**I Would Not Lay a Hand on the Lord’s Anointed**

**1 Samuel 26:1-25**

**Key Verse 26:23**

*“The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed.”*

In this passage, David again spares Saul’s life though he has a great opportunity to kill him. David believed the living God who exists and rewards those who earnestly seek him (Heb 11:6).

1. **Read 26:1-5. Who reports to Saul about the hiding place of David? (1) What does Saul do when he hears this report? (2) Where does Saul make his camp, and where does David stay? (3a) What does David do when he finds out Saul has arrived? (3b, 4-5)**
   1. **Read 26:1-5.**

The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?”2So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand select Israelite troops, to search there for David. 3Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul had followed him there, 4he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived. 5Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him.

* 1. **Who reports to Saul about the hiding place of David? (1)**

The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?”

* 1. **What does Saul do when he hears this report? (2)**

2So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand select Israelite troops, to search there for David.

Saul continues to pursue David despite his knowledge that God would make David the king of Israel.

* 1. **Where does Saul make his camp, and where does David stay? (3a)**

Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the wilderness.

* 1. **What does David do when he finds out Saul has arrived? (3b, 4-5)**

When he saw that Saul had followed him there, 4he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived. 5Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him.

David sent out scouts and went to Saul’s camp. He closed in the Saul who was lying in the camp.

1. **Read 26:6-12. Who does David ask to go with him to Saul’s camp? (6) When David and Abishai goes to Saul’s camp by night, what do they see? (7) What does Abishai say to David when they have an opportunity to kill Saul? (8) What is David’s response? (9-11, 1Sa 24:6-7) How does David leave Saul’s camp? (12)**

**2-1) Read 26:6-12.**

6David then asked Ahimelek the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?” “I’ll go with you,” said Abishai. 7So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him. 8Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won’t strike him twice.” 9But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless? 10As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. 11But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.” 12So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

**2-2) Who does David ask to go with him to Saul’s camp? (6)**

6David then asked Ahimelek the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?”

David was not afraid of Saul anymore.

**2-3) When David and Abishai goes to Saul’s camp by night, what do they see? (7)**

7So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

They saw Saul, lying asleep inside the camp and Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

**2-4) What does Abishai say to David when they have an opportunity to kill Saul? (8)**

8Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won’t strike him twice.” He told David it is the best opportunity to kill Saul, his enemy and he was willing to kill him for David.

**2-5) What is David’s response? (9-11, 1Sa 24:6-7)**

9But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless? 10As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. 11But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.”

6He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the Lord.” 7With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way (1 Sam 24:6-7).

He believed the living God who forbid anyone to kill the Lord’s anointed. David remembered the will of God which he learned when he cut a corner of Saul’s robe and obeyed it even though it means he would suffer more.

**2-6) How does David leave Saul’s camp? (12)**

12So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head as an evidence.

**3. Read 26:13-20. Who does David call out to? (13-14) What does David rebuke Abner for? (15-16) Who recognizes David’s voice? (17) What does David ask Saul? (18) How does David plead his innocence to Saul and make Saul appeal to his conscience? (19-20)**

**3-1) Read 26:13-20.**

13Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. 14He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Aren’t you going to answer me, Abner?” Abner replied, “Who are you who calls to the king?” 15David said, “You’re a man, aren’t you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn’t you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. 16What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men must die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord’s anointed. Look around you. Where are the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head?” 17Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, David my son?” David replied, “Yes it is, my lord the king.” 18And he added, “Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of? 19Now let my lord the king listen to his servant’s words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, people have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have driven me today from my share in the Lord’s inheritance and have said, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ 20Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains.”

**3-2) Who does David call out to? (13-14)**

13Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. 14He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Aren’t you going to answer me, Abner?” Abner replied, “Who are you who calls to the king?”

He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner.

**3-3) What does David rebuke Abner for? (15-16)**

15David said, “You’re a man, aren’t you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn’t you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. 16What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men must die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord’s anointed. Look around you. Where are the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head?”

David rebuked Abner for his careless guard for king. Saul was the commander of the army. David implied that Abner even sinned before the Lord because he failed to guard the Lord’s anointed.

**3-4) Who recognizes David’s voice? (17)**

17Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, David my son?” David replied, “Yes it is, my lord the king.”

**3-5) What does David ask Saul?(18)**

18And he added, “Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of?

**3-6) How does David plead his innocence to Saul and make Saul appeal to his conscience? (19-20)**

19Now let my lord the king listen to his servant’s words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, people have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have driven me today from my share in the Lord’s inheritance and have said, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ 20Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains.”

David said as if Saul was not responsible for his plan to kill David. If the Lord incited against David David would repent (to bring an offering to the Lord). If people have incited it means for David to leave his home (the Lord’s inheritance) and serve other idols (being prevented from worshiping the Lord).

**4. Read 26:21-25. How does Saul respond to David? (21) What does David return to Saul? (22) What does David know about God? (23a) What does David say to Saul? (23b-24) What does Saul say? (25)**

**4-1) Read 26:21-25.**

21Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have been terribly wrong.”

22“Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it. 23The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. 24As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble.” 25Then Saul said to David, “May you be blessed, David my son; you will do great things and surely triumph.” So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.

**4-2) How does Saul respond to David? (21)**

21Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have been terribly wrong.”

This is the first time Saul used the word ‘sinned’ I think. But interestingly in today’s passage Saul never mentioned about ‘the Lord’ even once. He could have said, “I have sinned before the Lord.” It seems that his relationship with the Lord became more and more slim.

**4-3) What does David return to Saul? (22)**

22“Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it.

**4-4) What does David know about God? (23a)**

23The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness.

David knew God is living and He rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness.

Hebrew 11:6 says “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.” This is a basic tenet of our belief.

David’s personal faith in the Lord who reward everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness spilled out as he said. Saul could have learned it from David and stop pursuing David.

**4-5) What does David say to Saul? (23b-24)**

The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. 24As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble.”

That is what God teaches us. “With the measure you use it will be measured to you.” (Mt 7:2b)   
”Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Lk 6:31). Since Saul cannot reward or act kindly towards David, David is seeking the reward and the same kind response from the Lord. “So may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble”.

In chapter 24 David emphasized the judgment of the Lord. But in today’s passage it seems that he was emphasizing the Lord’s reward. It seems that David became less judgmental maybe because he learned a lesion from his mistake when he tried to kill Nabal and his household.

**4-6) What does Saul say? (25)**

25Then Saul said to David, “May you be blessed, David my son; you will do great things and surely triumph.”

Saul acknowledged that David is the one blessed and his effort to kill him would be futile. He knew that David would do great things and surely triumph.

In conclusion, David again spared Saul life even though he had a great opportunity to kill him because he believed the living God, who rewards everyone for his righteous and faithful action. When we believe the living God who is the righteous God will rewards those who earnest seek Him and punish those who are unfaithful and unrighteous. Then we will have hope and vision in the midst of difficult situation. God’s response or reward sometimes seems to be too slow, but He surely rewards for our faithfulness and righteousness and punish our unrighteousness. Amen