

David: Highs and Lows

David and Saul

1 Samuel 24

Introduction:

This week in our series on the highs and lows in the life of David, we push a little further into David's wilderness years. Saul remains relentless in his hostile pursuit of David. David, moving here and there, proves to be elusive. As 1 Samuel 24 opens we learn that "David is in the wilderness of Engedi" (24:1).

Were you so inclined you could go to the wilderness of Engedi today. As you travel south from Jerusalem down toward the Dead Sea, you'll see highway signs that direct you to Engedi. The land is craggy and barren. 1 Sam. 24:2 tells us that David and his men are near a spot called the "Wildgoats' Rocks." It's not hard to imagine the cliffs and caves of Engedi.

David is living through a low season, but here in Engedi we see one of his highest and most noble moments. There is a moment when Saul is exposed and vulnerable. An easy target. David has Saul right where he wants him.

But David chooses to let that moment go. He refuses to exploit his advantage. In doing so he shows us something about who God is, and what God is like.

Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 24

For Discussion / Reflection:

1. Have you had experience with someone who unfairly held animosity toward you? How did you handle it? How were you tempted to respond to them?
2. Have you ever attempted to be reconciled to someone, and your effort was rejected? How did you move forward?
3. Read 24:4-7. Do you think David would have been justified in making a different decision there in the cave?
4. Beginning at verse 8, David makes a defense of himself to Saul. What do David's words tell us about David? What do his words tell us about God?

5. How does this event in David's life foreshadow and point to the greater king – King Jesus? How does it anticipate the gospel?

Prayer:

Merciful God, just as David spared Saul's life, refusing to act in vengeance or anger, you have likewise spared us. In your kindness, you deal with us patiently, wanting all people to come to repentance. Forgive the subtle ways we inflict hurt on others when we have been hurt. Forgive the way we hold grudges, choosing indignation over peace. Forgive us for withholding grace from others when we have gladly received it from you. Meet us with that grace yet again, and work among us that we might become a community of grace, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.