

Overcoming Evil with Good (1 Samuel 24:1-22 & Romans 12:17-21)

06-Oct-19

G'day Church Family

There are Bibles in front of you

And we're looking at 1 Samuel chapter 24 - and we'll be referring to Romans 12:17-21, as we go through the Samuel chapter.

Let me pray before we look at this passage together

Intro

How do you feel **when a person really hurts** you or your family?

(pause)

How do you feel when **a person is really mean or nasty** to you or your family?

(pause)

What **do you want to do** to that person?

Plot **Revenge**?

See them **fail**? Or **fall** in a heap?

(pause)

[PowerPoint 1]

Do you secretly do a **fist pump or gloat** - when that person gets pay back?

The other day I saw my **granddaughter** do a **fist pump** when her brother got in trouble? And mutter under her breath - **ha ha!**

It's a **struggle handling bad and evil done to us** or our family? Isn't it?

[PowerPoint 2-Question]

Does God want us to **pay back** someone - by answering their evil and hatred with our own evil and hatred?

(pause)

So how do we respond to the bad or evil done to us or our family?

How do we respond to the enemy - so to speak?

[PowerPoint 3-Blank]

Well in the last few weeks in our look at 1 Samuel

King **Saul** is out to **kill David**?

Why?

- Saul is plain **jealous** of David - David had killed Goliath and there was a song that the people of Israel constantly had on their lips "*Saul has killed his thousands and David his tens of thousands*"
- Saul has been **rejected by God for his continued disobedience** and Saul can now see that God is with David
- Saul's jealousy **blinded him to what God had done** for him
- Saul's jealousy drove him to **hatred, paranoia** and eventually **madness**

So, **how does David handle Saul's evil intentions and hatred?**

The answer is here in 1 Samuel 24 - and it's all about **overcoming evil with good**

Now there's a novel idea!

(pause)

So, what does overcoming evil with good look like?

[PowerPoint 3-Overcoming evil]

Overcoming Evil with Good = Not Answering Evil with Evil (1 Sam 24:1-7, Romans 12:17)

First, it looks like not answering evil with more evil

[PowerPoint 3a-not evil for evil]

Picking up from v1 - Saul is told where David is - in the desert of En Gedi.

So v2 - Saul takes 3000 able young men - and goes looking for David and his men. Saul and his **3000** men versus David and **600** men (23:13) - seems fair?

Then we have the funny situation in v3 - where Saul goes into the **cave** to relieve himself - it just happens to be the cave - where David and his men are hiding

David catches Saul with his **pants down** - literally

David's men are excited - v4 - this is a perfect God given opportunity for David to kill Saul - and get rid of him once and for all

David's men want to answer Saul's evil - with more evil?

If we're honest, we'd probably feel the same in their situation - they've been on the run - they can't rest anywhere - always looking over their shoulder - and they're away from their family.

But - instead of killing Saul - David creeps up behind Saul and cuts off the **corner of Saul's robe**

David refuses to answer evil with his own evil

In fact, David even feels bad - in v5 - that he's even cut Saul's robe?

Why? Because v6 - Saul is God's anointed - David refuses to lay a hand on him.

As far as David is concerned - it's wrong to answer evil for evil.

You see - David can see how evil is consuming Saul.

Saul's hatred for David - has led to a whole bunch of priests and the town of Nob being wiped out (back in Chapter 23) - and Saul's just getting more and more out of control

Friends, the answer to someone's evil - is **never more evil**

A read a story recently of a man, called John, who opened his front door on his birthday and found two tons of manure piled eight feet high on his front lawn.

It was a birthday present from his brother, Frank.

*The present was the latest in a **gift-giving war** between the 2 brothers which had started when John sent Frank one of those "insulting" birthday cards about growing old. John received 50 insulting birthday cards back.*

Last year John received a pet rock which weighed 2000 kgs

John's response was to send Frank 10,000 kgs of pebbles and a note telling Frank the pet rock had had babies.

Over the years, gifts between the two have also included a full-grown elephant and two busloads of choirboys.

You see, the 2 brothers are consumed by their hatred for each other.

Who knows **where it will end?**

But each time the hatred gets deeper and deeper!

In our NT passage from Romans 12 - The Apostle Paul gives the answer to this evil in v17: **Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.**

Remember, as we repay evil for evil - people are watching us - our family see it - our friends see it - is that what we are supposed to be modelling?

Overcoming Evil with Good = No Revenge (1 Sam 24:8-15, Romans 12:18-20a)

Second, overcoming evil with good - looks like not taking revenge - in verses 8 to 15

[PowerPoint 3b-not revenge]

We pick up the story from v8 - where Saul leaves the cave and David calls out to Saul

David shows complete respect for Saul

He refers to Saul as "My Lord, the King" and he bows down and prostrated himself before Saul.

David explains that he could have killed Saul in the cave

He could have taken revenge like David's men suggested

But no - he **spared** Saul - he showed **respect** to Saul and he said he would not lay a hand on God's anointed one

It's not David's place to take revenge - **revenge is up to God**

See v12

May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you.

You may have heard on the news this week from America

About police officer Amber Gugyer who was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the murder of a young man called Botham Jean. Botham's family were in court for the sentencing. You would imagine his family would be devastated by the death of Botham, and very angry with Amber, the murderer. You would imagine, they'd want the highest prison

sentence, and perhaps even want somehow for her to be paid back for what she did. But no!

Botham's brother, Brandt, surprised the court room by sharing with Amber the only thing that could totally change her life forever. Brandt told Amber "If you are truly sorry, I know I can speak for myself; I forgive you... I think giving your life to Jesus would be the best thing Botham would want for you. I love you as a person, and I don't wish anything bad for you".

You see Botham's brother, Brandt, - didn't want revenge against Amber

He realized what the apostle Paul in our NT reading from Romans 12- says in verse 19 - 20

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, on the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed them" ...

What Botham's brother, Brandt, realized was - it's not up to us to take revenge
Revenge is up to God - and instead we are to offer our enemies grace - a free gift of love

Brandt wanted for Amber - what God wants for everyone on this planet - a relationship with Jesus

What's going to motivate the police offer, Amber, to change? More hatred? Or forgiveness and love and the offer of a life loving and following Jesus?

Brandt chose to feed his enemy - with the spiritual food of God.

In fact - even the Judge in the courtroom gave - Amber a Bible!

Overcoming Evil with Good = Convicts evil behaviour with goodness (1 Sam 24:16-22, Romans 12:20-21)

Third, overcoming evil with good looks like convicting evil behaviour with goodness - that's in verses 16 to 22.

[PowerPoint 3c-convicting evil behaviour]

After David explained to Saul - that he could have taken revenge but didn't - Saul's conscience is pricked.

A definition of conscience: a person's moral sense of right and wrong, viewed as acting as a guide to one's behaviour.

Look at Saul's reaction in v17

You are more righteous than I, you have treated me well but I treated you badly.

Saul realizes David didn't react as most people would when they have an opportunity to take out the enemy.

David answered Saul's evil intentions with goodness and mercy.

In fact, David's actions and words - of goodness and mercy - caused Saul to do a bit of self-examination

(pause)

I came across this little skit in my Scripture class a couple of weeks ago:

I'm going to ask Lina to help me here:

Mitch: Look, I know we don't like each other

Lewis: I never said I don't like you.

Mitch: Well ... I don't like you.

Lewis: I think you're a good person.

Mitch: You bug me.

Lewis: I like your company.

Mitch: But I think you're dumb.

Lewis: I think you're pretty smart.

Mitch: You're a huge nerd.

Lewis: You're really cool.

Mitch: And you talk funny.

Lewis: You say funny stuff.

Mitch: You've got a big nose.

Lewis: You've got a big heart.

Mitch: You stink.

Lewis: You don't.

Mitch: I don't care about you.

Lewis: Well I care about you.

Mitch: You care about me?

Lewis: Of course I do.

Mitch: Even after I've said so many bad things about you?



Lewis: Even then.

Mitch: I'm really sorry.

Lewis: About what?

Mitch: About being so terrible to you.

Lewis: I appreciate that.

Mitch: Are you sure?

Lewis: Yes.

Mitch: Can you forgive me?

Lewis: Of course.

Mitch: Can we be friends?

Lewis: We always have been.



I hope you can see how Lina's kind and loving responses - started to change my attitude

That's what David did to Saul

Compare David's and Saul's consciences here

Back in v5 - David's conscience is moved even by just taking a piece of Saul's garment. Saul's conscience only gets moved when his life has been spared?

David's actions and words pricked Saul's conscience

As the Apostle Paul says in our NT passage from Romans 12 - v20:

If your enemy is hungry, feed them;

If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head

David's actions and words heaped burning coals on Saul's head.

He felt terrible - Saul realized just how far he'd fallen.

He even sees why the Lord should reward David with the kingship of Israel
(v20)

How's our consciences?

Is there someone in our lives, who's hurt us or been mean and nasty to us?

Have we thought of responding with our own evil to them? That's not the way
God wants us to be?

Have we thought of revenge? That's not God's way either?

Much better, to respond with goodness and mercy - as David did?

(pause)

Conclusion

[PowerPoint 5a-Conclusion]

Now before we get carried away here - and leave church today

Thinking, I've got to **be more like David?**

Which in one sense is true.

But, that's not the point.

David has an epic fail next week - and you won't want to be like him next week

Yes, David could have killed Saul - but he showed goodness and mercy - to Saul
- who didn't deserve it.

The Bible calls undeserved mercy - *GRACE*

David showed Saul - grace

But - In a **far far greater way** - God showed us undeserved mercy - **God showed us GRACE**

God could have **left us in our sinful lives** - because we all sin and can't stop - and we can't fix it - God could have left us like that with no hope.

And, **God could have taken revenge** on all of us - and wiped us all out.

God could have said - you all can't stop sinning - I'm a holy God - You're all going to Hell - and you'll be separated from me forever

But He didn't do that and He doesn't do that!

He showed grace

He sent His own Son - Jesus - fully God - fully man - and perfect in every way - to come to this Earth - and die on a cruel cross - and take our punishment for our sins - and give us the opportunity to be forgiven of our sins - and to open the gates of Heaven for eternal life - to all who **believe** in Jesus.

That's grace!

(pause)

Jesus didn't do **evil** - He always did **good**

Jesus didn't take **revenge** on His enemies - He **died** for them and said **forgive** them Father, they don't know what they are doing (Luke 23:34)

Jesus overcame evil with the goodness of His cross

Jesus heaped **burning coals** on the ones who killed Him...

The Roman **Centurion** - who oversaw His death said - surely this is the Son of God (Mark 15:39)

Jesus heaped burning coals on the Christian **persecutor** - **Saul**- by asking him - "**Saul Saul why are you persecuting me?**" (Acts 9:4) - and then Jesus made Saul, the Apostle Paul.

The **Jews** when they heard what they'd done to God's Messiah, Jesus, in Acts 2:37- they were **cut to the heart** and asked what shall we do? Repent, believe in Jesus and be baptized - was the answer!

Jesus may even be heaping burning coals on our heads this morning/evening?
I suspect, like me, you **struggle** with the desire to respond to the evil done to you - with your own **bad thoughts**, your own **bad words** and your own **bad actions**?

I suspect, like me, you've done the **fist-pump** - when the bully at school or at the bully at work, or the mean guy, or the smart Alec, or the arrogant know it all - has an epic fail or fall - ha ha?

Jesus didn't do that?

And He didn't teach that?

So, how are we to overcome that struggle and desire we have to do bad against those who do bad to us?

Well - by leaving this place this morning/evening - being thankful that Jesus - didn't do the fist pump when we failed - or when we fail now - no - he offered us grace and forgiveness - and continues to offer us grace and forgiveness

We overcome this struggle and desire to do evil -

By being thankful for Jesus' grace to us

And remembering - we're not alone - Jesus loves us and He's part of our lives
- every hour - of every day

Remembering ...

[PowerPoint 5b-Phil 4:13]

I [We] can do all things through He [Jesus] who strengthens me [us]
(Phil 4:13)

And remembering ...

Apart from me – Jesus says - you can do nothing (John 15:5)

And remembering Jesus is our model to follow - not David.

Let's pray...