

引言 INTRODUCTION

We tend to believe that poetic justice does exist. The Chinese has a proverb that says: “Good people will be rewarded and bad people will be punished. If it does not happen yet, then perhaps the time has not come.” You hope that a driver who speeds and cuts in front of you will be stopped by a cop down the road. You expect those who are compassionate toward the poor will be blessed. What if those results do not come true? David was in a situation like that. Let us briefly go over our story today, then we will draw some spiritual principles we can apply to our daily life. In the previous chapter, Saul’s troop was about to close in on to David’s men. Suddenly, a messenger told the king that the Philistines had launched an attack in another part of the country. Saul had no choice but to pull back and fight the enemies. As we come to chapter 24, that battle was over. Saul heard that David was now in En Gedi, which was on the western shore of the Dead Sea. He then led three thousand of his elite soldiers to the area. The passage says by now David’s followers had grown from 400 to 600 (compared to 1 Samuel 23:13). Therefore, Saul had an edge of a 5:1 ratio. We see an interesting scene in [verse 3-4](#). Saul was doing his business. He was by himself in a vulnerable state. If David attacked Saul, he had to decide whether to grab his clothes or grab his sword. But David did not take advantage of the situation. He later revealed himself after Saul walked out from the cave. He explained to the king why he spared him in [verse 10-12](#). Saul cried aloud as his conscience was crushed. He responded to David in [verse 17-21](#). Saul was humiliated. He then went home. But of course, Saul came back later. This is a recurring theme in David’s life. Saul tried to catch David, but God protected him. David suffered an unjust treatment, even though he was innocent. We will face similar situations too. People around you may not be nice to you even when you do nothing wrong. There are unrighteous matters going on in our society too. We want to do something to make it right. There are certain lessons we can learn from David. He gave up a golden opportunity to kill Saul. David looked at the big picture from God’s perspective, instead of focusing on his loss and gain.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 尊重神的安排 Respect God’s Assignment

There are two major reasons why David did not take matters into his own hands. First, he respected God’s assignment. David understood that it was God who put Saul in a leadership position. Look at how David addressed Saul. David called him “my lord” (verses 6, 8 and 10), “the king” (verses 8 and 14). He also called Saul “my father” (verse 11), which could mean his father-in-law or simply an older person. David respected Saul as the leader of the nation and his boss. Beyond all that, David honored Saul as “the Lord’s anointed” (verses 6 and 10). Saul did not win an election. He did not seize power like a dictator either. In fact, at first he did not want to be a king. God assigned Saul the position when people asked for a king. God put Saul on the throne for His purposes. Saul would continue to rule until God had accomplished His goals through the man. That was why David willingly waited for God’s assignment for him. We need to admit that patience is a hard lesson to learn. We want to get tomorrow’s things done yesterday. We lament over lost opportunities. Traditional wisdom says: good things come to those who

wait. But experience tells us that bad things come to those who are late. But the fact is, we may not get the best from God if we jump ahead of His schedule. From this, we can derive our first spiritual principle: **our trust in God must include our faith in His plan and His timing.** God is the source of all our blessings. He knows our needs more than we do. We wonder if God is withholding His blessings when He does not meet our requests right away. But God may be using the time to refine our character, just like what He was doing in David. David surrendered to God's will. He said twice in verses 6 and 10 that he dared not lay his hand on the Lord's anointed. He cut off a corner of Saul's robe to prove that he could have taken care of Saul on the spot. What if David actually killed Saul? He could easily justify his action. He was innocent but the king attempted to get rid of him. David's problem would go away instantly. A fugitive would become a king. No more running and hiding from Saul. But that might put some tension to his friendship with Jonathan. On the one hand, Jonathan admitted that his father was wrong. However, he would remember for the rest of his life that his best friend killed his dad. Fellow Israelites might interpret that David was no better than Saul. They were equally ruthless and they both craved for power. David did not want to be that kind of king. Therefore, he submitted to Saul because he submitted to God's assignment. Notice David's gesture in verse 8 when he met Saul: ... **David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage.** A blameless person prostrated before a blood-thirsty tyrant. That expression said a lot about David's character. At least some soldiers on both sides would witness it. It was a sharp contrast between the current king and a future king. The Bible tells us that good leaders or bad ones are all assigned by God. Paul says in Romans 13:1-2 – **1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.** When Paul talks about the authority, he refers to the Roman Empire. Even a pagan regime that persecuted Christians, and the Caesar who destroyed the temple and slaughtered Jews were assigned by God. No one wants to suffer under a wicked government. But God can wisely use even tragic events to accomplish His will. All authority comes from God. A leader is able to rule because God shares some power with the person. Therefore, any rebellion against an earthly ruler is a rebellion against God. This notion takes us to a second spiritual principle: **we should obey leaders even though we do not condone their ungodly leadership.** It goes without saying that no human system is perfect. Many leaders just want to hold onto their power, and other politicians only care about the next election. We may not agree with certain laws the government makes. In fact, some secular leaders are pushing regulations to eliminate Christianity. Regardless, we should obey the Lord by obeying our government, as long as its requirements do not contradict the Bible. We can peacefully protest against immoral regulations. For example, we argue from the Bible that God only creates two genders, marriage is between a husband and a wife and abortion is killing a baby. Very likely, ungodly officials will keep exerting pressure on us despite our submission. We cannot control how they treat us. But their attitude and actions do not excuse us from not following God's commands. Paul encourages us in Romans 12:14 – **Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.** Then also in verse 18: **If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.** David demonstrated those virtues. He treated Saul with mercy and grace. Someone defines mercy as not getting something you deserve, while grace as getting something you do not deserve. Saul should have been punished for his sins. But David spared his life. Moreover, Saul got the respect and even blessing from David that he did not deserve. Those reactions are rare in today's world. People equate meekness with weakness. The world says it is noble to ignore an offense. We are told to fight for

our rights at all cost. Therefore, retaliation is reasonable. But God tells us to show kindness even to those who mistreat us. We are called to live by a different standard. We will only do so if we trust that God is in control of the world and our lives. He always watches over us.

2. 期待神的判斷 Expect God's Assessment

David overlooked the opportunity to kill Saul because he respected God's assignment. He spared Saul's life also because he expected God's assessment. In other words, David left the final verdict to God as to who was right and who was wrong. He says in verse 12: **“May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.”** David repeats the same notion in verse 15. It was quite clear that Saul was guilty as charged. But David refrained from playing God's role of an avenger. David understood that in the end every person was accountable to God. He did not only need to wait to become a king, he also must wait for God's final assessment. God would punish Saul if He determined that Saul was at fault. The king actually had the same standard in his mind. Saul says something along the same logic in verse 19: **“... So may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me this day.”** He knew that he was sinful and David was righteous. He believed that eventually God would compensate David for his kindness. From our perspective, we often feel that God is being unfair. We question why some people suffer from poverty and disease all their life, and they are oppressed by the rich and powerful. Other people gain fame and fortune through immoral means. They enjoy all the pleasure with a long and healthy life. God may not be fair according to our standard. But He is always just. There will be a consequence for sin, whether it is in this life or in eternity. Those who do not confess their sins and receive God's salvation grace will have to bear the outcome for their sins when they meet God. Therefore, we should not lose hope when we or others become victims of injustice. We should wait for God to exercise justice. Paul urges us in Romans 12:19 – **Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”** In our story today, David himself, his men and Saul all interpreted that God delivered Saul into David's hand. It made sense for David to pay back to Saul for what he deserved. However, David refused to repay evil with evil. It does not mean that David simply turned himself in and let Saul do whatever he wished. David used his God-given wisdom to protect himself and his followers. In our daily life, we seek God's protection and stay alert to potential dangers. We lock our doors at home and we ask the authority for help when needed. Also, the legal system is in place to protect innocent people and penalize wrongdoers. But after we have exhausted all our resources, we leave the final judgment to God. He will avenge our grievances. From this, we can arrive at our third spiritual principle: **if we let God be the judge, then we should not play the role of an executioner.** We can use an election to remove ungodly leaders from the office. But it is wrong to plot an assassination of a ruler. People conjured up schemes to take down Hitler and other wicked figures in history. The end does not justify the means. An evil solution will not eliminate an evil regime. We should wait for God's assessment, although it may not happen right away. Indeed, people will continue to suffer. Many Christians throughout history went through the same ordeal. Suffering is a repeated theme in many New Testament books. Believers knew what they would face. But they had joy instead of bitterness. They knew that they faced hardship not because they did something wrong. Quite the contrary. They were persecuted because they believed in the truth. A common topic in the Bible that goes hand-in-hand with suffering for the Christian faith is the second coming of Jesus. Jesus will exercise a righteous judgment on His

return. Here is God's promise in the last chapter of the Bible. He says in Revelation 22:12 – **“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.”** Ultimately, God will make all things right. The human justice system may have flaws. Some judges are biased, others may be corrupt. But even when criminals escape the court of this world, they will not be able to dodge the court of heaven. Here is the fourth spiritual principle we should keep in mind: **God's justice may be delayed, but it will never be denied.** People choose to commit crimes because they ignore God's standard. The biggest sin of all is to reject God. Therefore, people oppose what we believe because they refuse God. Of all the messengers who suffered for proclaiming the truth, Jesus is our prime example. 1 Peter 2:21-23 read: **21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.** The most innocent man in history suffered the biggest injustice. Jesus was a victim of a mistrial, and He died of a conspiracy. Jesus sacrificed Himself because He loved us. The righteous Lord was killed for us undeserved sinners. Through all that, Jesus also set an example for us. He told us upfront that people will act against us because they acted against Him. We should not be surprised if people mistreat us because we bear Jesus' name. But just like Jesus did not avenge Himself, we too must put our hope in God.

結論 CONCLUSION

David looked at the big picture from God's perspective, instead of focusing on his loss and gain. Therefore, he let God be God and let Saul be his king. David patiently lived as the head of a rebel for now. He cut off a piece from Saul's robe. A few years ago, prophet Samuel told Saul that God had rejected him to be the king. As Samuel was leaving, Saul held onto Samuel's robe and ripped off a strip. The prophet told Saul that just like that, God had cut off Saul's throne. It would be given to a person who was better than him. Now David got a corner of Saul's robe. It was as if God gave David a token of the future leadership. A thousand years later, another King gave up His robe. Some Romans soldiers took off Jesus' robe. They roll dice to decide who should keep it. This King of all kings did not have a royal garment. He humbled Himself and died like a criminal. Today, Jesus calls us to identify with Him. Many people in the world want to be kings and queens in their circle. But Jesus asks us to be His followers and servants.

引言 INTRODUCTION

我們似乎都相信因果報應真的存在。有句話說：「善有善報，惡有惡報。若然不報，時辰未到。」你希望超速切入在你前面的司機會被警察攔住。你期望那些對窮人有同情心的人會得到祝福。如果這些結果沒有出現你會怎樣想？大衛就處於這樣的情形。我們先大致看一下今天的故事，然後從中找一些可以應用到日常生活的屬靈原則。在上一章中，掃羅的軍隊幾乎把大衛的手下包圍。忽然，一位使者告訴王，非利士人攻擊另一個地區。掃羅只好回去與敵人作戰。當我們來到第 24 章時，那場戰事已經結束。掃羅聽說大衛在死海西邊的隱基底。於是，他率領三千名精銳士兵去那邊。經文說現在大衛的跟隨者從 400 人增加到 600 人（比較撒母耳記上 23:13）。因此，掃羅有五比一的優勢。我們在第 3-4 節看到一個有趣的場景。掃羅在辦公。他獨自處於脆弱的狀態。如果大衛攻擊掃羅，他必須決定要拿衣服還是拿刀。但是大衛沒有利用這個機會。掃羅走出山洞後，大衛在第 10-12 節解釋為什麼他饒了掃羅一命。掃羅被良心責備，放聲大哭。他在第 17-21 節回應大衛。掃羅被羞辱，於是他回家去。但當然，他後來再次回來。這是大衛在目前反復出現的情況。掃羅試圖抓大衛，但神卻保護他。大衛雖然是無辜的，卻遭受不公正的待遇。我們也會面對類似的情況。就算你沒有做錯任何事，你周圍的人也可能對你不友善。社會上也有許多不公義的事。我們想做些事來改變現狀。我們可以從大衛身上學到一些功課。他放棄了殺掃羅的黃金機會。大衛從神的角度看大局，而不只是關注個人的得與失。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 尊重神的安排 Respect God's Assignment

大衛沒有自作主張來處理事情，有兩個主要原因。首先，他尊重神的安排。大衛明白是神把掃羅放在領導的位置。注意大衛如何稱呼掃羅。大衛稱他為「我的主」（第 6、8 和 10 節），「王」（第 8 和 14 節）。他還稱掃羅為「我父」（第 11 節），意思是岳父或是一位年長的人。大衛尊重掃羅是國家的領袖和他的老闆。除此之外，大衛說掃羅是「耶和華的受膏者」（第 6 和 10 節）。掃羅沒有贏得選舉。他也沒有像獨裁者那樣奪權。其實一開始他並不想當王。當人們要求立王時，神揀選掃羅成為王。神將掃羅擺在寶座上是有祂的心意。掃羅將繼續統治，直到神完成祂在掃羅身上的目的。因此大衛情願等待神對他的安排。我

們必須承認忍耐是一個很難學的功課。我們希望昨天就已經把明天的事情做完。我們為失去的機會而難過。有人說：等待的人會有好結果。但經驗告訴我們，晚來的人便會吃虧。但事實是，如果我們超神的車，我們便得不到祂最美的祝福。在這裡，我們可以得出第一個屬靈原則：**我們對神的信心必須包括相信祂的計劃和祂的時間**。神是我們所有祝福的源頭。祂比我們更了解我們的需要。當神沒有立即滿足我們的要求時，我們會懷疑祂是否保留祂的祝福。但神可能利用這段時間來鍛煉我們的品格，就像祂在大衛身上所做的那樣。大衛順服神的旨意。他在第 6 節和第 10 節中兩次說他不敢伸手傷害耶和華的受膏者。他割下掃羅外袍的一角，證明他可以當場把掃羅殺死。如果大衛真的殺了掃羅會怎樣呢？他有充分的理由為自己辯護。他是無辜的，但王卻試圖除掉他。大衛的問題會馬上解決。逃犯會成為王。他不再需要逃難和躲避掃羅。但這可能會影響他與約拿單的友誼。一方面，約拿單承認父親不對。然而，他一輩子都會記得，他最好的朋友殺了他的父親。以色列人可能會認為大衛並不比掃羅好。他們同樣冷酷無情，只渴望得到權力。大衛不希望成為那樣的王。因此，他順服掃羅，因為他順服神的安排。請注意第 8 節中大衛遇見掃羅時的姿勢：**…大衛就屈身、臉伏於地下拜**。一個無辜的人向一個冷血的暴君跪拜。這個動作充分表現了大衛的品格。在現場有一些雙方的士兵都可能看見。這是現任的君王和未來的君王之間的鮮明對比。聖經告訴我們，不論好與壞的領袖都是神所安排的。保羅在羅馬書 13:1-2 說：**1 在上有权柄的，人人當順服他，因為沒有權柄不是出於神的。凡掌權的都是神所命的。2 所以，抗拒掌權的就是抗拒神的命；抗拒的必自取刑罰**。當保羅談到權柄時，他指的是羅馬帝國。就連一個迫害基督徒的異教政權，以及毀壞聖殿、屠殺猶太人的凱撒，都是神安排的。沒有人願意在一個邪惡的政府下受苦。但是神充滿智慧，祂甚至可以使用悲慘的事件來成就祂的旨意。所有的權柄都來自神。領袖們之所以能夠統治，是因為神與人分享一些權力。因此，對抗地上的統治者就是對抗神。這個事實帶出第二個屬靈原則：**我們必須服從領袖，雖然我們不認同他們不敬虔的領導**。當然，沒有任何人間的制度是完美的。許多領袖們只想保住自己的權力，而一些政客只關心下一次選舉。我們可能也不同意政府制定的某些法律。事實上，一些不信神的領袖極力地透過法律來消滅基督信仰。無論如何，只要政府的要求不與聖經衝突，我們就應該通過服從政府來服從主。我們可以用和平的方式抗議不道德的規定。例如，我們根據聖經來辨論，神只創造了兩種性別，婚姻是一夫一妻，墮胎是殺死嬰兒。很可能，就算我們順服，不敬虔的官員仍然會不段施加壓力。我們無法控制別人如何對待我們。但他們的態度和行為並不能成為我們不遵守神命令的藉口。保羅在羅馬書 12:14 中鼓勵我們：**逼迫你們的，要給他們祝福；只要祝福，不可咒詛**。然後他在第 18 節補充：**若是能行，總要盡力與眾人和睦**。大衛展示了這些美德。他向掃羅表達憐憫和恩

典。有人將憐憫定義為沒有得到你應得的東西，而恩典是得到你不配得的東西。掃羅本應因他的罪而受到懲罰，但大衛饒了他的命。掃羅也不配得到大衛的尊重，甚至祝福。這樣的回應在這個世代是罕見的。人們把溫柔等同於軟弱。世人說不記仇是高尚的品格。爭取自己的權利是正常的。因此，報復是合理的。但神告訴我們，要向那些虧待我們的人表現出恩慈。神要求我們按照不同的標準生活。唯有當我們相信神掌管著世界和我們的生命時，我們才會這樣做。祂總是在看顧我們。

2. 期待神的判斷 Expect God's Assessment

大衛因為尊重神的安排而不去殺掃羅。他饒了掃羅的性命，也是因為他期待神的判斷。換句話說，大衛把最後的審判權交給神，讓祂來定誰對誰錯。他在第 12 節說：「願耶和華在你我中間判斷是非，在你身上為我伸冤，我卻不親手加害於你。」大衛在第 15 節重複了同樣的觀點。很明顯，掃羅是罪有應得的。但是大衛沒有代表神去報仇。大衛明白，最終每個人都要對神負責。他不僅要等候成為王，他還要等待神最終的判斷。如果神確定掃羅有錯，祂會懲罰掃羅。王心裡其實也有相同的標準。掃羅在第 19 節中按照同樣的邏輯說話：「…願耶和華因你今日向我所行的，以善報你。」他知道自己是有罪的，而大衛是公義的。他相信神最終會獎賞大衛的仁慈。從我們的角度來看，我們常常覺得神是不公平的。我們質疑為什麼有些人終生貧窮、疾病纏身，受權貴欺壓。其他人則以不道德的手段獲得名利。他們享樂，並且健康長壽。按照我們的標準，神可能不公平。但祂永遠是公義的。罪會帶來後果，無論是在今生還是在永恆。那些不肯認罪，不接受救恩的人，將來到神面前就要為自己的罪承擔後果。因此，當我們或其他人成為不公正的受害者時，我們不應該失去盼望。我們應該等候神施行公義。保羅在羅馬書 12:19 節中教導我們：親愛的弟兄，不要自己伸冤，寧可讓步，聽憑主怒；因為經上記著：「主說：『伸冤在我；我必報應。』」在今天的故事中，大衛本人、他的手下和掃羅都明白是神將掃羅交在大衛的手中。大衛若要報仇也是合乎情理的。然而，大衛拒絕以惡報惡。這並不是說大衛應該去自首，讓掃羅為所欲為。大衛用神所賜的智慧來保護自己和他的跟隨者。在日常生活中，我們尋求神的保護，提防潛在的危險。我們在家裡鎖上門，在需要時向警察尋求幫助。此外，司法制度是要保護無辜的人並懲罰犯法的人。但是當我們用盡這些資源之後，我們將最終的審判權留給神。祂會為我們伸冤。我們可以從這裡得出第三個屬靈原則：**如果我們讓神來做審判官，那麼我們就不應該成為執法的人。**我們可以通過選舉把不敬虔的領袖革職。但暗殺統治者是不對的。人們想出各種計劃來幹掉希特勒和其他歷史上邪惡的人。我們認為目標正確並不代表我們可以不擇手段。邪惡的解決方法不能消滅邪惡的政權。我們必須等待神的判斷，雖然它可能不會立即發生。事實上，人

們將繼續受苦。歷史上許多基督徒都經歷過同樣的困難。苦難是許多新約書卷重複出現的主題。信徒們都清楚他們面對的處境。但是他們心中有喜樂而不是苦毒。他們知道他們面臨困難並不是因為他們做錯了什麼。恰恰相反。他們是因為相信真理而受到迫害。聖經中一個與為信仰受苦密切相關的主題是耶穌的再來。耶穌回來時會施行公義的審判。這是神在聖經最後一章的應許。祂在啟示錄 22:12 節說：「看哪，我必快來！賞罰在我，要照各人所行的報應他。」最終，神會消滅一切的罪。人間的司法制度可能有缺陷。有些法官有偏見，另外有些法官可能腐敗。但就算罪犯逃得過地上的法庭，他們也逃不過天上的法庭。這是我們應該記住的第四個屬靈原則：**神的公義也許會延遲，但是一定會執行**。人們選擇犯罪是因為他們妄顧神的標準。最大的罪就是拒絕神。因此，人們反對我們的信仰，因為他們拒絕神。在所有因宣揚真理而受苦的使者中，耶穌是我們最好的榜樣。彼得前書 2:21-23 說：**21 你們蒙召原是為此；因基督也為你們受過苦，給你們留下榜樣，叫你們跟隨他的腳蹤行。22 他並沒有犯罪，口裡也沒有詭詐。23 他被罵不還口；受害不說威嚇的話，只將自己交託那按公義審判人的主**。歷史上最無辜的人遭受了最大的不公義。耶穌是被誣告的受害者，並死於一場陰謀。耶穌犧牲自己是因為祂愛我們。公義的主為我們這些不配的罪人而死。藉著這一切，耶穌也為我們樹立了榜樣。祂預先告訴我們，人們會反對我們，因為他們反對祂。如果人們因為我們屬於耶穌而苦待我們，我們不應該感到驚訝。但就像耶穌沒有為自己主持公義一樣，我們也必須把盼望寄託在神身上。

結論 CONCLUSION

大衛從神的角度看大局，而不只是關注個人的得與失。因此，他讓神作他的主，他讓掃羅作他的王。大衛暫時以革命黨的領袖身份耐心等候。他從掃羅的外袍剪下了一角。幾年前，先知撒母耳告訴掃羅，神拒絕了他做王。撒母耳離開時，掃羅抓住撒母耳的外袍，扯下了一片。先知告訴掃羅，就像他的衣服一樣，神也奪回掃羅的王位，要把它賜給一個比他更好的人。現在大衛得到了掃羅袍子的一角。就好像神給了大衛未來領導的象徵。一千年後，另一位君王放棄了他的外袍。一些羅馬士兵脫下耶穌的袍子，然後抽籤決定誰可以留作紀念。這位萬王之王沒有一件王袍。祂謙卑自己，像罪犯一樣死去。今天，耶穌呼召我們與祂認同。世界上很多人都想成為自己圈子裡的皇帝和皇后。但耶穌要求我們成為祂的跟隨者和僕人。