

5/14/22 - 1 Sam. 22 - "Caught Between Two Worlds"

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Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] Now we're reading all of 1 Samuel chapter 22. David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam.

And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him.

And he became commander over them. And there were with them about 400 men. And David went there to Mizpah of Moab.

And he said to the king of Moab, Please let my father and my mother stay with you till I know what God will do for me. And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

Then the prophet Gad said to David, Do not remain in the stronghold. Depart and go into the land of Judah. So David departed and went into the forest of Herath.

[1 : 13] Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him. 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.

And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, Hear now, people of Benjamin, and 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. Then answered Doak the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul.

I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech, with 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.

[2 : 28] 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.

And Saul said, Hear now, son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I am, my lord. 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?

Then Ahimelech answered the king, And who among all the servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and captain over your bodyguard, and honored in your house?

Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No. 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.

And the king said, You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house. 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.

[3 : 52] 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. Then the king said to Doag, You turn and strike the priests.

And Doag the Edomite turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day 85 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.

But one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahithub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David.

And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. And David said to Abiathar, I knew on that day when Doag the Edomite was there that he would surely tell Saul, I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house.

[4 : 59] Stay with me. Do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping. Praise God for his word that just penetrates our world and our hearts today like no other.

There's no other literature out there that exists that was so inspired that really cuts to the core of our lives. I know that this may not be your everyday Mother's Day sermon, but this is the sermon for today, according to the providence of God.

And so, we enter in today with reverence, with awe of the message that he desires to speak to each and every one of us today, regardless of what day the calendar in this world says.

And so, today, I want us to understand that between the text and today, there's two worlds that exist.

And whether we realize it or not, these two worlds do exist, and they are at odds with one another.

And there's a world of light. There's a world of darkness.

[6 : 20] There's a world of truth. There's a world of false. There's a world of life. And there's a world of death. And now, what I'm trying to explain is that I don't know if you might be surprised by the fact that the world we live in right now is a little messed up.

I don't know if that might be a public service announcement to you. But consider that message delivered. Word, this world is dark, and it's not my opinion or some politician's opinion or some wise guy with a cool podcast's opinion.

God's Word says this world is dark, the world that we live in. It's dark. It is false. And this world and the end of this world equals death.

And the impact of sin stems all the way back to Genesis 3 within a garden between a man named Adam and a woman named Eve.

And this has completely reshaped and distorted mankind's wants, mankind's needs, and mankind's desires.

[7 : 39] Completely reshaped and distorted them. Within our world is absolute confusion, right? We want what we don't need.

We need what we don't want. We desire the things that aren't good for us, that aren't glorifying to God. We're completely backwards. And you sense this tension, I think, that when we scroll social media, news, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, whatever we want, when we hear it on the radio, when we watch it on the TV, and even if you do a good job of, like, tuning out all the noise, you got, it's just you and the Lord, it's like you can't escape the people around you that just remind you with some simple statements like, did you hear?

It's like, oh, great, here we go. Or, did you see this or that? And again, I mean, unless a Christian would resolve to the life of a hobbit in the shire, we can't escape the tension that we live in.

You can't run from it. It's here. It's in the world. And we are all exposed to that tension. And for a Christian, one who has been bought by the blood of Jesus Christ by their faith, who are living out the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, you experience this tension continuously as you know that God has set you apart from this world to not live according to the standards and the patterns of this distorted and reshaped world.

And your true home is not under the provision and the care of what's here now, but what's waiting ahead for you, where Jesus is.

[9 : 37] That's where your ultimate provision is. These two worlds, as they can be observed in our lives today, are seen symbolically in the two worlds of Saul and David in the passage today in chapter 22.

The sermon today is titled, Caught Between Two Worlds. And I hope to expound this in three separate sections to simply see that the hope that keeps us now is the hope that we reach for tomorrow.

So as we do that and we see that today, let's pray as we go into the Word and expound that. Let's pray. Father, we come to You today and we are just thankful that regardless of what is in this world, we know whose world this belongs to.

It belongs to You. We've mishandled, as mankind has, all the things. We don't know who we are. We don't know who You are.

We are at quite a conundrum in our sin, being surrounded in such disarray and dysfunction and distortion. But this time, over the next half hour, may we see truth as You've defined it.

[11 : 12] May we find truth, and if we find truth, may we find hope. We praise in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

So three sections today. Not that one. We'll do the first section first. In the company of good and evil.

And we see this between verse 1 through 10. These sections, sometimes they're sections, sometimes they're points. What we're going to do is capture the theme of those verses and then look a little bit into what's going on in those verses, then see our world today according to those verses.

So look with me in your Bible. If you have your Bible still open, if you don't have a Bible open, we have a lot available in the chairs. But open that to 1 Samuel 22 and read with me.

Keep your finger in the Bible as we go through this. And please, don't take my word for it. Never take my word for it. Take God's word for it. In verse 1, we see that David makes his sixth escape in verse 1.

[12 : 30] Kind of like a transitionary statement in this passage. And this is his sixth escape, regardless if it's from Saul or from the Philistines that he just escaped from.

But we see that he's bunkered himself in a cave. It's literally Dave in a cave. And that was the secondary sermon title I was going to continue to propose to you today.

But I didn't want to lose the reverence of this passage. But literally, it's Dave in a cave. He's among family that have assembled in this cave.

And look at the descriptors in verse 1 and 2 of the people that have received word that he's here. Look at the descriptors that the narrator has given to us.

They're all in distress. They're in debt. Do you see that? They're bitter in soul. David became the commander of these 400 people that came within this refuge.

[13 : 47] This refuge looks like an outcast of losers. People who are needy. Who are dependent upon someone.

And I guess if you were looking for a Mother's Day sermon, if we wanted to cherry-pick verse 3 out of it, we could probably look at what's going on behind the context of chapter 3. Because David, oh, David, trustworthy David, right?

He carries his mother and his father, his mother more so, right? Because it's Mother's Day, to the land of the Moabites.

And what's happening here is God's sovereign hands of provision. God hasn't just been going play by play like we've been going sermon by sermon or chapter by chapter.

He's written the whole narrative. It's laid out. He knows all the names within the Lamb's Book of Life. He knows all things.

[14 : 45] And what's happening here is David is cashing in a favor for the Moabites. Why does this matter? Because within the narrative and the storyline of the Bible, who's David's great-grandmother?

Ruth, the Moabites. And David, knowing that the only place, the only territory that his parents would be safe would be in not any other kingdom, not hiding in the hills, but within the confines of the enemy camp.

And he is able to reason with the enemy. I don't know how. The narrative doesn't say how. But he did. And I believe it has a great connection with Ruth being his great-grandmother, the Moabites.

Regardless of how it happened, God allowed it to happen, and his parents were protected. That's your Mother's Day sermon today. Kids, protect your parents in the enemy's camp.

Wouldn't it be unthinkable, though, that an enemy of Israel would cooperate like this? Right?

[16 : 03] But God, being omnipresent in existence, had this plan in motion, and David wisely executed it.

That's the main point. It doesn't matter about the hows. We know how this happened, and it's because God allowed it to happen. His family found asylum, Ruth, under the wings of Boaz in Ruth. And now his family finds asylum under the wings of the Moabites against Saul. Here exists the hand of God moving and working to provide and protect for his people.

But for David, it seems in verse 3, something's uncertain for him. And David went from there to Mizpah of Moab.

And he said to the king of Moab, There's a little bit of uncertainty.

[17:12] In other words, while David waited in the stronghold, he would not move until God said, move. Where God instructed him to move seems kind of odd as the text plays out.

And he left the king in verse 4. And stayed with him all that time in the stronghold. And then the prophet came to him again and said to David, Do not remain in the stronghold.

Depart and go into the land of Judah. So David departed and went into the forest of Herod. It's odd to see the instructions from God.

And listen up, because this is important. He didn't lead David away to some further land off into the east. If I could show you a map and be real cool with technology right now, I could show you a map of where God is telling him to go.

But take my word for it now, check me later. But he's telling David to go west in the direction of Saul. Isn't that odd?

[18:27] Considering David is looking for protection. Maybe David had it all along, regardless of where he's at. And that might be the point. And that's it.

Five verses into this chapter. And it's like you just saw an entire chapter. You could probably lay it out if you saw the Brent translation version coming out sometime in a store near you, right?

It might expound on this into an entire chapter. You probably could. But the narrator and his intention in writing this message to the original audience then and us today, he gave us five verses.

And I think there's a point in that as well to kind of push the tension and the emphasis forward.

Enough about David. We need to get back to Saul. What we do know is that in David's world, if we're talking about worlds, we would find in David's world an assembly of outcasts, an assembly of losers, essentially.

But in David's world, there was peace, regardless of being away from the enemy or walking towards the enemy. Now, let's follow the narrative into Saul's world in verse 6.

[19:51] It's sort of a contrast in the writing style, because the author seems to paint this picture of, if you have losers, let's just call these guys winners. You've got winners.

They're resting. It seems like they're at peace. Their positioning up on a hill is pretty good with a military advantage. Nobody can attack you or sneak up on you.

And everything seems pretty peaceful other than this man up on this hill, Saul sitting under a tree with a spear in his hands, and all the servants were standing around him.

Do you see him on this hill with this spear that just had David's name written on it, just had Jonathan's name on it? In verse 6, this isn't the first time we've seen Saul underneath a tree.

If you've been connected in this series for any sort of amount of time, this scene would look very familiar to chapter 14, previously, of Saul being under a tree resting.

[21:10] The previous episode, Saul was very discombobulated at that time. His son Jonathan snuck up on the enemy camp, took care of the garrison at the Philistine, and then just falls from the tree.

Remember, I coined it as like that was the real story of Captain Jack Sparrow. I just saw him running around for his rum and everything, running around like crazy with his head just spinning. He was completely discombobulated. But now, we should see something different in this chapter, because Saul doesn't seem very discombobulated anymore.

He seems pretty calculated. And one thing is for certain, as we'll see the narrative as was read today, is that this is not the Saul of chapter 14 any longer.

And look with me in verse 7. I'm going to read it. And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, Hear now, people of Benjamin, will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards?

[22:21] 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.

This is ranting and raving.

It's a little odd, though. Because regardless of the illustrated calculation of Saul at this moment, there seems to be a tendency of insecurity going on here.

There appears to be a disconnect between his demeanor and his discourse. Another that calculated anger was a desperate man for loyalty who has never received loyalty from the people he needed loyalty from.

[23 : 35] Which maybe that's a message in itself. Because sometimes those most suspicious of betrayal are the ones who ought to be suspected of betrayal.

But that might be for another day. And we see in verse 7 through 8, if you listen closely, his words have kind of taken us back and echoed the words of Samuel back to chapter 8, which warned God's people when they were demanding a king.

Samuel warned them of what this king would look like. Samuel said, these will be the ways of the king who will reign over you. And compare Saul's words here with Samuel's words in chapter 8. Samuel said, he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of 50,000. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. In other words, Saul testifies to the fact that he is that king that Israel is supposed to be warned of. Saul is an enemy of God, which naturally makes sense why God's people were so inclined to fail in their complete obedience to Saul after all.

[24 : 53] Hey, I rhymed. God's people, they wanted what they didn't need. They needed what they never wanted. They desired things that weren't good for them.

But then there's a voice. You see in verse 9, a voice rings out. Then answered Doeg, the Edomites, who stood by the servants of Saul.

I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech, the son of Etub. Right? He inquired of the Lord for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath, the Philistine.

At that moment, the silence broke. The tension broke, but only to rise again.

Maybe you can say Saul did have a friend and it was a fellow enemy of God. A member of the Edomites. Doeg, known as a liar, a snake, an enemy of God.

[26 : 09] Maybe Saul and Doeg were meant for each other after all. David actually has a song regarding this moment in Psalm 52 that's titled, Song, the Song when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, David has come to the house of Ahimelech.

And in Psalm 52, look at this description of Doeg. It says, Why do you boast of evil? O mighty man, the steadfast love of God endures all the day.

Your tongue plots destruction like a razor, a sharp razor. You worker of deceit. You love evil more than good and lying more than speaking what is right.

You love all words that devour. Oh deceitful tongue. And you thought last week that Psalm 52 was about you and your boss that you hate.

Uh-uh. It's a little bit deeper than that. And I've got to give you a welcome to the two worlds.

[27 : 23] In David's world, people would find refuge. They would find protection. They would find God's blessing. Within Saul's world, there was ranting.

There was raving. There was revenge and darkness. And within each seemed to be distressed people.

People in need and in debt. People bitter in soul. But only one world offered hope. Standing back for a moment at this point in the text, I believe the author desires to see a few things concerning the sovereignty of God's hand that guides all history as we know it even today.

And this is very important. Is that if we look at a narrative like this as wildly dark as it is, we know one thing is for sure, that we are masters of our own destruction.

We are. God's people were warned time and time again.

[28 : 47] And they continuously, habitually chose Saul's world. And I believe those who followed Saul weren't much different than those who followed David.

People who were in distress, who were in debt, who were bitter in soul and found their relief in Saul's world and not in David's world.

the difference. Those who followed David were not only aware of their need but also aware of the fact that from whom all their needs were fulfilled, how their needs were truly fulfilled.

Aware of the fact from where they can find refuge in. Isn't there the secular trinity as I highlighted earlier of the needs, the wants, and desires?

It's sort of like this compelling reason that we follow along in Saul's world rather than David's because our wants and our needs are misguided, misprioritized.

[30 : 02] We want what we don't need, we need what we don't want and we desire the things that aren't good for us and that don't glorify God. Until the world discovers God as the object of all their affections, they will find themselves in Saul's world and in constant oppression but who is to blame?

Each and every one of us for that. We are often masters of our own destruction but I've got to ask you, whose world might you find yourself in this morning?

And so the story progresses to the priest who is found caught between these two worlds and the second section is a devastating acts of evil company.

And in verse 11, we see that with Doeg's deceitful words still echoing through Saul's world, Saul quickly summons not only Ahimelech but Saul in his calculated anger summons every single priest from Nob.

You might have to have a conversation with your young children about this one coming up. But verse 13, Saul addresses the conspiracy of providing for David which it seems like Doeg deceitfully, devourously left out of the account of what actually transpired between Ahimelech and David that one day.

[31 : 43] Doeg had lied. And what did he lie about you might ask? Doeg lied because Ahimelech's provision to David was on account of the quest that was sent by the king that Saul had sent him to go to this and this place and Ahimelech abided because of Saul's word and his command and that is completely left out of this.

And Ahimelech's last word in verse 14 upon this earth would testify to the truth. What's the truth? That David is blameless.

David is a faithful captain and son-in-law to Saul. David even sat honorably at Saul's table. And for that Ahimelech has inquired of the Lord for that since.

In other words Ahimelech is testifying to the truth essentially saying what conspiracy you madman. You see even apart from God's power the most compelling truth we might propose to a hardened heart cannot be penetrated apart from the power of God.

Only God is able to allow a heart to be penetrated by the truth. Saul's heart has been hardened at this point. No ounce of truth can reconcile that fact.

[33 : 22] Saul in verse 16 didn't want to hear any of it. After all if Ahimelech indeed inquired of the Lord Saul's getting some bad news here. If Ahimelech got the green light from the Lord after inquiring then Saul's greatest haunting adversary is once again working against him.

God is working against Saul. And Saul responds in verse 16 with the death sentence to Ahimelech and all his house gathered here at Gebeah and this is a very very dark day.

Why is it so dark? I don't believe that it's because of all the killing. Like that doesn't help the darkness in here. But before when Saul would act out in anger it was the evil spirit sent from God that compelled him to act evil.

Right now this is all evil apart from God that's acting out right now. There is no spirit, evil spirit of the Lord tormenting Saul.

Saul is acting out in his own evil will and for that I believe it is a very very dark. Who would rise to this occasion to commit such mass murder to put this priest, this innocent priest to death and all the priests in Naam?

[34 : 56] Who would rise to such an occasion? Well it seems that God's people Israelites didn't have that much evil in their hearts.

But this is the opportunity that Doeg could ever dream of as being an Edomite. They hated God's people and now they can have their way.

And so in verse 18, in arguably the darkest moment of this entire book, 85 priests were slaughtered by the Edomites this day.

And just for good measure, anything that moved or had breath in its lungs in the city of Nob died as well.

seeing this play out through many different perspectives this week and thinking about this text coming up long ago before we started this series, I knew this text was going to come.

[36 : 10] I can't help but watch this insanity from the viewpoint of a bystanding soldier. And I want you to see that too today if you're not a Christian.

I would encourage you to see the same today through the eyes of a soldier. If you are not in David's camp, you are indeed in this camp.

it's not have a little bit of both, one foot in and one foot out. It's one or the other.

And I got to ask you, if you're not a believer today, what in the world could be your reasoning to not flee to David's camp after seeing this madness?

Why would you delay even a second? On behalf of the world, of Saul's way of appealing to your needs and your wants and your desires?

[37 : 21] Well, let me tell you something. It's the greatest lie the world has ever sold you upon. It's the greatest lie. And that gate of people headed for hell is very wide.

It's very wide. And regardless of the popular opinion of the world today, even in Saul's world, where David only had 500 men, Saul probably thousands and thousands, that gate is indeed wide.

Popularity does never, ever dictate truth. God's need to need to be to be exposed to you and turn from it.

Turn from this world. Or else, it will implode every single corner of your life and you will be held by the hand to the fires of hell.

That is the most loving thing that I can ever share with you today from this passage. be saved from the world today and follow the footsteps of the one within the line of Eli who would escape from Saul's world.

[38 : 32] Let's follow him into section 3, which is the protective acts of good company. Do you see this one who is fleeing?

I invite you to flee with him in verse 20. Run with Abiathar. What did he do? He fled after David. Abiathar is the one who escaped the slaughter. The one who was prophesied all the way back in chapter 2 with that unknown prophet to Eli on behalf of his failure to serve the Lord faithfully in God's temple.

This one who would remain in Eli's house is fleeing and finding refuge in David's world. Church, is this not a vivid picture of the gospel.

Like a Himalek, there's one in Isaiah 53 that the Bible tells us of one who was slaughtered, which we find escape to.

[39 : 52] Verse 7 in Isaiah 53, he was oppressed, this one was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

The gospel is brought into view as we see the penalty that Jesus bore on behalf of our sin. Every abrasion upon his skin is a representation of our sin, and by our faith in Jesus Christ, we escape that slaughter, that slaughter, like Abiathar.

It is upon the promise of God we find refuge in the arms of Jesus Christ, just as Abiathar found within the arms of David, and we hear our Savior's words to us today, just like David to Abiathar.

Verse 23, stay with me. do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life with me.

You shall be in safe keeping. What a promise. But only if you believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ will you see the world of evil as it is, and turn from the lies, and run to the truth.

[41 : 35] I don't know about you, but I'm running to that world, and I'm sticking there. Amen, church? As we kind of wrap things up today, I think there's many various times and seasons in the Christian life that we're often exposed to the tension of apprehending the peace of God and being afflicted by the power of the world and the oppression of the world.

And if you're to ask me why I became a Christian, Christian, I can wholeheartedly say, probably along with many of you today, we've searched Saul's world, and that world had nothing to offer us. Nothing. Nothing. The world had a wonderful opportunity in fulfilling my own needs at a certain point, providing my wands and a promise to fulfill my desires.

But what the world did best in my life before Christ was to blind me to the truth that all of which that I searched for in this world was found only in Jesus Christ and Christ alone.

Being a Christian costs us greatly in this life, but not nearly as much as God's wrath will cost us at the life to come, if continued in unrepentant rebellion against God.

[43 : 26] God literally saved me from Himself through Jesus Christ, Christ, and so I might be saved to Himself, for Himself, by Himself.

This is the good news of the gospel. You see, in that I urge us all to run to Jesus Christ. Don't look back. Even if the sword of the enemy is swiftly approaching our very own throats, God help us all, but we will even say with our last dying breath, all glory be to Christ, my King.

Too radical? Too radical? I don't know, maybe from the world's eyes. Maybe from the world's eyes. But what may be radical in the eyes of the world is the most honorable in the sight of God, nine out

of ten times.

Arguably ten out of ten times. We ought to understand that the greatest provision experienced by the hands of even our own mothers as we reflect on our mother's day today.

Think about the greatest provision from the hands of your mother and that doesn't even pale in comparison to what God has given us through Jesus Christ. A fraction, half of a fraction, has been received from the hands of our mother.

[44 : 53] and if our mother has given us greatly in our lives, boy, does that broadcast the provision of our Father, our Father God in heaven, through Jesus Christ.

He has given us great provision by the hands of Himself. So I've got to ask you as we close, whose hand do you reach for today?

Let's pray. Amen.