

1 Samuel 20:12-42

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[0 : 00] 1 Samuel chapter 20. If you remember, we began to look at the power of a covenant and the power of that covenantal relationship. Covenants are so important in Scripture.

God's interactions with man and God's agreements with man and how he deals with man is a covenantal relationship, not a contractual relationship.

God enters into covenants with man rather than signing a contract with man. Contracts seem to imply a rendering of service in return for something else.

In the world standards, if you pay this, then you get that. Or if I give you this, then you pay me that. Covenants are so much different. Covenants are an agreement between individuals based upon their roles and their responsibilities.

In the covenantal relationship of marriage, for instance, we see those displayed for us very clearly in Scripture. We can go to Ephesians 5, and we can see roles and responsibilities of husbands and wives, and even in relation not only just to one another, the relation that they have to their children.

[1 : 13] We see it over and over throughout Scripture. And it is really the goal of the covenants to operate in a manner, as we say in our relationship with Christ, and as we try to express in our relationship even in marriage, it is that we choose to love rather than respond with love.

We see this very clearly in John 3, 16, for God so loves the world. This really begins to show the power of the covenant.

That word love there, and I know I'm in 1 Samuel 20, but I want you to really get a breadth of why these things are so important. The word for love in John 3, 16, for God so loved the world is the word agape or agapeo, and that is a love that chooses to love.

It is an intentional love, not a love that responds to the goodness or rightness of the individual. So essentially what John 3 is telling us is that God so loved the world, God chose to love the world, that he loved the world enough to do something.

When I counsel husbands and wives, or if I'm in pre-marriage counseling and I'm looking at the soon-to-be husband and wives, I say the goal of marital relationship is to live in such a way that you choose to love the individual, not just respond with love.

[2 : 35] Now, the reality is when we look at Scripture, that's something that man always falls woefully short of, each and every one of us, because we deal with feelings and we deal with realities, and too many times feelings are realities to us.

But God doesn't deal with that. God created emotions and he gave us those things so that we can respond in fellowship and we can respond in a relationship with him and with one another. But John 3 tells us that God loved the world so much, he did something, that he gave his only begotten son. Right? It is a love that took action, which thus begins this wonderful covenantal relationship, the covenant of the blood of Christ. We see it at the communion table. We're reminded, for this is the blood of the covenant, that God loved us enough that he did something for us.

And as the rest of the New Testament reminds us, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Every covenant that we find in Scripture, every covenant that we find God making with man in Scripture, is very unique.

Now I know I'm laying a lot of groundwork, but we want to really understand this. In that God is the initiator of that covenant and he is the sustainer of that covenant.

[3 : 52] That is, it isn't that man comes up with a good idea and says, oh, it'd be cool if I entered into this agreement with God and God did this for me. No, God initiates it, therefore God sustains it.

It is typically, no, it's not typically, that's a bad word. It is always a one-sided responsibility covenant. The edemic covenant, the covenant he made with Adam, actually the covenant he made with Eve. The proto-evangelium, I know we looked at this already, but it bears repeating. Genesis 3.15, that the serpent would bruise the heel, that the seed of a woman would crush the head of the serpent and the serpent would bruise his heel.

It's a covenant, right? God makes an agreement that the seed of a woman would crush the head of the serpent, and serpent being a representative of Satan there. Now, the seed of a woman, we know is Jesus Christ.

It doesn't say the seed of man, it says the seed of a woman. God initiates that, God sustains that. He brings it, he's the only one that can bring it about. The Abrahamic covenant that we find in Genesis 12, Genesis 15, and then repeat it and fulfill it a little bit more in Genesis 17 and following. [4 : 57] Again, God initiates this. Leave your land, go to the land that I will show you. I will make your descendants as the stars of the heaven. All the promises that are given in the Abrahamic covenant is really initiated by God and sustained by God.

All these things, they're not based upon Abraham's response to God, his faithfulness. It's counted or reckoned to him as righteousness because he believes God. The Davidic covenant, when we get to the covenant he makes with David, again, David is blown away because God initiates this and God sustains this.

And we know because we look at the lineage of David and it doesn't seem like it should, you know, sustain it. What God has promised would come about because there's a lot of failure there but yet God's promised to stay.

So over and over and over again we see the power of these covenants. The covenant of Christ. God initiates it. God sustains it. This is a good way of saying that the relationship we have with God is a covenantal relationship that if we know Christ as our Lord and Savior, now stay with me, I'm bringing it all together right here.

If Christ is our Lord and Savior, we're redeemed and forgiven. It's because God loved us enough to do something for us in spite of us and he initiated that relationship with us and therefore he is sustaining that relationship which is a good way of saying your salvation is the work of God not your work, not my work, not the work of any man and it is God's responsibility and God has the power and the ability to keep us.

[6 : 23] Those who are in the hand of the Savior will never be taken out. That's why I believe in eternal security of the saints. Because if it was up to my works and my righteousness and all those things, I'm going to fail.

But now it does not give me an excuse to sin. It is the reality of the fact that I am wed to Christ. That he loved me enough to die for me.

He sustains me. He holds me. He redeemed me which changes the way I live. It's the power of the covenantal relationship. Going back to 1 Samuel 20.

We have seen in the first few verses in the first we will call it the first 11 verses because we will pick up in verse 12.

David leaves Ramah. He is in the presence of Samuel prophet of God. He is in the presence of Samuel when Saul shows up and begins to prophesy.

[7 : 24] David leaves Samuel and goes back to the very place he fled from. And he goes back to the presence of Jonathan. He had just fled from there.

Saul was seeking to kill him. Jonathan didn't know about it so David goes back to him. So the first two things and I'll give you these we won't really lay them out because we're fixing to start reading. The first two grand things that we see are represented in covenantal relationship is that it opens a door of opportunity.

When David had nowhere else to go because Saul had found him or Saul had actually went after him and he was there and Saul's prophesying he's here in the presence of Samuel David knew he could go back to Saul's son Jonathan.

A covenant opens a door of opportunity gives the individual a place to go. We saw the application in that and that because we are in a covenantal relationship with Christ we can now go as the book of Hebrews tells us boldly before the throne.

We have somewhere to go. It opened the door because Jesus is the forerunner or the trailblazer and because of our relationship with Christ we are now welcomed into the presence.

[8 : 40] We have somewhere to go. The second thing that we saw that is really present in the fact that he went back to Jonathan and he's talking to him is it unites opposing parties.

It opens the door of opportunity and it unites opposing parties. What should have been really warring families the family of Saul with the family of David was united in the friendship of David and Jonathan.

David is the only one we'll read it here in just a moment is the very one that stands in the way of Jonathan's possession of the throne which is legally and rightfully his because he is the son of Saul. And what should have been an issue is a non-issue and we're reminded because they had entered into a covenant before the Lord. The covenant united opposing parties.

In Christ we are united with the God that we have rebelled against. He is holy. We are not.

[9 : 50] The problem of man's separation from holy God is man's sin. Man lives in open rebellion. Paul very much says so in the first two chapters of the book of Romans.

What could have and should have been known of God and what could be known of God is denied by man and they live in open rebellion of God. And you have opposing parties. because God is opposed to the proud and the prideful and those who regard sin in their heart. We see these things.

But the covenant unites those opposing parties. It brings a fellowship. We are now welcomed into the presence. We are able to be in a relationship.

Now we pick up in verse 12. David has said his peace. They've went out to the field. And then Jonathan said to David the Lord the God of Israel be witness.

[10 : 49] Again he's calling on the mediator of their covenant that is Yahweh. The Lord the God of Israel be witness. When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow or the third day behold if there is good feeling toward David shall I not then send to you and make it known to you.

If it please my father to do you harm may the Lord do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not make it known to you and send you away that you may go safely. And may the Lord be with you as he has been with my father.

If I am still alive will you not show me the loving kindness of the Lord that I may not die. You shall not cut off your loving kindness from my house forever not even when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.

So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David saying may the Lord require it at the hands of David's enemies. Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him because he loved him as he loved his own life.

Then Jonathan said to him tomorrow is the new moon and you will be missed because your seat will be empty. When you have stayed for three days you shall go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself on that eventful day and you shall remain by the stone I will shoot three arrows to the side as though I shot at a target and behold I will send the lad saying go find the arrows if I specifically say to the lad behold the arrows are on the side of you get them then come for there is safety for you and no harm as the Lord lives but if I say to the youth behold the arrows are beyond you go for the Lord has sent you away as for the agreement of which you and I have spoken behold the Lord is between you and me forever so David hid in the field and when the new moon came the king sat down to eat food and the king sat on his seat as usual the seat by the wall then Jonathan rose up and Abner sat down by Saul's side but David's place was empty nevertheless

[12 : 55] Saul did not speak anything that day for he thought it is an accident he is not clean surely he is not clean it came about the next day the second day of the new moon that David's place was empty so Saul said to Jonathan his son why has the son of Jesse not come to the mill either yesterday or today Jonathan then answered Saul David earnestly!

let me get away that I may see my brothers for this reason he has not come to the king's table then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him you son of a perverse rebellious woman do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness for as long as the son of Jesse!

lives on the earth neither you nor your kingdom will be established therefore now send and bring him to me for he must surely die but Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him why should he be put to death what has he done then Saul hurled his spirit him to strike him down so Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death then Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger and did about in the morning that Jonathan went out into the field for the appointment with David and the little lad was with him and he said to his lad run find now the arrows which I am about to shoot as the lad was running he shot an arrow past him when the lad reached the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot Jonathan called after the lad and said is not the anything only Jonathan and David knew about the matter then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him go bring them to the city and when the lad was gone David rose from the south side and fell on

his face to the ground and bowed three times and they kissed each other and wept together but David wept the more Jonathan said to David go in safety and as much as we have sworn to each other in the name of the Lord saying the Lord will be between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever then he rose and departed while Jonathan went into the city we see here the power of covenantal relationship the first two it opens the door of opportunities David had somewhere to go it unites opposing parties those who should have been at odds with one another were of greatest friends we see that they kissed one another that's nothing really erotic about that it's a display of deep friendship of kindness and and fellowship with one another it's a sign of mutuality of being one with one another in purpose and plans and intentions is a great sign of fellowship we see here that they weep over one another!

that there's going to be this departure they will see one another one more time one short brief time but David knows he's about to leave this begins the decade long wanderings of David as he flees from the presence of Saul this begins the period where he's on the run and everything is kind of changing he's going from being the captain of Saul's army and going out and coming in the victor into the city to being the man hiding out in the caves and having this really rough neck group of guys David's mighty men hanging around him he'll feign insanity he'll flee for his life a number of times he'll spare Saul's life twice this mic's just a little bit loud guys he'll I'm getting excited that's what that's what brother Jerry told you you gotta pay attention to my voice he said I get excited Jerry picks on me all the time and says you can always tell when Billy Joe's about to blow the speakers out if his hands start going up and he starts getting excited you better start turning him down so you guys are doing a fantastic job I'm sorry I got a little carried away there anyway so you can see that everything is changing for

[17:10] David but yet it is this covenantal relationship that is the groundwork for what's about to take place so the third reality that we see is that the covenant secures future outcomes the covenant is the foundation which secures the future outcomes David has been anointed king by Samuel he has been called and appointed as king by God he has been chosen as the king which God chose Saul is the king that man chose David is the king God chose David knows that he has been called appointed and anointed and he has a kingdom waiting on him but the problem with the kingdom that is waiting and the king in waiting is that there's an enemy that opposes the king there's an enemy that stands in the way of the one who is supposed to be fulfilling what God has called him to do

David knows what God has commissioned him to do and he's completely relying upon that he is dependent upon the one who called him to be the one who supplies him he's not seeking to grab the kingdom by force though at any moment he could have if he could go unashamedly unfearfully into the presence of Goliath surely Saul would not have been a problem yet he did not take it by force we've already seen that he would have won the popularity contest by this point in Saul's career yet David didn't take it by force he's waiting on God's timing and yet the whole time he's waiting the enemy's trying to distract him and to kill him and to push him aside and to do anything to keep him from gaining his rightful position as king the enemy is opposing him every step of the way but the grand security he has on this earth for what is going to happen in the future rests in the covenantal relationship he has with

Jonathan because David knows what he knows he knows that Saul is seeking to kill him not everybody knows that Jonathan had been left out of the loop he knows that Saul's men have come after him but he needs to make sure that he has a way out and they make a covenant with one another they reaffirm that covenant in the field and Jonathan tells him this you're going to be missed tomorrow tomorrow's the festival of the new moon it will be a day where everybody should eat together and gather together especially all the attendants of Saul David should have been there it's almost we start seeing Saul's split personality Saul really expected him to be there even though the last time he saw David he tried to pin him to the wall with a spear right I mean surely he'll be here on the new moon festival so what if I just threw a spear at him and I had people waiting outside his door of his house trying to kill him surely he'll come eat a meal with me this is what Saul thought and David needed some security right he needed something to settle the matter so that he would know what it is he should do

Jonathan says you won't be there I'll go sound out my father I'll make sure but he gives this promise he says when I know the desires of my father I will disclose it to you as the Lord lives so they come up with this great plan right you hide behind the rock I'll shoot some arrows I'll send the lad after the

arrows I get kind of amazed by this these guys are really good archers and you know they are because he sends the boy running and then he shoots over the boy's head it's amazing right if that had been my son I'm like let's shoot the arrows first and then send him right he sends him running and then he shoots over his head and tells him to go get them they're really skilled at what they do it's just kind of a side note that's how my mind works but anyway they had this great plan but the reality is is that David knew he could trust Jonathan to disclose to him the realities of what Saul was planning why because they were in a covenant with one another and the disclosure from Jonathan would dictate whether David would stay or go he was going to wait three days and on the third day Jonathan would let him know if he should stay or if he should go the future really hinged upon the reality of the covenants the agreement between the two that should have been at odds with one another the agreement between the two that have found a great friendship with one another was going to be the grounds that

David was dependent upon and standing upon to determine should he stay or should he go his future depended upon the covenant that he had entered into with Jonathan Jonathan would find out the facts because if David was to try to find them out on his own then David was literally taking his life in his own hands but what's so amazing is that Jonathan takes his life in his own hands to find them out Saul throws his spear at Jonathan Jonathan is disgraced because he takes the side of David Jonathan is looked down upon and he is really what Saul is saying is you're no son of mine because he says the woman you come from wouldn't be my wife is really the wording he's saying that he ashamed his mother's nakedness is saying surely my wife is not your mother you're no son of mine and the scorn is on Jonathan so Jonathan is bearing the scorn Jonathan is bearing the insult Jonathan is bearing the spear being thrown at him so that David would know what his future held I hope you see the application because covenant that we have in Christ is what secures our future outcomes our savior bore!

[23 : 03] our scorn our savior took our ridicule our savior took our despising mockery our savior took our shame our our savior bore our our misery and our pain on the cross so that we may know three days later what the future look like for us the covenant that we have with Christ secures the reality of our future it makes peace with us and holy God and it ensures to us that we have a future because when he came out of the grave on the third day he secured the future of all those who believe in him and follow after him he is the first fruits of the resurrection not the only fruits of the resurrection he is the one who holds the power of death hell and the grave in his hands he is the one who is taking the mockery and the misery because his father turned his face away from him it says when he was on the cross bearing our sins bearing our shame that God had to forsake him because of our guilts no guilt of his own he had to turn away from him because of our sin no sin of his own and he did that so that the covenantal relationship we have with him would ensure our future outcome much like David was dependent upon Jonathan to know he had a future even more so we are dependent upon our savior to know what our future is so many in this world live in a hope so think so maybe so mentality those who are in a covenantal relationship with Christ we live in a no so I have one that came out from behind the rock that told me what my future looks like David was hiding behind a rock and came out so that

Jonathan could tell him the one we're in a covenant with came out from behind the rock to tell us what our future looks like it secures our future outcomes what power of the covenant the last thing that we see that is displayed for us in the text is the covenant opens the door of opportunity the covenant unites opposing forces forces the covenant secures our future outcomes the covenant recognizes God's sovereignty the covenant recognizes God's sovereignty it is amazing when we read the text not just here but of every interaction between Jonathan and David even Saul knows it Jonathan acknowledges that David will be king he knows it beyond a shadow of a doubt not necessarily just because Samuel has told him so Samuel hadn't told anyone Jonathan should have been jealous for the throne

Jonathan should have desire to defend his own right to the throne but Jonathan recognizes the reality that God has chosen David to be the king and when he acknowledges that sovereignty of God to choose the right God has to choose the right God has to appoint Jonathan enters into a covenantal relationship with David that secures David's eternity or not eternity David's future but it also secures the future of Jonathan's family because Jonathan says when all of the enemies of David are dismissed make sure my family is taken care of now we know that King David fulfills that when he brings in Mephibosheth the son with the lame feet of Jonathan but Jonathan does not say

and I always say that scripture is important when God's bringing his people through the wilderness wondering some of you reading in your daily reading plan in the Old Testament some are reading in the book of numbers you know we're in the book of numbers some of us are and it's that that book were there in the wilderness they've rebelled they didn't go in it's amazing how God always speaks to his people God does not say if I bring you into the promised land he says when I bring you into the promised land that's amazing to me God doesn't say if you get there he says when you get there and the word of God is intentional I like how David is having this relationship with Jonathan and this discussion with Jonathan and Jonathan does not say if God removes all your enemies Jonathan says when God removes all your enemies because see the covenant recognizes God's sovereignty and appointing and even dismissing who is ruling over his people he says may the Lord God reign favorably upon you as he has in the past with my father Saul and he recognizes that God put Saul in place and God's taken Saul out of place and he recognizes that David is going to hold the throne and there's this recognition that the position of the king is not the right of man but the appointment of God and that's calling that the sovereignty of God that God has the right to choose God has the right to decide now that's something that man has a hard time with in our own natural tendencies man likes to believe that we're the we've said it this way we're the captain of our own ship right we can steer our own vessels we can dictate our own life we can determine our own course we can do whatever whatever it is we want to do man attempts in all of his efforts and all of his vain labors to remove the sovereignty of God we feel like that we can do our own thing whenever we want to do it however we want to do it we forget the reality as Paul says on Mars Hill in the book of Acts that God determines when we should live where we should live and how we should live right that God determines the appointed season we live in the day we live because God had determined before the foundations of the earth were laid that this is when we would be alive that's how sovereign God is we have the family we have because God had sovereignly decided that would be the family I have I live in this the community I live not because I chose it not because I picked it not because I wanted to you said well sure you did you had to write what Paul says on on Mars Hill that God sovereignly determines when men should live you said well I made the choice I decided to be here well yes you did God had already determined and planned all those things and you're just joining with God and what he'd already determined you said well wait a minute see I believe in a God who's sovereign so sovereign that he's in control of all things I believe that he holds the hearts of the kings in the palm of his hands and he turns them as he would the channel of waters I believe in a God that he can make rain here and he can make it dry there I believe in a

God that holds the storehouses of the snows in the heavens and the storehouses of the waters in the heavens that he can tell it where to rain he tells the lightning where to go I believe that in the sovereign God who controls all of creation and I believe in a sovereign God who controls all of creatures I believe in a sovereign God who's in absolute 100% control of all things and without it we are of all people most to be pitied because if there is one aspect of any of creation that he cannot control then he is not absolute I believe he knows who's going to be saved when they're going to be saved how they're going to be saved where they're going to be saved and I think some people have a hard time with that because we put man's names and we label it in a certain way I just call it being biblical do I have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel absolutely he tells me I should am I going to save anyone absolutely not because salvation is not a man it's of

[31 : 31] Christ right Christ died and paid the price it's the salvation as Jesus says to Nicodemus the spirit blows where it wants no man knows where I believe God takes our actions and in his sovereignty does a mighty work in people's hearts and minds it does not dismiss or discount my responsibilities it maximizes God's sovereignty see the covenantal relationship acknowledges the sovereignty of God I am saved not because I'm a good person I'm saved and redeemed and I'm in a relationship with Christ because God in his sovereign wonderful gracious mercy chose me before the foundations of the world were laid and called me to himself did I have to respond to that yes I did he said well pastor you're speaking out of both sides of your mouth no I'm not trying to be biblical right this deal

Moody says free will man and sovereignty of God two wings on the dove take one away and it flies in a circle but we understand this reality that God calls us he calls us and brings us to himself what a wonderful thing right we don't want to twist the text we don't want to make it say anything it doesn't but if God knows who's going to be king and he tells them when to be king then God knows

who he's calling I can tell you the people that first proclaimed the gospel to me I mean the true gospel and I can give credit to the individual that said hey Billy Joe go read the book of Romans and see what it says about salvation but I'd rather give greater credit to the God who put that person there so that I would hear that admonition so that I would open up the scripture and we acknowledge that the God is over all and when we're in that relationship with him we we have to because it is on his power and his authority we stand I don't have a hope in heaven or a hope in eternity or a hope in glory because I think I've been good enough I have a hope in heaven and a hope in eternity and a hope in glory because the king who sits on the throne told me I'm his and I'm resting all of my eternity on his sovereignty it's not because I pray to prayers not because it did I pray for yes I can tell you the night I hit my knees and I prayed the prayer it's not because I said the right thing it's not because I walked an aisle it's not did I do all those things yes it's not because I went through the water was I baptized yes out of obedience and is a clear command but the hope of eternity is not resting on who I am my hope of eternity rest on who he is he is sovereign the enemy tries to convince me that I'm going to fail the enemy tries to convince me that oh that's that's all a lie and I just remind the enemy there's one greater than him who's already on the throne and when he's sovereign that means he's over all and if he who is on the throne tells me I have a right to be there because I'm trusting in him then who is anyone else to tell me I'm not I wish I could remember right after Easter service had someone in the congregation send me a video and I wish I could remember who preached the message it was it was a great message and it was a snippet of when the thief on the cross beside Christ got to heaven and he was speaking as that individual and he said you know can you imagine what he said he said the man on the middle cross told me I had a right to be here the man on the middle cross told me I had a right to be here it's not because I think I have a right it's not because I've been good enough it's because the man on the middle cross says I have a right to be here he's sovereign he's the king of kings and lord of lords and my covenant that I have with him rests in the fact that he is sovereign therefore I have a rights because of who he is not because I who I am we see this power this covenantal relationship not only for David between David and Jonathan it's going to do amazing things for David it does amazing things even for the lineage and the family of Jonathan Jonathan's family will be well taken care of Mephibosheth is well taken care of all these provisions are in place later on it's an amazing even after David flees and comes back Mephibosheth is restored again and it's this grand story it's all goes back to this covenant here but what we see more so is the power that that has for us in our covenant with Christ it opens a door that we have access to the throne room it unites those who of us who were in rebellion which are all of us rebellion with the holy God now we're united with him Jesus says no longer do I call you my slaves I call you my friends so he says in John 15 I call you my friends right we're a friendship with God and we're reminded that it it secures our future outcomes we know where we're going and it's all because of the sovereignty of God we acknowledge his sovereignty he has the right to dictate to us our future and we see that all in first Samuel chapter 20 thank you brothers okay you you you you