

PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING PROVIDENCE

PROVIDENCE: God actively sustaining, guiding, and providing.

1. JUST BECAUSE I CAN DOESN'T _____

1 Samuel 24:1-4, *When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks. And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'" Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe.*

- **Cutting off a corner of Saul's robe** has massive symbolic significance

  15:28, *And Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you."*

- **It will provide proof** that David spared Saul's life

2. I NEED A BIGGER _____

1 Samuel 24:5-6, *And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed."*

- **David's Heart Struck Him |** regret; to recognize what he did as sin
- **David is developing well-informed Faith & Doctrine.** He understood that "anointing" was something done by God, and to attack God's anointed was to do so to God.
- **For David, the kingdom could only properly come to him as God's gift.** David would not take it for himself.

1 Samuel 24:7, *So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.*

- **Persuaded |** shasa: to tear apart; to cut down.
- **Sometimes wisdom** does not come through consensus.
- **Dale Davis |** "One should always be mindful that it is never possible to infallibly interpret God's providence."

1 Samuel 23:7, *Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars."*

- **For David, it was one thing to have the promise of the kingdom;** but how the kingdom would come to him was another matter.
- **God's will must be achieved** in God's way!

Matthew 4:8-9, *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."*

HOW TO DEVELOP A WELL-INFORMED PERSPECTIVE

- **THE WORD** (Psalm 119:105)
- **PRAYER** (James 1:5)
- **WISE COUNSELORS** (Proverbs 11:14)
- **WAIT ON THE LORD** (Psalm 46:10; Psalm 37:5-7)

3. TRUST GOD FOR _____

1 Samuel 24:10-11, *"Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the Lord gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.' See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it."*

DAVID MENTIONS SEVERAL POWERFUL THINGS

- **PROVIDENCE:** there can be no question that God delivered Saul into David's hands.
- **CONSENSUS:** everyone around David voted for Saul's death.
- **MERCY:** the corner of the robe showed David's mercy & kindness toward Saul.

1 Samuel 24:12, *May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.*

- **David knows he is in the right, but he will trust God for justice.** There will come a day of justice, but God will bring it, not David.
- **David will wait rather than take the crown for himself;** it must come from God.

Romans 12:19, 21, *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

1 Samuel 24:14, *After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea!*

1 Samuel 24:16-18, 20, *As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the Lord put me into your hands....And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand.*

- **Saul's confession was not dragged out of him with a sword at his throat.** It was forced out of him by David's goodness and righteousness and mercy!

1 Peter 2:22-23, *He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*

4. EMBRACE THE _____

1 Samuel 24:22b, *Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.*

Psalm 57:2, *I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me.*

- **God uses the Journey to make us like Jesus.** Our growth doesn't tend to come through shortcuts and comfort, but through struggles, trials, difficulties, and caves. Difficulties are not just something to get through; they are something to be embraced.

James 1:2-4, *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*