

LVII. SMALL SINS, SOVEREIGNTY, AND SAFETY: 1 Samuel 22:6-23

INTRODUCTION. In his book *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, **J.I. Packer** writes, "[Charles] Spurgeon was once asked if he could reconcile these two truths to each other. 'I wouldn't try,' he replied; 'I never reconcile friends.' Friends?—yes, friends. This is the point that we have to grasp. In the Bible, divine sovereignty and human responsibility are not enemies. They are not uneasy neighbors; they are not in an endless state of cold war with each other. They are friends, and they work together." This is true, and it serves as a great introduction to the passage of Scripture we are focussing on today. This passage actually has a great deal to do with Human Responsibility and God's Sovereignty. First let's walk through it, and then I will show you the four doctrinal truths we should glean from these verses.

CON(TEXT).

1 Samuel 22:6-23

"6 Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him. Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. 7 And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of Benjamin; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, 8 that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day." 9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, 10 and he inquired of the Lord for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

11 Then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, and all of them came to the king. 12 And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub." And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13 And Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he has risen against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" (*The insecure always think everyone is out to get them*) 14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and captain over your bodyguard, and honored in your house? 15 Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No! Let not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father, for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." 16 And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house." 17 And the king said to the guard who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because their hand

also is with David, and they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the LORD. (*Civil Disobedience*) 18 Then the king said to Doeg, "You turn and strike the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. 19 And Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he put to the sword.

20 But one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 21 And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. 22 And David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house. 23 Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping."

Q. What should we learn from this passage? At least four truths:

DOCTRINE(S)/OUTLINE.

I. THE LORD'S ENEMIES WILL HATE THE LORD'S PEOPLE (1 Samuel 22:6-19).

II. SEEMINGLY LITTLE SINS MAY HAVE TREMENDOUSLY COSTLY CONSEQUENCES (1 Samuel 21:1-3; 1 Samuel 22:22; 1 Samuel 2:30-36).

III. THE LORD'S SOVEREIGN WILL SHALL BE ACCOMPLISHED EVEN THROUGH THE SINS OF MEN (1 Samuel 22:6-19).

IV. THE LORD'S PEOPLE WILL BE PROTECTED FROM ALL ETERNAL HARMS (1 Samuel 22:23).

I. THE LORD'S ENEMIES WILL HATE THE LORD'S PEOPLE (1 Samuel 22:6-19).

- Look at Saul and Doeg.

USE FOR EXHORTATION

- (i) Do not be shocked by it.
- (ii) Prepare for it.
- (iii) Rejoice when it happens.

– **Matthew 5:10-12**

"10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

II. SEEMINGLY LITTLE SINS MAY HAVE TREMENDOUSLY COSTLY CONSEQUENCES (1 Samuel 21:1-3; 1 Samuel 22:22; 1 Samuel 2:30-36).

I) David lied to Ahimelech, which left him totally unaware that King Saul would be furious at him for aiding David (1 Samuel 21:1-3).

- **(i) David lied to Ahimelech when he came to Nob, hiding the fact that Saul was pursuing David to put him to death.**

1 Samuel 21:1-3 "1 Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David, trembling, and said to him, 'Why are you alone, and no one with you?' 2 And David said to Ahimelech the priest, 'The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, "Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you." I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place.'"

- **(ii) Ahimelech was unaware Saul would be furious with him, therefore he walked right into the wolf's mouth.**

1 Samuel 22:11-16 "11 Then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, and all of them came to the king. 12 And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub." And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13 And Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he has risen against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" 14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and captain over your bodyguard, and honored in your house? 15 Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No! Let not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father, for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." 16 And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house."

- **(iii) David occasioned the death of all the persons of Abiathar's house, though he did not rightly understand how.**

1 Samuel 22:22 "And David said to Abiathar, 'I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house.'"

TRANSITION.

Yet there is far more to this story than David's lie. The ultimate reason the priests were slaughtered is because of the sins of Eli, their forefather, and the promised judgement of God.

****Turn with me back to 1 Samuel 2:22.***

II) Eli did not rebuke and remove his sons from their office as priests, therefore the Lord promised to cut off his family (1 Samuel 2:22-36).

- **(i) Eli gently rebuked his sons, and only when word spread abroad of their wickedness.**

1 Samuel 2:22-25a

"22 Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 23 And he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. 24 No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. 25a If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?"

- **(ii) Eli's rebuke was too little and too late, because the Lord had already decided to put his sons to death.**

1 Samuel 2:25b

"But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the Lord to put them to death."

- **(iii) The LORD rebuked Eli like Eli should have done to his sons.**

1 Samuel 2:27-28

"27 And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh? 28 Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel."

- **(iv) The LORD held Eli responsible for the sins of his sons, because**

he did not reprove and remove them from their office.

1 Samuel 2:29-30

"Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?' (v. 30 implies Eli dishonored and despised the LORD in favor of leniency toward his sons) "30 Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

- (v) The Lord promised Eli that his house would be cut off yet at least one would survive.

1 Samuel 2:30-36

(the LORD to Eli, because of his wicked sons and Eli's permissiveness)

"30 Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. 32 Then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel, and there shall not be an old man in your house forever. 33 The only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep his eyes out to grieve his heart, and all the descendants of your house shall die by the sword of men."

From the perspective of human responsibility,

Eli's leniency with his sons and David's lie to Ahimelech led to the slaughter of 85 priests and an entire city.

Again I say:

Seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences.

USE FOR WARNING

- **THOMAS BROOKS:** *"A little hole in the ship sinks it; a little stab in the heart kills a man; and a little sin, without a great deal of mercy, will damn a man. Though the scorpion be little, yet it will sting a lion to death; and so will the least sin, if not pardoned by the death of Christ."* — Thomas

Brooks, *The Works of Thomas Brooks*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 22.

BOYS AND GIRLS, "A little hole in the ship sinks it."

You who have not yet been born again, repented of your sin, and embraced Jesus Christ in faith and obedience: the smallest sin and shortest sin deserves the deepest and longest hell. The smallest sin puts a hole in the boat that is your life, and will eventually sink you into the deepest sea.

God is so holy that He will not overlook any sin, because every sin is cosmic treason against the One True God who created you, sustains you, commands you, and designed you to live enjoying and glorifying Him. God is so holy he will not let one sin go unpunished. Yet He is so loving that He did not abandon sinners like you and me to torment and death. He sent His only Son into the world to save sinners like us—to save all who would embrace Him in faith.

You must be born again; you must turn from your sins; you must trust Christ alone for salvation—His perfect life, His substitute death, and His glorious resurrection; you must be baptized; you need to join the church and walk with the church all the days of your life for God's glory and your good.

You who have been born again, and trusting in Christ alone for salvation—you who are embracing Christ Jesus in faith resulting in obedience: Beware of seemingly little sins! Your soul has been rescued by you may still sink the ship that is the one life God has given you!

- **RICHARD BAXTER:** "Little sins are the sparks that kindle great fires; they seem small, but they carry the soul toward destruction." — **Richard Baxter, *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, vol. 2 (London: George Virtue, 1838), 129.**

BOYS AND GIRLS, a little fire in the bedroom is OK, right?

USE FOR EXAMINATION

Q. Do you make light of seemingly little sins?

- If God has commanded it, you must aim to do it.
 - If God has forbidden it, you must avoid it at all costs.
 - **When you sin, you need to confess it and repent of it.**
- It does not matter how small or insignificant you may think it to be.

USE FOR EXHORTATION

Pray these verses in sincerity and faith:

- **Psalms 51:10** "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

- **Psalms 19:13** "Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression."
- **Psalms 23:3** "Lead me in paths of righteousness for your name's sake."

BOYS AND GIRLS

ENCOURAGEMENT

Seemingly little acts of obedience are incredibly rewarding.

III. THE LORD'S SOVEREIGN WILL SHALL BE ACCOMPLISHED EVEN THROUGH THE SINS OF MEN (1 Samuel 22:6-19).

I) The men at the Tower of Babel sinned against God, therefore God confused their languages as an act of judgement. Yet according to His sovereign plan of redemption this was His purpose to save a people from all over the earth—from every tribe and language and people and nation, thereby maximally showing His glory in salvation.

- **Revelation 5:9-10**

"9 for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,
10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

II) Joseph's brothers sinned against him by selling him into slavery and lying to their father, saying he had been slain. Yet according to God's sovereign purpose this happened so that Joseph would save his whole family, and thereby preserve the line of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

- **Genesis 50:20** "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."

III) The unbelieving Jews sinned against the Church by persecuting them. Yet according to God's sovereign purpose this was used to scatter those believers and get the gospel to those who had not yet heard.

- **Acts 8:1-4** "1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison."

4 Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word."

- **C.f. Acts 1:8** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

IV) Paul was sinned against by the Jews and the Romans who wrongfully accused and imprisoned him, taking him to Rome. Yet that is how God got the gospel to Onesimus, Philemon's slave.

- See the book of **Philemon**.

V) The unbelieving Jews, under the leadership of the Pharisees and Sadducees, sinned against Jesus through murdering Him by the hands of the lawless Romans. Yet this was according to the definite plan of God.

- **Acts 2:23** "Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men."
- **John 11:49-53** "49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. 50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." 51 He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. 53 So from that day on they made plans to put him to death."
- ♦ **JOHN FLAVEL:** "God's providence is so wise and powerful, that He can turn the greatest sins of men to the accomplishment of His own purposes, as the crucifixion of Christ was the greatest sin, yet the greatest good." — **John Flavel, *The Mystery of Providence, in The Works of John Flavel*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968), 416.**

USE FOR INSTRUCTION / DOCTRINE

Here is the point:

I) The Lord will accomplish all His purpose.

- **Psalms 135:6** "Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps."
- **Isaiah 46:8-11**
"8 Remember this and stand firm,
recall it to mind, you transgressors,
9 remember the former things of old;
for I am God, and there is no other;

I am God, and there is none like me,
10 declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, 'My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish all my purpose,'
11 calling a bird of prey from the east,
the man of my counsel from a far country.
I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;
I have purposed, and I will do it."

– **Daniel 4:34-35** (*Nebuchadnezzar speaking*)

"34 [The LORD's] dominion is an everlasting dominion,
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;
35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,
and he does according to his will among the host of heaven
and among the inhabitants of the earth;
and none can stay his hand
or say to him, 'What have you done?'"

The Lord has never wanted to do something and then not done it;
He has never set out to accomplish something and failed;
No man can stay His hand nor thwart His plan;
He will be glorified in heaven and on earth.

– **C.S. LEWIS:** "A man can no more diminish God's glory by refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the word 'darkness' on the walls of his cell." — **C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain**

II) Even the wrath of man shall reveal God's glory.

– **Psalms 76:10** "Surely the wrath of man shall praise you."

– **POOLE:** "The blasphemous speeches and furious attempts of thine enemies shall serve thy glory, and cause thy people and others to praise and magnify thee for that admirable wisdom, and power, and faithfulness, and goodness which thou shalt discover upon that occasion." — **Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

– **C.S. LEWIS:** "You will certainly carry out God's purpose, however you act, but it makes a difference to you whether you serve like Judas or like John." — **C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain**

USE FOR COMFORT

Believers, the absolute sovereignty of God in all things is the pillow a Christian can rest their head on each night.

You know why? Because this is the endgame for everyone who clings to Christ Jesus with simple faith:

Revelation 21:3-4 "3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'"

Revelation 22:3-5 "3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

IV. THE LORD'S PEOPLE WILL BE PROTECTED FROM ALL ETERNAL HARMS (1 Samuel 22:23).

1 Samuel 22:23 "Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping."

– **Christ say this to you, Christian:** "With me you shall be in safekeeping."

Christ is no sinner like David. Christ Jesus is the perfect, wise, omnipresent, and omnipotent One who has shed His blood to bring you all the way to glory. With Him you are in safekeeping.

Thoughts for Personal/Family Worship: Chapter 22

1. Some things are hard to understand, especially when evil runs riot and innocent blood is shed. Yet even in this God is working out His purposes; even the “wrath of man” will praise the Lord ([Ps. 76:10](#)). The slaughter of the priests was a fulfillment of God’s word of judgment against them ([1 Sam. 2:31–33](#)).
2. The death of the priests also puts in bold the truth that sin has consequences that go beyond the sinner himself. David’s lie to Ahimelech may have seemed trivial. At the time, he may well have justified it as a “harmless” sin to help him escape from Saul, yet what terrible consequences resulted. There is actually no such thing as a private sin. Either by consequence or example sin affects others. How have you justified “little” sins in your life? What is the right way to deal with them?

Puritan quotes on seemingly small sins

- “Take heed of secret sins. They will undo thee if thou dwell upon them, and give up thyself unto them. Though they be ever so small in the beginning, they will be very great in the end, if they be not nipped in the bud by repentance. *A little hole in the ship sinks it; a little stab in the heart kills a man; and a little sin, without a great deal of mercy, will damn a man.* Though the scorpion be little, yet it will sting a lion to death; and so will the least sin, if not pardoned by the death of Christ.” — **Thomas Brooks, *The Works of Thomas Brooks*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 22.**
- “There is more evil in the least sin than in the greatest temporal calamity; for sin is the transgression of the law, and breaks the harmony of the soul with God.” — **Thomas Watson, *The Great Gain of Godliness* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2008), 67.**
- “The least sin is a greater evil than the greatest misery; for sin is against God’s nature, and misery is but the fruit of sin.” — **John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 9 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 234.**
- “Small sins, if not repented of, will lead the soul into greater sins, as a small leak, if not stopped, will sink the ship.” — **Richard Sibbes, *The Works***

of Richard Sibbes, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 47.

- "Take heed of giving way to the least sin, for it is like the letting out of water; one drop makes way for another, till the whole vessel be emptied." — **Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, in *The Works of Thomas Brooks*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 65.**
- "The least sin, unrepented, is a sting in the conscience and a step toward eternal ruin." — **Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of Repentance* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 81.**
- "Little sins are the sparks that kindle great fires; they seem small, but they carry the soul toward destruction." — **Richard Baxter, *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, vol. 2 (London: George Virtue, 1838), 129.**
- "He that allows himself in the least sin, opens a door to the greatest; for sin is of a breeding nature, and one begets another." — **John Flavel, *The Works of John Flavel*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968), 112.**
- "There is a great deal of difference between falling into a temptation, and running into a temptation. The falling into a temptation shall work for good, not the running into it. He that falls into a river is capable of help and pity, but he that desperately turns into it is guilty of his own death." — **Thomas Watson, *All Things for Good* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1986), 45.**
- "A regenerate person abhors sin not only for the curse but for the contagion. He hates this serpent not only for its sting but for its poison. He hates sin not only for hell but as hell." — **Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of Repentance* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 64.**
- "When sin lets us alone, we may let sin alone; but sin is always active when it seems to be the most quiet, and its waters are often deep when they are calm. We should therefore fight against it and be vigorous at all times and in all conditions, even when there is the least suspicion." — **John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, in *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 6 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 19.**
- "Sin is not so sweet in the committing as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning." — **Richard Sibbes, *The Bruised Reed* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998), 98.**

Puritan quotes on God accomplishing His purposes even through the sins of men

- "God's providence is so wise and powerful, that He can turn the greatest sins of men to the accomplishment of His own purposes, as the crucifixion of Christ was the greatest sin, yet the greatest good." — John Flavel, **The Mystery of Providence**, in **The Works of John Flavel**, vol. 4

(Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968), 416.

- "The sins of men are overruled by God's hand, so that what they intend for evil, He turns to good, as Joseph's brethren's malice was made a means to his advancement." — Thomas Watson, **A Body of Divinity** (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), 119.
- "God's decrees are immutable, and the sins of men cannot frustrate them; nay, He makes the wickedness of the wicked to serve His glory, as the wrath of man shall praise Him." — John Owen, **A Display of Arminianism**, in **The Works of John Owen**, vol. 10 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 45.
- "Though men sin in their actions, God's providence so governs that their sins become instruments of His will, as the selling of Joseph into Egypt was sinful, yet God meant it for good." — William Perkins, **A Golden Chain**, in **The Workes of William Perkins**, vol. 1 (London: John Legatt, 1612), 72.
- "The Lord is so sovereign that He can bring light out of darkness, and make the sins of men, which are rebellion against Him, to work for His eternal purposes." — Richard Sibbes, **The Soul's Conflict with Itself**, in **The Works of Richard Sibbes**, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 128.
- "God's infinite wisdom orders the disorders of men's sins to the fulfilling of His righteous decrees, as the treachery of Judas was a step to the redemption of the world." — Thomas Brooks, **The Secret Key to Heaven**, in **The Works of Thomas Brooks**, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 305.
- "No sin of man can hinder God's purpose, for His providence is such that He makes even the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder He restrains." — Stephen Charnock, **The Existence and Attributes of God**, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 89.
- "The sins of the wicked are but tools in the hand of God's providence, whereby He carves out His own designs, as Pharaoh's hardness of heart served to magnify God's power." — Thomas Manton, **A Practical Commentary on the Epistle of James**, in **The Complete Works of Thomas Manton**, vol. 4 (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871), 142.

Puritan quotes on God protecting his people from eternal harms

- "God's people are kept by His mighty power unto salvation, and no evil shall prevail against them to their eternal ruin." — John Owen, **The Doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance**, in **The Works of John Owen**, vol. 11 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 234.

- "The Lord will never forsake His own, but will preserve them from all eternal dangers, as a shepherd keeps his flock from the wolf." — Thomas Watson, **A Body of Divinity** (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), 276.
- "Though the saints may fall into many troubles, yet the Lord's covenant ensures they shall not perish, but be kept safe to their heavenly inheritance." — Thomas Brooks, **Heaven on Earth**, in **The Works of Thomas Brooks**, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 329.
- "The elect are so guarded by God's power that no temptation or sin can separate them from His love, nor pluck them from His hand." — William Perkins, **A Golden Chain**, in **The Workes of William Perkins**, vol. 1 (London: John Legatt, 1612), 108.
- "God's faithfulness is a shield to His people; though they suffer in this world, they shall never be cast away from His eternal presence." — Richard Sibbes, **The Bruised Reed**, in **The Works of Richard Sibbes**, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 44.
- "The Lord's chosen shall not be lost, for He has promised to keep them by His grace, and His power is greater than all the powers of hell." — John Flavel, **The Method of Grace**, in **The Works of John Flavel**, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968), 137.
- "No enemy can prevail against God's people to their eternal destruction, for Christ Himself intercedes for them, and His prayers never fail." — Thomas Manton, **A Practical Exposition of the Lord's Prayer**, in **The Complete Works of Thomas Manton**, vol. 1 (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1870), 292.
- "The saints are preserved in Christ Jesus, and though they may be afflicted, they shall not be abandoned to everlasting harm." — Stephen Charnock, **The Existence and Attributes of God**, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 412.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Study and Discussion Questions for Sermon: *Small Sins, Sovereignty, and Safety* (1 Samuel 22:6-23)

Study Questions

- **Context and Overview:**
 - Summarize the events of 1 Samuel 22:6-23 in your own words. What key actions do Saul, Doeg, Ahimelech, and David take in this

passage?

- How does the historical context of Saul's pursuit of David shape the events in this passage?
- **Doctrine I: The Lord's Enemies Will Hate the Lord's People:**
 - How do Saul and Doeg demonstrate hostility toward God's people in this passage? Cite specific verses.
 - According to Matthew 5:10-12, how should believers respond to persecution? Why is rejoicing in persecution significant?
- **Doctrine II: Seemingly Little Sins May Have Tremendously Costly Consequences:**
 - What was David's "small sin" in 1 Samuel 21:1-3, and how did it contribute to the tragic events in 1 Samuel 22:6-23?
 - How does Eli's failure to discipline his sons (1 Samuel 2:22-36) connect to the slaughter of the priests at Nob? What does this teach about the consequences of leniency toward sin?
 - Reflect on Thomas Brooks' quote: "A little hole in the ship sinks it." How does this metaphor illustrate the danger of seemingly small sins?
- **Doctrine III: The Lord's Sovereign Will Shall Be Accomplished Even Through the Sins of Men:**
 - How does God use the sinful actions of Saul and Doeg to fulfill His purposes in this passage?
 - Provide examples from other biblical stories (e.g., Joseph's brothers, the crucifixion of Jesus) where God used human sin to accomplish His sovereign plan. Use specific verses cited in the sermon notes.
 - How does Psalm 135:6 or Isaiah 46:8-11 reinforce the idea that God's purposes cannot be thwarted?
- **Doctrine IV: The Lord's People Will Be Protected from All Eternal Harms:**
 - What promise does David make to Abiathar in 1 Samuel 22:23? How does this reflect God's promise to His people?
 - How do Revelation 21:3-4 and 22:3-5 provide comfort to believers regarding their ultimate safety in Christ?
- **Human Responsibility and Divine Sovereignty:**
 - How does J.I. Packer's quote in the introduction illustrate the relationship between human responsibility and God's sovereignty? How is this balance evident in the events of 1 Samuel 22:6-23?
 - Why is it important to understand that human responsibility and divine sovereignty are "friends" rather than enemies?

Discussion Questions

- **Application of Doctrine I:**
 - Have you ever experienced or witnessed hostility toward Christians

because of their faith? How did you or others respond, and how does this passage encourage us to handle such situations?

- How can we practically “prepare” for and “rejoice” in persecution, as suggested in the sermon notes?
- **Application of Doctrine II:**
 - What are some “seemingly little sins” in your own life that you might be tempted to overlook? How can the consequences of David’s lie and Eli’s leniency serve as a warning?
 - Discuss Richard Baxter’s quote: “Little sins are the sparks that kindle great fires.” Can you think of modern examples where small sins led to significant consequences?
 - How can praying Psalm 51:10, Psalm 19:13, or Psalm 23:3 help believers combat the temptation to minimize sin?
- **Application of Doctrine III:**
 - How does the truth that God’s sovereign will is accomplished even through human sin provide comfort in difficult circumstances? Share a personal experience where you saw God work through a challenging situation.
 - How does C.S. Lewis’ quote about God’s glory (“A man can no more diminish God’s glory by refusing to worship Him...”) shape your perspective on God’s sovereignty?
- **Application of Doctrine IV:**
 - How does the promise of being “in safekeeping” with Christ (1 Samuel 22:23, Revelation 21:3-4) encourage you in times of fear or uncertainty?
 - What does it mean to you personally that Christ, unlike David, is a perfect and omnipotent protector?
- **Broader Reflection:**
 - How does this passage challenge you to examine your own actions and their potential ripple effects on others?
 - In what ways can the balance of human responsibility and God’s sovereignty influence your daily decisions, especially in areas of obedience and trust in God?
 - How can believers encourage one another to remain faithful in small acts of obedience, knowing they are “incredibly rewarding” (as noted in the sermon)?
- **For Younger Audiences (Boys and Girls):**
 - Using the metaphor of “a little hole in the ship,” explain why even small sins matter to God. Can you think of a time when a small choice led to a bigger problem?
 - How can you trust Jesus to keep you safe, like David promised to

keep Abiathar safe?

Group Activity

- **Scripture Reflection:** Divide into small groups and assign each group one of the four doctrines. Have each group read the relevant scriptures and discuss how the doctrine applies to their lives today. Share one key takeaway with the larger group.
- **Prayer Exercise:** As a group, pray through Psalm 51:10, Psalm 19:13, and Psalm 23:3, asking God to help each person identify and repent of "small sins" and to trust in His sovereign protection.

TRANSCRIPT OF SERMON

beloved brothers and sisters visitors guests friends in his short book called Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God Ji Packer writes this charles Spurgeon was once asked if he could reconcile these two truths to each other meaning human responsibility and God's sovereignty someone comes to Spurgeon and says "Can you reconcile those truths that God is absolutely sovereign over all things and man is still responsible for what he does and does not do?" And Spurgeon replied "I would not try i never reconcile friends." That's his short reaction to someone why would I try to do that i never try to reconcile friends packer goes on and says "Friends yes friends." This is the point that we have to grasp in the Bible divine sovereignty and human responsibility are not enemies they're not enemies they are not uneasy neighbors they are not in an endless state of cold war with each other packer says they are friends and they work together and that is true packer's right but something that if you haven't faced yet you're going to at some point you're going to come across passages of scripture that are as clear as day god is absolutely in control of every single thing that has ever will ever happen period full stop god is meticulously in control of everything he does all things according to the counsel of his will and that's going to most likely make you think well so man is not responsible for his actions then if God is sovereign over everything why does he hold any of us accountable for it and that's because you're a child of the Enlightenment and you don't realize it or not but you think more philosophically and try to figure all things out that it makes sense to you rather than thinking biblically and theologically and that's that's all of us that's people's response is if God is sovereign then man is not responsible they're enemies it's either God is sovereign or man is responsible and the truth is God is completely sovereign over all things and you are completely responsible over all things in your life for what you do how you respond what you don't do as Packer and Spurgeon rightly said they human responsibility and divine sovereignty are friends it serves as a great introduction this truth does to this passage of scripture that we're focusing on

today in 1st Samuel 22:es 6-23 this passage actually has a great deal to do with human responsibility and divine sovereignty if you properly understand what's going on and why it's happening at first reading it it might not at all and you might only see human responsibility saul and Doe wipe out 85 priests and then an entire city called Knob and then David realizes at the end this is partly my fault and so you might only see the human responsibility side but I'll show you from even 1st Samuel chapter 2 how you should you and I should properly understand this passage and then we'll see what we can learn from it so let's walk through this text and then I'll show you four doctrinal truths we should glean from it four doctrinal truths after we I think properly understand it look at verse six in 1st Samuel chapter 22 this is God's word now Saul heard that David was discovered they David had just come back into a popular place in Israel into Judah and he was discovered they realized David is no longer hiding out but he's come into Judah as the prophet told him to do in the previous verse saul was sitting at Giba under the Tamaris tree on the height with his spear in his hand and all his servants were standing about him and Saul said to his servants who stood about him "Hear now people of Benjamin," Saul is of the tribe of Benjamin so he's with all these people in who are in the same tribe "will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds that all of you have conspired against me?" He's saying "All of you have betrayed me you're conspiring against me is David gonna reward you better than me and he's just insecure this none of these people are necessarily conspiring against him at all but insecure people always think everyone else is against him that might be you you might always feel attacked or think people are against you or wonder like they said something it's like did they mean it like this it's like that's that's a sign of insecurity and insecurity is just a a new word for the fear of man you care what people think about you so much that people say something "Were you attacking me?" No I was just having a conversation or people like this they're just trying to do their duty to Saul and Saul gathers them up and says "Yeah you're all conspiring against me aren't you david's going to reward you better than me." They're probably looking at each other like "What insecure people people who fear man just like Saul saul fears man he doesn't fear the Lord and so you guys are all conspiring against me is David going to reward you better than I have no one discloses to me look again halfway through verse eight no one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse none of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me to lie and wait as at this day david's not lying and wait for Saul david's not trying to kill Saul it it was not David's or Saul's son's desire to conspire against him that's not what he was doing that's not why he made a covenant with David he made a covenant with David because he loved him it was only after after that that he had to help David escape when Saul was trying to kill him david's not lying in weight none of this is true saul is paranoid he fears man things aren't going well for him and he he can't possibly say maybe it's because I live in unrepentant sin against God that's why things are going badly like no it can't be that it's got to be everyone's conspiring

against me when truly it was because of his unrepentant sin verse nine then answered Doe the Edomite you remember reading about him in chapter 21 and we just read this strange verse chapter 21:7 now a certain man of the servant of Saul was there that day detained before the Lord his name was Doe the Edomite the chief of Saul's herdsmen that verse is in chapter 21 when David goes to Ahimelech the priest to receive provisions and food and to receive a sword to equip him and we have that strange verse there and now we can see that's why that verse was there doe was there he saw David come to Ahimelech the priest himch took care of him he had no reason not to he had no idea what was going on and so verse 9 then Doeag the Edomite who stood by the servants of Saul said "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub and he inquired of the Lord for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." Verse 11 then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest the son of Ahitub and all his father's house the priests who were at Nob nob is this city the city of priests and all of them came to the king is that strange from our perspective it is strange we if you're thinking you would go I'm not going i wouldn't go if I'm him but Amalech why would he not go he has no idea that anything could possibly be wrong why because David lied to him when David came to him him even says "Why are you alone what's going on this is strange." And it says he was fearful when David came to him David just said "Oh Saul sent me on an errand the king sent me on an errand and I had to come quickly so I couldn't bring a sword." Nahm oh okay I guess everything's fine he doesn't realize that he actually fed and armed an enemy of the current king Saul and so Saul sends for himch sends for his family and they'll go "Oh cool the king wants to see us." That's surely what they're thinking the king has maybe got a blessing for us maybe he's going to congratulate us on doing such an excellent job at the city of Nob so Amalech they all came to the king verse 12 and Saul said "Hear now son of a high tub." And he answered "Here I am my lord king just put yourself in his shoes hear me now." Like "I'm here my lord my king what would you like to say why have you summoned me verse 13 and Saul said to him why have you conspired against me and this is probably when a himch goes "Wait what i have been summoned not for a good reason you and the son of Jesse and that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him so that he has risen against me to lie and wait as at this day ahimelech surely is shocked and that's why he responds in verse 14 then Ahimelech answered the king "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David and who is the king's son-in-law and captain over your bodyguard and honored in your house is today the first time that I've inquired of God for him no let not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father for your servant has nothing has known nothing of all this much or little ahimelech has no idea had no idea that David was on the run from Saul that Saul was angry at him that Saul wanted to kill him so he says "All I know is that David is honored in your house this is your son-in-law why wouldn't I not feed him he needed a sword why wouldn't I give it to him why wouldn't I pray for him i don't understand what's happening." That's what Alec is basically saying i had no idea much or little verse

16 and the king said "You shall surely die Aheimec you and all your father's house." Verse 17 and the king said to the guard who stood about him "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord because their hand is also with David." And they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me is that true no they had no idea he thinks it is so he orders them to be put to death look then at the second half of verse 17 but the servants of the king would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the Lord by the way this is not the main point of the text at all but this is another example in scripture of what we call civil disobedience civil disobedience the servants of the king are right there to do the king's bidding and he says "Murder these priests." And because it is an unlawful command it would be sinning against the Lord to do that they say "Nope we're not doing that we're with you we will help you we will obey you you are our Lord." Small Lord but we're not doing that so they disobeyed then verse 18 the king said to Doe "You turn and strike the priests." And Doe the Edomite turned and struck down the priests and he killed on that day 85 persons who wore the linen ephod ephod is something that the priests would wear as they served and verse 19 and Knob the city of the priests he put to the sword both man and woman child and infant ox and donkey and sheep he put to the sword but verse 20 but one of the sons of Aheimec the son of Ahitub named Abiathar escaped and fled after David and Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord and David said to Abiathar I knew on that day when Doeag the Edomite was there that he would surely tell Saul I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house stay with me do not be afraid for he who seeks my life seeks your life with me you shall be in safekeeping so what we have in this text is Saul thinking everyone's conspiring against him but that's not the main thing the main thing is that the priests are slaughtered and then the city of Knob everyone there slaughtered and then we need to pull back and just ask so what's going on is it just Saul's sin is it Doe the [__] sin yeah from the perspective of human responsibility yep but from the other perspective of God's sovereignty this was actually a sign an act of God's judgment on these priests and on this city that he had promised in 1st Samuel chapter 2 human responsibility they sinned but it was according to God's sovereign plan that his act of judgment would fall on Eli's family and all of them but one would be cut off let me show you the four specific things I think we should learn from this text of scripture four specific things the first and the fourth are the shortest the first and the fourth are the shortest that we'll spend time on and we'll spend our most of our time in application and understanding on points two and three but four things first learn again from this text as we've seen almost every time we come to 1 Samuel since Saul's been introduced the Lord's enemies will hate the Lord's people the Lord's enemies will hate the Lord's people you see Saul's anger still enraged against David so much so that he thinks everyone else is out to get him this is a principle all throughout scripture those who hate the Lord will hate the Lord's people look at Saul look at Doe here and so let me just give you some exhortations about that do not be shocked when it happens if you are a Christian those who don't love Jesus will not love you those who hate Jesus will hate you so don't be shocked second be

prepared for it be prepared to be hated it shouldn't be a shocking thing when unbelievers do not like you it should be a shocking thing when unbelievers do like you so prepare for it don't be shocked by it and thirdly rejoice when it happens rejoice when it happens matthew 5:10-12 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account rejoice and be glad." That's Christ's command to you Christians when you are persecuted spoken evil of treated badly when they speak evil against you falsely on account of your faith in and labor to obey Christ his command not option but command rejoice and be glad so hate the Lord's people when it happens he says "Your reward is great in heaven." For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you so don't be shocked prepare for it and rejoice when you are persecuted for righteousness sake when the Lord's enemies hate you rejoice now second the second truth that we need to learn from this and really the heart of what's going on here points two and three are really at the heart of this the second thing I want to draw your attention to is probably the most shocking and it is this seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences now this is from the point of view of human responsibility which you have to take we have to look at it from two different angles one kind of on the ground how we see things david's actions he's responsible for them eli's actions he's responsible for them and I want you to see how little bitty what we think are little bitty seemingly small sins actually result in costly consequences first David lied to a himc which left him totally unaware that King Saul would be furious at him for aiding David did you not notice in this passage i mean I tried to point it out to but you can just if you're thinking about it you go he really does have no idea he surely wouldn't have gone to Saul if he knew he had aided someone fleeing from Saul and Saul's trying to kill David if he would have known he would have said to his family "We need to probably go join up with David and see if David will protect us." But he goes right into the wolf's mouth david lied to him when he came to Knob hiding the fact that he was that Saul was pursuing David to put him to death you remember in 1st Samuel chapter 21 so Aimilec was unaware that Saul would be furious with him he walked right into the wolf's mouth and this is Benjamin the tribe of Benjamin benjamin is a ravenous wolf the end of the book of Genesis and Jacob's blessings over his sons benjamin is a ravenous wolf and Saul lives up to that name he is a ravenous wolf and so even though a himch explains himself after he figures it out "Oh no I had no idea big or little no idea that was happening." The ravenous wolf King Saul responds with "You shall surely die." David occasioned the death of all the persons of Abiathar's house though maybe he didn't rightly understand how maybe he did maybe he didn't look at verse 22 again in chapter 22 david's right that he occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house but we don't know whether or not he actually realized it's because I lied to him in the Hima and all the family just walked right to Saul maybe it's that or maybe it's just because Doe saw me there and I didn't take care of Doec maybe

that's what he's thinking it doesn't really matter if David rightly understood it David's lie occasioned the death of the whole house verse 22 and David said to Abiathar "I knew on that day when Doeg the Edomite was there that he would surely tell Saul I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house." David's one little silly lie to a hunch leads to 85 priests being slaughtered and an entire city men women children livestock put to the sword see how seemingly little sins can have tremendously costly consequences yet there is far more to this story than David's lie the ultimate reason the priests were slaughtered and this is from God's sovereign perspective that we get in scripture the ultimate reason is because of the sins of their forefather Eli back in chapter 2 of 1 Samuel so why don't you turn with me back to the left go back to 1st Samuel chapter 2 starting with verse 22 1st Samuel chapter 2 starting with verse 22 this is what's happening in this whole scene Eli did not rebuke his sons for their sin and he didn't remove them from their priestly office as he should have therefore the Lord comes and promises judgment on Eli and his family Eli did not rebuke and remove his sons from their office as priests therefore the Lord promised to cut off his family look at verses 22- 25 now Eli was very old and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting this is not little stuff it's like yeah they need to correct little things it's like this is gross sexual sin by these men who are supposed to be leading and they're serving as priests verse 23 and he that's Eli said to them said to his sons mean adults his sons are sleeping with women it's like they're inviting women to the church building to sleep with them and their associate pastors it's like that's not simple things like hey man you didn't exactly tell the truth there it's like this is big obvious gross stuff verse 23 he said to them why do you do such things because they wanted to why do you do such things for I hear of your evil dealings from all the people no my sons it is no good report that I hear the people of the Lord spreading abroad if someone sins against a man God will mediate for him but if someone sins against the Lord who can intercede for him how soft is this I don't even know if you can call it a rebuke no my sons it's not good that you're doing this he gently rebuked his sons and only when word spread abroad of their outright perverse wickedness secondly look look at the next part of verse 25 and see that but they would not listen to the voice of their father for it was the will of the Lord to put them to death the point there is Eli's gentle rebuke was too little and too late because the Lord had already decided to put his sons to death now look at verses 27 and 28 and there came a man of God to Eli and said to him "Thus says the Lord did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest to go up to my altar to burn incense to wear an ephod before me I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel the Lord here is rebuking Eli like Eli should have rebuked his sons he's rebuking Eli stern like Eli should have rebuked his sons look at verses 29 and 30 now why do you then scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling and honor your sons above me by fattening

yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel it wasn't only that Eli's sons were sleeping around in that sense they were also taking portions of the offering that they were not lawfully permitted to take they were taking the parts that belonged to the Lord fattening themselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people and now look at verse 30 therefore the Lord the God of Israel declares "I promise I promise that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever but now the Lord declares,"Far be it from me for those who honor me I will honor and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed." implying that Eli dishonored and despised the Lord in favor of being lenient with his sons he will not rebuke his sons he will not remove his sons from their priestly office and the Lord says "You are not honoring me you are despising me by you being lenient with your children." parents future parents you need to learn a lot from Eli's example his leniency with his children not requiring them to obey not giving them just and right consequences for their actions led to them being wicked young men and led to the Lord cutting off Eli's family seems little doesn't it i'm just kind of lenient with my children like "Ah hey why'd you do that?" H go on why did you do that go on it's not good that you do that just go on but look what happens to Eli and his family the Lord says "You've not honored me you've despised me you've despised me by your leniency toward your sons." cared more about possibly his sons liking him than the Lord liking him look then at the really brutal part in verses 30-36 therefore the Lord the God of Israel declares look at 30 again i promise that your house and all the house of your father should go in and out before me forever but now the Lord declares "Far be it from me for those who honor me I will honor and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed verse 31 behold the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will be not there will not be an old man in your house then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel and there shall not be an old man in your house forever the only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep his eyes out to grieve his heart and all the descendants of your house shall die by the sword of men eli's seemingly little sins being lenient with his sons not rebuking his sons as sternly as he should not removing them from their priestly office he just thinks "Hey I talked to them about it surely I talked to them about it i told him it wasn't good that they were doing it i asked them why they were doing it." And then the Lord's response is "You're done you're done." From the perspective of human responsibility you need to see Eli's leniency with his sons and David's lie to a Hima led to the slaughter of 85 priests and an entire city again I say seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences thomas Brooks in his famous book Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices says "A little hole in the ship sinks it and a little stab in the heart kills a man and a little sin without a great deal of mercy will damn a man." Though the scorpion be little yet it will sting a lion to death and so will the least sin if not pardoned by the death of Christ boys and girls look up here at me if you have a big ship or even a small ship and a little bitty hole gets in that ship what's going to happen what's

going to happen is it going to stay floating it's going to sink a little hole in a ship still sinks it and so it is with things that we think are little sins david goes to Himlec and doesn't really want to have to talk to him about the fact that he's on the run from King Saul so he just lies says "Uh the king sent me on urgent business that's why I don't have a sword that's why I don't have any food." David probably thinks it's a little bitty lie then a few days later 85 priests are slaughtered because of that and an entire city is put to the sword little seemingly little sin has tremendously costly consequences boys and girls from a young age you've got to learn that truth that ultimately there are no little sins even the things the sins we think are little still can wreck a whole ship a little hole in the ship sinks it you unbelievers you need to learn from this if you've not yet been born again turned from your sin and embraced Jesus Christ in faith the smallest sin and the shortest sin deserves the deepest and the longest hell one little sin deserves an eternity under God's judgment there truly in the end are no small sins because there is no small God to sin against the smallest sin puts a hole in the boat that is your life and will eventually seek you into the deepest sea unbelievers god is so holy that he will not overlook any just he is righteous because every sin ultimately is cosmic treason against the one who true God who created you who sustains you every moment of every day who commands you and has revealed his law even in your heart who's designed you to live enjoying and glorifying him that's what every sin is rebelling committing treason against this one good holy just and loving God he's so holy he won't let one sin go unpunished yet the good news of the gospel unbelievers you need to know one little bitty sin is enough to damn you for all eternity but the good news of what Christ has done is that God sent his only son into the world to save sinners like you and like me the Lord Jesus lived never letting even one little hole in the boat he lived perfectly without sin then on the cross he went to pay the penalty for your sin and my sin for all who will come to him through faith don't think just because well I'm not as great a sinner as other people one small tiny sin earns you an eternity under God's judgment and wrath you must go to Christ Jesus you must be born again turn from your sins trust Christ alone for salvation he lived without sin he died as a substitute for sinners he arose from the dead three days later and his arms as it were are open to you now saying "One little sin will damn you but if you trust in me with simple faith I will redeem you." So trust trust in the Lord Jesus Christ be baptized join the church walk with the church all the days of your life boys and girls the smallest sin you could ever imagine earns you an eternity in hell under God's judgment so trust in Christ Jesus alone to be your savior and you won't not just have little tiny sins forgiven you'll have every single one of your sins forgiven trust in Christ every single one of us must and you you who have been born again you are believers you're converted you should still learn from this passage not not just think woo I'm glad my soul that ship can't ultimately sink because Christ has saved me you still need to learn from this passage that even you who are trusting Christ for salvation you've got to beware of seemingly little sins you may still go to heaven but the ship that is this one life God has given you to glorify him in it you may sink that ship beware be warned

your soul may have been rescued by Christ but the ship may still sink in this life a little hole in the ship sinks it a little stab in the heart kills a man parents beware of treating your children like Eli did all of us beware of little lies lies that you might not even think are a big deal at all little thing that you think later like why did I even say that look at David look at Eli seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences richard Baxter said "Little sins are the sparks that kindle great fires they seem small but they carry the soul toward destruction." Boys and girls a little hole in the ship what's happening to the ship it's going to sink a little bitty fire let's say in your bedroom have you ever asked your parents if you could have a fire in your bedroom i hope not what would mom or dad say if you said "Can I do a fire in my bedroom like a campfire roast some marshmallows." What would they say what if you said "What about a little fire?" It's going to go "Okay you can have a little fire in your bedroom." Are they going to say yes to that why it's going to get bigger a little spark ends up starting a huge fire there's a reason that we don't light fires in the middle of our bedrooms there's a reason we have fireplaces if we're going to have fire inside and it's because just like little sins little sins are the sparks that kindle great fires they seem small but they carry the soul toward destruction so boys and girls if you go to Christ and say "Can I commit this great gross terrible sin can I murder someone?" What's Christ going to say to you no you shall not murder what if you come to him and say "Can I commit a little sin just a little one maybe I won't murder someone but I'm going to be angry with someone in my heart." That's small compared to murder isn't it what's Jesus going to say no small things that seem like small sins are really not small in the end so I want you to examine yourself do you make light of seemingly little sins look at David look at Eli be terrified be terrified of making peace with little sins making light of them if God has commanded it no matter how big or small it may seem to be to you you must aim to obey it period if God's commanded it you must aim to obey it if God has forbidden it no matter how big or small it may seem to you if God has forbidden it you must do everything you can to avoid it when you sin you need to confess it turn from it trust Christ to forgive you for it it doesn't matter how small or insignificant you may think the issue is now let me give you an exhortation pray these verses if you take notes I encourage you to write these three references down and pray these verses of scripture because I hope you like me are saying "I don't want to make peace with any sin and I'm terrified of even treating little sins lightly." And look look at the fires that can come from them look at the priests look at knob psalm 51:10 create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a right spirit within me psalm 51:10 create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a right spirit within me that is a prayer worth praying next Psalm 19:13 psalm 19:13 keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins let them not have dominion over me then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins so that verse I think gets quoted a lot it's like Lord keep me from really obvious heinous sins that people are going to find out about and it's going to ruin my life that's not what that means presumptuous sins is when you're presuming on the mercy of God and you go ahead sinning because

it's it's like not that big of a deal and Christ died for sins anyways so that's presumptuous sin keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins psalm 19:13 let them not have dominion over me then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression and the third verse that I would encourage you to pray is a variation of Psalm 23:3 lead me in paths of righteousness for your name's sake lead me in paths of righteousness for your name's sake seemingly little sins may have tremendously costly consequences yet conversely it's not really the point of this passage at all but I I want to give you this encouragement on the other hand seemingly little acts of obedience are incredibly rewarding seemingly little sins they may be huge negatives huge destruction coming from them but the same way that things that seem like little bitty acts of obedience those are incredibly rewarding god will reward you for them others will be rewarded for your obedience boys and girls especially you young men and women what your life is going to look like most of your life is little bitty tiny acts of obedience like a thousand times a day don't believe the lie that the faithful Christian life looks like well if you don't move to the third world and take care of orphans and feed those who are literally starving well you're just kind of a normal Christian no you're a faithful Christian living for the glory of God when you're just doing your seemingly small tiny duties a thousand times a day boys and girls it's a huge thing for your mom or your dad to tell you to do something and you to say "Yes sir." That's a huge thing god promises a blessing on you if you honor your father and your mother those things that seems little doesn't it mom tells you to do something you don't want to do and you smile say "Yes ma'am." And you go and obey that's huge and that's all of life little bitty things doing private worship for 15 minutes seems like that's such a small thing that's huge that's incredibly rewarding the Lord will reward you for that and you will grow because of it so don't forget that just how seemingly small sins can result in huge fires so seemingly little acts of obedience are incredibly rewarding you mothers you probably need to learn this best there's probably a thousand things you do every day in trying to bring up your children and the discipline and instruction of the Lord that seem like tiny little things but there's nothing tiny when it comes to obeying the Lord Jesus Christ all of it has the promise of reward all right now so first thing expect those who hate the Lord to hate us second seemingly small sins watch out third you need to learn from this passage that the Lord's sovereign will shall be accomplished even through the sins of men the Lord's sovereign will shall be accomplished even through the sins of men did Saul sin in ordering the priests to be slaughtered yes that was not a lawful thing that he could do that was murder did doe sin in slaughtering those priests and then going to knob and wiping out that city yes you're not allowed to ever look at something in the scriptures and justify something God has said is sin justify it by saying "Well this is according to God's like ultimate plan." No unless the Lord directly tells you to do something you you're not allowed to do that they broke the commandment you shall not murder that's the human perspective saul and Doe sinned greatly from the divine perspective God was sovereignly working over all of that to execute his judgment that he had promised on the house of Eli god

accomplishes his will even through the sins of men he has no participation in their sin but he accomplishes his purposes through them ruling over them ultimately for his own glory this is all throughout the scripture let me give you a few of examples of this from elsewhere in scripture consider the Tower of Babel the men at the Tower of Babel did they sin against God yeah they wanted to build a tower all the way to heaven they wanted to make a name for themselves so the Lord sees what they're doing and pronounces an act of judgment on them confuses their languages and so they spread out into all the earth was that God's ultimate plan to have people all over the earth different tribes different languages different nations so that Christ would redeem people from all over all different kinds of people all different kinds of nations all different kinds of languages worshiping before the throne of the lamb yeah how did God accomplish that through the sins of the people at Babel this is God's sovereignty ruling over and even working through the sins of men consider Revelation 5:9 and 10 if the sins of the Tower of Babel if God had not worked through them then this wouldn't happen you were slain and by your blood you ransom people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and you've made them a kingdom of and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth that's God's ultimate plan and he accomplished it even through the sins of men consider Joseph's brothers did Joseph's brothers sin against him in the book of Genesis by first throwing him into a pit and then selling him into slavery lying to his father that he was killed by a wild beast did they sin against him yeah but it was according to the definite plan of God that Joseph would then get to Egypt and eventually rise up through the ranks become the prime minister there and so that he would save his entire family and by the way which is preserving the line that the Lord Jesus Christ would be born through genesis 50:20 Joseph even says to his brothers "As for you you meant evil against me but God meant it for good." God meant it for good to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today consider the unbelieving Jews who sinned against Christ or sinned against rather the church by persecuting them yet according to God's sovereign purpose this was used to scatter those believers to get the gospel to those who had not yet heard it you see this in the book of Acts at the beginning of Acts chapter 8 and Saul approved of Steven's execution so Steven the first martyr of the early church a deacon in the church is stoned to death and Saul who's not yet a Christian this is the Apostle Paul he approved of his execution and there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles devout men buried Steven and made great lamentation over him but Saul was ravaging the church and entering house after house he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison verse four now those who were scattered went about preaching the word up until Acts chapter 8 the early church was not obeying the commission that the Lord Jesus gave them in Matthew 28 and in Acts 18 you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth they were in Jerusalem and then what does the Lord do to get them scattered and to start going out he works even

through the sins of these unbelieving Jews who killed Steven and started persecuting the early church God's sovereign purpose will always stand and the sins of men can't get in the way men try to thwart God's plan and end up actually just serving God's eternal purpose Paul was sinned against by the Jews and the Romans who wrongfully accused him and imprisoned him and then took him to Rome yet that is most likely how God got the gospel to Onesimus Fleiman's slave Onesimus becomes a Christian most likely through the ministry of the Apostle Paul and Paul's in prison in Rome this whole book Fleiman is written to Onesimus's former master who he had fled from and Onesimus became a Christian because of the sins of the Jews and the Romans and falsely imprisoning Paul and taking him to Rome the unbelieving Jews under the leadership of the Pharisees and Sadducees sinned against Jesus through murdering him by the hands of the lawless Romans was it sin for the Pharisees and Sadducees who stirred up the crowd was it sin for all of them to yell "Crucify him!" about Christ was that sin or do you look at that and say "Well no I mean that was God's plan that he would go to the cross." No no no no you can't you can't separate those that was sin for them to murder the Lord Jesus Christ it was sin for Pilate to wash his hands it was sin for Pilate to allow Barabbus to be released and Christ condemned yet that was according to the definite plan of God Acts 2:23 Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God you hear he's speaking to thousands of Jews on the day of Pentecost you crucified by the hands of lawless men you crucified Christ and all of it happened according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God God is even working through the sins of people like Caiaphas who in John 11 listen to these verses John 11:49-53 one of them Caiaphas who was high priest that year said to these men these men who are conspiring against Christ but they're saying "I don't know if if we let him keep going then the Romans may take us over and may punish us even more severely than they had been." Caiaphas said "You know nothing at all nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people than that the whole nation should perish" Kyifa said it's better for one man to die than the whole nation to perish what did he mean we got to murder Jesus to save the Jewish nation he didn't mean it in the gospel sense this is why John even writes in verse 51 he did not say this of his own accord but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation and not for the nation only but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad so far from that day or so from that day on they made plans to put Jesus to death God's even working through the sinful murderous inclinations of Caiaphas and he Kyifus accidentally prophesies and preaches the gospel accidentally on his part but according to God's sovereign plan he prophesied it's better for one man to die than the nation John Flavius says "God's providence is so wise and powerful that he can turn the greatest sins of men to the accomplishment of his own purposes." as the crucifixion of Christ was the greatest sin yet the greatest good so use this use this example God even working through the sins of men to accomplish his purpose this is what you need to ultimately learn the Lord will accomplish all his purposes the Lord will accomplish

all his purposes every one of you please look up here for a second god has never wanted to do something to speak in that human human type way he's never wanted to do something that he hasn't done he does whatever he wants to do whenever he wants to do it and he doesn't need your permission or mine or anyone else's he does what he wants whenever he wants psalm 135:6 "Whatever the Lord pleases he does in heaven and on earth in the seas and all deeps." That's a plain truth of scripture and many people today don't like that because it makes us think like "What about those terrible things that happened in the world?" And we don't always have an answer like, "Well why did God let that happen what did God permit that to happen?" And a lot of times you and I are going to have an answer other than providence is wise i don't know i don't know the answer to why he permitted such such and such to happen i don't know but he did and I know he's going to work all things for his glory the good of his people and the destruction of sinners you can't reject clear teachings of scripture just because like I don't know how to make sense of this i don't either i don't know how to make sense of why did God do this not this why did he do this i don't know but he's smarter than me he does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth in the seas and all deeps how about this isaiah 46 8-11 remember this and stand firm recall it to mind you transgressors remember the former things of old for I am God and there is no other i am God and there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purposes is that unclear it's not unclear it's just unpopular because we don't know what to do with certain things i propose to you what we do with it is trust the Lord who sent his only son into the world to be slaughtered in our place to redeem our sinful souls i think we can trust him even the things that we can't understand we can trust him daniel 4:34 and 35 Nebuchadnezzar speaking "The Lord's dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom endures from generation to generation all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say to him "What have you done?" None can stay his hand or say to him "What have you done?" The Lord has never wanted to do something and then not done it he has never set out to accomplish something and failed no man can stay his hand nor thwart his plan he will be glorified in heaven and on earth and he will even work through the sins of men to accomplish his purposes even the wrath of man shall reveal God's glory saul and Doe's wrath leads to the praise of the Lord why because even through their sins they even unknowingly are accomplishing exactly what the Lord promised would happen to Eli and his family psalm 76:10 surely the wrath of man shall praise you surely the wrath of man shall praise you that doesn't mean we are aiming to praise God in our wrath it means even when we sin it will lead to the praise of God's glory and he will never let his plan be overcome so you need to ultimately if you're a Christian you need to be comforted by this nothing nothing he's going to do whatever he wants to do and the great thing for us is he's told us what he wants to do and what he's going to do the absolute sovereignty of

God in all things is the pillow you as a Christian can rest your head on each night because the endgame for everyone who clings to Christ Jesus with simple faith is this and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying "Behold the dwelling place of God is with man he will dwell with them they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away that's the endgame can anyone stop that can the sins of men stop that no no longer will there be anything accursed but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it in the new heavens and the new earth and his servants will worship him they will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads and night will be no more they will need no light of lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign forever and ever that's your future Christian and no one can stop it lastly in conclusion I just want you to see that last verse david's example in that last verse of chapter 22 stay with me he says "Do not be afraid for he who seeks my life seeks your life with me you shall be in safekeeping." With me you shall be in safekeeping the Lord's people will be protected from all eternal harms that's what you should learn from David's example there david's a type a picture of Christ christ says to you believers "With me you shall be in safekeeping." With me you shall be in safekeeping christ is not a sinner like David was christ Jesus is the perfect wise omnipresent and omnipotent one who has shed his blood to bring you all the way to glory with him with the sovereign one you're in safekeeping pray with me our father we ask that you would glorify yourself save sinners sanctify your people purify your church receive everything we offer up now as sacrifices of praise receive them for Christ's sake in his name we pray amen.