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**B0927 – July 5, 2009 – David's Response To Trials**

We're going to look at a situation in David's life, and watch how he manages this, watch what truths he uses and try to instill this as a model of how to handle trials because the later kings don't handle things this way. David is God's model leader. We want to start by turning to Psalm 57 which was written out of a critical event in David's life. David was one of the greatest believers in Scripture, and he is often looked down upon as unspiritual because of the Bathsheba incident. But God's evaluation is that he is a man who followed after the Lord wholly. This causes a lot of tension for most folks but that's God's evaluation. So we have to go with what God said, not what we think.

In this Psalm we have a situation that happened earlier on in his life, and I think we've given you enough background of history so that as we get into the Psalm and watch it you can pick up on things that you would not have picked up on had you not come to class. We're going to look first at the Psalm itself, the title, because in the Hebrew verse 1 is that title, "For the choir director," even though the English translation verse 1 starts out "Be gracious to me, O God," in the Hebrew "Be gracious to me, O God," is verse 2. The titles are inspired Scripture in the Hebrew. So we take these titles seriously. They don't always tell us a lot but the Holy Spirit put them there to prep us for what's coming.

What we want to look at in this title is after it says "For the choir director;" it says "Al-tashheth," and whenever you see something like that you know that the translators didn't know what to do with it. Because if they knew what to do with it they would have translated it; all they did is alliterate it, they took it and made it a one to one correspondence between the sound in the Hebrew

and the English language. If you look at Psalm 58 it says “Al-tashheth.” Psalm 59 says “Al-tashheth.” Psalm 75 “Al-tashheth.”

So what does “Al-tashheth” mean? “Al-” is a Hebrew adverb of negation and it’s a particular kind of negation, it says don’t do this; “tashheth” means to destroy, so the title here in Hebrew means “don’t destroy.” The reason the translators haven’t translated it is because it doesn’t really make a nice title. “For the choir director, don’t destroy,” is he telling the choir don’t destroy the song, what is going on here? We have to decide why is this in the title? Actually, most people that have looked at this Psalm feel that “Al-tashheth” is sort of a code put into the Psalms to describe a time in David’s life when he had the chance to destroy Saul. So this becomes a snapshot of what was going on in David’s heart when he could have killed Saul but didn’t.

The kings of Israel start with Saul, and after him we have David, before Saul they didn’t have any kings. Occasionally God raised up judges to deliver them but not a king. Why did they eventually want a king? By the end of the Judges period, about 1050BC their society was in chaos, “every man did that which is right in his own eyes.” That was an internal problem. What they sought was an external solution. So they demanded, they didn’t just ask, they actually demanded that God give them a king like all the other nations. Great. Is that what God wanted for Israel? To be like the other nations?

That’s why the OT is so good because it pictures so well the way we are, we get uncomfortable being different so we try to be more like the world. That’s what they did; they wanted a king like all the other nations. And remember, God said, alright, I’ll give you a king and he’ll be sort of what you want but I’m putting on some limitations. So He chooses Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. And He said Saul’s dynasty was a conditional dynasty. It was conditioned on whether or not Saul would obey the Lord. So Saul is given a promise but it was conditional. Saul failed, he rebelled against the Lord. He was a very confused man, he didn’t do a great immorality, but he did have a problem and it was right from the very beginning. He was half ashamed to be identified with the Lord. When the pressure came on him he immediately reverted to human solutions, couldn’t get his eyes on the Lord, it was always Saul, Saul, Saul, what are people going think of Saul, and never what does the Lord think of Saul. Finally Saul was replaced in God’s economy by David

of the tribe of Judah, and David eventually, not at the point of Psalm 57, was promised an unconditional dynasty.

So David becomes a model. And when we studied David we contrasted his behavior with the contemporary ancient Near Eastern kings. I gave you some quotes from Esarhaddon, some quotes about how these kings dealt with political problems. What was David's political problem? He's called to be king, what's the problem? What age was he when he was called to be king? He was a late teen and Saul was old enough to be his father, it's a little arrogant for teenager David to try to take the throne. So we've got a little problem, I'm called to be king but somebody else is sitting on the throne. So we have to have a change of dynasty here, not just a change of political party, a change of dynasty. How was this usually handled in the ancient world? We gave quotes of how the ancient kings took the throne: they took it by force, they killed off not only the king but his sons and his grandsons. Those sons were potential problems so you knock them all off. That was standard operating procedure. I'm reminding you of all that background just to deal with that one word in Ps 57, "don't destroy." That word sums up the difference between David and contemporary kings in the ancient world. Now do you see a little better why "Al-tashheth" is there? Don't destroy. David, at an early point in his life, has been anointed king, but Saul and his dynasty are in the way and David was being warned don't destroy. The challenge for David is am I going to go along with the standard operating procedure of the world and knock them off or I am going to trust the Lord to put me on that throne; is it going to be by faith or by works? I can sit here and I can engineer the politics, I've got the army, I can train the assassination team and they can go take him out, no problem. But to do that would create a problem in that who gets the glory after it's all done? Obviously David in his humanity gets the glory. David in his human skills gets the glory. Where's the Lord in all this. The Lord was the one that called Him to the throne, so David has a contest here. It's bad enough to have to sit and wait for Saul to get off the throne; it's quite another story when the guy comes after you to kill you, now you've got a problem. And it becomes triply bad when you've got your own army guys with you that have risked their life for you, and you've got a chance to take Saul out and end the threats to their life and you don't do it. That's the situation for David in the middle of this Psalm.

We want to look a little bit at the background of what was going on because it says it's "A Mikhtam of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave." That pins it down to the event of 1 Sam 24; this is when he's in the cave, so let's watch what happens. It's an amazing story. What we want to study is David's thought processes in that cave; that way we can learn how to handle problems like David did, not just the Goliath problem but the Saul problem. Let's see if we can mimic this great believer's mental attitude when he faced problems; that's what we're trying to do here. Let's go back in history to 1 Sam 24 and understand the situation.

I have to forewarn you here, the OT is very candid, and this passage as well as the one which I hope you will read for next week, 1 Kgs 11 and 12. 1 Sam 24 is one of those passages with a delightful sense of humor. Watch for it. "Now it came about when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." On a map of Israel En-gedi is by the Dead Sea. Jerusalem is just to the NW. The whole region is rocky cliffs of red sand, interspersed here and there is a spring and En-gedi was one of those springs, so it's all desert and then all of a sudden there's this lush area. That's En-gedi. It's known for its caves. Well, Saul has just come near the capital, Gilgal, because Jerusalem isn't the capital yet, and it's here that he hears about David down at En-gedi. So what does Saul do? Verse 2, "Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. <sup>3</sup>He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there *was* a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave. <sup>4</sup>The men of David said to him, "Behold, *this is* the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly. <sup>5</sup>It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's *robe*. <sup>6</sup>So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed." <sup>7</sup>David persuaded his men with *these* words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul."

Think of this, put this in the historic setting. Talk about getting caught with your pants down, this is the place in the Scripture. Here it is: here's the king in the most compromised position that you could possibly imagine, and this is

part of the humor of Scripture. It's all done without making it silly humor, but there's a divine irony and we have to enjoy how the Holy Spirit worked here in this situation. There's tremendous irony to this. Of all the caves that he had to pick, it was the cave where David and his military guys are sitting in back watching this. You can imagine David's own guys. David, this is your big shot, let's get the guy now, we can kill him and disappear in the recesses of the cave and they'll never know it even happened, they probably don't know what cave he went into, it'll take all day to find him. A beautiful set up. David sits in the situation tailor-made for an assassination against the competing dynasty. If he were to think as a pagan would think, as Esarhaddon would have thought, there's no question what David would have done in this situation, absolutely no question. But David is here and David has something in his heart and it's called the word of God, and that makes a difference in how he manages this situation. Notice he has to manage his own situation, he has to manage the guys that are with him, and he has to do it in such a way that it's going to leave him in conflict, serious conflict, with the accepted standards of political behavior in that day and age.

With that background let's go to Ps 57. Ps 57 is a "Mikhtam," that means a kind of Psalm. Psalms have structures to them, and in the last hundred years of church history there have been enough people study the Psalms that they've been able to figure out there are categories to Psalms. There are elements to these Psalms and if you capture it you'll see it repeat. It's artistically done so it's not mechanical, every Psalm is different. Here is the structure of a Psalm. One of the things that you'll find in a Psalm is a lament over some problem; it describes the problem. Also you'll find a verse or two that express the promise or the doctrine that the Psalmist claimed by faith in the middle of that lament. That's what they call the confidence section because it's that section that the Psalmist shows how he managed the situation, what he thought. Third, you'll find a petition section, so you'll have a petition in there. So lament, confidence, petition. Then you'll have somewhere usually a praise section, and the praise is described two ways. The scholars that have used this classification call some praise declarative praise, and descriptive praise. Here's the difference: declarative praise is just a statement of what God did in the particular situation, the specifics, that's declarative praise. The descriptive praise is more of a generalization of the character of God that led Him to do this specific thing in the particular situation. In other words, after watching God do it thirty-two times, that He

acts this way in this kind of situation, I start generalizing and saying, well then, God is a God of love, God is a God of power, God is a God of justice and so forth, I start describing who and what God is. That's called descriptive praise.

You'll see these elements in almost every Psalm, and there are patterns to combining these elements. There are certain Psalms that are heavy on lament and they're called the lament Psalms. There are Psalms that are heavy on descriptive praise; they're called descriptive praise Psalms. There are Psalms that are heavy on petition. They're all a bit different.

This particular Psalm has a lot of stuff in it but and we want to see a little bit about how David thinks. Let's see if we can find some of the structure in vv 1-5. Verse 1, "Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, For my soul takes refuge in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge Until destruction passes by. <sup>2</sup>I will cry to God Most High, To God who accomplishes *all things* for me. <sup>3</sup>He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. Selah. God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth. <sup>4</sup>My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire, *Even* the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows And their tongue a sharp sword. <sup>5</sup>Be exalted above the heavens, O God; *Let* Your glory be above all the earth.

Do you see what's going on there? Where's the petition in that, where do you see him asking God to do something? Clearly the petition is in verse 1, "Be gracious to me, O God," he's petitioning God, he's addressing Him directly. He doesn't do that in vv 2, 3 or 4, there he's just describing, and then in verse 5 he addresses God again, "Be exalted above the heavens, O God." So it's like a sandwich, vv 2-4 are sandwiched between vv 1 and 5. So let's look at the sandwich. Verses 2, 3 and 4, "I will cry to God Most High, To God who accomplishes *all things* for me." There he's sort of talking to himself, working up the courage to trust the Lord. Verse 3, "He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. Selah. God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth." Which of the five elements is verse 3? The confidence section, he's describing the confidence he has in the Lord in the middle of the situation. Verse 4, "My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire, *Even* the sons of men, whose teeth are spears

and arrows And their tongue a sharp sword.” That’s obviously a description of the problem, so it would be a lament.

We haven’t seen any praise yet. So the first parts of this Psalm are petition, confidence and lament. So it’s going to be in these verses that we learn about the mental attitude inside of David’s head in the cave situation, this is very instructive to us later on. Now we know the 1 Sam 24 situation in the cave, we see the situation David’s in and we want to get inside his head because this guy is a sharp believer. We can learn a lot from David. Verses 1-5 are how he’s starting to handle what happens in his life.

Verse 6, “They have prepared a net for my steps; My soul is bowed down; They dug a pit before me; They *themselves* have fallen into the midst of it. Selah.” What does that look like? The lament again, it’s a description of the situation. Verse 7, “My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises! <sup>8</sup>Awake, my glory! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. <sup>9</sup>I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. <sup>10</sup>For Your lovingkindness is great to the heavens And Your truth to the clouds. <sup>11</sup>Be exalted above the heavens, O God; *Let Your glory be* above all the earth. What are the elements in that? Praise, heavy on praise. So clearly from verses 7-11 the Psalm shifts. Do you see how it shifted? When you read Psalms watch for that shift. The Psalm starts out taking you through the problem, they take you to the doctrine and the truth the guy used, and then they take you to the resolution. It’s a very insightful thing. What we’re allowed to do by studying these Psalms is get inside these guys heads, these great believers, and how they thought so we can walk through life holding their hand and saying okay, take me through that trial David, I want to watch how you handled it.

Verses 7, 8, 9 and 10 all deal with praise. Do you notice anything in verses 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 where you see a confidence section repeated, where he’s expressing confidence in something? Verse 7, it’s very clear in verse 7 that he has absolute confidence the Lord’s going to handle this problem for him. There’s one other little tidbit in verse 6, you have to look at it carefully, go through each one of the lines, and see if you don’t notice something different between verse 6 and verse 4. We said both of those are laments. Verse 4 is a lament in the sense it describes the problem; verse 6 starts out looking like it’s doing the same thing, but what happens at the end of verse 6? That’s a

prophecy of something. What verb tense is that, past, present, or future? Its past, “they have fallen into the midst of it.” Therefore, is verse 6 looking at the problem before resolution or looking at the problem after resolution? It’s looking at the problem after it’s been solved. Sometimes the praise sections of the Psalms will look at the situation after God solved it. That’s why they’re praising God.

But here’s the tricky part, sometimes their confidence is so great that they can remove themselves from the situation and look at the situation as though it’s already been solved, even though it hasn’t been in reality. When you see that, and there are several Psalms that do that, that tells you how powerful these guys were mentally, it shows you what kind of a mental attitude they had. Talk about tough people, people like David in these kinds of situations accomplish these great things for God because on the inside they have that amazing confidence, they could even visualize it in their mind as something that is already past, the problem is already over, even though it wasn’t over. They had a grip on the mind of God and it was that powerful.

Let’s go back to verse 1 and go through this and study how David handles it. Watch what truths he brings in, what kind of doctrines David thinks about. The first line, “Be gracious to me, O God.” Why does he ask God to be gracious? Doesn’t David have the unconditional promises? Can’t David stand there and say, God, You have to be gracious to me God because I’m Your guy. David doesn’t do that. He immediately puts himself in absolute humility before the Lord, realizing he is a sinner. He starts right out on a grace basis. He says my relationship with the Lord is based from beginning to end on His grace and that means it’s not because I’m such a great and wonderful person that God just has to pour out blessings on me. There’s none of that in here, just a petition to “be gracious.”

Then it says “for my soul takes refuge in You; and in the shadow of Your wings,” when you see an expression “in the shadow of Your wings,” and you have a concordance, try looking that up and see where it first occurs in Scripture. When you look at a concordance always look at expressions and find out when it was first used. Think about what we’ve learned in history, I want to take you where this expression is first used. Turn to Deut 32, where did David get all this truth from? This is the national anthem of Israel, isn’t it? You think David meditated on this anthem? We have a neat anthem,



actually the fourth verse of our anthem has some very fantastic words, we never sing them of course because they get too deep into our godly heritage, but what did we say is the big difference between the Israeli anthem and the anthem of every other nation? God forecast their history. Is Israel going to disappear from history? Not according to the anthem, they're almost going to disappear but God's got a plan and David's thinking back to that plan in v 11, "Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. <sup>12</sup>The LORD alone guided him," etc... Why isn't Israel going to disappear from history? Because God, just like a mother eagle cares for its young is going to care for Israel. The eagle was looked upon as a great bird of prey, a strong, strong shelter. By the way, this metaphor of God as an eagle spreading out his wings to protect continues into the NT. Do you remember where Jesus used this? There was one point in Jesus' life where He mentioned this same metaphor. It was toward the end of His life, He came into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the crowds began to turn against Him and He knew He was going to go to the cross, and He looked back at the walls of Jerusalem, and He said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling." That picture of God's wings giving shelter comes ultimately from Deut 32. That's why it's so important to study your OT. The imagery in the Gospels is all coming out of the OT. And it teaches you to look out on the eagle today, that great majestic bird and think about God, His protection, His power and His sovereign election of the nation Israel, that's all embodied in the form of the eagle God created.

So let's go back to Psalm 57, David's thinking back to his national anthem. It's not a mystery where he got this now. He's pulling it from things he learned in Torah. "Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, for my soul takes refuge in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge, until destruction passes by." Notice the confidence there? That he's not going to have to take refuge for much longer because he has this confidence that the destruction will pass. Where's he getting that from? Who's sovereign? God is. Who's going to make the destructive period pass by? God is.

In verse 2 he quotes a name for God. This is not a Jewish name and you should be sensitive to this. "God Most High" - it is unusual for a Jew to address God that way. That's striking, why doesn't he call Him Yahweh? But

why “God Most High.” That is a Gentile expression; that’s the name Melchizedek used. Oh, Melchizedek used it, and who was Melchizedek? Melchizedek was the last of the king-priests before the baton was handed over to Abraham. What does David’s kingship mirror? He is to be a king and a priest after the order of Melchizedek, preparing himself for the ultimate, Jesus Christ. So he’s using Melchizedekian language to describe God, Gen 14.

Now we know, “shadow of Your wings” is from Deut. 32; we know that “Most High God” is a title from Gen. 14. He says “He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth,” verse 3. You can do word studies on all those words. But I want to single out two words: the words translated “lovingkindness” and “truth” because those appear frequently. You can’t read the Psalms without understanding these two words, they’re very critical to understand the vocabulary. Lovingkindness is an adjective that describes covenant loyalty. Implicit in the word lovingkindness is a covenant of some sort. Does that ring a bell? Yes, the Davidic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, these guys all thought in terms of those contracts. See how powerful that contractual way of thinking is. When they got themselves in a jam they apparently went back in their hearts - whose contract is involved here. I’ve got the paperwork and it’s all signed, and they went back to the paperwork, they went back to the contract. This lovingkindness is always used in terms of some sort of covenant. That’s why it’s used for marital love; it is not used for when two young people fall in love; that is another word because there’s no covenant yet. The vocabulary shifts to *chesed* when there’s a covenant. So lovingkindness has covenant in the background. The idea of truth there is pictured in the pillars of the Temple, the pillars were called “truth.” Why did they call them that? What did the pillars do? They held the place up. So the idea of truth is it gives strength and stability.

Well, this is where his confidence is coming from. What he is doing here is he’s taking all that information about the covenant, about keeping covenant, about a truthful God, a stable God, an omnipotent God, a holy God, a number of the attributes of God are wrapped up in those words. You find this consistently when the great saints of Scripture get in a jam what do they meditate on? The attributes of God. They start to cycle these things because that’s where strength comes from. And that’s what he’s going back to in this cave.

Verse 4 is a description of what happens, and notice how he generalizes it, it's not just Saul, "My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire," Now knowing what you know of 1 Sam 24 who do you suppose he's talking about here? Do you suppose he could possibly be including some of his own people? It's just a thought, we can't be dogmatic here. The guy is supposed to be a leader here, and he's got men he's leading. One group is out to kill him, the other group is out to protect him, and here's David in the middle of this, "My soul is among lions," and the "lion" is often used of a warrior, that's why that same imagery is taken over in 1 Peter and applied to who? "...a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." "My soul is among lions, I must lie among those," I have to sleep, "among those who breathe forth fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." Do you notice the emphasis in verse 4 on speech, watch how often in the Psalms David is complaining about gossip and maligning and criticism. Hate speech! Here's a guy that went out there, a warrior, he's constantly on the run, his life is at stake, yet in the midst of all that stress what was the thing that bothered David the most? People running off at the mouth. I think we all face that. If you haven't it's just a matter of time. The thing that bothers you the most in life is all the criticizing and gossip. It ruins people's reputation, it ruins communication, and it ruins fellowship. There are warnings in Scripture about the tongue.

Now in verse 5 he ends with an appeal. It's sort of like a preliminary praise, but it's in the form of a petition. "Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth." What does that tell you in context with verse 4? See what he's doing? In verse 4 he's analyzed the problem. He's thought about the problem that he perceives and he's concluded now there's no way I can solve this problem, God has to do it. That's why he says "Be exalted...O God." That's one of the things that is involved in praise. Who gets the credit? Who gets the credit if David's men go get him? David has to control his men in that cave, when they could so easily move in with a knife and take out his problem. You can just see these guys saying let me go get him! Now, come on, he's almost finished, he's only got a few minutes to do his thing, and these guys are professional killers; that's what their job is, they're trained to do that, they're soldiers, he trained them all the way from another cave, called the cave of Adullam. David has trained these guys. And they're just chomping at the bit to do this and he says no, do not destroy, do not

destroy. What do you mean don't destroy, come on David, if we let this guy go we're going to be killed some day in battle. Don't you have any consideration for us? We're trying to help you pal. So the pressure is on David from his own guys. But David isn't thinking about his own guys, he isn't thinking about Saul. Verse 5 tells who he's thinking of. He's thinking of who gets the credit. God has called me to this dynasty, if the dynasty is ever to get going in history, God will have to put me on the throne, no one else, not my wisdom, not my political gimmicks, not all my negotiations, God is going to have to do it and God will get the credit. And God did. Just think what this opens up you up for if you work for the CIA and all the political conspiracy, whole new ways to solve problems.

The rest of it is the declaration of praise. This is looking back at it, verse 6. We come now to this past tense in verse 6, because here is where you start to pick up the flavor. The crisis is over. Now whether verses 6-11 went on in his mind at that time or whether verses 6-11 tell you what he was thinking after the whole thing was resolved we don't know. "They have prepared a net for my steps;" this is all the plotting with Saul and his men, "my soul is bowed down;" and notice when it says "my soul is bowed down" he's admitting that he's depressed. He's not going, you know, "I've got the joy, joy, joy" business; it's not quite like that. He is depressed, he's feeling the pressure. This goes on day after day after day after day. He's on the run, they have to forage for food and water, day after day after day, this gets old after awhile, and so you can see why he's depressed. "...They dug a pit before me; they themselves have fallen into the midst of it." Knowing what's going on in the cave, do you see where this came from? There's an irony to this. They literally have tried to set David up, surround him and destroy him in the wilderness. But what happened? The main guy Saul has fallen into his own trap. He's inches away. There's tremendous irony in all this, there's a tremendous sense of the sovereignty of God.

Now in verses 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 is his tremendous confidence. "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast." What did he say in verse 6, "my soul is bowed down," but "my heart is steadfast." See, you can be depressed and still have confidence. Some people think, well if your depressed your out of it, you've broken fellowship. Not necessarily, David does still obviously believe the promises of God. So you can be hurting and still be steadfast. On the surface, yeah, I'm shaken, but deep down, I've got confidence in the Lord, my

heart is steadfast, and so he says now I'm going to sing, "I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!"

In verse 8 he's talking to himself when he says, "Awake, my glory," "my glory" is usually used synonymously with soul, and he says "Awake, my soul, awake my harp and lyre," what was one of his talents? Music. It was a method of expressing his thankfulness to God. Verse 9, "I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord" and notice, not just personally, who was he giving thanks before? "among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations." How did David, literally, sing praises among the nations? What are we reading here, what book of the Bible? Psalms. Has he given praise before the nations? Yes, because the book of Psalms got published among the nations. Plus, in his own career he probably shared this with other kings. We know he talked to Hiram of Tyre because that's how Solomon knew how to get the cedar for the temple. So David probably talked many times, and these kings would share stories of how they got to the throne. Well David, how did you get to the throne? And that was his opportunity to give a testimony. These other kings would say, well I killed so and so, and I killed this guy and I wiped out his family. David, how many families did you wipe out? None. What, you didn't kill your opponents? No, I didn't kill them. Why not? Because I have a God in heaven who takes care of those things for me. It was an opportunity to give testimony. So David gives testimony to God's lovingkindness and truth.

Let's conclude by turning back to what happened at the end of that incident in 1 Sam 24 to see what kind of a victory God really gave to David. Something stunning happened here. As we read before, Saul's relieving himself, David comes up, and cut a piece off of Saul's garment then Saul went out of the cave. Verse 8, "Now afterward David arose and went out of the cave and called after Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. <sup>9</sup>David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, 'Behold, David seeks to harm you'? <sup>10</sup>"Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD had given you today into my hand in the cave, and some said to kill you, but *my eye* had pity on you; and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD'S anointed.'" Saul knew very well that if David got close enough to cut this off, he got close enough to chop his head off. So it was living evidence that David wasn't just bluffing. He goes on and

describes it; it's an amazing dialogue, vv 11, 12, 13 and 14. Now verse 16, here's the result, here's the end of the scene. "Now it came about when David had finished speaking these words to Saul that Saul said, 'Is this your voice, my son David?' Then Saul lifted up his voice and wept." Saul was a very emotional person, a very unstable kind of person. He floats around spiritually but he was emotional. Verse 17, "And he said to David, 'You are more righteous than I; for you have dealt well with me, while I have dealt wickedly with you.'" It led to a confession of sin. Now the amazing thing in verses 20-21, keep the history and background in mind; keep your history in mind! What is the big picture? Dynastic succession. That's what's going on here, who is going to control the throne of Israel. Here's the guy that's on the throne, who has all power, is twice his age and what does he say in verses 20-21 as a result of this? "Now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand." Who's relinquishing his dynasty? <sup>21</sup>So now," (look at this, look at verse 21,) "So now swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will *not destroy* my name from my father's household." And guess what the verb "destroy" is? It's the title of the Psalm, "Al-tashheth," don't destroy my seed. What's the object of the verb "destroy?" The old dynasty. Why not destroy it? Because God is in control. Man's not going to get the glory, God's going to get the glory, so I trust Him.

Here we have an eloquent portrayal of the behavior, for about thirty minutes, probably this whole thing was started and finished in thirty minutes, a snapshot of one of the great believers of all time and how he managed adversity, trial and pressure, and how he came out of it. Then in verses 20-21 what he accomplished by it. He could have killed Saul, but what would that have done? It would have hardened the people who were the Saulites. It would have hardened them and you would have had to fight all of them. But by having Saul himself, in verses 20-21, admit that yeah, my dynasty is finished, and the destiny of my sons rests on you, he's defeated. Saul was defeated, and he was defeated without even being touched with a knife. The reason is because David used another sword, the sword of the word of God that is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. David is an amazing story here of a guy, a king, a Messianic leader who operated with knowledge of the covenant, knowledge of the attributes of God, and in coming weeks we're going to watch sadly, one of the all time idiots to sit on the throne, Rehoboam. Watch what this guy does. Keep David in mind; use him

as a reflector as we start studying these other kings. We'll see how they fare and we'll pull out more truths on sanctification. Sometimes it won't feel too good because it gets into carnality and idolatry and we realize we can really wreck it. But it's great, because we need to know that.

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