

1/4/26 - 2 Samuel 1:1-27 - "New Year, New King"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 January 2026

Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] Please turn with me to the second book of Samuel, chapter 1. And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dirt on his head.

And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage. David said to him, Where do you come from? And he said to him, I have escaped from the camp of Israel.

And David said to him, How did it go? Tell me. And he answered, The people fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead.

And Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead. Then David said to the young man who told him, How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?

And the young man who told him said, By chance I happen to be on Mount Gabor. And there was Saul leaning on his spear. And behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him.

[1 : 31] And when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, Here I am. And he said to me, Who are you? I answered him, I am an Amalekite.

And he said to me, Stand beside me and kill me. For anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.

So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my Lord.

Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

And David said to the young man who told him, Where do you come from? And he answered, I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite.

[2 : 43] And David said to him, How is it if you were not afraid to put your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? And David called one of the young men and said, Go execute him.

And he struck him down so that he died. And David said to him, Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, I have killed the Lord's anointed.

And David lamented with lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son. And he said, It should be taught to the people of Judah. Behold, it is written in the book of Jashar.

He said, Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places. How the mighty hath fallen. Tell it not in Gath. Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon.

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice. Lest the daughters of the sons circumcised exult. You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor fields of offerings.

[3 : 46] For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul not anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely, in life and in death they were not divided. They were swifter than eagles. They were stronger than lions.

You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet, who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. How the mighty hath fallen in the midst of the battle.

Jonathan lies slain on your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant have you been to me. Your love to me was extraordinary, surpassing the love of women. How the mighty hath fallen, and the weapons of war perished. This is the word of God.

[4 : 51] Thanks be to God. A new year always comes with fresh lists, don't they? Fresh plans.

We set goals. We improve our systems. We tell ourselves, this year, like the refrain of the Browns, this is the year we're going to the playoffs.

This year, I'm going to organize better. This year, if I just lead smarter, this will happen. Or if we just make the right decisions this year, things will finally feel secure. And almost all of that has wisdom to it.

It's good to plan. It's good to think outside of the box and improve our lives. But beneath it is a quiet assumption that if I can control, I can somehow keep life from unraveling.

[6 : 03] Israel once believed that too. They thought, if we just get the right leader, the right kind of leader, the right structure, the right representatives, then we'll finally be secure.

That's what 1 Samuel is all about. Today, we open up into 2 Samuel 1, and it begins with a funeral. Happy New Year! Right? It wasn't my plan to start this out. It was God's plan. And I think it's not by any coincidence that we start this new year with a funeral.

The king of Israel is dead in the passage. It's dark, right? It's hopeless. It's like unraveling of all human hope.

The king of Israel has died. However, as dark as this passage feels, and it should feel dark, it also reveals something.

[7 : 12] That when the kings that we rely on fail, God shows us that our hope was never meant to rest on Him, but on Jesus Christ, on God alone.

You see, one of God's mercies is exposing where we have placed our security falsely, and so that we may learn to rest in Christ.

And so as we as a church step into this new year, God may not promise us more control at all. It might be actually opposite. For some of us, this might be the worst year yet.

Only God knows. And so as we step into this year, God may not promise any control at all, but He will give us something infinitely better this year.

A clearer dependence on Christ. We can guarantee that. The sermon title today is New Year, New King.

[8 : 22] And I'm going to break this up into three resolutions. I'm going to play on this New Year stuff. All right? So bear with me in my creativity. So three resolutions.

I'm going to break this down. And what I want us to see is that we are to turn from false saviors. There's an imperative in this passage. Turn from false saviors and bow before the true King. I want us to see this according to these three resolutions I have broken up in this passage. And I'd like to pray before we begin and dive in. So let's pray. Father, we are grateful to be here. Grateful for a new day. Grateful for a new year. Grateful for an opportunity where we can prioritize rightly.

That it's not about what we control, but about who is in control. Help us to see that today in this passage. Help us to make resolutions that are deeply dependent upon your strength and not ours.

[9 : 38] Praise in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. First resolution today is stop trusting false kings.

Stop trusting false kings. Just as it was read this morning, the funeral begins after the death of Saul. Right? This is not just biography, church.

By reading these words, we see that this is the conclusion of Israel's failed experiment to appoint their own leader.

to choose who they want to lead them. This is the end of that. Their attempt to build security on something other than God.

We think back to 1 Samuel 8, where Israel demanded a king like all the nations. We want to look like them.

[10 : 41] We want that guy. And God warned them what such leadership would do. In chapter 8, he would take from them. He would be a bad ruler because it's not God's king.

And yet, God allowed it and still remains sovereign in the entire process throughout 1 Samuel. And then in chapter 12, Saul became, quote, the king you have chosen for whom you have asked. Saul, the name Saul, actually means the one asked for. He's the one who was asked for. He's impressive. He was strategic. He was strong and tragically very self-reliant on his own strength. And here we pick up this story and we have to ask the question that's looming in the air of this funeral. What happens after the king we trusted dies?

What happens after the king we trusted dies? What happens to the nation who were victims of Saul's failing?

[11 : 53] That as their leader went out and is leading the charge, if he fails, they all have failed. Because he did not obey the voice of the Lord in 1 Samuel 13 and chapter 15 and chapter 28,

whose reign ended in tragic judgment and suicide.

He fell on his sword. His armor bearer wouldn't even take his life. And once Saul died in chapter 31, the armor bearer took his life too because the Philistines were right on their heels.

This is tragic. You see, when Saul fell, the people fell with him. It was disastrous. Their confidence fell with him.

Their security fell with him. Their identity fell with him. All bound up in a king who couldn't save them that they wanted. The heart cry after Saul's death may have sounded like something of the disciples after the crucifixion of Christ.

In Luke 24, the disciples say that we had hoped that this was the one to redeem Israel. But now he's dead.

[13:07] All hope seems lost. Saul once looked unstoppable in 1 Samuel, but the Philistines defeated him in chapter 31.

Why? Why was Saul defeated? Because only a fully obedient king can reign over God's people. we all have we'll call it Saul syndrome at times, don't we?

Depending on our own strategies, elevating our leaders, idolizing our movements, or idolizing our identity politics, or anything that tries to own control.

But you see, sometimes the most merciful thing that God does is remove that which our misplaced trust is placed. Not to ruin us and just destroy us and everything, but to awaken us, to take away our control, to finally awaken us, to expose our selfishness, to expose our rebellion against him.

man, unbelievers have the million dollar question answered here. This is why Jesus came. Why he came, he lived a life that we can't live.

[14:41] Lived a perfect sinless life. He died on the cross and was buried and resurrected from the dead. Real history, real hope. This is why he gave us Jesus.

We have to stop saying that we can hold our lives together. If you're not in Christ today, you can't hold yourself together. Plead with God that you need him.

Something steadfast, something secure, a hope that's only found in Christ. God didn't abandon his people when Saul failed.

In fact, he was already preparing something better. And as Saul was falling, David was rising. look at this passage.

There's two things happening here in verse one. After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking down the Amalekites.

[15:40] So what we have here is 1 Samuel chapter 30 and 1 Samuel chapter 31 happening together in the beginning of this book, David had returned from striking down the Amalekites.

These Amalekites mattered because Saul failed to obey God's command concerning the Amalekites. That was the big turning point in his leadership because he failed to listen to the voice of the Lord.

And so Saul collapses and as Saul falls upon his sword, David rises. Not because David is flawless. We're going to find that out very quickly in 2 Samuel, right? But it's because David is God chosen. David is God chosen and David is God sustained. The Lord was with him. New Year's often tempts us, right, to double down on these things, our own strategies, our own systems of management, our own, if I just do this, life will finally work.

[16:59] Well, guess what? This opening passage invites us to stop asking God to bless our souls and instead ask God to give us hearts aligned with his king.

That is what this passage does so quickly for us in verse 1. Sometimes the kindest thing God does is let our lesser kings die, fade away, so that he can give us something better.

he can replace that which is broken with something that works. And that something better will never be tighter control or a stronger version of us.

It will always be a clearer dependence on Christ because only he can make our lives truly secure. Scripture warns us, do not trust false kings and do not misjudge the true king.

Right? Makes us look at ourselves. First resolution, stop trusting false kings. Second resolution, start learning holy grief.

[18:11] life. So after all that transition happens, the old guy's gone, the new guy's in.

On the third day, we find a man arriving to Saul's camp and he's sad. He looks sad.

He's mourning. At least he's appearing to be mourning here. He tells David what has happened and places Saul's crown on David, pays him homage.

And on surface level, this seems loyal, sympathetic, and perhaps even selfless, sacrificial to David. David asks him a question in verse 3.

Where do you come from? And this man claims, I escaped the camp of Israel. And it's almost like with saying that. He's like, David, you and me are like, you know, I'll be your Jonathan.

[19:12] We're both escaping that Saul guy. Right? Kind of laying the playing field between the two. In other words, this man seems to immediately be positioning himself for favor, bowing down to David, crowning David, saying, I escaped camp of Israel.

I escaped that Saul monster. And David asks, how did it go? Tell me. In verse 4. This man claims that people fled, many had fallen, it was chaos, and Saul and Jonathan are dead.

In verse 5, David presses for a couple more facts because that was striking. To hear the king of Israel is dead, along with his predecessor, or his successor, Jonathan.

He presses for facts. He says, how do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead? This is pretty serious. In verse 6 to 10, four verses, we get quite this elaborate story.

He claims that he stood over Saul. He stood over Saul. Saul was in pain and agony because he couldn't fall on his sword or spear.

[20:33] So he was kind of stuck. Kind of embarrassing moment. And so he kind of just did some euthanasia and just, you know, okay, well, I'll help you out. Relieve your suffering. And he killed him mercifully.

Because this man, this messenger, is a merciful messenger. And took his crown and armlet. However, if you remember our series in 1 Samuel, chapter 31, either this guy's lying or we're missing some verses.

Because that's not what happened. We can see that reading our Bibles, but David couldn't necessarily see that. Because we know that Saul did kill himself.

The armor bearer was there, and the armor bearer was witness. And secondly, according to this man's testimony, despite what he might think that he's doing with David here, he's actually putting his foot in his mouth.

In his story, he said to Saul, you know, who are you? He said, I'm an Amalekite. You don't say that to David. Something doesn't add up.

[21:54] This is so stunning. David just finished defeating the Amalekites, the very people according to Exodus 17, who opposed God with all of their being.

They were constantly opposing God. If they were given a millisecond to repent, they would not take it. They would take their very last breath to oppose and reject God.

These are the Amalekites. Since Exodus 17, these are the people. And here, this Amalekite stands before David, and an Amalekite crowns him king.

If I were to write this story, that's not how it would go. That's anticlimactic, but isn't that stunning? How God works mysteriously.

In other words, the enemy of God becomes the accidental herald of God's chosen king. Man, talk about our control. We can't control anything.

[23:00] God's in control. What does God's chosen king do as a response to hearing about the death of the king of Israel who was madly, insanely chasing David down through 1 Samuel to kill him?

The one who David had many opportunities to take his life and set the record straight? How did David respond? Verse 11 and 12, David tore his clothes and all the men with him did the same.

They mourned, wept, fasted until evening. See, Saul's life goal was to kill David.

That was his New Year's resolution. salvation. All throughout 1 Samuel. And David is mourning. He's mourning the death of this madman.

What in the world is this all about? Well, I can tell you what, it's not political theatrics. This is covenant faith.

[24:15] Covenant faith. David refuses to celebrate the failure of the one who failed him. Church, put ourselves on the chopping block for a minute.

I'll put myself on the chopping block. Church, do we weep more over the sins of others? Like, oh man, they're just so messed up.

They did X, Y, Z, and oh, geez, so bad. Or do we weep more at the loss of their souls because of their sin?

Do we pray more that people would be humbled? Oh, God's gonna humble you. Right? In our own version of vengeance and destruction, do we pray more that people will be humbled or that people be redeemed?

You see, David's grief reveals something. Maturity is marked less by accomplishments and successes and more by character, particularly the capacity to love even those who oppose.

[25 : 41] things. And right here, there's a new year question emerging quietly from the text today. What if the truest mark of spiritual maturity this year will not be what we accomplish or find success in, but whom we refuse to stop loving in our lives, to weep for lost souls, to pray for the redemption of their souls?

See, this text does not say grief means that we approve of sin or ignore injustice. That's not what the history of Christendom actually proves to us.

But David doesn't do that either here in this passage. But what we see is that real holiness does not grow colder towards sinners. It grows brokenhearted towards sinners, towards the lost, towards those who oppose us.

And in the same way, David gives us a dim but true glimpse of a greater king, one who would someday weep over a city that rejected him, Jesus Christ. David's grief shows the heart of God's king here, patient, righteous, compassionate.

Why would we trust lesser kings when this is the king God gives to us in King Jesus? What in the world, where in the world have we lost track of the good news of the gospel, church?

[27 : 31] Resolution sets, start, learning, holy grief. The third resolution is stand honest before the true judge.

See this from verse 13 to verse 27. In verse 13, David asks one more question. It's already triggered by the A word.

David asks one more question. Where do you come from? And he says, the man exposes that he willingly raised his hand against the Lord's anointing and thought that he would earn him favor.

He says that he's a sojourner of the son of an Amalekite. This guy would be a protected Amalekite in Israel's nation, the sojourner of the son of an Amalekite.

And so he's hoping to play the protection card, right? But there is a problem.

[28 : 38] Anyone who's receiving protection but fails to protect the one who's in charge, the king of Israel, regardless of how it's justified as having mercy on them and not wanting to see them struggle, he committed murder.

this protected citizen, the sojourner of the son of an Amalekite, an act that David had multiple opportunities to take and he did not move a muscle towards taking Saul's life.

He willingly raised his hand against the Lord's anointed and he severely misjudged this king, King David. He misjudged what God values.

He misjudged the seriousness of even presumptuous sin. Presumptuous sin. What happens? Judgment falls.

Not impulsively, not emotionally here, but righteously. Righteous punishment is served. David commands in verse 15, go, execute this Amalekite murderer.

[29 : 58] And he explains why in verse 16. Your blood be on your head. You testified, I killed the Lord's anointed. This is uncomfortable and it's supposed to be.

It's supposed to be uncomfortable today. Church, the gospel is never sentimental about rebellion. You can live your life in this facade that there is no punishment for sin and you can do what you want and define your own truth, take a little from this religion and this religion and boom, you have something that you like.

It appeals to you. This is nonsense, folks. Absolute nonsense. The gospel is never sentimental about rebellion.

It is very, very clear and it is clear here. And that's why it's uncomfortable for good reason. There is no safe way to oppose the ways of God.

God. What a message. If you're here today and you don't know Christ, what good news this is for you. But it comes with bad news.

[31 : 24] The good news is Jesus Christ, trust in Jesus Christ, but the bad news is if you leave here today continuing in rebellion with Jesus Christ and the ways of God, unrepentant opposition, we know that your life will end the same way as Saul's.

There will be no hope. If you resist the good news of the gospel, even another day, you're not promised tomorrow, you're in grave danger. This Amalekite reminds us it is deadly to misjudge God's king.

Do not treat the God of this universe any different. We bow before the king. We surrender our ways to his ways.

Because ultimately it's not about what makes sense to us, but it's what is true. That's what you need to grapple with today. Verse 15, and as David just struck down the Amalekites, as the passage opened up with, David takes down one more.

A man who professionally opposes God. The Amalekites professionally oppose God. And in doing so, what happens here in the grand scheme of the picture and the painting of 1 and 2 Samuel, here David completes what Saul failed to do.

[32 : 58] he didn't preserve an Amalekite. As the passage comes to a close, the first act of the new king is breathtakingly!

Stunning is my word today. I'm going to say stunning. It's breathtaking. He doesn't rally the troops in this pep rally or this political campaign and saying, I got the crown now, follow me.

I'm the guy. I'll be better than Saul. Saul was messed up. I got it together. How does David begin his kingship? he doesn't end the scene with any of that.

He starts it with lament. Grieving. From verse 17 to 27. And this is a lament that teaches that God's people name their grief before him.

Come honestly before him, naming their grief from verse 17 to 19. This is a lament that teaches us to honor even deeply flawed leaders for the real good God gave through them in verse 22 through 24.

[34 : 17] A lament that teaches a holy jealousy for God's reputation when his people fall in verse 20. A lament that teaches that death truly is loss and it is right to weep.

Verse 19, verse 25, verse 27. A lament that teaches that tragedy should drive us to remember what God once gave through a person, no matter how flawed.

Verse 22 and 24. A lament that teaches that every fallen mighty one reminds us that we need a greater king. And lastly, this lament teaches us that God's people, teaches how God's people are to grieve with truth, to grieve with humility, but to also grieve with hope until the day death is finally destroyed.

You see, David slows this nation down, reverently slows them down and teaches them not a song of triumph, not necessarily a song of hope, but a song of lament, sadness.

sadness. This passage leaves us with the unavoidable truth. Do not make the Amalekite mistake. Try to earn favor with God by your justification.

[35 : 57] Don't commit presumptuous sins. Second thing it reminds us is do not misjudge the king. God is holy, pure, white, not a blemish or stain in him.

Who do we think that we are to ever justify anything in this life that goes against him? God is holy. And the more that we understand that, the more we can grapple with this disconnect and this dependence that we truly have on him. Do not misjudge the king. And lastly, sin does never, it never pays.

There's no justification for sin, not now and not in the world to come. There's nothing that can justify sin. This chapter sits in tension.

There's sort of like multiple things going on here. There's mourning and hope. There's failure and faithfulness. There's loss, but there's promise.

[37 : 15] And it tells the truth about cynicism, being openly opposed to God's ways, and invites us honestly into despair. Without despair, sorry.

Invites us honestly without despair. prayer. We have three invitations this new year, and I want to invite you to take notes, to lay down the kings that we have chosen, the ones that we believe that would finally make life secure and make sense.

Not angrily, but repentantly, lay down the kings that we have chosen, the ones we trusted too much or secretly hoped would save us.

Let them fall so that Christ can stand clearer in our lives. The second thing is to cultivate a heart that grieves like God grieves.

Grieve like God grieves. Not celebrating the downfall of others, not fueling outrage, not learning to weep over brokenness, I'm sorry, but learning to weep over brokenness, weeping over our

brokenness, weeping over the brokenness of others.

[38 : 31] Learn how to grieve as God grieves. May this year be a learned process that God is not done redeeming even the darkest situations in our lives.

And lastly, refuse to misjudge the king. Don't misjudge him. Jesus is not merely an upgrade to Saul, right? He is the king that David could faintly foreshadow of the righteousness in Christ, the mercifulness of Christ, the unshakableness of Christ, and Christ the one who was crucified, risen, and reigning.

And here's the hopeful start of a new year according to 2 Samuel 1. Paul Paul year by promising God more control. We enter it by receiving a better king. It's about what he has given to us. Turn from false saviors and bow before the true king. Let's make that this year. Let's pray.