

## 1 Samuel 22:6-23 — The Antichrist

October 2, 2022

It is hard to look at the news. Each day, it seems to get worse. We have the war in Europe between Russia and Ukraine that reduced a modern nation to rubble. Families are torn apart, and lives are destroyed. Now there is talk of Russia considering the use of nuclear weapons. This week we also had the Nord Stream 2 pipeline sabotaged. I don't know who struck it, but the impact on the climate and world tensions is enormous. In Florida, we also have Hurricane Ian unleashing destruction at record levels.

With all this bad news, people ask me if we are living in the end times. To answer that question, it depends on what you mean by the end times. Technically, since the resurrection of Jesus, we are living in the end times. If by the end-times, you are wondering if Jesus will return next week, I don't know. What I do know is that each week we are closer to the end times than we were the week before.

The Bible tells us that a man will show up in the end times who will claim that he can bring order to our chaotic world. The problem is that his true agenda will be the destruction of the church and the people of God. In the letters of John, he is talked about four times. He is called the antichrist.

Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. 1 John 2:18 (ESV)

...and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 1 John 4:3 (ESV)

While there are different views about the identity of the antichrist, we should not miss what the apostle John says. There will be one great final antichrist with a capital “A” in his name that will show up at the end of time. Before that, there will be many antichrists with a lowercase “a” in their name that will show up. That is because the spirit of the antichrist is already in the world. We should expect that from time to time, smaller antichrists will rise up in history and attempt to destroy the people of God.

Today, as we continue our study in the book of 1 Samuel, we read about a time in Israel’s history, a thousand years before Jesus came on the scene when an antichrist rose up against God’s people. Who is this vicious enemy of God that will create so much destruction? As we will see, it is an inside job. This person is someone close to God’s people.

How was this person corrupted? Today we will see the incredible danger of intentional disobedience to God and continuing in sin. When we refuse to repent of our sin, we will find sin taking us places we never wanted to go and doing things we never dreamed we would do. Sin can even transform someone into an antichrist, a vicious enemy of the people of God.

We are in 1 Samuel 22:6. My name is Kurt. Join me as we learn about the incredible danger of failing to repent and continuing in sin.

## **Background**

For the last few weeks, we have followed David, God’s anointed king. He was a fugitive running from King Saul. Saul wanted to kill David for no other reason than because he was jealous of David. In this chapter, the camera leaves David. We will get back to him next week. The camera pans north to the city of

Gibeah, where we find out what Saul was doing. The last time we were in Gibeah was 1 Samuel 20. The last time we heard of Saul was when, in a murderous rage, he threw his spear at his son to attempt to kill him because Jonathan stood up to his father's hatred for David and reminded his father of David's loyalty and innocence.

Since then, we followed David after he left Jonathan and ran from Saul to save his life. Last week, we saw David stop at the city of Nob. There he deceived Ahimelech, the priest, into giving him bread and Goliath's sword so he had a weapon. He then ran to Gath to hide from Saul among the Philistines, the enemy. That turned out to be a terrible idea. He was quickly discovered, chained to the city gate, and almost lost his life. God made it possible for him to escape. He then went 10 miles Northeast, just over the Philistine border to a desolate location called the caves of Adullam. There he hid in a cave in the ground. God showered his grace upon David. First, God sent David's family to encourage him. Later God sent men to be around him. From there, David moved to another country just outside of Israel called the land of Moab. There he dropped off his parents so they would be cared for. He and his men stayed in a Moabite fortress for what appears to be a long time. Finally, the prophet Gad came to him and told him to return to Israel. In spite of fearing for his life from king Saul, David obeyed God's word and moved to the forest of Hereth inside Israel. Geographically this was not near a border but was in the middle of the nation. This shows us David's commitment to obeying God's word through Gad the prophet since there was no

bordering country for him to escape. That brings us to 1 Samuel 22:6, where we leave David and turn back to Saul.

### Saul at Gibeah

Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him... 1 Samuel 22:6a (ESV)

This is probably a slight flashback. It seems to refer to David and the men being discovered at the fortress in Moab, which was just over the Israelite border. Remember that David and his men stayed in that fortress for some time.

This was the first time since David fled to Ramah at the end of chapter 19 that Saul heard reliable news about David's location. When David was in Ramah, Saul attempted to kill him four times. It is reasonable to assume Saul that when Saul heard about David's location, he immediately began planning another attack.

When it talks about the men who were with David, this is the 400 hundred men that joined David at the cave of Adullam. The size of David's militia will continue to grow. At this point, when Saul heard that David had a militia of 400 men around him, that was not good. Saul preferred it when David was alone and without help. The militia around David leads Saul to picture a January 6 type scenario. He was worried that David and his men were planning to storm the capital in Gibeah, kill Saul, and attempt to steal the kingdom. The truth is that nothing like that was planned by anyone. Nevertheless, as we will see, those were the thoughts in Saul's paranoid and twisted mind.

...Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. 1 Samuel 22:6b (ESV)

Take a good look at Saul. The scene is intended to be a complete contrast to where we found David hiding in the caves of Adullam earlier in the chapter. Last week David was hiding alone underground in a cave. Here Saul is pictured at ease. He is sitting, reclining in a chair while everyone else stands around him. Instead of hiding in a hole in the ground, Saul was on the top of Mt. Gilboa surveying his kingdom while under the shade of a tree. David was defenseless. He lost Goliath's sword to the Philistines. Saul had his spear in his hand. At first, David was completely alone. Saul was surrounded by servants and friends. Do you see the contrast between these two pictures?

Let's think about the servants that surrounded Saul. Most of them were powerful. They were rich and famous. They were the shakers and movers. It was only the significant people that were able to hang around the king. Let's compare that to the 400 people that eventually came to David.

And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him... 1 Samuel 22:2 (ESV)

The people around him were the riff-raff of society. The outcasts. The nobodies. We need to see the contrast, not just in the environment around these men, but the people around these men.

While Saul appears to be in a much better position when you compare these men on the outside, it turns out all Saul's security was an illusion when we hear him speak about his heart on the inside. Let's listen to Saul speak to his servants.

And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of Benjamin;... 1 Samuel 22:7a (ESV)

Let's stop there. How many tribes were in Israel? Twelve! I want us to notice that all of Saul's servants, all of the people that worked for Saul, came from his own tribe! There were twelve tribes, but he only hired friends and family. This is favoritism. This is nepotism. For Saul, it didn't matter if you were qualified for the job, what mattered to him was that you were part of his tribe, his inside group. When it came to choosing people for his cabinet, he didn't choose leaders who were best for the country. He chose leaders that were friends with him and related to him. You scratch my back, and I will scratch yours. In the future, this kind of favoritism toward his own tribe for positions of leadership will result in deep divisions between the tribes of Israel.

Nothing is new under the sun. Leaders putting their friends in positions of power instead of the qualified is nothing new.

...will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day." 1 Samuel 22:7b-8 (ESV)

Look what he says to his insider servants. "Will the son of Jesse..." There is an interesting bit of Hebrew going on here which will help you as we study this chapter. In some cases, when somebody doesn't address a respected adult by their name, but instead calls them only the son of their father, that was intended to be an insult. It was a way of demeaning someone and saying they are so small and insignificant that they needed to be referred to by their father's name instead of their own. Saul calls David a little twerp.

Saul says, “Will that little twerp give you fields, vineyards, and make you commanders of thousands and hundreds?” Here we see how Saul leads. It is called bribery. He bought their loyalty. Using his power, he lined their pockets to buy control over their life. This was government corruption at its finest. The funny part is that Saul admits it.

He says, “If David was king, remember none of you would have a job and you wouldn’t have all the under-the-table money and special favors from me.” If David was in charge, none of you would have a job because none of you would be qualified for a job. Remember that.

He was angry at his servants for not disclosing to him that his son Jonathan made a covenant with David. We learned of this covenant earlier. It was a promise of friendship and loyalty Jonathan and David made to one another. They were best friends. No matter what the future held they would care for one another and their families. Saul didn’t like the alliance between his son and David when he so deeply hated David.

Saul then had a pity party claiming nobody felt sorry for him.

Notice where he takes this “That my son has stirred up my servant to lie in wait as at this day.” Saul was convinced that Jonathan stirred up David to lead a coup to oust Saul as king. Saul was convinced that David and his men were planning an assassination attempt on his life. Saul thought David, his 400 men, Jonathan, and other people in his administration, were part of the coup.

The truth is nothing like that was taking place. Nobody thought they would be better off with David as king. Nobody was conspiring against him. No

information was withheld from him. Nobody had any idea what he was talking about.

Why was Saul so paranoid? Why did he think everyone around him was out to get him? The reason is that when you fill your mind with unwholesome thoughts and evil thoughts, your brain will take you to unhelpful and paranoid places. So far, Saul has attempted to kill David over a dozen times. Attempting a dozen murders begins to take a toll on your thinking. Since Saul was always planning to kill David, his mind was poisoned. He was convinced David must be planning to kill him. All of Saul's sinful thoughts and evil plans were coming back to haunt him. They were corrupting his thinking. He always assumed the worst about other people, not the best.

There is a lesson for us. Be careful what we put in our brains. What we put into our thought life will determine how we think and act in real life. Our sinful plans against other people will return to haunt us.

When I was a freshman in college, on the first week of school, some of the upperclassmen took the freshman on the floor out to watch a movie. They didn't tell us what we were going to see. I think they bought the tickets for us. It turned out to be a horror movie. I was completely unaware of what I was going to see. I left the theatre traumatized. I think I was shaking. I am not exaggerating when I tell you that I couldn't sleep through the night for the next two days because of the scenes that were in my brain. Walking around campus at night, I was convinced there was a man with an ax waiting to chop off my head, hiding in every shadow. The movie that was in my brain twisted my thinking, so I



interpreted reality differently from everybody else. That is what happened to Saul. All his evil schemes and murderous plans left him assuming everyone else was involved in evil schemes and murderous plans against him!

The Bible reminds us of the importance of guarding our thought life.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.  
Philippians 4:8 (ESV)

...take every thought captive to obey Christ,.. 2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

At this point, Saul's servants remained quiet as he ranted and raved about the imaginary conspiracy Saul was convinced would take his life. What do you say to people like Saul? There is no reasoning with them. While most of the people around Saul wisely saw this as a time to keep quiet and avoid the king, there are evil people out there who saw someone in the grip of paranoia as a golden opportunity to carry out an evil agenda. That was Doeg the Edomite.

If you were with us last week, you would remember him. He worked for Saul, but he was an Edomite. Edomites are the descendants of Esau. Throughout the Bible, they are depicted as the enemy of God's people. Doeg happened to be in the tabernacle in Nob when David visited Ahimelech, the chief priest to get bread and a sword. Doeg saw this as an opportunity not just to hurt David but to carry out great evil against God's people.

Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, and he inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." 1 Samuel 22:9–10 (ESV)

None of the servants of Saul knew what to say to him about a supposed conspiracy against his life because nothing like that was taking place. The

problem is Saul wouldn't take "No" for an answer. He wanted somebody to reinforce his mistaken beliefs.

In Doeg, Saul found someone who would support his conspiracy theory and tell the king all he knew about it, as Doeg told him about David's visit to Ahimelech.

Was it true that Ahimelech, the high priest, gave David food and Goliath's sword? Yes. Did Ahimelech consult the Lord for David to give David divine direction on a plan to overthrow Saul? Absolutely not. He didn't do that. It appears Doeg told the truth, but then he added to the truth to make his story fall more in line with what Saul wanted to hear. That way, he could get Saul even angrier.

Doeg had an agenda. He was shaping the news, not just reporting the news. Nothing is new under the sun. Isn't this the way the modern media works? They choose an agenda then they shape their reporting of the news to make it fit their agenda. Sometimes they even add fictitious information to the facts, just like Doeg did as he talked with Saul.

In case you don't believe that Doeg was shaping his report to give Saul what he wanted to hear, we need also to notice the information Doeg did NOT tell Saul. He didn't tell Saul the rest of the story. Last week, Ahimelech was hesitant to talk with David because he knew of the tense relationship between Saul and David. Doeg didn't tell Saul that the only reason Ahimelech gave food and a sword to David was that David lied to him. Ahimelech didn't think David was on the run. David told Ahimelech he was on a top secret mission serving king Saul.

Ahimelech gave David food and a sword because he wanted to be loyal to the king by helping David on this mission. Doeg left that part of the story out so he could put Ahimelech in the worst possible light, making it look like he was part of a conspiracy.

At this point, Saul was fit to be tied. He was convinced the coupe was true and that he had evidence the chief priest was part of it. What was Saul to do? If he followed God's law, he could do nothing. Before anything took place, a second witness needed to be brought forward.

"A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established." Deuteronomy 19:15 (ESV)

Notice the law says you can't even establish a charge against a person unless you have two or three eyewitnesses to something they did wrong. This is not a verdict, this is a charge! This is not the way we tend to think. The problem is that with only one witness, you never know that person's character. You never know a person's true motives. Even if they have good motives, you don't know if they misunderstood something or if they are misrepresenting something. This is why we must be careful and not jump to conclusions but have two or three witnesses of something done wrong. Saul should have stopped and at least checked Doeg's character.

This is something practical for all of us. When we hear something about someone, and it is not good, we must not start by assuming the worst about people. We must always assume the best about people. It is only when there is

evidence of two or three people that we should consider a charge against a person.

Saul was not interested in the truth. He was angry. He was looking to shut down any assassination attempts on his life as fast as possible. Saul, in his anger, played right into Doeg's hand.

If you are still not convinced that Doeg was craftily shaping the truth to manipulate Saul by his paranoia, read Psalm 52. That is a Psalm that David wrote about Doeg. In the Psalm, David describes how Doeg deceptively misrepresented the truth to Saul to manipulate him for evil.

Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man? The steadfast love of God endures all the day. Your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right. Selah Psalm 52:1–3 (ESV)

### **Saul called the priests to Gibeah.**

What happened next was not pretty. If we were going to put a movie rating on the next verses, they are “R” rated. Look whom Saul summoned to his royal court.

Then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, and all of them came to the king. 1 Samuel 22:11 (ESV)

Saul didn't just summon Ahimelech, but he summoned all of the priests who were in the priestly city of Nob. This was not good. I am sure Saul's moodiness and anger were well-known to Ahimelech and his family. When they came, they had every right to be filled with fear.

And Saul said, “Hear now, son of Ahitub.” ... 1 Samuel 22:12a (ESV)

Again we see an insult. Saul refused to call Ahimelech by his name. He called him the son of Ahitub. This is calling Ahimelech a twerp. The problem was Ahimelech was a very significant man. As the high priest of the nation, he was the second most powerful man in the nation after the king.

While Saul treated Ahimelech rudely, Ahimelech replied with great respect.

...And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." 1 Samuel 22:12 (ESV)

Dignity and respect was not what came his way in return.

And Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he has risen against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" 1 Samuel 22:13 (ESV)

Saul accused him of joining David in a conspiracy against the king. The evidence was that he helped David by giving him bread, a sword and inquiring of God for him.

Saul felt the walls closing in around him. He was convinced Jonathan, his son was against him because of his covenant with David. Now the priests were plotting against him.

While Saul's servants knew better than to try and reason with Saul when he was in his paranoid lunatic moods, apparently, Ahimelech did not know Saul as well. He thought he could straighten out Saul with some truth.

Then Ahimelech answered the king, "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and captain over your bodyguard, and honored in your house?" 1 Samuel 22:14 (ESV)

Saul, what are you talking about? David is not against you. David is completely faithful to you. He is loyal to you. You do not have a person who is more faithful to you than David. Let's pause right there. That is saying something,

especially after the number of times Saul tried to kill David. David had a reputation for being the most faithful and loyal servant of the king even though the king kept trying to kill him.

David was also the king's son-in-law. He was family. He was married to Michal, the king's daughter. David was also captain of the king's bodyguard, the head of the secret service. The person in charge of your secret service is the most trustworthy person you can find. In the king's house, there was nobody more honored, of better character, or more well thought of than David. Why would he be in a conspiracy to kill you

There is a quick application that came to mind while I was studying. David had Saul as one of the most difficult bosses. He still did a great job working for a difficult boss. He was known for his faithfulness to his boss and loyalty to his place of work even when his boss and his place of work treated him terribly. What a reminder to work for our bosses the same way, even if they are not good and fair, just as Saul was not good and fair toward David.

Today we hear of quiet quitting. That is, we just do the minimum in our job to get a paycheck, but we do not care enough to do our job well. That was not David. He was not a quiet quitter. He did a job well, even when his boss was against him. David never took revenge. Later, when David will have the opportunity to kill Saul, he won't. He will not touch the Lord's anointed. He will submit to him and respect him even when he doesn't agree with him—what a challenge for us as we think about working for a difficult boss.

What about this charge of Ahimelech inquiring to God for David?

Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No! Let not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father, for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little.” 1 Samuel 22:15 (ESV)

The Hebrew here is a little tricky to translate. It can mean, “This is not the first time I have inquired of God for David. You had no problem with that in the past. Why do you have a problem with it now?” That is the way the ESV translates this text. I may be wrong, but I agree with other Bible scholars who think it should be translated as “I have never inquired of God for David in the past. Why would I start now?” That seems to be the better translation. It also makes better sense with the rest of the verse as Ahimelech launches into saying the priests knowing nothing about a coupe.

The problem was that all of Ahimelech’s defense, which was good, logical, and true, did not change Saul’s mind. He had already made up his mind. He pronounced the verdict without considering what Ahimelech said or checking for secondary witnesses.

And the king said, “You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father’s house.” 1 Samuel 22:16 (ESV)

This is serious. King Saul was not just committed to wrongfully taking the life of Ahimelech but the entire high priestly family.

These kinds of irrational and over-the-top emotional decisions have happened before with Saul. In an emotional state, the king pronounced an unjust death sentence, but it was never carried out by the army. We think of Jonathan after dipping the tip of his spear in a little honey and tasting that honey after the battle of Mishmash. He never heard his father’s silly command to not eat until sundown, so he inadvertently violated Saul’s silly command in a minor way. For

that, Saul commanded his own son to be killed. The problem was that the entire army stood up against Saul. They refused to kill Jonathan. Instead they saved Jonathan. Will this happen again? Will the soldiers save the priests from an unjust and evil death sentence given by the king?

Remember, killing the priest for an imagined offense and killing all the other priests in the city of Nob is a particularly evil deed. Earlier in this book, when the Philistines took the Ark of the Covenant, God inflicted them with mice and tumors. What will become of the man who unjustly executes the high priest and his entire family? That is signing your death warrant and asking God to kill you.

And the king said to the guard who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David, and they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the LORD. 1 Samuel 22:17 (ESV)

This is almost comical. Saul starts with the bodyguard standing next to him. He asked him to kill the priests of the Lord. The man refused. When that trusted soldier wouldn't kill the priests, apparently, he turned to others soldiers asking them to kill the priests. All of them refused to lift a finger against these men of God. They refused to do Saul's dirty work. You can imagine how frustrated Saul became.

While we often think negatively about Saul and his kingdom, we need to correct ourselves when it comes to this scene. Saul's soldiers were courageous men willing to stand up for what was right and disobey the king's orders because they knew his order was sinful. This was a courageous move. They were risking



their lives. Refusing to obey his order meant it was likely their heads would be chopped off next week.

What a great reminder for us. While we work hard for a difficult boss, as David did for Saul, there are also limits. If our employer asks us to sin, we must stand up and say, “No,” even if it costs us our job. In this case, it could cost these men their life.

It is always right to do what is right, even when it is costly.

After Saul couldn't get his soldiers to kill the priests, he turned to the one man who agreed with his conspiracy theory, the one man who would listen to his orders to kill.

Then the king said to Doeg, “You turn and strike the priests.” And Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he put to the sword. 1 Samuel 22:18–19 (ESV)

Can you picture the polished pavement in the palace that day after Doeg was done bleeding out 85 of the priests on the floor in front of Saul? There was blood everywhere. This was a gruesome scene as God's priests were slaughtered in front of the king.

Notice, it got worse. Doeg then traveled to Nob, the city of the priests, where he killed every remaining man, woman, child, and animal. When he was done, there was nothing left but blood and rotting flesh. The sound of a barking dog wasn't even heard in the city. He went far beyond what Saul had commanded. Saul bears great guilt in this because he did not attempt to hold him back.

On that day, Doeg proved himself to be no different than his Edomite ancestors, enemies of God's people. He was a true antichrist. Along the way, he coerced king Saul into joining him in becoming an antichrist of God's people.

Let's think of how far Saul has fallen. When he was first anointed king, he was commanded to completely wipe out the Amalekites and to leave no man, woman, child, or animal alive. That was because God was carrying out his judgment against the Amalekites for their horrific sins, such as child sacrifice. Saul couldn't bring himself to kill every last man, woman, and child of the sinful Amalekites in 1 Samuel 11. Here we are in 1 Samuel 22, and he has completely destroyed every man, woman, child, infant, and animal of the priestly family. Unlike the Amalekites, they were not guilty of great sin. Saul destroyed people who were completely innocent of sin. The farm-boy turned king was transformed into a bloody tyrant embodying the spirit of antichrist.

There is an important footnote to this tragedy. While these horrifying murders were the work of Saul, and he was fully responsible for his actions, this great evil was not outside of God's sovereign purposes. Evil never is. We must be careful not to claim we know the mind and purposes of God when we see suffering and evil around us. We know people are fully responsible for their sins but God is still bigger than sin and can use the sin which people commit for his good purposes. That is why even when sin is done against us, we do not lose hope. God is bigger than sin and has the ability to take sin and use it for the good he wants to accomplish.

Much earlier in this book a prophet came to old Eli with a terrible message about God's judgment on Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas for their sin of sleeping with the women who worked in the temple and disrespecting the offerings of God and the people of God.

Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. Then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel, and there shall not be an old man in your house forever. The only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep his eyes out to grieve his heart, and all the descendants of your house shall die by the sword of men. 1 Samuel 2:31–33 (ESV)

God promised that one day for Hophni and Phinehas' sin, their ancestors would be cut off from the priesthood by the sword, and that only one man of their family line will escape.

Saul's evil choices, for which he was fully responsible, were used by God to carry out this prophecy against Eli's family for Hophni and Phinehas' horrific sin. While there is great tension in understanding how God is not the author of evil choices but he still uses those evil choices for good purposes, there is also a great encouragement. It reminds us that even when people freely choose evil, even horrific evil, God is so great that he takes the evil choices of men and uses them for his good purposes. Let me show you how we see the same thing with the death of Jesus on the cross for our sin. God took the evil choices of those who crucified Jesus and used those choices to have Jesus' death save us from our sin

...this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. Acts 2:23 (ESV)

for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and

the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. Acts 4:27–28 (ESV)

Herod, Pilate, Gentiles, and Jews gathered in Jerusalem to kill Jesus. Their choice to kill Jesus was part of God’s good plan for Jesus to die for our sins.

This is why Paul says this in Romans 8:28.

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 (ESV)

As Christians, even though we may face great tragedy and suffering, God promises to use all those things, even the injustices done against us, as part of his good plan to establish God’s kingdom.

**Abiathar escaped and was protected by David.**

In 1 Samuel 2:23, the prophecy said one would escape. One did escape.

But one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 1 Samuel 22:20 (ESV)

There was no other place for him to go other than to David. We don’t know how he escaped. Maybe in God’s providence, when Doeg showed up to slaughter the city he was chasing a lost sheep in the hills. We don’t know.

And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. 1 Samuel 22:21 (ESV)

The word for kill in this verse is a different word in Hebrew from the earlier word translated as kill in this book. This particular word for kill carried much more violent overtones of a bloodbath, merciless slaughter

And David said to Abiathar, “I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father’s house. Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping.” 1 Samuel 22:22–23 (ESV)

Last week, David lied to Ahimelech. Here we see David's lie had devastating consequences. It contributed to Saul's murder of the entire family of the high priest except for Abiathar. David deeply regrets his sin.

He also took responsibility for his sin. He made a promise to protect Abiathar with his life. He said the only way Saul was going to be able to kill Abiathar was by going over David's dead body. He promised to protect him with his life. Wow, that is a great promise of protection.

### **Application**

There are a number of applications we can make to our life from this chapter. First, let's look at this from a high level. When this chapter began, David finally gave up on lying, trusting in the worldly strength of Goliath's sword, and in his own plans. He was going to trust in God alone to fulfill his purposes for his life. When that decision was made, David was alone, hiding in a cave in the ground. David has not lifted a finger but God has given him 400 men. He has the prophets Samuel and Gad on his side. Now every remaining priest in the land of Israel has left Saul and is for David. The one remaining man in the high priest's family is sided with David. God is working out his plan to bring Saul down and bring David up. David now has the prophets and priests, and he is the anointed king, all by the hand of God working out his good purposes.

This chapter also shows us the danger of sin.

Saul shows us that continuing in sin can lead us to do things we never thought we could do. Saul went from the chosen king of Israel (1 Samuel 11) to an antichrist figure that attempted genocide of the priests of God (1 Samuel 22). Continuing in sin leads us to places we never planned to go.

David shows us how our sin affects others. David's lies to Ahimelech contributed to the death of almost all of his family. Sin does stay in a box. When we sin, other people suffer.

This chapter also show us how to respond to sin.

David owned his sin and took responsibility to help those hurt by his sin. Saul blamed others for his sin. He made others suffer for the sinfulness of his heart. Today, how are we responding to the sin in our life? Are we like David or like Saul?

Lastly, just as David protected Abiathar from Saul's unjust wrath by the guarantee of his life, Jesus protects us from God the Father's just wrath against our sin by giving his life.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. John 5:24 (ESV)

While Doeg and Saul were antichrists committed to annihilating God's people, turn with all your heart to Jesus. He died on the cross to save God's people. In him alone, we will find forgiveness, safety, and protection from our sin.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at [www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com) ([www.c2rc.com](http://www.c2rc.com))

© You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided (1) you credit the author, (2) modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web address ([www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com)) on the copied resource.

