

1 Samuel 20:1-11

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles, go with me to the book of 1 Samuel, 1 Samuel chapter 20, 1 Samuel chapter 20. The entire 20th chapter is really one account, so it bears kind of reading in one setting, but we won't take our time and read it all the way through this evening just for the sake of time.

But it's hard to divide the message, it's really just one great message, but we will look at the first kind of the A part of it, if you will, the first half of it this evening. And then next time we're together in the Word, which will probably be next Wednesday, we will finish it up because Sunday is Mother's Day, so there's no evening service this Sunday, so next Wednesday we'll finish this up.

If you remember, at this point in the book of 1 Samuel, David's life is in great jeopardy because Saul's desires and his ambitions have come to the forefront.

When David began to rise in popularity and fame among the people of Israel, when they began to sing those songs, Saul has slain his thousands, David his tens of thousands, and the evil spirits, as the Word says, or disturbing spirits from the Lord would overcome Saul as the Holy Spirit rests upon David.

David, we've looked at that and we've seen how reality is, it's probably a spirit of conviction, of uneasiness, of unsettlement. Really the Lord is just working on him, for lack of a better way.

[1 : 31] During those times, it started out where Saul was putting David in dangerous places. He was sending him to the front line, he was sending him to the battle line, he was putting him in places where he was anticipating the Philistines would do his job for him, and that is, or do his desire.

He was anticipating that David would die in battle, but yet, as the Spirit is covering David, he continues to rise victorious and just growing in popularity. Over time, Saul no longer is content just to let the enemies do it, so he comes out and says from the very beginning, okay, I'm going to kill David.

He tells his son Jonathan, tells his officers there in his army that that was his desire. Jonathan interceded on behalf of David, and there seems to be this time of peace, but as is fitting, because Saul makes a covenant, he makes a vow, he doesn't make a covenant, he makes a vow before the Lord, but the word of the man whose heart is not right really has no weight.

So Saul breaks that vow, slings a spear, sticks it in a wall, David eludes his grasp, David goes home to tell his wife, he's let out the window of his house, if you remember, and he flees, and he goes to Ramah.

Ramah is where Samuel is at. Samuel's the prophet. So he's with Samuel. I'm giving you all this backstory because you need to know how we got to here.

[3 : 00] So Saul sends three groups of men to go get him, because it's a very public knowledge, everybody knows where he's at. And each of those group of men, as they walk up to Samuel, Samuel is standing before the prophets, the school of prophets that is there.

And each time a group of men come, they begin to prophesy. Saul says, well, I'll handle this, I'll go on my own. Saul goes there, and he comes into the presence of Samuel and the prophets, the spirit of the Lord comes upon him, he begins to prophesy.

He strips himself of his royal clothes. The word says that he laid naked on the ground before Samuel. It does not necessarily, in the original language, imply completely naked, unclothed.

It just means he was stripped of his royal attire. So he was humbled and made on level playing ground with everybody else. And he was prophesying. And that's where we're at.

Okay, that's where we're at. We'll read the first 11 verses, I believe it is, of the 20th chapter. And we'll kind of stop midway, but I think it's a good place to stop for this evening, for the sake of our time.

[4 : 06] 1 Samuel chapter 20, starting in verse 1, reading down to verse 11, says, Then David fled from Naoth and Ramah and came and said to Jonathan, What have I done?

What is my iniquity? And what is my sin before your father that he is seeking my life? He said to him, Far from it. You shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing, either great or small, without disclosing it to me.

So why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so. Yet David vowed again, saying, Your father knows well that I have found favor in your sight.

And he has said, Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved. But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death. Then Jonathan said to David, Whatever you say, I will do for you.

So David said to Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field until the third evening.

[5 : 10] If your father misses me at all, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem, his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for the whole family. If he says it is good, your servant will be safe.

But if he is very angry, know that he has decided on evil. Therefore, and I'll pay attention to verse 8. Therefore, deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you.

But if there is iniquity in me, put me to death yourself. For why then should you bring me to your father? Jonathan said, Far be it from you.

For if I should indeed learn that evil has been decided by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you about it? Then David said to Jonathan, Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?

Jonathan said to David, Come and let us go out into the field. So both of them went out to the field. And we'll stop right there this evening. Now we'll continue on. We'll see that they're plotting, not they're plotting, really they're planning, and the things, how all this comes about.

[6 : 16] It's a very familiar set of scripture to us, a story, an account of, again, David's life being spared. But I wanted to call attention to you there in verse 8 because I think it's the key to this entire passage.

Because if we pull ourselves back from it and we look at it kind of with just impartial eyes and we see what's going on, there are a lot of things that seem not to be making sense here.

But we'll kind of flesh that out in just a moment. But it is that you have brought me into a covenant before the Lord. So I want you to see tonight, and then we'll finish it up next Wednesday night, the power of a covenantal relationship.

The power of covenantal relationships. This is important because the scripture deals with covenants, not contracts. Right?

The scripture speaks of the covenants of God, not contracts with God. When I do pre-marriage counseling and I have a couple sitting before me and we're getting ready to do the marriage, the very first session is always the same session.

[7 : 18] It's been this way since I started doing pre-marriage counseling. Every session, I sit down with them and I look at them and I tell them the reality of what we're about to do. And I make it emphatically clear from the very beginning, and I say it unapologetically and unashamedly.

What we are about to do is a religious ceremony. It is not a civil ceremony. When we go through with this, I have no right, no power, nothing invested in me by the state of Tennessee to proclaim you husband and wife in a civil ceremony.

That is, I'm not licensed. I have no licensure. I have nothing like that, and I cannot go as a justice of the peace. The only right that I have in the state of Tennessee to officiate a wedding is that I am an ordained pastor.

As an ordained pastor, I have the power and the authority to officiate a wedding. Therefore, what I officiate, when we fill out a wedding certificate, I will always check, even if I did have licensure from the state, I will always check religious ceremony.

We say, yeah, that's a no-brainer. I'm sure you're going to do it because you're a pastor. I say, well, there's a big difference because a civil ceremony is a contract being entered into between two individuals. A religious ceremony is a covenant because the two are standing in the presence of God and they're entering into a covenant with one another.

[8 : 32] And it is here that I get very serious, and I get all the way it comes, and I am leading you to make that covenant. And therefore, the power and the authority of what's going on is covenantal, which is so much different than contract.

And when we look at that in marriage, the reason it carries such weight is because Scripture places a lot of emphasis on covenants. In Christ, your hope for all of eternity rests on the authority of a covenant.

You are in a covenantal relationship with Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. He says in the Last Supper, this is the blood of the covenant that is shed for you.

Covenants are powerful. And the power of a covenantal relationship is seen all throughout Scripture. We see it being played out practically in the story of David and Jonathan.

I do not think it's a stretch when we see, because I have to ask myself, why is this chapter given such weight? Why is it given such length? Why is it here that we need to really look at it?

[9 : 52] Why do we need to pay so much attention to what is going on? Can't we just move past this and get on to the stuff? Because chapter 20 is a pretty long chapter, really, in light of things. Isn't there other things that are more important?

Really, all we are seeing is the playing out or the power of this covenantal relationship between two individuals and the benefits that it brings to them.

And if the covenant that they have is so powerful between two individuals, how much more the covenant that we have with Christ. So our hope in seeing this is when we see the power of the covenantal relationship with them, we understand the power we have because of our relationship with Christ.

So we'll see the truth here as it is proclaimed, but we understand the application as it applies to us in Christ. Okay, I'll go ahead and tell you there are four of them that we see in this passage.

We'll see two of them tonight unless I spend too long on the first one because I took so long in the introduction. The first thing that we see that is powerful, that is a powerful result of a covenantal relationship, the very first thing is it opens a door of opportunity.

- [11 : 02] It opens a door of opportunity. A covenantal relationship opens the door of opportunity. Look at what the word of God says in the very first verse there in the 20th chapter.
- Then David fled from Naoth and Ramah. Then David fled from Naoth and Ramah and came and said to Jonathan. You say, well, okay, that's good.
- Wait a minute, let's think about what's going on. David leaves the presence of Samuel, the prophet of God. He leaves the presence of Samuel and the school of prophets.
- The man who has proclaimed the word of God. Samuel is the man who has anointed David as king. He is the man that God has used to show David that he would be the next king.
- He is the man that God used to show David the power of the spirit coming upon him and covering him. From that day forward, the spirit of the Lord came over him. So Samuel has this huge role here.
- [12 : 05] When he leaves, some people say that David acted kind of rashly, that he kind of jumped the gun, that he published it and never left. He shouldn't have went the way. We're not reading that. Scripture says he done it and there's a reason behind it and we're going that route, okay?
- So what we see here is David more than likely understood that the spiritual power that was being displayed in Saul did not mean that Saul's heart was going to be changed.
- This is the second time, by the way, that Saul prophesies. After the first time, his heart wasn't changed. He has all these spiritual happenings and these spiritual occurrences and yet there's no heart change.
- Just because Saul is stripped naked of his royal attire and is prophesying, laying on the ground, does not mean that when he gets up, he's going to be a changed man. If you think that's the case, then keep reading because he's not.
- So David, more than likely, wisely understood, hey, when he gets up, I'm still in danger. Most people, and it very clearly seems to imply that David fled while Samuel was prophesying or while Samuel was standing over Saul who was prophesying.
- [13 : 08] But when we think about this, David is leaving the prophet of God where the spirit of God is being displayed in power that no one could overcome David because everybody that came up began to prophesy and he leaves him and look, he goes to Jonathan.
- You say, well, yeah. Well, think about it. David goes back to the very place he just ran away from. Jonathan is back at the king's court.
- He doesn't know of his father's plotting and scheming. David has just run away from here. And the very first place he goes is back.
- Why? Because he's in a covenant with Jonathan. It gives him a place of opportunity.
- He has somewhere to go. He knows that with Jonathan, he is welcome. That with Jonathan, he at least has an individual he can bring the problem to.
- [14 : 21] This is before David's mighty men, right? This is before people were drawn to David as he's hanging out in a cave. This is David on the run by himself who goes to the prophet Samuel.
- And when he needs to leave there, the very first place he goes is back to the man who's trying to kill him, son Jonathan. Why? Why? Because he's in a covenant with him.
- Jonathan had befriended him. If you remember, Jonathan had befriended him and entered into a covenant with him and given him his military attire as a sign and a symbol of that covenant.

And they were living in a covenantal relationship. Nothing impure, nothing improper, nothing wrong here. Some people try to enter into that. That's not the case. Yes, it says in the text that they kiss one another and that's nothing improper, nothing impure because in that culture, in that time, even today, there's nothing wrong with men kissing men, right?

It doesn't mean it is an erotic kiss or anything like that. This is just a sign of the friendship. I mean, Paul himself says, greet one another with a holy kiss and he's speaking to the brethren. I've told you, I don't bring that application in today's time.

[15 : 32] I'm sorry, I don't. I'll greet you with a holy hug, not greeting everybody with a holy kiss. We're just a different culture, different time. That's one thing where we're gonna confine it to the culture, okay? Nothing wrong with that.

And it's okay. But what we see here is that when David has nowhere else to go, he goes back to Jonathan because he knows the covenant he has with Jonathan gives him an opportunity.

There's someone he can approach. Where's the application? The book of Hebrews says that you go boldly before the throne of God based upon the blood of the Lamb. The covenant opens a door of opportunity.

You have somewhere to go. When everything falls apart and even the safe place you thought you had is no longer safe, because of the covenant that we're in with Christ, we have somewhere to go.

It opens the door. We can go boldly into the presence of Lord God Almighty because of the blood of the Lamb.

[16 : 38] That's the covenant. Because of the covenant we have with Christ, the door has been opened for us to have a place to go with all of our burdens, with all of our concerns, with all of our fears, with all of our anxieties, with all of our uncertainties.

Because the very first thing that David says to Jonathan isn't, hey, how are you doing? The very first thing he says is, what have I done that your father's trying to kill me? He knows he has a place to go dump his burdens because he's in a covenant.

We're in a covenant with Christ, and that covenant has opened up a door for us that now we have a place to go. If you think about it, before your covenantal relationship with Jesus Christ, that is, before you were redeemed, before you are saved, before you are sanctified, before you have been called and forgiven.

That's what salvation is. It is the signing of the covenant, and before you get too carried away, and I know it's kind of sidetracked a little bit, but all this stuff's important. One thing you notice in covenantal relationships in scripture is it is quite possible for two men to enter into a covenant with one another, but any time a covenant has to do with God having a covenant with man, man does nothing.

God always initiates it, and the covenant is based completely upon him and his sovereignty. Okay? We'll get to that later on. Think of what we call the Adamic covenant, the covenant made with Adam and Eve in the garden, right?

[17 : 59] Genesis 3, 14, the Proto-Evangelium, the seed of a woman would crush the head of Satan. God makes that covenant. Adam and Eve do nothing. They're standing in sin. All right? So then you have the Abrahamic covenant that I will bless those who bless you.

I will curse those who curse you. Genesis 12, Abrahamic covenant. This Abrahamic covenant has nothing to do with Abraham. Abraham does nothing in response to it. God makes it. He initiates it. He fulfills it. A little bit later when Abraham has the two carcasses, we've looked at this, and the fire goes back and forth.

The whole time that covenant's being ratified, Abraham's asleep. Again, that furthered the progression of the gospel. God did it. Abraham was sleeping. The Davidic covenant, when he makes a covenant with David, later on after David's on the throne, guess what?

David does nothing. God initiates it. God promises it. God is the originator of it, and God fulfills it. That the seed of David would reign upon the throne. That's the Davidic covenant. Every covenant you find in scripture that God is making a covenant with man.

Man does nothing. God does all the work. That's important. The reason that's important is because your salvation is a covenantal relationship in which we do nothing for our salvation.

[19 : 11] salvation is his work. And we're benefactors who respond to that covenant he has made.

You don't earn your salvation. We don't work for our salvation. We work because of our salvation. We don't achieve our salvation no more than Abraham or Adam or David or any of those ones, any of the other covenants we find in scripture.

They don't do anything. God tells them, this is what I'm going to do. And they're always like, wow, who am I that you would do that for me? Right? Usually they fall on their face. Not usually, just about every time in scripture they fall on their face and they go, I can't believe this is what I'm getting.

Who am I that this would happen to me? That is so amazing. That's why when it comes to salvation the very first response that really be either physically or spiritually of the heart we need to fall on our face and go, who am I?

I don't deserve this. God is entering into a covenantal relationship with me and it opens a door for me to have somewhere to go because before that you had nowhere to go with all your problems.

[20 : 19] You could run to Rama all you want to. Guess what? Your enemy's coming to Rama. It opens the door of opportunity. The second thing we see and I will stop after this one and I'll try to make this one quick and I'll probably pick it back up when we come back next Wednesday night so we can fulfill it but I want you to see it before we leave it.

The second reality we see of the covenantal relationship very powerful aspect is it unites opposing forces.

The covenantal relationship unites opposing forces. There's no reason David and Jonathan should be friends.

Jonathan is the rightful heir to the throne of Saul by the earth's standards. Later on in the chapter this is why we'll come back to it I won't dig into it a lot right here I just want you to kind of leave with this one.

Saul reminds Jonathan that Jonathan's only threat to the throne is David. He's been told that before he'll be told that again. That as long as David is alive Jonathan will not have his throne.

[21 : 31] They are opposing forces. They will never serve as co-regents even though that's how they planned it. Only one will sit up on the throne. It will either be Jonathan or it will be David.

By the world standards they are enemies with one another. They are a threat to one another. David cannot rule as long as Jonathan is alive.

Jonathan will not rule as long as David is alive. They are at odds with one another. We'll dig into that a little bit further. But the power of the covenantal relationship is it unites opposing forces.

And the reason you need to know that is because sinful man has no right being in the presence of holy God. in our natural condition we are at war with God.

We are in rebellion. We have high-handedly as Old Testament says it sinned against him. We have chosen to chase the desires of our own heart and the desires of our own flesh and to forsake the commands that he's clearly given us in scripture.

[22 : 46] All intentional sin is a high-handed sin. That is looking at God going I don't care. So I haven't sinned that way. Yes with our nature that's who we are. Sinful man is in rebellion with holy God.

We are opposing forces. But the covenant unites those who really should never be together.

You say well wait a minute God created me perfect. Right he did but we rebelled. And when he redeems us he restores us to a right relationship with him because of the covenant.

Okay. Now that we it wasn't that God was at war with us we were at war with God. God's drawing us and bringing us in and wooing us and showing us his goodness and his mercy and the whole time what did he say to Paul why do you kick against the goads essentially why are you pushing back against me.

Right. Why are you wrestling with me. That covenantal relationship of Christ unites those opposing forces. It puts two that should never be together together.

[23 : 56] I mean in reality we'll end right here guys. I have no right on my own standing in the presence of a holy God before him in prayer. Because I am sinful man.

And when the cherubim and the seraphim which surround his throne constantly repeat day and night holy holy holy holy the thrice holy the perfect of holiness and everything around him is holy.

Who am I to run before his throne but for the blood of the lamb. Because now Jesus says in John 15 15 no longer do I call you servants but I call you friends.

Because a servant does not know what his master is doing but a friend does know what he's doing. now he who I once opposed is my friend because of the covenant.

So it's 1st Samuel chapter 20 verses 1 through 11. We'll finish up that chapter. We'll read it again. We'll come back to this but we'll finish up that chapter next Wednesday night as we continue to look at the power of a covenantal relationship.

[25 : 05] Thank you guys. Thank you guys. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.