: Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. (12) And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

a. Amid our passage, there is an interruption. Grief and sorrow now take center stage. David's and his men's grief is today's most important part of our reading.

i. Israel has been struck. Her leaders and troops have fallen. The enemy has crushed the People of God.

1. At such news, grief cannot wait. Grief cannot be contained! David and his men **mourn, weep and fast**.

b. But why is David's grief so pronounced? What can you and I learn from David's sorrow and pain?

i. We have spoken about this before. A Christian is to love God most and love the saints best. Both these truths must accompany each other. You cannot have one without the other.

1. Our Lord commands us in **Matthew 22:37-40** And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. (38) This is the great and first commandment. (39) And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (40) On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

- a. Our keeping of the law is predicated upon these two twin truths.
- ii. Our passage tells us that David loved God and revered God's honor. We also see that David loved the people of God.
  - 1. So David understood that when the people of God fail, we all fail! When the enemy crushes the people of God, we should all feel the pain.
- c. Sin, we have said before, will hurt those we didn't intend to hurt.
  - i. Beloved, look at the misery that Saul's sins have caused. So many innocent men have died. The people of God lie in ruin and shame.
  - ii. No wonder David weeps and wails. The condition of the people of God disturbed him profoundly. A disobedient king had led God's people to great tragedy.
    - 1. **Isaiah 9:16** for those who guide this people have been leading them astray, and those who they guide are swallowed up.
      - a. If the leaders are ungodly, the people will be ungodly. If the leaders are sinful, then the people will taste the bitter consequences of sin.
- d. So what can we learn from this passage? We realize that ungodly leadership has a price.
  - i. Beloved, we must mourn the unbelief, apostasy, and coldness within the modern church caused primarily by ungodly leadership.

- ii. Our hearts should break to see the disregard and apathy for the faithful doctrine that is so prevalent today. The church flirts with paganism in its pulpits, disorderly and unholy worship, and vile practices. Often, the church is too preoccupied with a politically correct moral-social agenda instead of preaching and believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  1. Oh, beloved, we live in strange and dangerous times.
- iii. Such behavior should drive us to mourn and grieve like David mourned and grieved over the destruction of God's people. Where such ideology takes root, the people suffer and die. The ground becomes soaked with the blood of those led astray.
- e. So what can you and I do? You and I **can mourn, weep, fast, and intercede.**
  1. **Daniel 9:3** Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.
  2. **Daniel 9:17-19** Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. (18) O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our

righteousness, but because of your great mercy. (19) O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”

f. Sin causes miserable grief.

4. Verses 13-16: Sin cannot remain hidden and unpunished:

And David said to the young man who told him, “Where do you come from?” And he answered, “I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite.” (14) David said to him, “How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?” (15) Then David called one of the young men and said, “Go, execute him.” And he struck him down so that he died. (16) And David said to him, “Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, ‘I have killed the LORD's anointed.’”

a. The Amalekite should have known better. David’s example of respecting the Lord’s anointed was well known throughout Israel. Therefore David asks, **“How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed?”**

i. The Sanctity of Saul was not found in that he was a godly man but that God had elevated him, and it would be God who would remove him. David had not succumbed to killing the Lord’s anointed on two previous occasions, yet this Amalekite does or at least confesses to having done so.



- ii. David would not take by human force that which God would give in sovereign love.
  1. David had a healthy fear of God, and that fear controlled his actions.
    - a. **Proverbs 9:10A** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...
    - b. But the Amalekite had no such fear of God and therefore he acted according to the foolishness of human wisdom. This would be his downfall.
  - b. So, the Amalekite received justice, but it is justice mixed with Irony. He is punished for what he said he did, even if there is a possibility that he didn't do it. He received what he should have received had he done the deed. The judgment of God found him, found him in his sin, and repaid him in line with the intents of his heart.
    - i. Do you see an incredible truth here? God not only judges the unrepentant sinner by their deeds but by their thoughts (the intent of the heart).
      1. **Ecclesiastes 12:14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.
      2. **Luke 12:2-3** Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. (3) Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

3. This is why sinners must come to God for the forgiveness of sin found only in the atoning work of Jesus Christ. That is the only way to deal with sin.
  - a. Man's only hope is the Gospel.
- c. Beloved, we must also consider that we have the evil tendency to think that our sins can be hidden from God. But that is not the case!
  - i. **Galatians 6:7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.
    1. Everything you have ever done and thought of doing is bare before the Omniscient God. This is a sobering thought!
- d. Beloved, we must live in the presence of the God who sees, exposes, and judges sin through His Son, Jesus Christ.
  - i. **Romans 2:16** on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.
  - ii. **John 5:22** For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,
    1. Because of this truth, it is important to realize that Jesus is the central figure in human history. Each soul here will one day stand before Christ.
      - a. The believer will be found not guilty for Christ Himself has paid his debt.
        - i. **Philippians 3:8-9** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing

Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

b. The unbeliever will be found guilty, for he has refused the atonement of Christ. Everything he has ever done or thought of doing will be used as evidence against him to convict him.

i. **Revelation 20:12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

ii. **Revelation 20:15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

5. Verses 17-27: David's lament in detail: And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his

son, (18) and he said it should be taught to the people of Judah; behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar. He said: (19) “Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen! (20) Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult. (21) “You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor fields of offerings! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. (22) “From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. (23) “Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions. (24) “You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet, who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. (25) “How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! “Jonathan lies slain on your high places. (26) I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was extraordinary, surpassing the love of women. (27) “How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!”

- a. In verses 17-18, we see that David penned his grief into a formal written lamentation that should be taught to the people. By doing this, David intended that people would never forget the price of sin.
- b. Verses 19 and 20 are concerned with the glory of God. David’s mourning was made even more severe by the thought that the women of the Philistines would take to the streets to tarnish the name of God. They would

sing about Dagon. That the wicked should rejoice at the expense of God and his people was unbearable. Beloved, we need to be zealous for the glory of God. Only in living humbly and obediently do we shut the mouth of the enemy.

- c. Verse 21 curses Gilboa for there Saul died an inglorious death. David mourns his enemy. A better lesson on loving our enemy cannot be found.
- d. Verses 22 and 23 extol the military might of both father and son. Jonathan, our verses tell us, died just as he lived. He died while serving others. He served both David and Saul and gave himself completely so that both men could move forward. Jonathan was not concerned with personal glory but fulfilling his role in God's kingdom.
- e. Verse 24 commands all of Israel to mourn as David is mourning.
- f. Verses 25 and 26 eulogizes one of the godliest men in the Old Testament. David remembers Jonathan's godly friendship and his undying loyalty. He concludes that he had never experienced this type of love at any other time.
- g. Finally, verse 27 ends David's lament with a sad and mournful look at the death of the leadership of Israel.

## 6. Benediction:

- a. **Hebrews 4:12-13** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of

the heart. (13) And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

**Public Reading of Scripture**  
**Hebrews 4:1-13**