



Dodging Spears, Trusting God

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And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.
1 SAMUEL 18:11

There are few greater challenges than learning to love those who don't love us, who seem to be against us. There is something deep inside that wants to not only protect ourselves, but also pay back the one who hurt us. We may even find ourselves hoping to give them more pain than they gave us. We learn something from both King David and Jesus, the Son of David, that helps us to

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follow God's way in these difficult seasons. They did not passively allow abuse; instead, they demonstrated patient endurance, trust in God, and a refusal to take vengeance.

Patient Endurance

In 1 Samuel 17, David had killed the giant Goliath and had become an instant celebrity in Israel. King Saul was extremely jealous of this. Yet David continued to faithfully serve King Saul, playing music when Saul was tormented by God's correction to his rebellion.

Once David's music ministry had soothed Saul, refreshing him and giving him relief from the distressing spirit (1 Samuel 16:23). Now, it was of no effect at all, and Saul responded by attempting to murder David. Why? David's heart and ministry had not changed—Saul had, and for the worse. Saul refused to receive comfort from David, and that refusal set the stage for his violence.

Sometimes we are able to minister to people for a season, but they may harden their hearts to us through no fault of our own. In

fact, in a premeditated strike, Saul said: ***"I will pin David to the wall!"*** This wasn't an accident. Though he wouldn't admit it publicly, Saul's heart was set on killing David. He didn't want to merely frighten or injure David. He wanted the spear to deliver a fatal blow, completely penetrating David's body.

Saul threw the spear, it missed David, and ***David escaped his presence.*** Perhaps Saul's aim was bad, affected by his poor mental and emotional state. Perhaps David saw the spear and ducked. Perhaps God supernaturally guided the spear to miss. However it happened, the spear missed, hitting the floor.

Trust in God

Despite Saul's attack, David showed a supernatural trust in God. He could have challenged Saul, saying, "If Goliath couldn't scare me, you sure can't. If Goliath couldn't kill me, you sure can't." David could have returned the spear to Saul, pinning him to the wall and killing him instead. But he didn't. He simply ***escaped his presence.***

When someone is attacking us, the wisest response may be to simply walk away—even if only temporarily. In the heat of the moment, we may say something that does not rightly represent God or is fruitless.

No one could blame David if he struck back, claiming self-defense. But David wasn't interested in defending himself or taking the throne for himself; instead, he was determined to leave the situation in God's hands. God would have to take care of Saul, because David wouldn't do it.

It's as if David is saying, "Lord, You put Saul on the throne. And I know I'm supposed

to be the next king, because You gave me Your promise and Your anointing. But getting Saul out of the way is Your business. I won't touch him, because he is an authority appointed by You. You started his reign, so You have to end it."

In the same way, we can trust God to work out His will in our lives no matter what our situation, no matter who is against us. Instead of defending ourselves, we can let God be our defender.

Refusing Revenge

Notice the second part of 1 Samuel 18:11—it is perhaps the most remarkable part: ***But David escaped his presence twice.*** This means that Saul threw the spear twice and missed twice. This means that after the first miss, David came back and played again.

If David struck back after resisting the temptation the first time, we can suppose that David still would become king. We would understand if he had chosen to strike back the second time. But if he had, he would have surrendered his destiny to be the greatest king of Israel. He still would be a king, but not the king the Lord destined him to be.

In his patient endurance, King David was a preview of his much greater Son—Jesus of Nazareth. Remember that one of the titles given to Jesus is, ***Son of David*** (Matthew 12:23). Jesus Christ, the Son of David, patiently endured all the attacks and violence against Him personally and told His followers to do the same: ***"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you"*** (Matthew 5:44a).

If you wish to fulfill God's call on your life to the fullest, it will require radical trust in Him. One of the most radical ways we trust Him is to leave personal vengeance, retribution, and bitterness with Him. God worked this in King David's heart. Jesus Christ, the Son of David, will work this in every willing heart today. ✚