

8973-U

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 2000

DAVID, A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

THE FUGITIVE BECOMES KING

Speaker: Bro. David Pride

Study #4: Blessed be thou, my son David

Reading: 1 Samuel 26

My dear brethren and sisters, we're going to begin with a hymn, the reason for this, it's 282, and the reason for this is that I want to focus our attention, focus our thoughts, all into the same place, we'll do this through the use of this hymn 282.

Take up thy cross, the Saviour said
If thou wouldest my disciple be,
Deny thyself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after Me.

It's been very well said, my dear brethren and sisters, that the road to the kingdom goes by the way of the cross. There is no other way than that it is 'the cross before the crown'; and this part of the life of the man after God's own heart, the fugitive period, illustrates the truth of that saying perhaps as well as anything we'll find. You see, b&s, there are crosses that are laid upon us, they are something unsought, it's unasked for, they're laid upon us! Like the thorns in the flesh, you see, that we may pray, and pray and pray that it be removed, and hear from the Father, 'grace, my grace is sufficient for you', 'My strength is made perfect through weakness', and these may be crosses, b&s, that we have to bear until Jesus comes.

Well, there is a cross that we've asked for, that we've taken up willingly, that we carry for Christ and with Christ, 'any man that will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me'. For we've focused our minds, b&s, by the singing and by our thoughts now,

Take up thy cross and follow Him
And don't think till death to lay it down,
For only he who bears the cross,
Can hope to share the glorious crown.

That's the way it is, b&s, we've been privileged in our study of the man after God's own heart, to spend a little time with one of the loveliest sisters in all the pages of scripture, we're talking, of course, about Abigail, the wife of Nabal, the wife of David. Here is a sister, who well knew what it means to bear a cross; who well knew what it meant to have a cross laid upon her, because this sister bore the cross of Nabal, the fool. When that cross is removed, b&s, she finds herself a woman of great substance; it's a time that many would look forward to, of great relief, great comfort from the pressure and the burden of that cross which she had to bear. And yet she chose another course, didn't she? when the cross of Nabal was removed, she took up another cross, it was the cross of Yahweh's anointed. You'll know as one brother says, b&s, being well-schooled in this house, that the word 'anointed' is the word for 'messiah' (4899); it's the word for Christ. She took up the cross willingly as we have done, of Yahweh's Anointed. She could have been and settled in to a life as a wealthy estate owner, the resources there was so great that her husband was able to put on a feast like the feast of a king; but she forsook all for the kingdom of God, and chose the life of a fugitive, dwelling and more than dwelling, hiding in the rocks and in the caves of the earth; she chose this! The road to the kingdom is rugged at times, isn't it? perhaps we can all attest to that. There are many pitfalls along the way, many difficulties along the way, b&s, it's a steep climb up mount Zion. Well, I think all of us in prospect, the view is worth it, and so we struggle on! Abigail would learn very quickly what it meant to be a fugitive, Abigail would learn very quickly the danger of living with a hunted man; she knew of it, b&s, she knew what was happening to David, remember when we talked about Abigail in chapter 25, she said to David, 'that a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul'; and she knew all about that! now she would live it, day after day after day, she would live that life along with her husband, David.

When we come to 1 Samuel chapter 26, it's going to appear to us as though history is repeating itself. There's such a parallel here with the things of chapter 23 perhaps beginning at verse 19, you'll see almost word for word, the parallel things that we will read. Same cast of characters with a couple of additions, important figures are added into the drama here now in chapter 26; the cowardly Ziphites are still there, still in the picture, same intentions, b&s, they don't change, they're still intent on turning David over to Saul, for some reason they have this loyalty to Saul and they just want to give him, David. No doubt for what they can get out of this, we would imagine; but if you'll just open your bibles to chapter 23 and look at verse 19, I'll read from chapter 26 verse 1, and you'll see how close the parallel is here: (you've got 23:19 and I'm reading from 26:1) 'And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon' (very close isn't it? history's kind of repeating itself here with the same individuals, speaking to Saul, coming to Gibeah, and pointing basically to the same place, slight differences, b&s, but we would expect this, it's a different occasion) But they're very slight, and just think from David's perspective, as these things begin to unfold, how discouraging a thing it must have been, to have been there before, seen these things happen before, see the way it went with Saul and his men, and now see history begin to repeat itself and know that Saul never got the message. Saul never learned, he never quit in this relentless pursuit of David, a man

caught up in the rage of jealousy as it says in the Proverbs, 'jealousy which is as cool as death, as cool as the grave' in the Song of Solomon.

So the word comes to Saul and on the first occasion, you will remember, he kind of hesitated, he didn't rush right down after David. He said to the Ziphites, just give me some certainty as to where he is, and then I'll come down and we'll get him. And so he kind of waited on that word and then he pursued down into the area looking for David. This time it's different, this time there's no hesitation at all, b&s, he's so anxious, this is the spirit of the man, so anxious and the scripture tells us that 'he arose and went down' (he sure did, didn't he?) That in one little phrase is a picture of Saul's life, he arose and went down and that's the direction of it, and it gets worse and worse and lower and lower as time goes along!

The character of Saul, so unlike some of the others that we've looked at, isn't it? b&s, we think about David, we think about Abigail, the way their character shines so brightly, we think about Saul and it's darker and darker; how sad this is; do we look on Saul as a brother, do you think of him this way? I mean, he was of Israel, he was the king, the king had certain things in the Law that he was to do. Saul was of the truth, and so we're thinking about a brother, my dear brethren and sisters, in whom the light of the truth is barely flickering, and it's about to go out altogether, it's about to go out! It's a sad thing, I think we should feel for Saul, I believe David did, don't you? don't you think that David's heart went out to Saul? don't you think he would walk away when the separations would take place and he'd say, 'O Saul' (and he'd call him his 'father') 'my father, why can't you see what Yahweh has done?'

But it wasn't to be that way! Saul was the man that could admit at En-gedi that he was wrong; that the course he was following was wrong; that it was unrighteous that it was an evil course, and he could weep, b&s, over it. Sometimes we're moved to tears over the things as we look over the direction that we've gone, we're moved to tears over these things. And Saul was moved to tears, unrestrained before David's men, before his men; but it didn't last did it? He could tearfully explain and outline Yahweh's purpose with David. He could say across that valley at En-gedi, 'I know you're to be king, I know the kingdom of Israel is going to be established in your hand'. Saul knew the picture and he could leave off the hunt and go home, but for a man like this, b&s, and may it not be for us, if we've been moved to tears over something that's affected us in our lives, and we see a course that's not right, and it's moved us to tears and repentance before our Father, may it never be like Saul, b&s, because tears just dried so quickly with Saul and he forgot, or cast aside perhaps would be a better way of saying it; cast aside the penitential words of 'the fountain of the wild goats' at En-gedi. He said to David, 'thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, as I've rewarded thee evil'. This is the man that would listen to the Ziphites.

The word 'Ziphites' means 'flowing' (2130), so Saul would kind of 'go with the flow' as they say, just get caught up in the flow of the thinking of these base individuals, these cowardly Ziphites, and Saul would just get caught up in their words and go with the flow

of that! You know, the Ziphites where we read about them, like Nabal, b&s, are descendants of Caleb. Two places that I'll give you but they're in 1 Chronicles 2:42 and 4:16 if you just want to make a note of it; I'm not going to turn to it now, we know, just as we worked out the meaning of the name 'Caleb' that 'dog' is involved with this; this was the flow that Saul was caught up in, b&s. He chose to follow a Ziphite pack of dogs, and the things that they would lead him to; so off to the hunt he goes again. Relentless, isn't he? the 3,000 men are there (see how this parallels the previous occasion at En-gedi in chapter 23), again he's got the 3,000 men, I think they're the same men, don't you? They're an elite army, the hand-picked out of all parts of Israel, chosen men; they're going to get a second chance here at David.

Now Abner is with them! we introduce a new name into the scene; Abner's with them, this is Saul's cousin, captain of the host; Jonathan is not there, b&s, we don't even notice the absence of Jonathan, it's as though he's not going to go along with the flow, that Saul's heading in, and he's apart from it (perhaps he's on a more noble pursuit, I think that would be Jonathan. As far as David was concerned with all that's going on, he knows it's happening! He knows Saul is coming, never trusts him for a moment, b&s, Saul is the double-minded man that is unstable in all his ways, and all David is doing is waiting for the instability to show forth itself once again. There's a psalm, b&s, the mind of David is what we want to get a hold of here, if we can just grasp the thinking of David, the way under great duress, where did he turn? what did he do? what did he rely on? This is what we want, b&s, for ourselves, it's not the examples, it's not the story line of the scripture that's the important thing; it's as we weave our lives into it, and what it does to us and how it affects us, and the mind of David is primary in all of this! We need to get hold of this, so turn over to the psalms, Psalm 54.

I want to read through this short psalm together, because it gives us the mind of David, but you see, this is one of those psalms that had to do with the very event that we're talking about. It's a psalm of David and you'll notice in the superscription that it says, 'when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, 'Doth not David hide himself with us?' That's what we've been reading, so you can go to chapter 23, and 26 and you'll see the same things and know this psalm is dealing with that period, but what it's doing is giving us the mind and the attitude of this man who had to face this great trial. So let's read it together, b&s, and you'll see it's a prayer. 'Save me, O God, by thy name and judge me by thy strength' (he calls God right into the picture immediately in this prayer). 'Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers (are these the Ziphites, do you think, b&s? not really strangers because their city was part of the inheritance of Judah that was taken in the time of Joshua) He says, 'Strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors (Saul, his army) oppressors seek after my soul; they have not set God before them' (if there's something to underline in this psalm, that's it!) They have not set God before them, this is what we need to do, b&s, this is what David did, HE SET GOD BEFORE HIS EYES, and we need to do the same, otherwise, the situation that we're dealing with is overwhelming; this is all we can see, it's like Peter looking at the waves and boisterousness of the sea all around him and not setting his eyes on Christ. You've got to have that right in front of our eyes. He said, 'Behold, God is mine helper,

Yahweh is with them that uphold my soul. He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth' (this is what David was walking in, in God's truth, as we are and we can appeal to the Father on the basis of our position in the truth; we are His people, He's called us to the heritage of His kingdom and glory, nothing less than that!) We know who we are, we know what we are and we know where we're going. And so did David, and he's appealing unto the Father on the basis of in thy truth: he says, 'I will freely sacrifice unto Thee: I will praise thy name, O Yahweh; for it is good. For He hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen His desire upon mine enemies'. Wonderful words, wonderful perspective, and wonderful reliance upon God, so we need to make our own, my dear b&s, if we're to succeed as David will!

So the oppressors that he speaks about in the psalm are seeking after his soul. And they come to the hill of Hachilah and it's almost as if David is hoping against hope, that it wasn't true, that it wasn't just a rerun of what had already taken place, it's as though he's just hoping that it wasn't true, and we see the steps that he goes through to try and confirm this, Saul's in pursuit and David wishes it wasn't so, and so he's going to convince himself or needs to be convinced actually within himself; just read verse 3. Just read down verse 3 to verse 5 and see the steps here, 'And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness'. (I don't think it means that he saw with his eyes what was taking place, but he perceived a situation developing, whether it was by word of mouth by people coming to him, but just something he became aware of, we'll see as the flow goes along how this is the case. Because in verse 4, 'David therefore, sent out spies and understood that Saul was come in very deed', in other words, Saul himself was really there, he's come again unto the scene! 'And David arose and came to the place where Saul had pitched and David beheld the place where Saul lay' (step by step by step he's confirming this awful information, he's going to have to deal with this all over again, and there are going to be similarities to what happened before, and David's going to know this). I don't think he's going to fall into the same area where he would actually touch the man through his garments, we know that's not going to take place, but just to continue on with verse 5; 'He beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him'. So he's convincing himself now that this really is the situation; he's beheld the whole lay of the land, the camp of Saul. He sees Saul laying in the trench, the scripture says (if you look at your margin it says 'in the midst of the carriages', you've heard the expression 'circle the wagons', it's as if Saul had circled the wagons, he's brought all the paraphernalia that goes with the doing of battle and he's laid it out all around the perimeter of the camp; all his soldiers now have taken their position within that perimeter and Saul is in the middle along with Abner at his side, his right hand man for this occasion and his personal bodyguard. And Saul is laying in the trench, in the centre of this whole circle; you might say, b&s, he's invincible with that kind of a setup, that you couldn't get to him even if you wanted to, and of course, all things are possible with God, and David who knew the scripture, would know from Samuel I believe, the history of Israel. He would know about the judges, he'd know about Gideon, b&s, with his minuscule army, was able to look down

on the Midianites in the valley, as though there were a valley filled with grasshoppers, and know that Gideon could go into the midst of that camp and could listen to the conversations that were taking place within it. And David would trust in those things!

Now there were two men there that David had great confidence in, it would appear, these two men he was able to ask, just the two, who will go with me? One is Ahimelech and interestingly enough, he's a Hittite, (the Hittites were part of the peoples of the land that should have been driven out in the days of Joshua, they should have been destroyed, there should have been no mercy shown to the Hittite), but this is the kind of people, these are the kind of men that David has found, have come to him. Out of all walks of life, they've gathered to him, their own great problems now, to this one who was to them, going to be the good shepherd. And so it's Ahimelech the Hittite (we'll hear about another Hittite that was part of David's army, won't we? perhaps you already have in one of the other sessions, the man by the name of Uriah. Good men, these men for David! Well the other man was Abishai, his nephew, one of the sons of his older sister, Zeruah, he was brother to Joab and to Asahel, those are the 3 sons of Zeruah that David would talk about on another occasion all together, as he just kind of evaluated these 3 men.

Notice verse 6, 'Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruah, brother of Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee' (now I don't think that was a reflection against Ahimelech and his reticence to go down into the camp with David, think that Abishai is just eager, he wants to go down! He wants to be at David's side, they're going after Saul and he wants to be there, he's one of the mighty men who are always going to be loyal at David's side and always anxious to dispatch the enemy, by the way, b&s, always anxious to do that. And looking down on that scene would have been an incredible thing! an impossible thing for them to accomplish, to go into that camp to Saul (that was the expression) apart from confidence in Yahweh, trusting God would somehow bring them safely in and safely back!

Look at verse 12, b&s, this is how it was done! Three thousand highly trained soldiers encircling the king with his body guard alongside; they're all sound asleep, everyone of them all sound asleep. Now a case of insomnia in the whole camp of Saul, b&s! they're all asleep; look at the end of verse 12. 'For they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from Yahweh was fallen upon them'; so yes, David trusted in God and Yahweh provided the means by which this could be accomplished. But this again is a great trial, it has to be a great trial for David, it had happened before, b&s, and sometimes the second time is worse than the first. You think you've solved something and resolved it when it happens once, and then it comes along again and you find you crumble the second time, and David had to face a great trial here, to go down into the camp of Saul, to find all these sleeping bodies, and to be able to walk through the camp as it were, to walk through the perimeter, through the carriages on the outskirts, through all the sleeping soldiers right to the place where Saul lay and Abner along his side; to come all this way with this man Abishai and then to stand over Saul. Obviously, he knew they were all

asleep and it was of God, obviously he would know that, or he couldn't do this otherwise, and he would accept that and just proceed in on that basis, and in that faith; but it's a great trial, b&s, for David, because here is Yahweh's anointed once again, given to him, handed over to him you might say by Yahweh Himself, obviously by Him!

You remember the argument that was presented the first time! 'this is the day, they said, this is the day that Yahweh said he would deliver the enemy into your hand', and here's Saul right before your eyes, and now it happens again. You say, 'well, surely this is the day; if the first wasn't this must be!' and that seems to be the thinking of Abishai as he just tries to deal with this, and tries to comprehend the things that are happening here, and the way David is acting. This was hard for Abishai to understand that, b&s. Very hard for him! One thing was firmly set, firmly set in David's mind, and that is he's dealing with Yahweh's anointed. He expresses that fact under pressure from 1 Samuel 23 to 2 Samuel chapter 3, the section that we're dealing with, he expresses that fact 8 times. Two of the times were at En-gedi when he cut off the skirt of the garment and wouldn't slay Yahweh's anointed; now b&s, here at the hill of Hachilah, here at this place where Saul is asleep, as though it's doubly difficult for him, it's twice the trial it was the first time. He expresses it 4 times, the other 2 occasions are in 2 Samuel chapter 1 where they're talking about the death of Saul and Jonathan. But it's a great trial! and I think we need to say, b&s, that a trial or temptation that is once defeated, isn't necessarily gone forever! not as long as we're in the flesh. And things have a way of coming around again, needing to be dealt with again, yes, we need to establish principles for dealing with these things, and we need to stand firm in them. And this is what David was doing, this is the wonderful example that he's giving to us, to follow. But this trial is even greater this time!

He'd done with Saul once and for all, just go in at verse 7, we'll just read down through verse 9 and just see how this works its way out! 'So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster (or at his pillow, right at his head where if something arises that's of trouble, it's right there and he can get a hold of it and get the spear into action). 'But Abner and the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day (so similar to the first time, isn't it?) Now therefore, let me smite him I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once' (that's the confidence that Abishai had in the power of his own right arm, he says, 'let me do it, David, I'll strike him down once, it won't take another one, he'll be done', Abishai was confident that he could do that); and David said to Abishai, 'but who can stretch forth his hand against Yahweh's anointed, and be guiltless?' And that, b&s, is something that you could take as a principle! because that's what sin is, because when we sin, we stretch out our hand against Yahweh's Anointed and we are not guiltless. Make that a principle for your life! David knew it, and we've got to know it too.

Abishai was devoted to David, you could see this all the way, he was devoted to David but he couldn't think any differently than he did, b&s, he was a military man, he was a soldier, and he thought as a soldier. A soldier sees the enemy, you dispatch the enemy

and be done with it! and as far as Yahweh's anointed was concerned, this was almost a foreign thought. David was teaching Abishai, at the side of Saul he's teaching Abishai about Yahweh's anointed; this is a military man and the other is a shepherd. Just look at Psalm 18, b&s, now the superscription to that psalm is long, it is unusually long, you don't usually find this, usually it's just a line or two that just states what it's all about. But there's a good deal of information here, kind of historical information that's built into the superscription, and as we explained, this is considered to be part of the psalm itself; so let's just read that as part of it! 'It's a psalm of David the servant of Yahweh, who spake unto Yahweh the words of this song, in the day that Yahweh delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. And he said' (and you begin to take up the psalm proper and see what he said. But this is the superscription and there's a lot of history here, and I think, b&s, that this psalm is something that David wrote when he was established as king.

When all this was behind him now, and he's set and established as king. You can see in verse 50, the final verse of the psalm it says, 'Great deliverance giveth He to His king; and showeth mercy to His anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore'. So now he's considering himself as Yahweh's anointed, we're up to this point and in the record that we've been following, Yahweh's anointed is always Saul. You see, he directs that now to himself, because he's established as king; but he's saying there in the psalm (we'll just pick up a couple of verses), going in a verse 32, he says, 'It is God that girdeth me' (that's El, b&s) and in this little section, the names of Deity are laid out so beautifully for us, in so many aspects of it. But here he says that it's El, that is the uncreate power, that was with David, 'that girdeth me with strength' he says, and we'll see that El is the appropriate name of God to be using here at this point. 'That girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet and setteth me upon mine high places. He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand (and the right hand is the hand of favour, b&s) 'thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great'. Lovely expression that, isn't it? thy gentleness hath made me great, he says.

Just go in at verse 47, again it's El, isn't it? He says, 'It is El that avengeth me and subdueth the people under me. He delivereth me from mine enemies; yea, Thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: Thou hast delivered me from the violent man', so that's what David is dealing with, b&s, he's dealing with violence and he can say, 'Thy gentleness hath made me great'; I think we can be sure that Abishai didn't know much about Yahweh's gentleness. Gentleness wasn't part of the mind-set of the man, Abishai, but he did know this, I believe he knew this, that David would not lift up his hand against Saul, so he says, 'let me do it!' You just wonder, b&s, what he thinks about as time goes along and he sees that it's not going to happen, it's almost the case of what would we say? what are we doing here? why did we come down? what's the purpose in it? Just to come down and take a walk, take a look, and then leave? And Abishai must have been stunned by this whole set of events as they just played out before his eyes. Never got the picture: later on when David was fleeing from Absalom,

it's interesting about Abishai; David would teach him about Yahweh's anointed and Abishai would take hold of the expression later on, but he always got it wrong, he always wanted to 'smite' somebody down against the whole purpose of God. And later on when David is fleeing from Absalom, and you remember Shimei going along on the hillside and he's cursing David and he's throwing stones down on David, and Abishai says, 'this man is a dead dog, so let me take his head off', and David says, 'it's not to be done!' David thought that it was an appropriate thing that was happening to him, that this was something that should be happening, and that this should not be done to Shimei, and later on actually, he pardons Shimei. When he does this, b&s, Abishai came forward at that time and said, 'let me kill him, because he's spoken against Yahweh's anointed!' So he's kind of got the message about Yahweh's anointed; but the bottom line for him was always he had to kill something!

But this is the strength of the man that was with David, absolutely loyal to David, a good man to have by your side when you're in trouble. And he's learning the picture, David's teaching him, as best he can he's teaching him. David had learned to wait upon God, 'vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith Yahweh', so he's teaching Abishai that gentleness can make a person great; while he's standing over Saul he's teaching! In 1 Samuel 26 and verse 10, 'And David said, furthermore (still teaching) as Yahweh liveth, Yahweh shall smite him: or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. Yahweh forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against Yahweh's anointed: but, I pray thee (talking to Abishai) take thou now the spear that is at his bolster and the cruse of water and let us go' (it's almost as if Abishai is stunned by this whole thing, b&s, frozen in disbelief. He doesn't move!) So we read, 'that David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from Yahweh was fallen upon them'. So he takes the spear, he takes the cruse of water, the spear that is the symbol (you might say) of not only offence but of defence, there it was beside the pillow ready for instant use, and David took the means of defense for Saul, and the cruse of water (it's kind of a life line, isn't it?) the refreshment that one would need to just try and renew themselves, stolen away while they slept! Lots of spiritual lessons there, b&s, aren't there? because we know that we can sleep very, very deeply in a spiritual sense, at times. So deeply, b&s, that our defences can be stolen away, and the water of life can just kind of evaporate like it never was, and we become like Saul.

The figure of sleep is powerful in the scripture, isn't it? 'While the Bridegroom tarried, they slumbered and slept', or the warning of the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, 'let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober'; very powerfully the lessons that have to do with sleeping for God's people. I'll say to you, my dear brethren and sisters, (and you'll correct me if I'm wrong here, I know you will), I think as a community we're getting sleepy, and it's a great danger. I know you'll tell me if I'm wrong, and I'll be glad to hear it, but I don't think I am! Saul's camp was part of the camp of the saints, it was of Israel; yes, it was separated from the camp of David, but it was a part of the camp of the saints. The apostle Paul says, 'knowing the time, to the Romans chapter 13 and verse 11, 'knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep', and now David and Abishai will slip out of the camp of Saul to get to a safe distance, and Saul

and his people will awake out of sleep. They're going to hear a voice again, they're going to hear the wake-up call from Yahweh's Anointed, as we are, b&s! Soon to hear that call, and the whole camp is to arise, as our whole camp out of every age of history is to arise and listen!

This time David doesn't call out to Saul as he did before; it's as though he wants Saul to be a spectator (kind of a witness) to the first things that are said; Saul will speak and David will talk to Saul (but not initially) Once again, he's going to make Saul aware of the fact that he's alive by grace! He's going to make Saul aware of the fact that, yes, thou art more righteous than I, David. David was a good judge of character, b&s, he knew what was in man, like the Lord Jesus knew what was in man; he knew about Abner, he knew Abner was a man who put a lot of confidence in the flesh. The world has a word for this, 'macho' (have you ever heard that?) Abner was 'macho' b&s, and that's really what David calls out across the valley to Abner. He's telling him he's worthy to die but just look at the scripture here as it just flows along from verse 14 on: 'And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner?' (it's as if the call has gone out and there's silence) then he says, 'Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who art thou that criest to the king? And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? (you'll notice the word 'valiant' is in italics; he's saying words that will hit right at the heart of Abner's manhood, b&s? What he's saying to Abner is, 'aren't you a man?' if you look at some of the other translations, that's exactly what you'll see, 'aren't you a man, Abner?', those are the terms and that's the way it's being used, and you can imagine how Abner would feel now as these words are just going to be opened out to him, as to how he's failed as a man; in his own perspective as a man, he's failed! and David's going to show him that. Then Abner answered and said, 'who art thou that criest to the king? and David says, 'art thou not a man, and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore, then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As Yahweh liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, Yahweh's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster'. We can picture Abner now, listening to this, feeling smaller on the basis of these words; turning to where the king lay and looking at his pillow and seeing just a hole in the ground where the spear was, and as far as the water, it's gone!

He begins to fear, he's got to begin to fear at this point, b&s, and we try and picture the scene! Saul and Abner perhaps just looking at each other now, wondering what has happened; sleepy-eyed, straining to see the man behind the voice. Hearing that voice say, 'Abner, you're worthy to die!' (margin says - one of the sons of death) maybe Saul's memory now would begin to come alive, because he'd use those words, he'd use those words about Jonathan. He said Jonathan was a son of death, you may remember back in 1 Samuel 20 (we haven't dealt with it in this particular segment of the life of David, but perhaps it's been mentioned), and Saul's anger was so kindled against Jonathan that he said unto him, 'thou son of a perverse, rebellious woman', right? the word 'woman' isn't there in the original either- 'thou son of a perverse and rebellious' (and he was, wasn't

he? b&s) as perverse and as rebellious as one could be, was Saul, and Jonathan was his son; but when he rails on Jonathan he says, 'Do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send, fetch him unto me for he shall surely die' (he's a son of death, that's the expression! just as we hear it now directed towards Abner in Saul's hearing). Perhaps his memory is being awakened a bit by the words that he's hearing; 'Is this thy voice, my son David' he'll call out, much like the first time. He knows the voice of David, b&s, he knew it full well, they had spent a lot of time together; he'd heard it just recently at En-gedi; he knew the voice of David! 'My son' and he was, wasn't he? the son-in-law to the king, and David is going to become Jonathan for the moment, as it were, b&s, speaking to his father.

Look at verse 18, because when Jonathan argued with Saul about David he said, 'what has he done?' what has he done that's wrong? and now David will become Jonathan in a sense and he said in verse 18, 'wherefore, doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand?' I just wonder how much of this would be like an echo in the mind of Saul, it maybe, it just maybe that he's so perverse, he just laid all this aside and just doesn't care about or think about it any more, and each expression like this would be new to him, because of the mind-set of that man.

But David's always trying to bring Yahweh into the picture with Saul: a wonderful character is David, isn't he? Saul knew that David was to be king, he knew well, this is the expression, and now he's back as though he never said it, and this is where David is so different from us, my dear brethren and sisters. He doesn't remind Saul, well, you know, you said this at one point; it's kind of the way that we sometimes go, isn't it? You know, someone says something to us and they go another way, and we say, 'well, you said'; there's no reproach from David over things that had been avowed to by Saul in the past, and he just picks it up at the new start, a new beginning every time, it seems; always hopeful that he can touch the heart of this man. He's almost making a plea about the things from the Law, he talks about making an offering, just look at verses 19 and 20, he says 'Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If Yahweh have stirred thee up against me, let Him accept an offering' (he's talking about the 'minchah' the offerings under the Law) 'but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before Yahweh: (he's saying, can't we somehow, Saul, get together and perhaps jointly make an offering, or at least individually make an offering to Yahweh that He'll accept) he's so desirous that He'd receive it, b&s. Let Him accept, let Him smell the offering, is what the margin says, so David would say, 'if only Yahweh could look upon us and just (breathe in, and accept the offering, just take it into Himself as something that's holy and something that He can receive) this is what he's begging Saul to do, it's almost like he's pleading from the Law, isn't it?

Slip back to Leviticus chapter 26, the principles are stated there upon which David is living his life and I believe the appeal is being made the king, who should know these things. Leviticus chapter 26 and verse 2, this was what was to govern Yahweh's people,

this is what the king was to be governed by, and to write out every year. Verse 2, 'Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am Yahweh'. Alright, reverence! Saul, are you reverent? 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them (sounds like Psalm 1, doesn't it?) he says, 'then will I give you'.... (and the blessings follow) but it's all based on this, b&s, keeping, reverencing, walking, keeping, doing, it's right in the Law, and any Israelite should be aware of this! You see, in verse 6, 'I will give peace to the land and you shall lie down and none shall make you afraid', that's the blessing of obedience, that's the blessing of reverence. Saul had no peace, he was in turmoil, b&s, and on the other hand, if you don't follow that pattern, see over in verse 27, 'If you for all this will not hearken unto Me, but walk contrary unto Me' (it's like saying, listen, Saul!) 'then I will walk contrary unto you in fury; and I will chastise you seven times for your sins', (and the result, b&s, down in verse 31) 'I will make your cities waste, and will bring your sanctuaries into desolation and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours' (God will not inhale and breathe in, the savour of a life that is disobedient to Him). How can He do this, b&s? how can a holy God breathe into Himself unholiness? and these are the appeals that David is making.

Go back to 1 Samuel 26 because David's going to go on here, verse 19, and he talks about opening up these things and he says, 'Saul, my lord, if it's not Yahweh in your life then it's just men that you're listening to, that's the essence of it. Abner, Ziphites, Doeg, and David's talking about offerings here, he's been forcibly removed and David brings this out. He says 'you've driven me out this day, the end of verse 19, you've driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of Yahweh, saying, Go, serve other gods'. That's an attitude, David takes it in his fugitive time as though that's the attitude against him, 'you might as well just go and serve other gods because we don't want you here; in fact, we want you dead!' So David now, brings this back before Saul, he's talking about offerings; he's been removed from the fellowship of the tabernacle, has David, or abiding in the inheritance of Yahweh, cleaving to the inheritance of Yahweh. Go serve other gods! in a way, that's like a warning to Saul, b&s, that's an indirect warning to Saul, that if he's listening carefully, he might get the picture, because if David does go out and in fact, serve other gods, in all probability it means that he's in league with the likes of the Philistines. And now he's become Saul's worst fear come true, David aligned with the Philistines! What could be worse for Saul?

Of course, for David, apart from the tabernacle, it would only remain that his heart would become the dwelling place for Yahweh's righteousness. That he himself would become the tabernacle of the Father, and he is Yahweh's anointed: and then these incredible words from Saul, b&s, as though he comes to his senses. This double-minded man, so he can slip into the compartment of his double mind which says 'listen to reason', and he's there now for the moment and this may be, it may be the very best that we'll ever get from Saul. Verse 21, 'Then said Saul, I have sinned', that may be the very best, b&s, that we'll ever get from Saul, you know what? it may be the very best that we'll get from ourselves; we come to the point where we realize before the Father and can express to the Father, I have sinned! then of course, follow a pattern that's totally unlike Saul; just so Saul could recognize it, be sorry for the moment, and then kind of pick up where he

left off and continue on in the sin. But he said, 'I've sinned' (I'll just give you a little quote from bro. Roberts it's from 'The Visible Hand of God' (I'll give you the page for those who have the ancient early editions as I do, the later ones I don't think it will correspond, but it's on page 241, and bro. Roberts says this about Saul). He says, 'Saul was not a bad man according to human standards of action; he was a bad man by the divine standard which is the eternal standard' (that's really all we care about, isn't it? b&s, the divine standard, the eternal standard, that's all there is for us, isn't there?) Truer words were never spoken, as they say, as far as Saul saying, I have sinned; just read a little further here in verse 21.

He said, 'I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and erred exceedingly.' Played the fool, he says, but you know, b&s, this is Saul even here, because when he says he's played the fool, the word 'fool' is a weak word. It's not the word 'nabal' (5036), it's not the strength of that word, of being a fool in that sense; that's wicked, that's impish, that's profane, that's irreverent, and Saul uses a weaker word than that, he uses the Hebrew word 'cakal' (5528) and that word means 'to be silly or to play a part'. It's far different from being a fool in Nabal's sense, isn't it? You see, David, just look on it as though I was silly for a time; I'm just playing a role here, I played the role of a fool, but I'm going to step out of it and be sensible now'. He used the wrong word, b&s, but that's Saul, you see! and Saul was always making allowance for himself so he could continue on in this pattern. He says, 'My soul was precious in thine eyes', I'm not so sure, b&s, that's Saul's perspective, my soul was precious in thine eyes, David said in verse 10, 'As Yahweh liveth, Yahweh shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle and shall perish', that's the way David viewed the life of Saul! He knew that Yahweh would take care of this, the position was precious, the fact that he was Yahweh's anointed was precious; he wouldn't lift up his hand against Yahweh's anointed, but the life of Saul must have been despicable to David, and even here Saul has it backwards, doesn't he? he has it turned around.

And this is David's response, we'll draw our thoughts to an conclusion; just listen to David's response, b&s, let's see how impressed he is with Saul's contrition, with his promises to do the right thing. Verse 22, 'David answered and said, Behold, the king's spear and let one of the young men come over and fetch it', and if you can get the picture of this sort of thing; I can picture now, David taking that spear of Saul and driving it into the ground and it's waving in the breeze as he steps away from it, and says, there it is, send one of the young men over to get it! There's Saul's strength just waving in the distance before his eyes. And David's got it! the king's spear in the hand of the true king; there's an unexpected turn to the words of David, as we just go to the end of this chapter, b&s, we'd just like to think about that!

I think we need to get this point: verse 23(just the beginning of it), this is the first thing, we need to get it, b&s). 'Yahweh render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness' (we're not apart from that, we're not apart from that, are we? we know full well that we're not! Paul writes to the Romans and talks about the righteous judgments

of God, and he says 'He will render to man according to his deeds', so we're not apart from this; the turn in the words of David that, I say, are unexpected, they're really not. We know David and we know the way his mind goes, but let's just read on.

Verse 24, 'Behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by your eyes', right? Do you all read it that way? it doesn't say that, are you satisfied with that reading? B&S, if you're satisfied with it, you've got to read more carefully because that's not what it says! that's not David's intention at all! He says, as thy life was much set by this day in my eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of Yahweh, not in the eyes of Saul, he doesn't expect any good from Saul, b&s, not at all. But his trust is in Yahweh, and this should be our prayer, this should be our prayer! LET MY LIFE (each one of us should be able to say this individually, 'LET MY LIFE BE MUCH SET BY IN THE EYES OF YAHWEH, AND LET HIM DELIVER ME OUT OF ALL TRIBULATION'. And Saul has the final word, absolutely true and perfect, Saul has the final word! It's an expression of the purpose of Yahweh, from one who could understand it, and would cast those precious things aside in an instant, but here's the final word, verse 25, 'Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail'. And he would, b&s, and Saul was right: so David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place, and they would never meet again!