

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn (2 Sam 1)

I. INTRO

- A. We live in a very dog-eat-dog world → a world that has been molded by the secular idea of survival of the fittest
 - 1. The world is happy to see its enemies fall and fail (politics) → some don't care about the state of the country as long as the other party fails
 - 2. Others are pleased to see others fail as if it somehow makes them feel better
 - 3. Others are so calloused by the roughness of life, it's like none of this even bothers them anymore
 - 4. You do what you need to do to survive... right?
- B. It just so happens, as we will see in these chapters over the month of September, that the "fittest" are often also the cruelest.
- C. Whereas many see problems, sorry, and pain as an opportunity for personal gain, David stands in stark contrast
 - 1. **A king who rises to power neither through cruelty nor coercion.**
 - 2. **A man who walks with integrity and rises above the fray**
- D. The first three chapters of 2 Samuel offer a sort of PR campaign for David's upcoming monarchy. They show his God-given right to the throne, and how he did not seize the throne nor steal it away; it was divinely given
- E. For us, we are faced with the question: How do we respond to brokenness? Do we capitulate on it (like an ambulance chaser), do we dismiss it (jaded), or do we mourn over it?

II. 2 Samuel 1:1–27

- A. *[1] After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking down the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag.*
 - 1. Refresher...Saul died at the end of 1 Samuel (used to be one larger book)
 - 2. David was striking down the Amalekites b/c they kidnapped fam
 - 3. While all that was going down, we see this... *1 Samuel 31:2–4 [2] And the Philistines overtook Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul. [3] The battle pressed hard against Saul, and the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by the archers. [4] Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and mistreat me." But his armor-bearer would not, for he feared greatly. Therefore Saul took his own sword and fell upon it.*
 - a) Note: the only reason there were ANY Amalekites is b/c Saul disobeyed back in 1 Sam 15 when he was commanded to destroy them → this also led to the kingdom being torn from him and God saying he would raise up a new king (David)
 - 4. Basically, since that Amalekite failure, we have been watching the downfall of Saul and the rise of David

5. If you're just tuning in, David, up until this point, has been above reproach, waiting for God's timing instead of vying for kingship
- B. [2] And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage. [3] David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." [4] And David said to him, "How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead." [5] Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" [6] And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. [7] And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' [8] And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' [9] And he said to me, 'Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' [10] So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."*
1. So David is in Ziklag, his base of operations, and in enters this Amalekite
 2. He tells David about Saul's death, but he is playing a game. He's an ambulance chaser. He sees this as a chance for him to get something
 - a) He is acting like he is in mourning (clothes and dirt = fasting)
 - b) We know he has no love for Saul or the Israelites (PoW)
 - c) He comes to David hoping to get something for this information → perhaps a reward, perhaps power, perhaps peace... who knows
 3. We should note that this is the wisdom of the world, and it is the way the world often responds to hurt and pain
 - a) The world sees a hole for power to fill (Oh, your spouse died, let me lowball you and try and buy your house while you're in pain)
 - b) The world sees a way to leverage someone's pain for their gain
 4. But what about David? What is David thinking? Is he thinking...
 - a) Saul is finally dead; this is my moment to shine
 - b) Saul is gone, and my army can seize the kingdom
- C. [11] Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. [12] And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. [13] And David said to the young man who told him, "Where do you come from?" And he answered, "I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite." [14] David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?" [15] Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go, execute him." And he struck him down so that he died. [16] And David said to him, "Your blood be on your head,*

for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

1. Well, that went south for the Amalekite
2. What does David do? He weeps. He mourns, and so do all his men. And they do this until evening
 - a) David has respect for the office of King, "the Lord's Anointed"
 - (1) He realizes that it's not a victory for the Israelites for their king to die, nor his son and heir
 - (2) No loss of Israelite is a victory, but a defeat!
 - b) David had love for his father-in-law, even though he tried to kill him
 - (1) He knew Saul was tormented and wounded (evil spirit)
 - (2) He used to play music to calm his mind and mood
 - c) David loved his brother-in-law, Jonathan, who willingly said he would step aside for David to have the throne after his death
 - (1) They were battle buddies, willing to die for one another
3. Exegetically, the point is this: David didn't kill Saul. David doesn't celebrate his death. David doesn't use this as an opportune moment to seize power
4. David is a man of integrity – even when facing mourning and pain.
 - a) He is broken over brokenness.
5. That's perhaps our first lesson here. **Be broken over brokenness.**
 - a) Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips and I live amongst..."
6. Do not celebrate the failure of your fellow man. Do not be dismissive of another's pain. Don't celebrate the cataclysmic impact of sin when someone else falls. No image-bearer is your enemy.
 - a) They are trapped by the enemy...

D. [17] And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son, [18] and he said it should be taught to the people of Judah; behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar.

1. We don't often think about it, but we actually need to learn to mourn well. The Bible has lots to say about grief. 1/3 of the Psalms are laments!
 - a) That means you should **bring your grief honestly before God**
 - b) The fact that David writes this song for the nation shows we are called to **Lean on the community of faith during sorrow**
 - (1) "mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15)
 - c) In the sorrow of life, we must **find comfort in God's truth**
2. David, this amazing future king and leader, doesn't say, "The king is dead, long live the king." He says, "Now is the time to weep, not rejoice."
 - a) This reflects our great God who said in Ezekiel 33:11 puts it this way, *"As surely as I live, says the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live."*

E. He said: [19] "Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen!"

1. This is like “National Grief” → 2 weeks @ half mast post 9-11
2. David begins with the whole nation’s identity. Israel’s “glory” was killed
3. The death of Saul is like a national wound, even for those who never personally knew Saul, nor liked him.

F. [20] Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult. [21] “You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor fields of offerings! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

1. David doesn’t want the enemies to know. He doesn’t want them to celebrate. This is a private matter. Be respectful of the pain.
2. In essence, David feels the sting of Saul’s death. Like giving space to a family to mourn when they lose a loved one.
3. But then David moves to more personalized grief

G. [22] “From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. [23] “Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions. [24] “You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet, who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. [25] “How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! “Jonathan lies slain on your high places. [26] I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me; your love to me was extraordinary, surpassing the love of women. [27] “How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!”

1. David remembers Saul and Jonathan for who they were: mighty warriors, a sword and bow in the hands of YHWH
2. Saul was like a father – literally and figuratively
3. You might wonder why David is so positive here about Saul, but you get it
 - a) At a funeral, don’t we strive to remember what was good? Isn’t it awkward when someone brings up old wounds?
 - b) There is a humility to lament → we know that we too are weak, we too are fallen, and we too have our list of failures
 - c) David isn’t ignorant. He isn’t lying. David embraces the human condition alongside a man who also needed forgiveness
4. And Jonathan? No, they weren’t gay. This is about a covenant friendship
 - a) Jonathan stepped aside from the throne for David, was willing to die for David, a friendship that is hard to fathom (but points to Jesus!)
5. David shows us how to lament, even over your “enemies.”
 - a) Saul wasn’t his enemy. Saul was a man plagued by the curse of sin, and brokenness. He was a man who was insecure from the day he became king, worried that he wouldn’t be enough
 - b) He was a man who continued to make mistakes, and in his weakness he struggled to learn from them

- c) Isn't Saul just like me? Isn't Saul just like all of us?
 - H. In the big picture, David's lament proves his innocence. He refuses vengeance, honors even Saul, and shows his kingship will be marked by integrity.
 - I. But this lament is not just history — it points us to a greater King.
- III. Jesus, the Greater David, laments too. He laments over sin and its consequences → the curse upon the world, the brokenness of iniquity, and the grave
 - A. Jesus weeps at Lazarus' tomb with grief at death's sting.
 - B. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. He is filled with sorrow for His enemies, wishing they would come to him and receive him rather than rejecting them.
 - C. Jesus weeps on the cross, pleading with the Father to forgive his persecutors
 - D. Jesus laments in the face of sin and the abandonment of God's wrath
 - E. David lamented "Oh how the mighty have fallen!" Jesus Himself became the fallen one, bearing our griefs, our shame, and our sorrow. He was our fall guy
 - F. David's lament ends in loss. Jesus' lament ends in resurrection — sorrow transformed into joy
- IV. APPLICATION → So what does it mean for us? Negatively we could say, "Don't be an ambulance chaser, a dismissive stoic, or a jerk when others are suffering pain & loss."
 - A. Positively, Jesus put it best → *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matt 5:4)*
 - B. We mourn over sin
 - 1. In our own lives & in the lives of others
 - C. We mourn over the slavery to sin that is evident in every community on earth from Cape May to North Korea
 - D. We mourn over the impact of sin (brokenness, suffering, relational separation)
 - E. We mourn over the inevitable consequence of sin → death
 - F. We mourn over those who refuse to believe in Jesus
 - G. We mourn over those who have never heard his glorious name
 - H. We mourn as we worship (1/3 of the Psalms are lament) because he knows the pain and sting of sin and death
 - I. We worship him with our wounds b/c he is wounded too
 - J. We don't approach this broken world with callous indifference
 - K. We don't approach this broken world with opportunistic selfishness
 - L. We don't approach this broken world with crushing defeat
 - M. We mourn with him b/c we SHALL be comforted
 - N. We remember to keep the enemy as the real enemy (Satan & his minions), and we mourn over those who wound us even though they know not what they do
 - O. FOR YOU?
 - 1. What should you be mourning over this week? In your life, your family, your friends, your country, your world
 - 2. Mourn well, mourn biblically, mourn like David