

2 Samuel 10:1-19

Introduction

Phone call while an RA in college berating me with vulgar language for being a Christian—my fairness and kindness was rewarded with this?

1. King David had a very similar experience in our passage today when his kindness, restraint and mercy were rewarded with unexpected behavior
2. As we look at our passage today we are going to see how the events of the passage reflect the interaction between God and man, and one again how David serves as a type of Christ

A. David's KINDNESS is met with CONTEMPT (10:1-4)

1. David extends kindness and loyalty to the king of the Ammonites (READ 1-2b):
 - a. When Saul was king, the Ammonites were enemies of Israel
 - b. However, it appears they were at peace at this time because of something David says here—that King Nahash had shown him loyalty (hesed) at some point
 - c. So, when Nahash died and his son, Hanun, became king, David wished to repay him for this loyalty by sending some of his men to console Hanun
2. King Hanun responds with contempt (READ 2c-4):
 - a. Hanun's advisors convince him that David's men were actually spies and that he was really planning to overthrow their city
 - b. So, Hanun humiliated David's men and sent them back home:
 - 1) He shaved off half of their beards--most Israeli men wore beards, and only shaved them off at times of emotional distress or in accordance with the Law for certain religious observances
 - 2) He cut their clothes off at the waist which would have exposed everything from the waist down
3. I want us to think for a moment how Hanun's contempt for David's kindness reflects the world's contempt for the LORD's kindness:
 - a. God's kindness is clearly evident:
 - 1) We see it revealed in Creation:
 - a) Psalm 33:5: "...**the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.**"
 - b) Psalm 36:5: "**Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.**"
 - c) Psalm 119: 64: "**The earth is full of Your lovingkindness, O LORD...**"
 - 2) We see this in the way that He sustains His creation: Psalm 104:10-30 (READ)
 - 3) Most importantly, however, we see it in the Gospel (Titus 3:4): "**But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy...**"
 - b. How does the world respond to the LORD's kindness?

- 1) We saw one example in how Jesus was treated:
 - a) He predicted He would be treated with contempt (Mark 9:12): **“And He said to them, “Elijah does first come and restore all things. And yet how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt?”**
 - b) We saw this in the way that the religious leaders treated him
 - c) We saw it in the way His own people turned on Him
 - d) We saw it in the way the Roman guards treated him (Luke 23:11): **“And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.”**

- 2) According to Romans 1:18-32, this is the way in which most of the world responds to God’s kindness:
 - a) They suppress the truth about God in unrighteousness
 - b) They refuse to honor Him
 - c) They become futile and foolish in their speculations
 - d) They worship creation rather than the Creator
 - e) They dive head first into sin with “hearty approval”
 - f) They no longer see it fit to even acknowledge Him
 - g) In other words, most respond to God’s kindness with contempt

- c. So, the question for us is how do we respond to the LORD’s kindness?
 - 1) Paul wrote in Romans 2:4 that the LORD’s kindness should lead us to repentance
 - 2) But he also wrote that some think lightly of His kindness and instead of repentance they continue in sin
 - 3) For the unsaved, this results in storing up wrath and judgment
 - 4) For those who are saved, it leads to chastisement

B. Ammon’s AWARENESS is met with ARROGANCE: 10:5-8 (READ):

1. We get another example here of the kind of king and leader David was:
 - a. When he learns what happened to his messengers, he travels out to meet them because he knew they were humiliated
 - b. He allowed them to stay in Jericho until their beards grew back so they wouldn’t face further humiliation at home

2. When the Ammonites became aware that their actions were an offense to David and Israel, instead of acknowledging their wrong they responded with arrogance:
 - a. Their actions made them **“odious to David”** (literally, they stunk)
 - b. There is no indication in the text that David was planning to respond to their foolish actions, but they obviously suspected that he would
 - c. They also obviously knew that Israel could easily defeat them because they have to hire mercenaries to join their army
 - d. But instead of acknowledging their wrong and seeking forgiveness from David, they puffed up their chests and responded with arrogance:
 - 1) They drew up in battle array at the entrance to their city which was in essence a declaration of war against Israel
 - 2) They knew their army was no match for Israel, so they hired tens of thousands of Aramean mercenaries who were deployed in the surrounding countryside

3. Once again, the Ammonites actions reflect what we see in the world:
 - a. The Bible says that the LORD makes the world aware of sin:
 - 1) In John 16:8 Jesus said that “**when He [the Spirit] comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;**”
 - 2) Psalm 25:8: “**Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way.**”
 - b. However, when the world is made aware that its sin is an offense against God (that they “stink”!), how does it generally respond? With humility and seeking forgiveness or with arrogance and pride?
 - c. Again, we saw this with Jesus when he confronted the religious leaders, and even later in His ministry as even the crowds turned against Him
 - d. Today we see the same arrogance and pride in the persecution that is directed at us Christians when we speak the truth about sin and the Gospel
4. How about us, though? How do we as Christians respond when we are made aware of our own sin?
 - a. When the LORD makes us aware of sin in our own lives, do we respond with humility and repentance, or arrogance and pride?
 - b. How do we respond to others when we’ve sinned against them and they confront us?

C. David’s MERCY is met with MILITANCE (an inclination to fight or quarrel): 10:9-16

1. There are two battles described in this passage:
 - a. The first took place when Ammon decided to fortify their army by hiring the Arameans and prepare for war against Israel (READ 9-14)
 - 1) Back up in v. 7 it says that David dispatched Joab, the captain of his army, to Ammon when he heard about their plans
 - 2) When Joab arrived, he discovered that he was facing two battle fronts:
 - a) One front was in front of them to the south where the Ammonite army had amassed their own army at the entrance to one of their cities
 - b) The second front was behind them to the north where the Aramean armies had gathered
 - 3) So, Joab split his army in two:
 - a) The Arameans were the more powerful force so he took the best soldiers and commanded them himself to defeat the threat from the rear
 - b) The Ammonites weren’t quite as formidable so he took the rest of the soldiers and put them under the command of his brother, Abishai, to battle them
 - c) Joab and Abishai then agreed to watch each other’s back (so to speak) and would help each other as needed
 - 4) The conflict ends with both the Ammonites and the Arameans retreating, apparently fairly soon after it starts:
 - a) As soon as Joab and his men approach the battle line with the Arameans, they flee
 - b) When the Ammonites learn that the Arameans fled, they retreat back into their city as well

- 5) At this point we would expect Joab to go into the city and destroy the Ammonites, and Abishai to pursue and destroy the Arameans, because this would make the most sense militarily, but instead Joab and Abishai show mercy and restraint and head back to Jerusalem:
 - a) We can only presume that they did this at David’s instructions, or knew David well enough to know that David would not have wanted him to proceed
 - b) We’ve seen this sort of restraint or mercy in David before—twice when he had opportunity to kill Saul but didn’t and another time when he initially sought revenge against a rich man named Nabal that refused to help him and his (he relented after Nabal’s wife interceded and David became convinced that revenge was not his to take)
 - c) We’ve also seen this in the way David treated those he had subdued—normally, a conquering army would wipe out the enemies cities, kill all the men, take the women and children, etc. (as the Amalekites did to Ziklag), but David didn’t do that and rather exercised restraint and mercy by letting them live and making them subjects of Israel instead

- b. How was this mercy paid back? Well, the second battle tells us—the Arameans responded to David’s mercy with militancy (READ 15-16):
 - 1) Militancy refers to liking to fight, being quarrelsome
 - 2) After realizing they were outgunned (so-to-speak) by Israel and being forced to retreat, instead of returning home they “**gathered themselves together**” in preparation to attack Israel
 - 3) To bolster their numbers and strength, they reached out to additional Aramean armies from further north across the Euphrates river
 - 4) Now we have to keep in mind that these Arameans were mercenaries—they were hired by the Ammonites in their war with Israel, but the Ammonites had already gone home so you would think the Arameans would call it a day and head home as well, especially since Israel’s army had returned home and refused to pursue them

2. We have here another picture of the world:
 - a. When Jesus refused to call down 12 legions of angels at his arrest it was an act of mercy and restraint; how did his captors respond?
 - b. When Peter, Paul and the other disciples revealed the mercy of God through their preaching of the Gospel, how did much of the world respond?
 - c. Throughout history the Church has been persecuted and millions upon millions of God’s people put to death simply for bearing witness to God’s mercy
 - d. Today, right here in our own country, we see growing resentment, hostility and even militancy toward God and His people

D. The Aramean’s DEFIANCE is met with DEFEAT: 10:17-19 (READ)

1. When David learned of the Arameans plans, he did what we would expect him to do to protect Israel—he attacked the Arameans, defeated them, and made them subjects of Israel
2. There are many things the Bible reveals, and one of them is that the world’s defiance will be met with its defeat
3. We know that God is long-suffering because He doesn’t want any to perish but all to come to repentance and salvation

4. We see this foreshadowed and reflected in David's actions above—The LORD extends KINDNESS, provides AWARENESS of sin, and EXTENDS mercy to those who sin and rebel against Him so that they might recognize and accept His goodness and the salvation He offers
5. However, when they refuse and respond with CONTEMPT, ARROGANCE and MILITANCY, His longsuffering will end and they will be defeated as He executes His judgment (Acts 17:30-31): **"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."**