

4/23/23 - 1 Sam. 19 - "Don't Be Bent, Be Broken"

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Date: 23 April 2023

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[0 : 00] Today, we're going to be reading through 1 Samuel 19. And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David.

But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. And Jonathan told David, And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him,

So that he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night. Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill him in the morning.

But Michael, David's wife, told him, If you do not escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed. So Michael let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped.

Michael took an image and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goat's hair out its head and covered it with the clothes. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, he said, He is sick.

[2 : 23] Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him. And when the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed, with a pillow of goat's hair at its head.

Saul said to Michael, Why have you deceived me thus, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped? And Michael answered Saul, He said to me, Let me go, why should I kill you?

Now David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and lived at Naoth. And it was told Saul, Behold, David is at Naoth in Ramah.

Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing his head over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul sent messengers again a third time, and they also prophesied. Then he himself went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is in Siku.

[3 : 34] And he asked, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they are at Naoth and Ramah. And he went there to Naoth and Ramah, and the Spirit of God came upon him also.

And as he went, he prophesied until he came to Naoth and Ramah. And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel, and lay naked all that day and all that night.

Thus it is said, Is Saul also among the prophets? This is the word of the Lord. Amen. Well, it's wonderful to be gathered around the word like this.

This is, There's nothing like this. A time of assembling as a group, a body of believers around God's word, seeking for him to speak into our lives today, and that he will.

Today, I'm assured of it. I'd like to provoke a little bit of thought as we start to stir up the content within our minds as God speaks to our lives today.

[4 : 45] I want us to think about the two monumental events that are inevitable to occur in each and every one of your lives, all of them being unexpected and completely being unknown of their arrival.

You know what I'm talking about. The time of our birth and the time of our death. And if Scripture proves to be true, as, you know, Scripture has a way of being true, the more you test it, the more its truthfulness comes out and is exposed.

But we enter into this world with the same condition. We enter into this world in the same condition, a corrupt will.

But upon our departure, Scripture says that some will die with that same corrupt will that it began. And, but for some, their sin and their corrupt will will be broken at some point between their birth and their death.

Something will happen and things will change between the first breath in and the last breath out. And so it's just simply to say all are born into sin, a corrupt will, which is imputed by the fall and disobedience of Adam.

[6 : 23] But along the course of life, something can change regarding our will. Something can change. Throughout life, we see that people's will at various times seem to be bent towards good and evil at times.

Even the lost world who are corrupt in their wills and separated from God can have a will that seems to be bent towards a little bit of good.

Charitable, if you might. And giving donations and everything like that. But that's just a bending towards good. And we also know that a corrupt world will bend very much so towards evil.

And this is often within the unfolding plan according to God's providence. And church, the text today really capitalizes upon a theme of observing the corrupt will of man playing out in contrast of the powerful will of God.

And not only that, but the response of God's empowering will to bend the will of man. Even the will of Saul at certain times to do good.

[7 : 47] And we'll see in this, there's going to be a series of escapes just as was just read. And I'm going to arguably just put it down into three because I'm really having the itch to do a three-point sermon just to reinforce my Baptist roots.

So I'm going to do this in three different escapes, but the first escape obviously has David departing twice. So you can stone me after the service for my ignoring of that.

But it's not an ignorance. It's simply just trying to take it thematically as the author has laid out. And so we're going to take these scenes, sections, points, whatever you want to call it.

There's going to be three different breaks in the text as we're going to examine today and as which we're going to look at or put our attention to. And these are going to be the three escapes that we're going to see.

And within each of these, we'll observe vital truths concerning the attributes of a corrupt will, especially influenced by evil, and a yielded will, evidenced and influenced by God.

[9 : 02] And so by the end of our time, my argument that I believe is the author's argument in this passage is as stated in the sermon title. Don't be bent.

Let's be broken. And so I want to pray as we drop into these three escapes and figure out what it means to not just be bent, but to be broken.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your word. As Israel turned to the prophets of old, we turn to your word to speak to us.

And Father, as you expose your words and your message to us, we pray that our hearts are ready and prepared that our conversations among each other, even in the seats today, might cease.

Pray that we put our cell phones away, Facebook away, Twitter away. We pray that as we enter this time, we're coming and encounter with the living God speaking to His people.

[10 : 13] Let not one of us pass this moment by. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen? Oh boy. Amen?

Come on, y'all. Please. Don't be bent. Be broken. Let's look at the first escape.

escape. Can a corrupt will be reasoned with? Here within the first escape, again, arguably two, but thematically one scenario, Jonathan is back into the picture in chapter 19.

Last week, it seemed as if Jonathan sort of had this suspicion of there's something about David that David deserves his loyalty.

And so, he committed to a rare bond of friendship and loyalty, and that was in, as Pastor Rick spoke and preached last week, chapter 18, verse 1 through 4.

[11 : 21] And within the narrative beginning in chapter 19, it's like this bond begins to be tested. This relationship and this bond between David and Jonathan.

In verse 1, Jonathan hears word that Saul sought to kill David yet again. However, Jonathan embraced this higher loyalty regardless of being the son of the king.

He embraced his loyalty to David even over being the son of the king. And it would be fascinating for us to read that we see Jonathan in these verses.

Jonathan delighted in David. Isn't that fancy? Jonathan delighted in David because just previously, I heard it from the lips of Rick last week that kept me scratching my head that Saul delighted in David in verse 22 in chapter 18.

But Jonathan proves to be the one telling the truth. And he approached this king who has slipped into a lie once again.

[12:37] And look at this confrontation in verse 4. I think we should just read it. Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, this is where his confrontation begins, let not the king sin against his servant David because he has not sinned against you and because his deeds have brought good to you.

For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine and the Lord worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced.

Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause? In other words, by this rhetorical tact, this logical persuasion, moral provoking, it had theological force, Jonathan literally triggered Saul by calling out his sin.

This madman Jonathan called out because of his sin and I would imagine this probably brought to his mind PTSD from Gilgal.

Do you remember that? When he confessed as Samuel confronted his sin, Saul said with his own lips, I have sinned in chapter 15.

[14:09] sin. This is the uncomfortable toxin that latches its grip throughout the nation of Israel's history.

And all throughout this book, from chapter 2, from Hophni to Phinehas, to Israel's Mizpah confession in chapter 7, to chapter 12 of this climatic moment of the nation of Israel rejecting God, asking God for a king, and in so rejecting God as their king.

For Saul, to take David's innocent life without cause was literally loaded language that takes us back to Deuteronomy and reflects on the regulations of murder according to the law, that to shed innocent blood according to Deuteronomy 19 was indeed sin and retribution for that act of murder was okay.

Deuteronomy 21, innocent blood being shed again, needed atonement. Man, what a speech. It's only two verses recorded here.

And you see, Saul had a corrupt will, clearly a corrupt will. One who just previously delighted in David and now all of a sudden despises him and is trying to kill him again.

[15:34] Saul had a corrupt will that was set against the Lord and against his anointed. And the one thing that turned it all around was the goodness, the reasonableness, and the rightness of David.

It seemed like this reasoning produced a little bit of fruit. At this moment, it was David's good deeds that disarmed Saul's evil attentions.

It was David's good deeds that unveiled Saul's sin. And church, Jesus Christ's good deeds disarm and unveil the same way.

Church, it was God's goodness that disarmed sin and triumphed over evil. This was an event that took place at the cross, and the cross continually, generation after generation, displays the goodness of God.

God. Now, the perceivable, what's going on in this passage and what goes on a lot in this world is the perceivable goodness bent the will of Saul.

[17:01] But is that good enough to save? Being able to identify goodness. Saul responds well to good reasoned advice.

And Saul even swore another oath. You know Saul with his oaths? He loves them. And he fetches David back. David rejoins them.

So, David got the spotlight once again. And what's going on with Saul? his will was corrupted and the goodness of David allowed his corrupt will to be bent to do good and to allow him back into the house and essentially not kill David, an innocent man.

But as we reflect back on chapter 16, we can't forget what has occurred in Saul's life. We understand that it is not the inability of God's goodness to last in Saul's life as if God's not powerful enough to truly change Saul's heart.

That's not the issue at hand. But rather, it's Saul's inability to escape God's decided judgment over his life.

[18:23] What's said is done in Saul's life and judgment has come. And that points to the eschatological judgment to come over all sin. And God exchanged, as a moment of judgment in Saul's life, God exchanged his spirit for an evil spirit.

It reminds us of Exodus 4 and Exodus 11 of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, whose heart was kind of predisposed to hate God's people and was hardened against God's people. And so, God hardening his heart then was an act of judgment. Do you see that going on in the text? And God will still achieve his plans despite the threat of Pharaoh, did he not? This brings to life, Romans 1, of what Paul is arguing about an evil, corrupt world that has every excuse to see God, but they still reject him. They can observe the goodness of God from a distance, but still, God gives them up to their desires. There's something very complex going on in this passage, and Saul's wickedness is clear. [19:43] He swore an oath, and the only thing that changed between him swearing the oath and all of a sudden a spearheaded for David's throat was that David had a victory in war. And so we see the essence of his anger was pride just as Rick spoke last week. And for the first time in the book of 1 Samuel, David would never return to Saul's service. After this escape, David is done. And for the rest of Saul's life, David would be known as a fugitive on the run. That's what happens after this verse 10. A church can a corrupt will be reasoned with? You might argue, yeah, a little bit, but only for so long. Only for so long. And while the goodness of God triumphed over evil, if the will is to be considered in this, conceptual goodness, which is observed and what is seen, may bend a will, but it will not break one. [21:05] Something else is vitally needed to do that work. And this lesson will continue to play out. Let's look at this second escape. How far will a corrupt will go? How far will it go? And it continues in verse 11. And the bounty is now set for Saul's henchmen. I'm just going to call him henchmen. That sounded good. Rather than company or people, henchmen. Saul sent his henchmen to find and to kill David in verse 11 and to pay a visit to his wife. I guess David may have thought he was safe or maybe just figured he was good as dead so he might as well kiss and say goodbye to his wife. Either way, Michael warns David of the threat, helps him to escape, and sets up a diversion to give David enough time to distance himself. And so to anybody who is reading with the church the 2023 Bible reading plan that we've all been in, we were just in 2 Samuel not long ago. And this might bring up sort of like this illusion of Rahab kind of creating this diversion, right? [22:27] And so we see upon arrival these henchmen retrieve the news of David's sickness. They get there, Michael's like, well, I'm sorry, David's upstairs resting, he's sick. And it kind of like you get a little snapshot of like, do these henchmen actually even care about what they're on mission for? Because honestly, if you're bloodthirsty as Saul, I don't think a sick resting man in bed would be something that would kind of bend your will to be like, oh, let's go kill him. It's a good time, right? It's odd. It's almost comical. Because either by the ease of persuasion or Michael's deception, it worked. And they were just like, okay, well, we're going to go back to Saul then, right? And they depart. The henchmen returned based on Saul's orders to, well, go, get him, and bring him back. I mean, don't you get this insight? Have you ever seen the minions? You just see those minions going? This is what I see when I see these henchmen going after David. You should imagine what I see when I see them prophesying as the thing was at the end. [23:47] But that's a different story. Michael does the unthinkable in verse 17. Not only does she fool Saul once by creating this diversion, but look at her response after he confronts her. she fools him again and says, he was going to kill me if I didn't let him go. Boy. In church, I guess it would probably benefit us if we understand that this is not the first, it's not the last, it's not the last time that it appears that something good comes from lying. Okay? I don't want this to turn into a moralistic element, but so many people grapple with Rahab, with Michael, as if there's some sort of moralization of this biblical incident, but we have to remember that based on the profound example of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is truth, and we ought to live a life of truth. We have to remember not to moralize these stories, because this is their story, and it's not ours. And so don't you dare try to justify a lie because of this. To moralize this would also inhibit us to have pagan gods in our household to put into a bed and make it look like somebody as we're lying. I mean, there's just no logic in that, so we must be aware of ever making that conclusion of lying.

[25 : 33] Jesus Christ has called the church to see his supreme example of righteous living so that we might love the truth, love to tell the truth, and hate lies.

And so while I do feel like that's important to note, I don't want to get caught in those weeds, but I do want to address that. There is something much more pertinent that stands before us, and this is going along even with the escape that we just saw previously.

If, according to the first escape, if a corrupt will cannot be reasoned with, we see here that a corrupt will will go to great lengths to destroy when its corruption is bent towards additional corruption, severely bent to do evil.

Just as a corrupt will may bend towards good once in a while, it bends towards evil and boy will it get dangerous. And we live in a day and age that we're surrounded in corruption.

It's like evil is celebrating to do more evil and trying to redefine what evil and good are. This is a lure which attempts to persuade our will and to even bend the will of the church towards its corruption.

[27 : 00] And it seems like we get caught in the tension, don't we? We get caught in the tension that occurs when we come to church. As six days throughout the week, our will has sort of been bent towards the world.

And then all of a sudden it's like, back to church and back to God. Okay, here I am. And you feel that tension as you assemble with the family of God. God.

But if evil cannot even entice an individual, it will seek to devour everything that is around that individual. If evil can't get to you or you, it will surround and encompass your life to get to you.

Satan really does this well. We live in a two-day prime shipping world. Well, Satan plays a long game and he does.

He does it well. Thinking that even in schools to have a student, Satan will have to bend the will of that education system.

[28 : 09] To have a home, if Satan wants a child, he would have to bend the will of the parents. To have a church, to have a Christian like you, he would have to bend the will of the pastor.

If the corruption of Saul's will would take the life of a vulnerable, innocent man that was perceivably sick in bed, don't think for a second that we can play games with sin and do religious gymnastics of being bent towards the world and then bent back towards God and so on and so forth between doing good and doing evil.

You see, evil seeks to bend. But what did we just learn about evil's enemy? The enemy of evil is good.

Goodness on display. Goodness triumphed on the cross. However, still, observable goodness does not provide a solution and it bends it too.

What we see in this last climatic escape will ultimately show that God reveals, as the saying goes, two can play that game.

[29 : 32] In other words, watch me bend your will, Saul. And here we find the solution and answer to our bending problem.

And so let's look into escape three and then unpack it. what can dismantle a corrupt will? Verse 18, these henchmen continue to pursue as they receive the word that David was fleeing to Samuel in Ramah.

And that was about two miles away. It's not too bad of a track. And of all places, for any believer, we must see the great significance of the direction of which David had run to.

We have to remember biblical theology, progressive revelation. God has been ruling His people all along by His Word.

He has given and entrusted His Word. And being that God had the ultimate authority, He bestowed that authority upon the prophets. a human agent that God used to speak.

[30 : 51] So on one side, to reject Samuel, as which was, as Saul did, is to reject God. But to run to Samuel, as David did, is to run to God.

With the enemy upon David's sense, and in light of the other two escapes, it was not turning to a best friend, it wasn't turning to a spouse, but turning to the living God of where ultimate protection is found and assured.

In verse 20, surely enough the henchmen arrived. I hope you're not thinking of minions right now, but surely enough the henchmen arrived only to find themselves out of their minds.

And what are they doing? They're doing the will of God. They're prophesying. And this happened three times.

Right? It's difficult to pinpoint what exactly was going on here, because last week, Rick mentioned that in chapter 18 of verse 10, Saul raved in his house when the evil spirit overcame him. [32 : 13] And the same word is actually translated here as prophesied. And so we can't understand exactly what's going on here. I don't believe that it's declaring the glories of God and that the Messiah is coming.

I don't think it's that type of prophecy. But whatever it is, where was the will of these henchmen bent towards? It was God.

It was bent towards God. And regardless of the unknown details of the behavior of these men, one thing is for certain, they bowed before God under the influence of the Spirit of God.

And they could do no other. They didn't have a choice in the matter. God overpowered them. This is something that Saul knew very well from chapter 10, verse 9, as this very thing happened to Saul. And the spirits, you see, the Spirit of the Lord seemed to have set up this protective barrier around the one that the evil one was determined to destroy.

[33 : 21] And so, verse 23, Saul says, ah, forget it. If you want a job right, you've got to do it yourself. Right?

American way. Saul dressed himself and takes things into his own hand, only to find himself in the same conundrum of these three companies of henchmen, though with a little bit more humiliating details.

Verse 24, while Saul was overcome by the Spirit of God, the Lord provoked him to strip himself of all his royal garments, and the Lord thwarted his evil schemes.

Have we forgotten Psalm 2? He who sits in the heavens laughs at the corrupt world. The Lord holds them in derision.

You see, the powerful King Saul is rendered powerless before the powerful Spirit of God.

Reasoning with a will will only bend a will.

[34 : 38] Observable goodness will only bend a will, but only the Spirit of God has the power to break the will, according to Paul in Romans 9, 16.

So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy. God is in the business of bending and breaking wills.

And don't be satisfied with a will that's just bent towards God that, well, you like the church's music so you attend the church, or you like the order of the service so you attend the service, or you just read the Bible because it gives you a good feeling inside.

No! allow God to break your will, to desire the things of God to cling to, for we have no other than the church, its mission, and its word of truth.

You want something sure in your life? I'll give it to you. When God breaks your will to His, no evil has the power to bend you away from the Father.

[35 : 57] Not even the most vile of evil. When God breaks your will, playing gymnastics, bending to and fro with the waves and the wind of the world, there's no power over you.

Being broken in your will towards God, there is no bending back and forth. There's only bending towards God. And that is sure. according to God's sovereign and divine decreed will, will one day be revealed for all to see someday that every knee will bow.

Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. there will be a day where the most vile, corrupt people in this world that have breath in their lungs will one day be provoked by God to bow to the truth.

That is certain. God will strip the garments from corruption. evil will be humiliated and Jesus Christ and his church will be exalted.

I don't know about you, but I thought Jesus Christ's words were pretty clear. Not my will, but yours be done.

[37 : 43] And the thrust of a broken will upon a Christian is bound into the will of the one whose will was yoked to the Father's will. Have we forgotten all of this?

At the moment of our brokenness is when the mighty Spirit of God fills our lives. Church, don't just be bent.

Be broken. salvation comes through brokenness and this is accomplished by only the Spirit of God and the initiation and exertion of God according to Romans 9.

Isn't it interesting too as David ran towards God at these times? David didn't, you'll see this occur throughout the rest of the series.

There were many times where David had an opportunity to allow his will to be bent towards evil and to really seize an opportunity to kill Saul when he would least expect it, but never was he ever found following through bending his will towards evil.

[39 : 01] It was always towards God. And even as he's evading this madman and his henchmen, his will is bent towards God.

At this moment, we get our Psalm 59. David wrote a song in Ramah. It says, deliver me from my enemies, O my God, protect me from those who rise up against me, deliver me from those who work evil, and save me from blood thirsty men.

But I will sing of your strength. I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

O my strength, I will sing praises to you. For you, O God, my fortress, the God who shows me steadfast love.

His will was not just bent towards God's goodness, it was broken towards God's goodness. Maybe you're not in Christ today, and something's going on, you know it.

[40 : 27] If birth into this world, we have all suffered this imputed corruption, corruption, of the imputed will of Adam's disobedience.

What's the good news? There is nothing that you can do to break your corrupt will. There is nothing that you can do to break that.

But only God can not only bend the will towards his, as Saul's was, but God breaks your will to herald, to uphold his will at all times.

So I gotta ask you and invite you to let God break your will today. For anybody who is not a believer in Jesus Christ, chase after David, whose will was broken for God, who ran to Samuel, the prophet, and Ramah.

We follow, we chase David as being Christ and our Savior. There is no salvation in anyone else, not one thing, not some sort of theory that sounds good, it all falls short than salvation in Jesus Christ.

[41 : 42] There is no power greater than God. We must not try to reason with corruption. God must break us of it. So help us, God.

Let's all flee straight to him. Let's pray.