

## Power and Conscience

### 1 Samuel 23:14-24:22

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*Pray that God by his Spirit would give you insight into his Word.*

1. Do you feel yourself to be under authority? Why is this important for life in God's world?
2. In 23:19-24 we see Saul pursuing David and almost getting to him. What interrupts his crusade? What caused this interruption? Take a look at v. 14.
3. What important contrast does vv.15-18 bring to the rest of the chapter? In what ways is Jonathan similar to Barnabas in the New Testament? Do you know people like that in your own walk with the Lord? Thank the Lord for them, and then thank them as well.
4. 23:19-23 shows Saul seeking advice whereas earlier in 23:2, 4, 10, 12 we see David seeking advice. What is the difference in their pursuit and what does this tell us about their respective characters?
5. During this time, David wrote Psalm 54. Read the Psalm. What is the main purpose of David's prayer in that Psalm?
6. Many people say that sometimes God guides by providing an open door. Here and in chapter 26 we see that David has an "open door" to kill Saul. Are open doors sometimes leading from God? How can we decide when an opportunity/event is the providence of God or a temptation?
7. Why do you think David had such remorse in cutting a piece of Saul's robe in v.5? It might be worth comparing this passage to 1 Samuel 15:27-28.
8. What reasons does David give to his men for not killing Saul in 24:6? Surely David was already promised the kingdom (20:13-16; 23:16-17). Why was it important that succession would not be by killing the former king? Why do you think Jesus refused to take the kingdom when it was offered to him in Matthew 4:8-10? There is also a lesson in here about doing God's things in God's way. Can you see it?
9. The English does not reveal this, but v.6 says that David "tore apart" his men in response to their suggestion to kill Saul. Why such strong language?

10. In chapters 24-26 we see David going through three different tests in the wilderness. There is a striking parallel with Jesus going through three different tests in the wilderness as well. Why are such patterns important and not merely reading things into the text?
11. In 24:17-19 Saul clearly acknowledges what is right. Why do you think that even though Saul knew what was right he did not do it? The proverb David cites in v.13 may help us here. How should this impact our discussions with unbelievers, and our criticism of culture?
12. What parallel is there between Saul's begrudging acknowledgement of David as the future king (24:20) and the final judgment scene according to Philippians 2:9-11?
13. David continually uses the phrase "may the LORD judge between me and you" (24:12, 15), what does he mean by it? You might want to see what leaving the judgment in God's hands means in the rest of the Bible (Psalm 54:5; 58:6-9; 139:19-24). Why not use the occasion to get Saul to promise he will stop hunting David?

*Pray that God would enable you to put these things into practice and look to Jesus as a result.*