

A Study of Heroes

Text: I Samuel 26

Chadwick Boseman said, "The only difference between a hero and the villain is that the villain chooses to use that power in a way that is selfish and hurts other people." It is true; the best of men are men at best. And the best of men have feet of clay. There are three heroes in our story today. Let's talk about them:

I. DAVID: THE PRESENT HERO

I Samuel 26:1-4

Proverbs 16:7: "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

In the political atmosphere of the culture we live in today we often hear, "No one is above the law." That phrase needs further clarification: "No one is above the law of God."

Ecclesiastes 12:14: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Proverbs 28:14: "Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief."

Proverbs 29:1: "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Pilate said in Matthew 27:22a, "...What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?..." This is a question that we must all answer. If we accept Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we escape eternal judgment (John 5:24). However, if Christ is not accepted, one must stand before God condemned.

Revelation 20:11, 12: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." This is so sad, because if we do not accept the free grace of God (Romans 11:6) offered in the Gospel, then by default you have chosen to be judged by your works and there is absolutely no one who can get to Heaven by their works.

Isaiah 64:6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

II Timothy 4:1: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

Gospel means "good news." The good news of the Gospel means that salvation by grace gives the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Proverbs 28:13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

As believers, we all should be mindful of II Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." I Corinthians 3:11-15 informs us of the results of the believer's judgment.

II. ABISHAI: THE FUTURE HERO

I Samuel 26:5-12

Abishai was the eldest son of David's sister Zeruiah. (I Chronicles 2:13-16). According to Josephus, his father was called Suri. Abishai's name means "Father of a gift." He was a brother of Joab and Asahel.

Joab, the second eldest of Zeruiah was David's field commander. Asahel, the youngest brother, was the fastest (which cost him his life from the hand of Abner) but Abishai was the most loyal of all of David's mighty men. Abishai went so far as to jeopardize his life to provide David with water from his favorite well (II Samuel 23:16, 17).

A. Abishai was the first to volunteer to go with David on a dangerous reconnaissance mission. I Samuel 26:6c: "...I will go down with thee."

B. Abishai was a fearless and fierce warrior. I Samuel 26:8

II Samuel 23:18: "And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three."

I Chronicles 18:12,13: "Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of salt eighteen thousand. And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went."

C. Abishai was impetuous

II Samuel 3:30; II Samuel 16:9; II Samuel 19:21. Abishai still harbored vengeance in his heart against Shimei who insulted David.

D. Abishai saved the life of David by single handedly killing Ishbi-benob, the mighty giant and son of Goliath.

II Samuel 21:17, "But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel."

If there is a Bible verse that describes Abishai, it would be found in the command of Joab to Abishai and the mighty men of David. I Chronicles 19:13: "Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight."

III. SAUL: THE PAST HERO

I Samuel 26:13-25

A. David knows the strength of his adversary.

Every leader has a right hand man: I Samuel 26:15a: "And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel?..."

B. David does not defy God's chain of command.

I Samuel 26:17-20

C. David's adversary comes into agreement with God concerning David's future and his impending judgment (I Samuel 26:21-25).

Conclusion:

Saul's words have a chilling effect, even over 3,000 years later, "...I have played the fool..." (I Samuel 26:21c). Proverbs 26:11: "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." Proverbs 10:8: "The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall. The late Dr. S. Lewis Johnson gives a five-fold reason explaining why Saul played the fool:

1. Saul played the fool by allowing his passions to control him.
2. Saul played the fool by listening to false representations of David.
3. Saul played the fool by acting against his conscience.
4. Saul played the fool by making resolutions and breaking them.
5. Saul played the fool by contending against the plans of God. (I Samuel 24:20; I Samuel 26:25). Gamaliel understood this when he said: Acts 5:39: "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

This should be a warning to one and all not to play the fool. The Bible says in James 1:23, 24: "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

In Christ alone shall we find the true Hero without flaws or disappointments. Even Napoleon had to say, "Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religions the distance of infinity."

-Pastor Pope-