

DAVID'S REGARD FOR THE LORD'S ANOINTED

BIBLE TEXT : I Samuel 24:1-22; Psalm 57:1-11

LESSON 214 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1)..

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Samuel 24:1-22

¹ And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David *is* in the wilderness of Engedi.

² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

³ And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

⁴ And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

⁵ And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

⁶ And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.

⁷ So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

⁸ David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

⁹ And David said to Saul,

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Saul's Relentless Pursuit of David

1 Saul's 3,000 chosen men outnumbered David's forces 5 to 1, I Samuel 24:1-3; 23:13;

Psalm 33:16-20

¹⁶ There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

¹⁷ An horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

¹⁹ To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

²⁰ Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.

2 David's persecution and trial inspired a great confidence in God, Psalm 57:1-11

II David's Noble Behavior

1 Bad advice was given by those who were not seeking God's leadership, causing David to act hastily, I Samuel 24:4;

Psalm 1:1-2

¹ Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

1 Kings 12:6-11

⁶ And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

⁷ And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

⁸ But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him:

⁹ And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

¹⁰ And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

¹¹ And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

Job 2:9-10

⁹ Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

¹⁰ But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

2 David regretted his act, harmless as it was, I Samuel 24:5-7;

Exodus 22:28

²⁸ Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

¹⁰ Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and *some* bade *me* kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* the LORD'S anointed.

¹¹ Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that *there is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

¹² The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

¹³ As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

¹⁴ After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.

¹⁵ The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

¹⁶ And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, *Is* this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

¹⁷ And he said to David, Thou *art* more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

¹⁸ And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

¹⁹ For if a man find his enemy, will

Acts 23:5

⁵ Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

Romans 13:1

¹ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

1 Peter 2:17

¹⁷ Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

3 David respected Saul as king and as the Lord's anointed, I Samuel 24:8, 10;

1 Samuel 15:30

³⁰ Then he said, I have sinned: *yet* honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

1 Samuel 10:24

²⁴ And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

Daniel 6:21

²¹ Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

4 David's testimony proved he had no malice, or covetousness for the kingdom, I Samuel 24:9-11;

Galatians 5:20

²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

John 5:44

⁴⁴ How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only?

5 David left judgment and vengeance to God and had proper love for his enemies, I Samuel 24:12-15;

Exodus 23:4-5

⁴ If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.

⁵ If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.

Leviticus 19:18

¹⁸ Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

Deuteronomy 32:35

³⁵ To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

Psalms 20:6-8

⁶ Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

⁷ Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

⁸ They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

Psalms 35:1-28

¹ Plead *my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

² Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

³ Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

⁴ Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

⁵ Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

he let him go well away?
wherefore the LORD reward thee
good for that thou hast done unto
me this day.

²⁰ And now, behold, I know well
that thou shalt surely be king, and
that the kingdom of Israel shall be
established in thine hand.

²¹ Swear now therefore unto me
by the LORD, that thou wilt not
cut off my seed after me, and that
thou wilt not destroy my name out
of my father's house.

²² And David sware unto Saul. And
Saul went home; but David and
his men gat them up unto the
hold.

Psalm 57:1-11

¹ Be merciful unto me, O God, be
merciful unto me: for my soul
trusteth in thee: yea, in the
shadow of thy wings will I make
my refuge, until *these* calamities
be overpast.

² I will cry unto God most high;
unto God that performeth *all*
things for me.

³ He shall send from heaven, and
save me *from* the reproach of him
that would swallow me up. Selah.
God shall send forth his mercy and
his truth.

⁴ My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie
even among them that are set on
fire, *even* the sons of men, whose
teeth *are* spears and arrows, and
their tongue a sharp sword.

⁵ Be thou exalted, O God, above
the heavens; *let* thy glory *be*
above all the earth.

⁶ They have prepared a net for my
steps; my soul is bowed down:
they have digged a pit before me,
into the midst whereof they are
fallen *themselves*. Selah.

⁷ My heart is fixed, O God, my
heart is fixed: I will sing and give
praise.

⁸ Awake up, my glory; awake,
psaltery and harp: *I myself* will

⁶ Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of
the LORD persecute them.

⁷ For without cause have they hid for me their net *in* a pit,
which without cause they have digged for my soul.

⁸ Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his
net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very
destruction let him fall.

⁹ And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice
in his salvation.

¹⁰ All my bones shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee,
which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for
him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth
him?

¹¹ False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge
things that I knew not.

¹² They rewarded me evil for good *to* the spoiling of my
soul.

¹³ But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was*
sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer
returned into mine own bosom.

¹⁴ I behaved myself as though *he had been* my friend or
brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for*
his mother.

¹⁵ But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered
themselves together: *yea*, the abjects gathered themselves
together against me, and I knew *it* not; they did tear *me*,
and ceased not:

¹⁶ With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon
me with their teeth.

¹⁷ Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from
their destructions, my darling from the lions.

¹⁸ I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will
praise thee among much people.

¹⁹ Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice
over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that hate me
without a cause.

²⁰ For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful
matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

²¹ Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, *and*
said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

²² *This* thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord,
be not far from me.

²³ Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto
my cause, my God and my Lord.

²⁴ Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy
righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

²⁵ Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have
it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

²⁶ Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion
together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed
with shame and dishonour that magnify *themselves*
against me.

²⁷ Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my
righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the
LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the
prosperity of his servant.

²⁸ And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of
thy praise all the day long.

Proverbs 20:22

²² Say not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* wait on the
LORD, and he shall save thee.

Proverbs 24:17

¹⁷ Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine
heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Proverbs 24:29

²⁹ Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will
render to the man according to his work.

Proverbs 25:21-22

²¹ If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if
he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

²² For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the

awake early.

⁹ I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

¹⁰ For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

¹¹ Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

LORD shall reward thee.

Matthew 5:43-44

⁴³ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Hebrews 10:30

³⁰ For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

III Saul's Temporary Change in Attitude

1 Saul, touched by David's mercy and godliness, became reconciled to him, I Samuel 24:16;

Proverbs 15:1

¹ A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

2 Saul admitted David's superior righteousness, I Samuel 24:17-19;

Proverbs 25:21-22

²¹ If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

²² For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

3 Saul knew that God was with David and that he was to be the next king, I Samuel 24:20

4 An armistice was declared and an oath taken regarding Saul's posterity, I Samuel 24:21, 22;

1 Samuel 20:15

¹⁵ But *also* thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.

2 Samuel 9:1-11

¹ And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

² And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name *was* Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant *is he*.

³ And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is* lame on *his* feet.

⁴ And the king said unto him, *Where is* he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.

⁵ Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.

⁶ Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

⁷ And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

⁸ And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am*?

⁹ Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

¹⁰ Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

¹¹ Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat

NOTES:

Saul the Rejected King, and David the Fugitive

The text of our present lesson brings two Biblical characters to us that we might profit from an examination of their lives and the motives behind their actions. Saul was king of Israel, anointed by the man of God in obedience to God's instructions, and accepted by the nation. After a series of misdeeds, rebellions, and disobediences, Saul was rejected by God but allowed to remain as king. The other one is David, a comparatively young man, also anointed to be king by the man of God in obedience to God's instructions, accepted by a few as their leader, and hailed by many as a hero and valiant man. David gave humble, willing, and obedient service wherever he was placed by God; but he was, for years, a fugitive from his own people and from the nation he loved so dearly.

There are times, as we look at the workings of God's plan in us and in others, when there would seem to be strange paradoxes. Even God's faithful servant, David, prayed for help and strength from God when the wicked oppressed and persecuted him. He reminded God that the "wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth." He further stated that the "wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. . . . He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity" (Psalm 10:3, 4, 6). But through it all David was taught a valuable lesson; because of the hard trials, his strength and wisdom were increased and his confidence in God multiplied. He knew that God would send help from Heaven, and save him from the reproach of the wicked who would swallow him up, even though they had already prepared a net for his steps and digged a pit before him. Evidently, David saw God answer and all things work out for his good, for he said that the wicked ones fell into the pit and snare they had made for him. In all this David glorified God (**Psalm 57:3** ³ He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth. **Psalm 57:6-11** ⁶ They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah. ⁷ My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. ⁸ Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. ⁹ I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. ¹⁰ For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. ¹¹ Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.).

Trials and adversities are not always indications that God's face is turned away from us. God looks with pleasure and love on his suffering children, whom He has seen fit to subject to trials and afflictions that some imperfection may be taken out of their lives. The fact that clouds come over our horizons, to hide the sun of God's obvious approval, does not mean that that sun has ceased to shine. These time of trial come to all who are godly, who love righteousness, and who desire perfection. When in such trials it is well that we say, as David said: "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. . . . Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth" (Psalm 57:7, 11).

To be driven away from home and loved ones would bring great suffering to anyone. To be counted as an enemy and hunted as an outlaw would cause great anxiety, even to a David, especially when there was no evil intent or guilt in the heart of the hunted one. To be forced to live in caves in the wilderness,

foraging for food and the necessities of life, to be denied the comforts of home and the security and solace that it brings, knowing all the pangs of hunger, thirst, sleeplessness, and mental anguish that our human bodies are capable of enduring, would try the very soul of even the most devout. But all these trials came upon the man God had chosen to be king — a man after God's own heart — and served to teach him a still deeper truth than he had yet known, and to give him a more sublime and complete trust in God than he had yet found necessary, or possible. "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). David said, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path" (Psalm 142:3). And he said it in faith, for he had the assurance, even though the clouds were heavy and the oppressions great, that, eventually, "the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me" (Psalm 142:7).

Saul was different from David. When Saul was first anointed king, he was humble in spirit, but soon became self-willed and stubborn. He did not go from "strength to strength" through the valleys of testing, to prove the providence of God in His purifying trials; nor did he go from "faith to faith" to see the righteousness of God as it is revealed to us when we follow the eternal precept: "The just shall live by faith" (Psalm 84:7; Romans 1:17). Saul went, instead, in his own strength, in his own wisdom, in his own will, and according to his own desires and plans. His life was a complete failure. It could have been a complete success, had he walked in God's way.

The Lord's Anointed

Prophets, priests, and kings of the Old Testament were anointed for their work. This was an indication that their call was of God, and also that so long as they continued in accordance with God's will they would be sustained and protected, as well as led, by God. The anointing was also a symbol of a much greater anointing -- a spiritual anointing — that was to be made available to all those whom God would call to be His children in the New Testament dispensation. The Old Testament anointing was necessary for these appointed ministers of God, no matter to what position they were called, as their work would not have been fully successful without it. Just so, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire — the spiritual anointing' that is now given to all who diligently seek it in faith — is absolutely vital and necessary for success in our work and service for God, no matter to what branch or phase of His service we are called.

Saul had been anointed by Samuel. The Spirit of God had come upon him at that time to witness to the fact that God's approval was upon him. He was given a new heart by God which, we have seen, testified to his state of godliness. Saul prophesied among the prophets, and this proved that he had the approval of the Spirit of God and a certain endowment of power and that he was, at that time, walking closely to God. But we know that the Spirit of God can easily be grieved. We are warned of the danger of doing it to our ultimate rejection by God if we willfully and maliciously persist in it. There came a time when Saul grieved the Spirit of God so badly that he no longer felt His leadings. But David felt that Saul had been placed in the position of king by God, and that it was God's place, and God's place alone, to remove him.

In a lawful earthly state or province, where due regard is given to order and correct administration, it is an accepted fact that the power to make a law is the power to change that law, and the authority to place an individual in a position of trust is the

only authority that can remove him from that position. The only ones who disagree with this principle are those who rebel at orderly administration and who are, in reality, anarchists or rebels. There is no room for either of these evils in the realm of God's righteous administrations or in the hearts of God's people. David was far from either classification, as this lesson proves.

David was anointed for the position of king soon after God rejected Saul. But there was a spirit in David that would not raise his hand to procure or defend what may seem to have been his rights, even though those rights were God given and entirely unsought by him (**1 Corinthians 13:5** ⁵ *Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;*). He could easily have reasoned that because God had made him king, his duty was to conduct a righteous kingdom for the honor and glory of God, and depose everything that would oppose or rebel against God. He could easily have felt that because his anointing was after Saul's rejection, and because Saul had been told another man was going to take his throne, it was his responsibility and duty to carry out the will of God so plainly indicated.

There are times when we feel we can clearly see God's Will in certain matters but yet we cannot move lest we advance ahead of God's time. God's ultimate will may be shown us independently of His time for the execution of that indicated will. We must be sure that we await not only God's will in every matter but God's time also.

Since God is omnipotent, if He desires a certain thing to be done He can see that every hindrance is removed that would obstruct or oppose His will. It has been well said that God works out His purposes through the agencies of men who are acting according to their own free choice. God is sovereign, and can exercise His sovereignty and still not violate the free will with which He has endowed man.

It is through the development of God's plan in any matter that we know, for sure, the will of God concerning that particular plan. If God does not fully provide for a thing, it can then ¹he said it is apparently not His perfect will that that thing be undertaken at that time.

In advance of a time when we will have to assume a responsibility, God may notify *us* of the responsibility that is to be ours, that we may prepare ourselves, by prayer, by consecration, and by study, for that position. It is seldom that He can trust any of us with such information. But if God chooses to do it that way He has a sovereign right to do so. And if He chooses rather to prepare us in the long and exacting school of experience for a position to which He is calling us, not daring to tell us of it in advance, for our own good, that also is His sovereign privilege. But if we take any matter in our own hands and refuse to wait God's disposition of the affair, according to His infinite wisdom and unimpeachable plan, we shall find God's will for us hindered and His plan for us delayed by our unwise conduct. We shall also find that our "wilderness experience" will, necessarily, *be* longer and our opportunity to fully serve God delayed even more.

David followed only a small part of what might have seemed the wise counsel of those who were associated with him. But in doing even this, he did that which he immediately regretted. Cutting off a part of the kingly clothing would seem but a small thing, especially when he had been urged to destroy the life of the king instead. What he did reflected upon the dignity of the king, but that was a small thing compared with what he was fully able to do and also seemingly justified in doing. Those who advised David supported their arguments with the incorrect use of the words which God had given him for reassurance and upon

which he, no doubt, had leaned heavily in this time of trial.

But these men did not know the voice of God as David did, and it is obvious that they did not desire, above all else, to follow the leadership of God as David did. David intended to let God work out every situation completely, for he knew that only in this way would God receive the glory and honor and the plan be a success. It would be said by some that he was justified in doing as he did, since he was then able to exhibit the portion of the garment as a proof that he did not wish to harm Saul; but his very appearance in the mouth of the cave that had just been evacuated by Saul would have done as much. For even this slight act of belligerence against the anointed of the Lord David suffered in his spirit. His was a tender spirit toward God and the will of God. He prayed constantly that God would not allow him to become callous in any way in his spirit or attitude toward God or God's people. This was one of the reasons God could say that David was a man after His own heart and that he had a perfect heart. David sought the honor and glory of God and the welfare of God's people in everything that was done; and even though he made serious mistakes, he always was ready and willing to acknowledge them and to repent bitterly of them (**Psalm 51:1-19** ¹ Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. ⁵ Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶ Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom. ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice. ⁹ Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹ Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. ¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit. ¹³ *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. ¹⁵ O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. ¹⁶ For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. ¹⁸ Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.). David highly regarded the one whom God had set aside and anointed, reasoning that God was capable of taking care of his interests and appointments when it was His time.

To have regarded the anointing of Saul with any less degree would, logically, have caused David to put a lesser appraisal upon his own anointing than he desired to do. The leadership of God was unmistakable when Samuel allowed seven sons of Jesse to pass by without pouring the vial of oil upon one head because he did not feel the witness of the Spirit of God that the chosen of God had appeared. David had, no doubt, consecrated very deeply as he hurried in from the field to receive his anointing. He had done the same in the months and years prior to that time, beyond all doubt. He would have been unworthy of the anointing if he had not thus prepared himself for it. And to disregard the special benefits of that anointing upon another would be merely saying that his own anointing had no value that was greater than the

ability of a mere man to set it aside.

As children of God and laborers together in the harvest field of God, there is a like obligation resting upon each one of us in our attitude toward those whom God anoints and places in positions of special responsibility in His vineyard. These persons are called to a higher calling than that of kings with temporal authority. There is no earthly diadem, scepter, or throne. They have no absolute monarchial power. Their leadership and authority may not even be acknowledged by the world at large. But their appointment and responsibilities are real, nevertheless.

These whom God has appointed to feed the flock of God, to take the oversight of them, and to administer reproof and discipline when necessary, are to be regarded by us in no less degree than David regarded Saul as the anointed of the Lord. They stand or fall before God and not necessarily before man. They must answer to God for all that they say and do. If they are unfaithful in their responsibility, it is God who will discipline them and set them aside, if that is necessary for the good of His cause. Our part is to hold a high regard for the anointing of God and to leave those things which are His completely in His hands that He might do with them as He pleases, when He pleases.

There are many wonderful virtues in the life of this godly king of Israel. Much more could be written on this particular subject, as well as on others that are suggested by the text of this lesson. In a future lesson, where David again spares Saul's life, we shall have another opportunity of studying more of these godly virtues and characteristics which speak to us of the exacting requirements that God set for those in that age. We will learn also of the much higher stipulations that are incumbent upon *us* who live in the full blessings of the Gospel dispensation — the time that godly men of old looked forward to with anticipation and wonder, marveling at the glorious things that would be freely bestowed upon all who will seek God in faith and true worship.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Who were anointed in Old Testament days?
- 2 How are people anointed today? and what are the full benefits of the promises given to those who are thus anointed?
- 3 Why was David a fugitive?
- 4 Is it wise always to follow the advice of those who are not necessarily following the Spirit of God?
- 5 How is one to know when it is God's will to do a certain thing?
- 6 What else must we look for besides God's will in our plans?
- 7 Does the Holy Spirit ever lead in ways that oppose each other?
(Read I Corinthians 14:33, 40.)
- 8 To whom does vengeance belong?
- 9 What attitude did David take toward Saul's anointing?
- 10 What promise did David make to Saul after they had made peace with each other?