

12 Lesson 20: The Enemy in My Hand, pt 3 (First Samuel 26:17-26)

Recap:

Last week we started First Samuel 26, which is the last of the three pictures we have been studying on the topic of vengeance – my enemy in my hand. We returned to the Wilderness of Ziph and the Hill of Hachilah to see Saul once again beginning a hunt for David after receiving a report from the Ziphites.

It is the same scene and the same scenario as it was in Chapter 24, but David is not the same man he was back then. He has developed a conviction over not raising his hand against the LORD's anointed king, and he has learned something about dealing with fools and letting the LORD avenge him. Last time David was in this place, he fled as soon as he heard Saul was coming for him but he ended up cornered. This time he decides to take a different tactic. He goes on the offense and becomes the hunter instead of the prey.

David and Abishai sneak into camp and take Saul's spear and water jug. Then they escape to a nearby mountain where David calls to Abner, the son of Ner (son of light), and rebukes him for not being vigilant in guarding his master.

1. Why take the spear and water jug?

David's Conversation with Saul

First Samuel 26:17-25

2. What tone does David take with Saul?
3. Is David saying that he is leaving Israel?
4. How does David respond to the penitent words?

Notice that his words change slightly from what he had previously said in Chapter 24:

"Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver [shaphat] me out of your hand." (24:15)

". . . and let Him deliver [natsal] me out of all tribulation [tsarah]." (26:24)

In Chapter 24, the word "deliver" was the word **shaphat** which means to deliver by rendering a judgment in favor of a plaintiff. It has the sense of justice playing out, which reinforces the picture there.

But here, the word for “deliver” is **natsal**. *Natsal* means delivered in the sense of being “snatched away” or “plucked up” – to be rescued unexpectedly.

The Hebrew word for “tribulation” or “troubles” is the word **tsarah** which means distresses or troubles, but it can also refer to a rival. In First Samuel 1:6, Peninnah is called Hannah’s *tsarah*, her tormentor. David asks that the LORD vindicate him and rescue him from his rival.

The Bigger Picture

Last week we compared this episode between David and Abner to the 1 Thessalonians 5 passage that talked about the Day of the LORD coming like a thief in the night, and that those who are sons of light are to be vigilant and wait for the day of the LORD’s vengeance. We are not appointed to suffer God’s wrath but to obtain salvation, and, with it, deliverance from the tribulation to come. Now, we see David using these words **natsal** and **tsarah** that mean to be “snatched away or rescued unexpectedly from tribulation.”

5. What do these words add to the prophetic picture?

The equivalent Greek word for *natsal* is *harpazo* which also means “caught up” as it says in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up [harpazo] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

6. What tribulation is David being saved from?
7. So, how well did David do this time when faced with a fool?

13 David in Enemy Hands

Read First Samuel 27:1-7

8. This isn’t the first time he has made this decision. Why did he go to the Philistines last time, and how did that work out? (First Samuel 21:10-15)
9. Why does David decide to return to the Philistines now?
10. Do you think David ever believed God’s promises to preserve him and make him king?
11. When was the last time David inquired of God for anything?
12. Do you think that has anything to do with his crisis of heart at this moment?

Application: Myself in Enemy Hands (pt1)

Why does a person who has been strong in the faith for so long suddenly decamp to the world?

13. What is different this time when David goes to Achish? Why does Achish accept him this time?

14. Why does David need to get out of the royal city?

15. Where does David end up?

16. How long does he stay?