

Message #65**I Samuel 27:1-12**

There is a statement in Romans that says God works out all things for good to those that love Him, but sometimes the good is hard to see. In fact, the verse does not say you will see the good or feel the good, it just says He is doing the good.

This life of David was certainly anything but boring. If you are David, there are times when life was very depressing. We may recall that God revealed to David when he was a young shepherd that he would become the next king of Israel. But ever since those days nothing much had gone right.

He has experienced loneliness, hunger, fear and quite honestly depression. What we see here is this:

NO MATTER WHAT GOD’S PEOPLE EXPERIENCE, THEY CAN ALWAYS FIND COMFORT IN THE FACT THAT GOD IS STILL SOVEREIGN AND EVENTUALLY HE WILL TURN THE NEGATIVES INTO POSITIVES.

All of the things David experienced were a prelude to him becoming the most honored king in Israel’s history. This chapter is fascinating and eye-opening. There are five narrative observations we want to make:

**NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #1 – David decides to take his men to live in Philistine land.
27:1-3**

Verse 1 begins by saying, “David said to himself.” We assume by this that he did not pray and talk to God, he did not consult Abiathar the priest or Gad the prophet. He was very low and depressed and he made this decision on his own. It was a very private decision.

He had done nothing wrong and things were so bad that the only place on earth where he felt he would be accepted would be in the land of the Philistines. He has just looked at 3,000 of his own people and they all hate him and are out to kill him.

What David does not realize is that God would ultimately turn all of this around and raise him up to be the most honored King in Israel’s history.

David was prompted by a desire to live life out from under the fear that Saul would kill him at any time (27:1) and prompted by a need to provide for 600 men plus their families (upwards of 1,000 people) (27:2) and prompted by a desire to live life as a normal family man (27:3). David decided to report to Achish, King of Gath, the leader of the Philistines.

David knew that the land of the Philistines would be the one place Saul would not go. Saul was a pathological liar and David knew he could not trust him.

David just wanted to live a quiet and peaceful life. He was emotionally shot. He was tired of this entire mess. I don't care how long you have known the Lord, there will be times in life when you are very low. For David, this was one of those times.

By this time in the life of David, everyone knew that he was a fugitive on the run from Saul. The Philistines would often employ mercenary groups of people. In exchange for a place to live and food to eat, these mercenaries acted as a para-military arm of the Philistines. They would raid and loot and share the spoils with the Philistines. David signed on with the Philistines and he finally had a place to live.

They were living near Gath. David and his men and their families, plus David and his wives - Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the Carmelitess. This certainly is not the ideal location for David and his men to live, but it is also not the final location where they will live. It was a relatively good temporary hide out.

It is interesting that eventually Gath will be a city David will take after he is king (I Chron. 18:1).

David has been criticized for this move. But there are three things worth noting about this.

First of all, David is right with God and Saul is not. As we have said earlier, when we get into eternity, you go to David and lecture him on what you think he should have done and see where that gets you.

Second, God is still sovereign in every bit of this. David is not getting direct revelatory messages from God here, but God was still sovereign and David knew that.

Third, David would learn much about the logistics of the city of Gath by staying here, which would enable him later to take it.

It is a shame that the lost heathen world was more receptive to David than believing Israel. Those who should have honored him hated him and those who should have hated him received him.

That is the way it was for Jesus Christ. He came to His own and His own did not receive Him. Israel, who should have honored Him, rejected Him and the Gentiles received Him.

When you find yourself at an emotional low, be careful so that you do not make emotional decisions.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #2 – Saul decides to stop chasing David. **27:4**

Let us keep in mind that the reason Saul is not going after David is not because he has suddenly had a change of heart and is now right with God. He has been led by Satan ever since Samuel anointed David (16:14).

Saul decided to stop chasing David for many reasons, most of which he is not even aware:

Reason #1 - He does not want to go after David and end up fighting him and the Philistines. Frankly he is a coward. He is aware of this. Truth is the one guy who could actually defeat the Philistines, is living with the Philistines. Without David on your side, chances were not good for winning.

Reason #2 - He does not want to go after David because God has turned his mind away from pursuing him. He is not aware of this. God is sovereign even in the decisions of Satanic crazy people.

Reason #3 - He does not want to go after David because in the near future he will die. His life is just about over. He is not aware of this.

Saul's final chapter in life will turn out to be his final rebellion against God.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #3 – David asks Achish to give him a city in the Philistine Territory. **27:5-7**

In all reality, David is treated by the lost, heathen world better than he is by believers who should have loved him and supported him. The Philistines recognize the value of David when most of Israel doesn't.

Notice how David approaches this in **verse 5**. He appeals to Achish's ego by saying why should a servant like me live in the same city as a royal king like you.

Achish decided to give David a city called "Ziklag." It was a city deep in the south of the Philistine territory. It is speculated that this city was located about 23-25 miles straight south of Gath. This city originally had been allotted to Simeon (Josh. 19:5) and also was part of the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:20, 31).

But at the time this event occurred, it was land taken by the Philistines. In all reality, David is moving into a city that was already part of Israel's land.

David and his men moved to Ziklag and they lived there for a year and four months (**27:7**). Josephus claims it was one year, 4 months and 20 days to be exact.

While David and his men were living here, two very unusual events occurred:

Unusual Event #1 - A massive number of Saul's best fighting men defected and joined David at Ziklag (I Chron. 12:1-7,19-22). It had taken a long time but finally some of these people came to their senses and realized it was David who was really right and not Saul.

Unusual Event #2 - David was able to pretend to serve Achish, while all the time actually helping to build and support cities and people of Israel (I Sam. 30:26-31). This, in all reality, was setting the stage for a massive support for David.

This year and four months that David lived in the land of the Philistines may have seemed like a major mess to David, but it was actually a great preparatory time for the greatest blessings of David's life.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #4 – David actually attacks the enemies of Israel. **27:8-9**

This location was actually a good one for David to defend Israel. The people that David attacked had been enemies of Israel for a long time. This is an amazing display of the sovereignty of God. Achish thinks David is down in Ziklag fighting Philistine enemies, which is true, but the enemies that he is actually defeating are first and foremost the enemies of Israel.

David is actually in the process of obeying the word of God by eliminating Israel's enemies from the land that belonged to Israel.

The Geshurites had been fierce enemies of Israel ever since the days of Joshua (Josh. 13:1-2).

The Girzites were closely allied with the Geshurites and the Amalekites who had been a problem ever since the days of Abraham (Gen. 14:7).

This is an amazing development by the sovereignty of God. David has been forced to run from Saul and relocated to Philistine territory. While there he is actually able to attack Israel's enemies and get them out of the land.

According to **verse 9**, David attacked these enemies and then took some of the spoils to Achish. David destroyed the men and women and took the sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels and clothing.

Again, this would be a smart move for David to make. He defeats the enemies and then takes Achish some of the spoils.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #5 – David hides all details of what he is doing from Achish. **27:10-12**

When Achish asked David where he was raiding, David told the truth, he just didn't reveal everything. He was raiding the Deep South Negev region.

David fought enemies and even though some of them were Philistine enemies, all of them were Israel's enemies.

Frankly some of God's own people need to learn not to be a blabber mouth. What David was actually doing was systematically taking out Israel's enemies and Achish thought he was fighting for the Philistines. David just let him think it.

In fact, Achish thought because he was fighting the people in the Negev region that the Israelites would be against David and David would be his servant forever.

PRACTIAL THOUGHTS:

- 1. Times when we are low should never cause us to stop serving God.**
- 2. God is still sovereign even when it seems like we are losing.**
- 3. God will eventually take care of every one of our enemies.**
- 4. Be careful about what you say and to whom you say it.**