**Becoming a Woman After God’s Own Heart**

**Life Lessons from David**

**Lesson 4: Forgiving Others**

**1 Samuel 24, 1 Samuel 26, 1 Samuel 18:6-9, Romans 12:14-21, Colossians 3:13**

**1 Samuel 24**

After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, “David is in the Desert of En Gedi.” **2**So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crags of the Wild Goats.

**3**He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. **4**The men said, “This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, ‘I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.’” Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe.

**5**Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. **6**He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the Lord.” **7**With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

**8**Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, “My lord the king!” When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. **9**He said to Saul, “Why do you listen when men say, ‘David is bent on harming you’? **10**This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, ‘I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the Lord’s anointed.’ **11**See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. **12**May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. **13**As the old saying goes, ‘From evildoers come evil deeds,’ so my hand will not touch you.

**14**“Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Who are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? **15**May the Lord be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it; may he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand.”

**16**When David finished saying this, Saul asked, “Is that your voice, David my son?” And he wept aloud. **17**“You are more righteous than I,” he said. “You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. **18**You have just now told me about the good you did to me; the Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me. **19**When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today. **20**I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.**21**Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not kill off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father’s family.” **22**So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

**1 Samuel 26**

The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?”

**2**So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand select Israelite troops, to search there for David.**3**Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul had followed him there, **4**he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived.

**5**Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him.

**6**David then asked Ahimelek the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?”

“I’ll go with you,” said Abishai.

**7**So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

**8**Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won’t strike him twice.”

**9**But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless? **10**As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. **11**But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.”

**12**So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

**13**Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. **14**He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Aren’t you going to answer me, Abner?”

Abner replied, “Who are you who calls to the king?”

**15**David said, “You’re a man, aren’t you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn’t you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. **16**What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men must die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord’s anointed. Look around you. Where are the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head?”

**17**Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, David my son?”

David replied, “Yes it is, my lord the king.” **18**And he added, “Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of? **19**Now let my lord the king listen to his servant’s words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, people have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have driven me today from my share in the Lord’s inheritance and have said, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ **20**Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains.”

**21**Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have been terribly wrong.”

**22**“Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it. **23**The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. **24**As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble.”

**25**Then Saul said to David, “May you be blessed, David my son; you will do great things and surely triumph.” So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.

1 Samuel 18:6-9. “As the troops were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs, and with tambourines and other instruments. **7**[And as the women danced,](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7832.htm) [they sang out:](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6030.htm) [“Saul](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7586.htm) [has slain](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5221.htm) [his thousands,](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/505.htm) [and David](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1732.htm) [his tens of thousands.”](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7233.htm) **8**And Saul was furious and resented this song. “They have ascribed tens of thousands to David,” he said, “but only thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingdom? . .”

**Romans 12:14-21**

**14**Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.**15**Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16**Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A14-21%2C+Colossians+3%3A13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28262a)] Do not be conceited. **17**Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18**If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19**Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

**20**On the contrary:“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” **21**Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Colossians 3:13**

**13**Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

1. What feelings and struggles do you think David experienced when King Saul was right before him two times, and he had perfect chances to kill him? Why didn’t he kill his enemy when he had the opportunity? Explain.

2. Think about someone who has brought you grief and pain in your life. Did you retaliate, or did you extend grace and forgiveness to them? How did that turn out? Explain. (Please remember that anything of a personal matter that’s shared in your small group must not be repeated outside the group. No gossip please!)

**1 Samuel 18:6-9**

**6**“As the troops were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs, and with tambourines and other instruments. **7**[And as the women danced,](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7832.htm) [they sang out:](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6030.htm) [“Saul](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7586.htm) [has slain](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5221.htm) [his thousands,](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/505.htm) [and David](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1732.htm) [his tens of thousands.”](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7233.htm) **8**And Saul was furious and resented this song. “They have ascribed tens of thousands to David,” he said, “but only thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingdom? . .” 9And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

**1 Samuel 24:20**

**20**I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.

3. What was the source of Saul’s jealousy of David?

(Hint: 1 Samuel 18:6-9 and 1 Samuel 24:20).

**1 Samuel 24:6 & 10**

**6**He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the Lord.” 

**10**This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, ‘I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the Lord’s anointed.’

**1 Samuel 26:9-11**

**9**But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless? **10**As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. **11**But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.”

4. Read 1 Samuel 24:6 & 10 and 1 Samuel 26:9-11. Why do you think David put such importance on respecting the Lord’s anointed?

**1 Samuel 26:12**

**12**So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

5. Read 1 Samuel 26:12. What happened the second time David could have killed Saul, but didn’t, that reassured him that God was with him, assisting him?

**1 Samuel 26:23-24**

**23**The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. **24**As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble.”

6. Read 1 Samuel 26:23-24. Read David’s words, and then, in your own words, summarize what he said.

**Romans 12:14-21**

**14**Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.**15**Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16**Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A14-21%2C+Colossians+3%3A13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28262a)] Do not be conceited. **17**Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18**If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19**Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

**20**On the contrary:“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” **21**Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

7. Read Romans 12:14-21. What phrase or phrases most stood out to you and why? Explain.

**Colossians 3:13**

**13**Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

8. Read Colossians 3:13. Does someone come to mind, whom you feel the Lord is asking you to forgive, whether or not they have asked for forgiveness? Do you need prayer concerning this?

9. David could have killed King Saul and assumed the throne, but instead he chose to rely on God to bring the king’s life to an end in His way and timing. Think back on some of the major decisions of your life. Are you like David, content to let God bring His will to pass, in His way and time, or do you usually try to “help God out” in some way? Explain.

10. Do you see any ways in which David’s words or deeds demonstrated that he was a man after God’s own heart in these passages?

11. Journal one of these passages SOAP style.