

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

I. 1 Samuel: From Samuel To The Death Of Saul

Z. Learning From God's Permitted Repeat Trials

(1 Samuel 26:1-25)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

In messages we gave before the recent presidential election, we noted that voters were unsettled over the issues and candidates for office, but now that the election is over, its results have only led to repeat trials for many:

(1) The November 14, 2016 Republican-American editorial, "No grounds for fright," p. 8A, told how the "election victory by Republican Donald Trump has sparked protests and even riots in many cities," and pjmedia.com (Tom Knighton, "U. of Michigan Gives Students Play-Doh, Coloring Books to Cope With Trump," November 10, 2016) reported Cornell University hosted a "cry-in" where "staff provided distraught students with tissues and hot chocolate" while University of Michigan students used "Play-Doh" and "coloring books" for solace over the election!

(2) However, the election results imply repeat trials even for many who voted for Mr. Trump: (a) The fact that so many rioters and college and university students are distressed that President-elect Trump won shows the extensive influence of leftists in the media and academia, that the President-elect's leadership is going to be strongly opposed, threatening the agenda for which many voted for him to implement. (b) Then, some who supported Mr. Trump are already upset at his actions even before he has taken office: Michael Savage, a radio talk show host and "Godfather of Trumpmania" for helping Mr. Trump rise in popularity, last Monday expressed dismay over a man the President-elect had appointed! Savage claimed he had been warned by "high ups" against voicing such criticism on his show lest he face repercussions from the new Trump administration, but that he was his own man, and had to inform his listeners.

(c) Also, George Will's piece, "A disruptive yet ruinous win" (Ibid., November 10, 2016, p. 8A) claimed that Mr. Trump "admires" President Obama's "executive unilateralism," his dictatorial style, and that the Republican win captured "an ever-larger portion of an ever-smaller portion of the electorate," the "white nationalism" group. Mr. Will warned of a changing "national tapestry" due to immigration that the President-elect and his supporters had to realize.

(3) Locally, I know of repeat trials that four believers have recently faced in relationships, health or job issues.

Need: *So we ask, "If we face repeat trials, why, and how does God want us to respond to them?!"*

I. God let David face a repeat trial of pursuit by Saul aided by Ziphite Hebrews living in Southern Judah:

- A. In 1 Samuel 23:19-25 NIV, God let David face pursuit by Saul aided by the Ziphites at the hill of Hachilah south of Jeshimon in Southern Judah; The MacMillan Bible Atlas, 1968, map 92.
- B. Then, in 1 Samuel 26:1-3 NIV, God **AGAIN** let David face pursuit by Saul aided by the Ziphites at the same hill of Hachilah where it faced Jeshimon, though this time David stayed out in the nearby wilderness; Ibid.

II. This repeat trial experience led David to recall God's PAST guidance and deliverances in previous trials, giving him settled guidance for handling his current 1 Samuel 26:1-25 trial (as follows):

- A. God's help in a past trial gave David settled guidance on handling Saul's possessions:
 1. Back in 1 Samuel 24:4b-22, David temporarily persuaded Saul to cease chasing him by showing a part of Saul's robe that David had cut off when Saul had unknowingly come close to David in a cave.
 2. However, David's conscience had bothered him for cutting off part of Saul's robe, 1 Samuel 24:5.
 3. Accordingly, in the 1 Samuel 26:5-11 trial, David temporarily took Saul's spear and water jug that had been near his head without harming these possessions as proof to Saul that David intended him no harm.
- B. God's help in several past trials gave David settled guidance on even how he was to approach Saul:
 1. Saul had brought 3,000 warriors to Ziph in 1 Samuel 26:2, but he had brought 3,000 men to kill David when he hid at En-gedi in 1 Samuel 24:3-4, and there God had still left Saul vulnerable to David.
 2. When Saul reclined with his 3,000 soldiers in 1 Samuel 26:5, covering over a football field area of land with Saul sleeping in the middle to protect himself, David recalled how God had immobilized Saul and his men at Naioth in front of Samuel when Saul had pursued David there in 1 Samuel 19:18-24.
 3. For these reasons, David was emboldened to approach a sleeping Saul with his sleeping 3,000 men in faith that God Who had before kept Saul harmlessly reclined would do so again, 1 Samuel 26:6-7, 12b.
- C. God's help in several past trials gave David settled guidance on handling the temptation to avenge himself:
 1. David learned from God's slaying of Nabal for wronging him in 1 Samuel 25:1-44 that God might slay Saul in vengeance for wronging him, stating this in 1 Samuel 26:10a to resist killing Saul, 1 Sam. 26:11a.

2. David learned when God sent a demon to trouble and wear Saul down in 1 Samuel 16:14ff that God might have Saul meet an untimely death, stating this in 1 Samuel 26:10b to avoid slaying Saul, 1 Samuel 26:11a.
3. David learned from the Philistine attack that caused Saul to cease chasing him in 1 Samuel 23:26-29 that God might have Saul slain in battle, stating this in 1 Samuel 26:10c to avoid slaying Saul, 1 Sam. 26:11a.
4. Thus, David used his experiences under God's help in past trials to avoid avenging himself of Saul.

III. Thus, David's final meeting with Saul in 1 Samuel 26:17-25 before Saul's death was marked by a settled David who knew what he should do and who did what was fully upright in God's view (as follows):

- A. After taking Saul's spear and water jug to a safe place some distance away, and after waking Saul, David asserted his innocence in not wanting to harm Saul, holding up Saul's spear and water jug as proof that he had not taken advantage of the opportunity to kill Saul when he had been near the sleeping king, 1 Sam. 26:17-20.
- B. Though Saul stated his repentance and asked David to return with him (1 Sam. 26:21), David acted wisely:
 1. First, he respectfully returned Saul's spear and water jug unharmed by means of a courier, 1 Samuel 26:22.
 2. Second, David repeated his claim to be innocent in relating to Saul, affirming his faithful righteousness in not harming him though granted ample opportunity to do so, 1 Samuel 26:23 with 1 Samuel 24:11-15.
 3. Third, David relied on God to aid him and judge fairly regarding his relationship with Saul, 1 Sam. 26:24.
 4. Fourth, David stayed away from Saul, not trusting his motives due to Saul's past actions, 1 Samuel 26:25.

Lesson: *God let David suffer a repeat trial that caused him to recall God's past help and directives that through them David might gain the guidance he needed to handle his current trial well.*

Application: *If we face a repeat trial, (1) may we trust in Christ to be saved and come under God's "much more" care, John 3:16; Romans 8:32. (2) Then, may we (a) view the current trial as a God's call (b) to recall His past directives for us in former trials (c) that we apply the lessons learned in such past trials for settled guidance now.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our sermon introduction, we noted that though many voters had felt uneasy anticipating the election, once the election results were in, a new round of repeat trials for many people had developed regardless how they voted.

However, if we apply 1 Samuel 26, we can use insight gained **before** the election for settled guidance **now**:

(1) We noted **before** the election that Daniel 2 predicted the remnants of the Old Roman Empire, Europe and the United States, will be composed in our era of strong and weak government elements and a separation of the races.

These predictions are **also** applicable **after** the election: (a) Michael Barone ("Trump's win: how and why" (Ibid., Rep.-Am., Nov. 12, 2016, p. 6A) holds that "Trump's surprise victory resembles the surprise defeats of . . . 2016 referendums in Britain and Columbia" where "the historical and cultural hearts of these nations . . . rejected the establishment position." Such strong democracies with weak governments due to distrust in leaders is common today. (cf. Paul Laudicina, "Scottish Independence: Strong Democracy, Weak Government," forbes.com, Sept. 19, 2014)

(b) Then, as we before noted, George Will's claim that Mr. Trump won by "capturing an ever-larger portion of an ever-smaller portion of the electorate," the "white nationalism" group, hints at the Daniel 2 prediction that not only would the governments be partly strong and partly weak, but that the races would not mix in marriage. (Ibid., Will)

(2) We also recall that **before** the election, we learned of the Revelation 3:21 prediction of Christ's granting Bible teaching churches key influence amid growing intrigue and dictatorial bents in world rulers in our era, and this prediction (a) **also** fits Mr. Will's **post**-election concern about "executive unilateralism" in American presidents (Ibid., Will). (b) This prediction **also** fits the **post**-election concern expressed in Patricia J. Rogers' letter to The Wall Street Journal (Nov. 11, 2016, cited in the Rep.-American, Ibid., Nov. 17, 2016, p. 6A) that the "government has overrun the limits carefully placed upon it in our Constitution, and the rule of law is eroding. Thus, elections have become increasingly consequential and even threatening for the 'losing' voters" so that "(t)he 'tyranny of the majority' that the founders feared is becoming a reality." With such oppression yielding an increased distrust in leaders as observed in Paul Laudicina's article above (Ibid., Laudicina), we see an alignment with what we **before** noted in Revelation 3:21 with 7:17, that there will be in our era a tendency for leaders who practice intrigue to gain power to become more dictatorial to hold onto that power over an electorate that increasingly recoils from them. This will lead many disillusioned folk to search for relief and direction and find it in churches that feed them God's Word, Rev. 3:21; 7:17.

Thus, (1) may we trust in Christ to be saved and come under God's "much more" care. (2) Then, may we heed our pre-election insight of Daniel 2 and Revelation 3:21 to be settled and secure in a world that lacks restful stability, knowing that God is allowing the instability to occur that people might be spurred to seek Him and His Bible truth for solace and direction. May we be as settled as David was in his repeat 1 Samuel 26 trial!