

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – August 14, 2022

Theme: Lessons from the life of David

Topic: Leaving Vengeance to God

Main Text: 1 Sam 26:1-25

Key verse: Romans 12:19 – *“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.”*

INTRODUCTION: Our study of the life of David brings us to an important question: What do you do when you become the target of injustice, and blatant wickedness? Wherever you live in our country and the world currently, injustice and acts of wickedness are rampant and almost inescapable. David challenges us in today's study, as children of divine inheritance, to allow God to avenge us. 'Vengeance,' which is the noun for *avenge* or *revenge*, means punishment inflicted or retribution exacted in retaliation for an injury or offense. Our natural inclination is to seek retribution when wronged, especially when the wrong is grave. The Mosaic law promotes this in us with *“an eye for an eye”* (Leviticus 24:17-22). This provision falsely fuels our sense of justice when we are wronged. And so, we see and hear of friends, relatives, school or classmates, work colleagues, business associates, taking vengeful actions against those (real or perceived) that have caused them injury or pain. But David teaches us in 1 Samuel 26 that we are better off trusting God to avenge us because His vengeance is always pure and comprehensive.

1. **(a) When you think of revenge, what purpose do you think it serves to avenge ourselves? And to what extent is that purpose served? (b) If vengeance is “measure for measure.” Can you say that as humans we are able to mete out vengeance accurately and rightly to those who offend us? If not, what does this tell us about the need to allow God to avenge us? (c) According to Deuteronomy 32:4, what is it about God that makes vengeance better left to Him?**

In the chapters preceding today's text, Saul felt threatened by David and decided that David must die. It did not matter that David had appeared in the scene to successfully rescue a subdued nation – for at last the nation of Israel had regained freedom from the hands of the Philistines by reason of the defeat and killing of Goliath. In today's story, information had reached Saul that David was hiding beside the hill of Hakilah, and so Saul had taken with him three thousand “elite troops” to go and hunt David down. Saul's camp was heavily fortified to the extent of forming a ring of warrior troops round about Saul and when David took the risky step of spying out the fortified camp, what he found shocked him: Saul and his elite troops were deep asleep. As far as David's companions were concerned, there couldn't be a better God-given opportunity to end the life of the one person who has been hunting him for years now. Just one strike and all his problems will end, Abishai argued (1 Samuel 26:8). But David would have none of that. Instead, he spared Saul's life after taking away only spear and water jug belonging to Saul (1 Sam.26:12). Living beyond the daily grind of difficult people requires our leaving the vengeance to the One who can handle it best.

2. **Read 1 Samuel 26:8-11; Proverbs 20:22; Romans 12:19; and 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 (a) Discuss a time when someone wronged you and you got a chance to give them a taste of their own medicine. How did it feel? What did you do? (b) Explain why we should leave vengeance to God. (c) 2 Thessalonians 1:7 suggests that we might wait until Christ's return to see God avenge us. How does that make you feel in the light of leaving vengeance to Him?**

As far as Abishai, David's commander, was concerned, *“God has surely handed your enemy over to you this time! And indeed, it was God's hand work! (See 1 Samuel 26:12).* But David was operating at a level of trust with God that was far beyond what Abishai could understand. So, David said, *“No! Don't kill him. For who can remain innocent after attacking the LORD's anointed one? Surely the LORD will strike Saul down someday, or he will die of old age or in battle. The LORD forbid that I should kill the one He has anointed! (1 Samuel 26:9-11).* For us, our 'King Saul' may be a family member, a colleague, a neighbor, another commuter on the road. We can, like David, leave vengeance to God. According to *R. Swindoll*, *“Because the Lord has promised us justice, we can concentrate on doing what's right instead of plotting revenge.”*

3. **Romans 12:19; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 1 Peter 3:9 (a) (b) What does David teach us about how to treat the advice friends or family members might offer on how to deal with our “enemies”? (b) Leaving vengeance to God might cause our friends and family to perceive us as “weak.” How best should you deal with such perception? (c) What key lesson have you learnt from today's study?**

Prayer: LORD, help me to remember that You are the Righteous Judge, and that true vengeance belongs to You. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen