



JUDGES
AND
KINGS



WINTER 02

DECEMBER 14, 2025

LESSON TEXT

I Samuel 19-II Samuel
2; I Chronicles 10-11:3

FOCUS VERSES

I Samuel 24:4-6

⁴And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

⁵And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

⁶And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT

God always keeps covenant, although He fulfills it in His time.

King David

I WILL BE
FAITHFUL
AS I WAIT
FOR JESUS TO
FULFILL HIS
PROMISES.

COVENANT CONTEXT

David was the rightful heir to Saul as king of Israel, but he did not reign right away. Nearly fifteen years passed between the time David was anointed and the time he was crowned. During the waiting, God was carrying out His plan for David's life and preparing him for the throne. Today we can encourage students that God's covenant promises have no expiration date.

SG *TEACHING OUTLINE*

Icebreaker: On a scale of one to ten, how good are you at waiting? Why do you say that?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers to set up the story of David waiting years to be crowned king.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection. **I**

I. SAUL'S JEALOUSY INTENSIFIED

A. David's Wait for the Throne

DISCUSS: *Why is it so hard to wait on God's timing sometimes? How can we better learn to wait?*

B. Saul's Attempts to Kill David

DISCUSS: *What do you think God was working in David during his long wait? What is God working in you while you wait on His timing?*

C. I will trust God while I wait on His timing.

II. DAVID SPARED SAUL'S LIFE

A. David on the Run

DISCUSS: *If you have ever tried to force God's timing, how did it turn out?*

B. David's Mercy Toward Saul

C. I will be cautious when becoming critical of spiritual leadership. **V**

DISCUSS: *How can we follow God-ordained spiritual leadership and remember every leader is also human?*

III. DAVID WAITED FOR GOD'S TIMING

A. Saul's Death in Battle

B. David's Tearful Response

C. God will do what He says in His perfect timing.

DISCUSS: *What are you still waiting for God to bring to pass?*

Internalizing the Message

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us wait patiently for Him to unfold His plans in our lives
- For God to bless someone who has directly opposed or wronged us

LESSON CONNECTION

I At its peak in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Mongol Empire was the largest connected empire in history. Originating from what is now Mongolia, this vast empire stretched from the Sea of Japan (East Sea) in the Far East to Eastern Europe in the West. It extended from above the Arctic Circle and south into India. It claimed more than nine million square miles.

Despite its military successes in conquering a myriad of lands, the Mongol Empire could not successfully invade and overwhelm one country—Japan. The Mongols tried on two separate occasions, both under the strong leadership of Kublai Khan. The first attempt was in 1274 with a force of eight thousand warriors aboard nine hundred ships. When that attempt failed, the Mongols again attempted seven years later with a much larger force of fifteen hundred ships and an army that has been estimated as high as one hundred forty thousand fighters. Once again, the invasion failed.

The reason was not simply the heroic fighting of the Japanese; it was an amazing example of fortuitous timing. Both invasion fleets were assailed by tropical typhoons, or what we would know as hurricanes. These horrific storms destroyed a sizable portion of the Mongol fleet each time, sending untold numbers of its warriors into the merciless sea. Had the Mongols invaded at any other time, they most likely would have defeated the smaller nation of Japan handily.

The Japanese coined a new term for these monster cyclonic weather systems. They called them “divine winds,” believing God had rescued them by sending the storms at just those times. The timing of these events shaped history. Regardless of whether God sent the typhoons of 1274 and 1281 to rescue the Japanese, the truth remains that timing can alter history. Both what happens and when it happens define destinies.

The knowledge that God controls all things is wonderful news for children of God. We have this assurance from God’s Word: “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way” (Psalm 37:23). God orchestrates our lives providentially to bring about His will for us. At all times, including in those moments when we don’t realize it, God is arranging matters according to His plans for our lives.

We see a beautiful example of this principle in the life of David. From the time Samuel anointed him, David knew he was to sit on the throne. But God’s timing was markedly different from David’s. He experienced a significant season of brokenness and disappointment before his coronation, none of which was enjoyable for one with such a divine destiny resting on him. Still, David’s patience through the process and his unwillingness to force God’s will meant when the “divine winds” of the storms were over, the perfect will of God was revealed for all to see. We can learn much from this season of the life of the man after God’s heart.

BIBLE LESSON

I. SAUL'S JEALOUSY INTENSIFIED

It was like fingernails on a chalkboard every time King Saul heard the lyrics from I Samuel 18:7: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." The women sang as they danced out of the cities of Israel to meet King Saul when David was returning from another victory over the Philistines. The words were meant to compliment Saul. After all, who else had slain thousands? But David was also being credited with ten times as many fallen by his sword. It was admittedly inaccurate, for by this point David was credited with but one victory, albeit a giant one named Goliath. But the zeal of these singers produced profound jealousy in the heart of Israel's king. Saul suspicioned that the only conquest remaining for David was his own throne. (See I Samuel 18:8.)

A. David's Wait for the Throne

The throne of Israel was prophetically David's. When Samuel arrived at David's house and emptied the oil on his head in the presence of his family, David's ascension to his royal estate was assured. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). God will always promise what He performs. There was never a question of David's destination, but it did not happen overnight.

David was considered a youth when he was anointed, and he was thirty when he began to reign; approximately fifteen years passed as David waited for God to fulfill His word. There is often a waiting process between the pronouncement of a divine promise and the performance of it. God's children must learn the art found in Psalm 27:14: "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."

DISCUSS: *Why is it so hard to wait on God's timing sometimes? How can we better learn to wait?*

B. Saul's Attempts to Kill David

David's season of waiting did not give him time to comfortably watch the days pass. Saul's vitriol for David surged into murderous rage. It even led to violence: "David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice" (I Samuel 18:10–11). This scenario played out again in the very next chapter.

David fled from Saul out into the wilderness, but in I Samuel 19, Saul commissioned his own son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. Saul dispatched squads to kill David on multiple occasions when he believed he had discovered where David was hiding. Saul himself led excursions to hunt down and slay David. (See I Samuel 19; 23:7–8.) David's season of waiting was filled with distress, homelessness, and despair, but through it all God was shaping David's character and preparing him to reign.

DISCUSS: *What do you think God was working in David during his long wait? What is God working in you while you wait on His timing?*

C. I will trust God while I wait on His timing.

Hopefully none of us will ever have our lives threatened while waiting on God's plan to unfold. But all of us will go through the process of dying out to our will, our plans, and our ideas of how to see God's will completed. In such seasons, we must remind ourselves that just as God's ways are not our ways, His timing is not ours either. We struggle with His timing because we tend to be a "want-it-now" culture. Just a five-minute wait at a drive-through restaurant frustrates us. One man said the surest proof of our impatience is the fact there are microwave instructions on a box of Minute Rice. But with God we must relinquish our demands for instant fulfillment. Delay is not denial; it is merely God wisely knowing the best season for His hand to move. Just wait on Him.

II. DAVID SPARED SAUL'S LIFE

The contrast between Saul and David is striking on multiple levels. We see it clearest in the way they treated one another. Though David had done no wrong to Saul, Saul sought repeatedly to kill him. Though Saul had clearly wronged David, David refused to kill Saul when given the chance—twice.

It is often quite easy for us to gauge how we treat someone else against how that person has treated us, but such is not the principle of God's kingdom. For those of us who are citizens there, we have a higher law: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:43-45).

Just as God shows mercy and pours out blessings on those who have mistreated Him, we are called to do the same. David is a splendid Old Testament example of what His descendant, Jesus Christ, would teach centuries later.

A. David on the Run

After repeatedly escaping Saul's direct javelin attacks, David decided he would be safest to flee. He could have fought. He was certainly able in battle, and having established himself as a national military hero, he could have tried to rally a sizable portion of the army to his side. Had he been willing to do so, a coup with his immediate ascension to the throne was a distinct possibility.

But David chose to trust God's timing. Would David be king one day? Absolutely. God had spoken it and it would come to pass. Did God need David's assistance in forcing the issue? Absolutely not. Even though it meant hiding in a cave surrounded by about four hundred men of rather low estate and dealing with hunger and deprivation, it was better to flee from Jerusalem and allow God to unfold His plan in His time, not David's.

DISCUSS: *If you have ever tried to force God's timing, how did it turn out?*

B. David's Mercy Toward Saul

On two occasions during David's flight from the murderous and corrupt king, circumstances placed Saul at David's feet. The first time, Saul entered a cave where David and his men were hiding; the second time, Saul was asleep when David discovered him. In both settings, with little effort David could have slain Saul in an instant and then asserted his right to the throne.

David's men urged him to kill Saul and take what was rightfully his. It would naturally appeal to them because it would allow them to return to their homes and possibly even assume leadership roles in David's kingdom. None of them would be on the run anymore. "And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee" (1 Samuel 24:4). Abishai, another of David's mighty men, advised: "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time" (1 Samuel 26:8).

But David would not bow to the pressure of his friends nor to the desires of his own flesh (human nature). In the cave, David carefully cut off the corner of Saul's robe without Saul's knowledge. During Saul's sleep, David simply took Saul's spear and water jug. After each incident David alerted Saul to what could have been and how he spared Saul's life. Though everything seems to point to the fact David had a justifiable right for revenge, he did not give in; He still trusted God.

C. I will be cautious when becoming critical of spiritual leadership.

First Samuel 24:10 gives David's clear reason for the mercy he showed Saul: "I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed." David purposed in his heart that leaving his God-called leader in God's hands was the wisest course of action.

Similarly, we should be incredibly careful about lifting our hands or voices against God-ordained spiritual leadership. Since church leaders are human, they are flawed and can make mistakes. Sometimes those mistakes can deeply hurt those they lead. This is a regrettable reality of fallen humanity. However, we do best to leave any correction of them to God and those with properly delegated authority over them. We are better served to maintain carefully clean hands and a pure heart than to exercise any "right" we may feel to retribution. God calls pastors and other spiritual leaders gifts in Ephesians, and we would do well not to abuse His gifts. If something is amiss, God is more than able to correct it through proper channels. V

DISCUSS: *How can we follow God-ordained spiritual leadership and remember every leader is also human?*

III. DAVID WAITED FOR GOD'S TIMING

A. Saul's Death in Battle

Although David refused to strike down Saul when he had the chance—twice—he knew the Lord would judge Saul when God was ready. God indeed judged Saul in the last chapter of I Samuel when Saul and his sons fell in battle against the Philistines. It is ironic—and even poetic justice—that the same enemy involved in David's greatest victory produced Saul's final defeat.

B. David's Tearful Response

At Saul's death much of David's trouble ended abruptly. No longer was the most powerful man in Israel seeking to kill him. His path to the throne was wide open. His future was secure. One would think David would find it hard to stop smiling at the way his prospects turned when Saul breathed his last. Instead, we read, "Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: and they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword" (II Samuel 1:11-12).

David exemplified a distinctive trait of a follower of Jesus Christ, namely not rejoicing when evil befalls people who might wish us harm. In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, our Lord admonished us, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). When we trust God's timing, we bear no ill will against those who appear to be opposing it.

C. God will do what He says in His perfect timing.

God can complete His plans regardless of what evil men or evil spirits do. He is sovereign, which simply means He exercises authority without limitation. It is often difficult for us to accept when God's timing takes longer than ours, but we must remind ourselves that delay is not denial. In His infinite wisdom, God will complete every purpose He has ordained in each of our lives. His timing was perfect for David; it will be perfect for you.

DISCUSS: *What are you still waiting for God to bring to pass?*

Teacher Option: Tell the story below or share one of your own to illustrate how God can work even difficulties together for good.

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

Someone born today in Guam or Puerto Rico is a United States (US) citizen at least in part due to bituminous, or black coal. This coal is prone to produce what is known as “firedamp,” a highly flammable mixture of gases, comprised largely of methane, the culprit in multiple mining disasters. Some experts think it led to a different tragedy on February 15, 1898.

On that date, the *USS Maine* exploded in the Harbor at Havana, Cuba, where it had been dispatched to guard US interests during the Cuban War for Independence. The explosion and subsequent fire sank the *Maine*, killing 268 sailors, nearly three-fourths of her crew. Speculation ran amuck that it had been destroyed by a Spanish mine, and “Remember the Maine” became a rallying cry in the States that accelerated US involvement in the Spanish-American War just two months later. The Treaty of Paris, which ended that conflict after eight terrible months and over two thousand deaths, granted Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States.

But had the coal produced enough of the flammable gas to ignite even three weeks earlier, it would have been clear the

Spanish were not responsible, and who can say how history might have unfolded differently. The timing of the event turned the tide of nations and territories.

In the moment, we generally cannot see how the circumstances of our lives will unfold over time. Far too often we do not understand how God is sovereignly directing His purposes for us, so we attempt to force issues based on our own desires and grossly limited perspectives. But His ways are not ours: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

God has a purpose for each of us, and it will come to pass as long as we walk in submission to Him. However, a facet of that submission is trusting God’s timing is perfect. Even “explosions” have a purpose for the citizens of Heaven. It may seem like a tragedy, but God can work good from it. Only in retrospect can we look back at painful moments and see how the plan of God allowed events to occur when they did. History is perhaps one of the greatest witnesses of God’s providence.