

引言 INTRODUCTION

There are certain people you often meet but you may not quite get along with. Perhaps they have different interests or personalities. They may see you as a competitor or a rival. I remember a lady named Cecilia in my first job after I graduated from school. I was a lab manager and she was a postdoc fellow. I was supposed to assist her in her work. Cecilia was smart, hard-working but prideful. When she wanted something, she must have it right away. Honestly, I did not like her manner. Gradually, I found myself reluctant to cooperate with her. Cecilia was upset about it. She then complained it to our boss, who is also a lady! One day my boss called me into her office. I thought it was a good opportunity to defend my case. She said calmly but firmly: “You don’t have to like Cecilia to work with her. Just be professional. You can find another job if you don’t want to be here.” I learned my lesson. God reminded me to be a peace-maker in the work place. From then on, Cecilia and I had a much better work relationship. In our story, David did not only have to deal with a person who did not like him. Saul tried to kill him. Chapter 26 shares some similarities with chapter 24. In both incidents, David let go of an opportunity to strike Saul at a close distance. Sandwiched between the two stories is the account about Nabal, the wealthy guy who refused to give food and water to David. God judged Nabal. Saul would face the same outcome later. For now, he kept chasing David. Saul was driven by the evil in his heart. Since the problem was bigger than David could handle, he must rely on God. What opposes us today may be people who do not like us. Perhaps your classmates are jealous of your grades or your colleagues are envious of your job performance. But if we suffer for unrighteousness, then we become victims of wickedness. Just like David did, we must try to maintain harmony with people while waiting for God’s vindication.

解釋 EXPLANATION

The story begins when a clan of Israelites called Ziphites played the role of informants to Saul again. They reported David’s whereabouts to Saul just like they did before. Saul responded the same way by sending three thousands best soldiers for a cat-and-mouse chase. However, this time David employed a different strategy. Besides playing defense by escaping, David played a little offense too. Verse 4 says: **David sent out spies and learned that Saul had indeed come.** David asked his men to locate where Saul was. He intended to meet Saul in-person. After the night fell, David shared his plan in verse 6-7: **6 Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab’s brother Abishai the son of Zeruiah, “Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?” And Abishai said, “I will go down with you.” 7 So David and Abishai went to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay around him.** Let us get to know the few characters here. This Ahimelech was a soldiers who shared the same name as the priest at Nob whom Saul killed. Zeruiah was David’s sister. Therefore, the two brothers Abishai and Joab were David’s nephews. It is common to recruit relatives as one’s

assistants. For the same reason, Saul assigned his cousin Abner to be a commander. The text says Abner slept next to Saul to protect him, and the rest of the soldiers were surrounding the two men. Security was tight to guard the king.

Abishai volunteered to go with David for the dangerous mission. What did David plan to do? Listen to a conversation between David and Abishai in [verse 8-12](#). Abishai thought it was an assassination task. Here are his reasonings. First, Saul treated David as an enemy. Therefore, David should look at Saul the same way. Second, he interpreted that God put Saul into David's hands. Third, Saul was in a vulnerable situation. Abishai could get the job done easily and quickly. No one might realize that their king was killed until daybreak, and they would have no idea who did it. David rebuked Abishai just like he condemned the men in the cave who suggested him to kill Saul. Abishai blamed Saul for causing all the calamities. Removing the trouble-maker seemed to solve all the problems. However, David focused on God. He chose Saul as a king. David honored Saul as the Lord's anointed. God allowed a wicked man to chase after David. David did not know why. But he chose to believe in God. David looked beyond the present hardship and followed God's guidance. God had not completed His plans in David yet. Sometimes we hope good days will last forever. But we must be prepared for bad days too. God is always with us in smooth-sailing and in a stormy sea. He has a higher purpose even for things we do not understand. That is why we need faith when we walk with the Lord. We will not question God when He gives us good health, a happy family and a thriving career. But we may grumble to God when our body shows warning signs, our kids disobey or when we are laid off from work. God gives us no explanation does not mean that He has lost control in our life. We should wait on Him rather than drawing an early conclusion.

David refused to take matters into his own hands. He was confident that God would deal with Saul the way He saw fit. God could inflict Saul with a disease like He did to Nabal. God might cause Saul to perish in a battle. Regardless, it was none of David's business. His obligation was to respect Saul as the king anointed by God. David stole Saul's spear and water bottle to make a point. Just like he cut off a corner of Saul's robe in the cave, David proved that he could have killed Saul if he chose to. The spear was Saul's weapon. It was similar to a scepter that represented Saul's authority. Water is a critical resource in the Middle East. The symbolic meaning was that God put Saul's power and his life into David's hand. David and Abishai had to walk past three thousand elite fighters before they could reach Saul. The mission did not only require skills and bravery. David must also trust God for protection. God gave David a success by causing Saul and his men to fall into a deep slumber. That was a condition David could not foresee nor control. Theologians use the term God's Providence to describe inexplainable ways God uses to achieve His goals. Those of us who were here last Friday heard the sharing of Howard. He and his wife Debbie are people of faith. They tour around the country in their van to share the gospel. They look to God for their financial needs and their safety. Once Howard shared an amazing testimony. They had an outdoor concert in a certain city. The forecast called for a thunderstorm. Howard decided to hold the meeting as planned. Behold, in came the rain. But God protected the crowd. Somehow the storm system split when it arrived at the venue. Then it merged after it had passed the place. No one got wet! Howard concluded that it could only be God's work. We

cannot predict how God will work. We should never put Him to a test either. We should not pray: “Lord, I know you are real if I can get this and that.” We organize church ministries and conduct our lives by Biblical principles. We commit all the unknown factors to God. We then step out in faith and do our best. God will accomplish all that are in His will. Souls will be saved and believers will become more mature despite our limited manpower. You will get a job offer even though you feel under-qualified. An immigration application will be approved despite a first rejection. Successes or setbacks, they are part of God’s continuous work in our lives. They are not unrelated and meaningless episodes. God weaves them together to become a beautiful tapestry. He wants to mature our spiritual life and build our trust in Him.

Similar to the cave incident, David revealed himself to Saul later. He waited till he went over to the opposite side of the mountain. David began by rebuking Abner for failing to protect his king. Guards falling asleep in their watch is a capital offense. Then David declared his innocence to Saul again in **verse 19-20**. David listed two possible causes for Saul’s relentless pursuit of him. First, if God compelled Saul to do so, then David was willing to present a sin offering as an atonement. Second, if the king was persuaded by people, then may the Lord judge them. Both men surely knew the true reason behind Saul’s rage. David was being gracious to Saul. He stopped short of saying: “God would definitely punish you for what you do to me!” David described his experience as being deprived of God’s inheritance and being forced to serve an idol. David lost the privilege to worship God at the tabernacle, and he was driven out of his hometown. To him, it was like separating from God. To some modern people, the concept of hometown seems less relevant. Many of us are immigrants from overseas. We relocate to another city when job situation changes. But how much do we value our home church? The pandemic caused some far-reaching changes to the worship pattern of some Christians. They can comfortably “worship” in front of a screen wearing their pajamas while sipping coffee. They have no guilty feeling checking their phone when it buzzes because no one is watching them. When needed, they can even pause a video and take care of their businesses. They also enjoy the flexibility of watching a sermon any time, not to mention they can pick any speaker they like. But that is not church life! Nothing can substitute a hand-shake or a hug, face-to-face interaction, praying in a circle, eating at the table and singing together with people who love them. It is all about fostering relationship. We are one family in Christ. We have the responsibility to care for each other, especially those who are absent. Let us encourage members to maintain a habit of week church attendance.

David concluded his speech by affirming his trust in God in verse 23-24: **“23 The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord’s anointed. 24 Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation.”** David believed that God would eventually reward him for his integrity. He suffered injustice. But one day God would right all the wrongs. David also had faith that since God had rescued him on multiple occasions, He would continue to watch over him. Meanwhile, Saul was convicted by David’s words. Listen to his response in verse 21: ... **“I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly,**

and have made a great mistake.” Saul admitted that he was a fool. He also thanked David for sparing his life. Was Saul being sincere in his confession? Something was missing. A true repentance is more than a simple “I’m sorry.” Many celebrity figures did that when they were caught in wrongdoings. Only they know if they are truly remorseful for their conducts. According to the Bible, realizing one’s fault is only the first step of repentance. We hold ourselves accountable for offending God and others. It must be followed by actions to make compensation. For example, tax-collector Zacchaeus was accepted by Jesus. He then paid back money to the people he defrauded. Moreover, we must be determined not to repeat the same sins. Lastly, the wrongdoers must also seek reconciliation with the people they offended, and with God. Perhaps at this point Saul only felt embarrassed. Both men then parted their way. This was actually the last time Saul and David met.

結論 CONCLUSION

When we suffer for unrighteousness, we must try to maintain harmony with people while waiting for God’s vindication. In due time, God will work things out the way He has planned. I began today’s message by telling you my past failure. I did not show kindness to another person. Let me share with you another experience when I was the victim in a conflict. A brother-in-Christ was my roommate before I got married. For some strange reason I cannot even recall, he was mad about me. We seldom saw each other even in the apartment. He stopped going to church later. Soon after my wife and I got married, we began receiving nuisance phone calls in the middle of the night. We suspected it was from that brother. But we needed some proofs. Therefore, we subscribed to caller ID service. Then we confirmed that those calls originated from the same number. We were even able to trace them to an emergency phone booth in the campus. One night our phone rang again. I quickly asked another brother to rush to the scene. Lo and behold, the guy was caught red-handed. Now we had a witness and the caller ID record as an evidence. I pondered what to do next. Should I confront the brother or should I report it to the police? There was a storm the following evening. We had a brief power outage. Then I realized that the caller ID record was erased. It could not be clearer to me that God asked me to let go of the matter. I forgave the brother from my heart, and I also asked God to forgive me for the wicked thoughts of trying to make even. I did not harbor anger anymore. There was no more midnight phone call. God knows it when we are being unfairly treated. He asks us to do the right things regardless. Jesus prayed: “Father, forgive them, because they don’t know what they are doing.” He begged for pardon to those who nailed Him to the cross when He was still hanging there. We cannot control what our enemies will do and how God will deal with the matter eventually. But we can decide how we react. We as God’s children should imitate after Jesus’ example.

引言 INTRODUCTION

你可能會經常遇到一些跟你合不來的人。也許他們有不同的興趣或個性。他們認為你是個競敵，甚至是死對頭。我記得在我畢業後的第一份工作中有一位名叫 Cecilia 的女士。當時我負責管理實驗室，而她是個博士後研究生。我的任務是協助她的工作。Cecilia 聰明、勤奮但傲慢。當她想要什麼東西的時候，她必須馬上得到。老實說，我不喜歡她的態度。漸漸地，我不願意和她合作了。Cecilia 對此很不高興。然後她向老闆投訴，碰巧她也是一位女士！有一天，老闆叫我去她的辦公室。我認為這是為自己辯護的好機會。她平靜但堅定地說：「你不需要喜歡 Cecilia，你只要保持專業精神。如果你不想待在這裡，你可以找另一份工作。」我學到了教訓。神提醒我要在工作場所與人和睦。從那時起，Cecilia 和我的工作關係有了改善。在我們的故事中，大衛不僅要與一個不喜歡他的人打交道。掃羅試圖殺死他。第 26 章與第 24 章有一些相似之處。在這兩件事中，大衛都放棄了近距離攻擊掃羅的機會。夾在這兩個故事之間的是關於拿八的記載。拿八是拒絕給大衛食物和水的地主。神審判拿八。掃羅後來也會面臨同樣的結局。在目前，他一直在追著大衛。掃羅的內心被邪惡所充滿。這個問題超過大衛所能處理，因此他必須依靠神。今天與我們作對的可能是喜歡我們的人。也許你的同事嫉妒你的工作成果。但是如果我們是為義而受苦，那麼我們就成為了罪的犧牲品。就像大衛一樣，我們必須盡力與人保持和睦，並等待神來主持公道。

解釋 EXPLANATION

故事一開始說西弗人再次向掃羅告密。他們是以色列人的一族。他們像之前一樣向掃羅報告大衛的行蹤。掃羅以同樣的方式回應，派出三千精銳士兵進行貓捉老鼠的追逐。然而，這一次大衛採用了不同的策略。除了逃跑之外，大衛還採取了進攻。第 4 節說：**就打發人去探聽，便知道掃羅果然來到。**大衛吩咐手下調查掃羅所在的地方。他打算親自與掃羅見面。當天晚上，大衛在第 6-7 節中講出他的計劃：**6 大衛對赫人亞希米勒和洗魯雅的兒子約押的兄弟亞比篩說：「誰同我下到掃羅營裏去？」亞比篩說：「我同你下去。」7 於是大衛和亞比篩夜間到了百姓那裏，見掃羅睡在輜重營裏；他的槍在頭旁，插在地上。押尼珥和百姓睡在他周圍。**讓我們認識一下這裡的幾個角色。這個亞希米勒是一個士兵，與掃羅所殺挪伯城的祭司同名。洗魯雅是大衛的姐妹。因此，亞比篩和約押兩兄弟是大衛的外甥。找親戚做自己的助手是很常見的。因此，掃羅也

委派他的堂兄弟押尼珥做元帥。經文說押尼珥睡在掃羅旁邊保護他，其餘的士兵圍著他們兩個人。掃羅王受到了嚴密的保護。

亞比篩自願與大衛一起去執行危險的任務。大衛打算做什麼？請聽第 8-12 節中大衛和亞比篩的對話。亞比篩以為那是個暗殺的行動。下面是他的理由。首先，掃羅將大衛視為敵人。因此，大衛應該以同樣的眼光看待掃羅。其次，他認為神將掃羅交在大衛的手中。第三，掃羅在脆弱的處境中。亞比篩可以輕而易舉地完成任務。可能到天亮時士兵才會發現他們的王被殺，他們也不知道是誰幹的。大衛斥責亞比篩，就像他在山洞裡責備那些建議他殺死掃羅的人一樣。亞比篩把所有問題歸咎於掃羅。除掉他似乎便解決一切。然而，大衛定睛在神身上。祂揀選掃羅為王。大衛尊重掃羅為耶和華的受膏者。大衛不明白為何神允許一個惡人追趕他。但他選擇了相信神。大衛的視野超越過目前的苦難，他跟隨神的指引。神還沒有在大衛身上完成祂的計劃。有時我們希望好日子會一直持續下去。但我們也必須為不好的日子做好準備。神總是與我們同在，無論我們是一帆風順，還是在驚濤駭浪中。就算我們不明白的事情，神也有更高的旨意。因此當我們與主同行時需要信心。當神賜予我們健康、幸福的家庭和順利的事業時，我們不會懷疑祂。但是當我們的身體出現警告信號、我們的孩子不聽話或當我們被解僱時，我們可能會埋怨神。神沒有給我們任何解釋並不表示祂對我們的生命失控。我們應該等候祂，而不要太早下定論。

大衛拒絕親自動手。他相信神會按照祂認為適合的方式對待掃羅。神可以像審判拿八一樣，讓掃羅患病。神也可以使掃羅戰死沙場。無論如何，這不是大衛的事。他的義務是尊掃羅為神所膏立的君王。大衛偷了掃羅的長矛和水瓶來證明一點。就像他在山洞裡割下掃羅袍子的角落一樣，大衛證明他本可以殺死掃羅。長矛是掃羅的武器。它類似於代表掃羅權柄的權杖。水是中東的重要資源。含義是神將掃羅的權柄和性命交在大衛手中。大衛和亞比篩必須經過三千精銳戰士才能到達掃羅。這項任務不僅需要技巧和膽量。大衛還必須相信神的保護。神使掃羅和他的手下沉睡，讓大衛成功。這是大衛無法預見或控制的情況。神學家使用「神的護理」這個詞來描述神使用人無法解釋的方式來達成祂的心意。大部份弟兄姐妹上週五聽到 Howard 的分享。他和他的太太 Debbie 是信心堅定的人。他們開車周遊全國，分享福音。他們把經濟上的需要和路上的平安仰望神。有一次 Howard 分享了一個奇妙的見證。他們在某個城市舉行戶外音樂會。天然預告說會有雷雨。Howard 決定按計劃聚會。看著暴風雨快要來到。但是神保護了群眾。風暴到達會場時不知何故分開了，然後它在經過那地方之後又合起來。結果沒有人被淋濕！Howard 得出結論，這只能是神的作為。我們無法預計神會如何工作。我們也不可以試探神。我們不應該禱告：「主啊，如果我能得到這個和那個，我就知道你是真實的。」我們編排教會事工，並按

照聖經原則去生活。我們把所有未知的因素交託給神。然後，我們憑著信心走出去，盡力而為。如果某些事情在神的旨意中，祂必然會成就。儘管我們的人手有限，但靈魂將得救，信徒會變得更加成熟。縱然你覺得自己不夠格，你也會獲得工作機會。儘管第一次申請被拒絕，移民局的手續會獲得批准。成功或挫折，都是神在我們生命中持續的工作。它們不是不相關且毫無意義的事件。神將它們編織在一起，組成一幅美麗的圖畫。神希望我們的靈命成熟並對祂的信心增長。

和在山洞的事件類似，大衛後來向掃羅現身。他一直等到他走到對面的山頭。大衛斥責押尼珥沒有保護他的王。守衛在值班時睡著是死罪。然後大衛在**第 19-20 節**再次向掃羅表明自己是清白的。大衛指出掃羅不斷追捕他的兩個可能原因。首先，如果神驅使掃羅那樣做，那麼大衛願意獻上贖罪祭作為補償。第二，如果王是被人們誤導了，那麼願主審判他們。他們兩人當然都知道掃羅發怒的真正原因。大衛在這裡向掃羅施恩。他沒有說：「神一定會因為你對我做的壞事而懲罰你！」大衛形容他的經歷好像被剝奪了神的產業並被迫事奉偶像。大衛失去了在會幕敬拜神的機會，並且被趕出家鄉。對他來說，這就像與神分離。對於一些現代人來說，家鄉的概念似乎比較含糊。我們中的許多人都是來自海外的移民。當工作發生變化時，我們需要搬到別的城市。但是我們有多重視我們的教會這個屬靈的家呢？疫情改變了一些基督徒的敬拜模式。他們可以穿著睡衣舒服地在屏幕前崇拜，然後一邊喝著咖啡。每當手機響起時他們便隨意查看，反正沒有人在看他們。在需要時，他們甚至可以暫停視頻並處理他們的事務。他們還可以等到有空的時候才看講道的錄影，更不用說他們可以挑自己喜歡的講員。但這不是教會生活！沒有什麼可以代替握手或擁抱、面對面的互動、圍在一起禱告、一起吃飯和一起唱詩。這些都是建立關係的方式。我們在基督裡是一家人。我們有責任互相關心，尤其是關心那些缺席的人。讓我們鼓勵成員們保持每週來教會聚會的習慣。

大衛在**第 23-24 節**中重申他對神的信心來結束他的演話：**23 「今日耶和華將王交在我手裏，我卻不肯伸手害耶和華的受膏者。耶和華必照各人的公義誠實報應他。24 我今日重看你的性命，願耶和華也重看我的性命，並且拯救我脫離一切患難。」**大衛相信神最終會因他的正直而獎賞他。他遭遇到不公平。但總有一天，神會糾正所有的錯誤。大衛也深信神既然多次拯救了他，神會繼續看顧他。與此同時，掃羅因大衛的話而良心受到責備。聽聽他在**第 21 節**中的回應：…**「我有罪了！我兒大衛，你可以回來，因你今日看我的性命為寶貴；我必不再加害於你。我是糊塗人，大大錯了。」**掃羅承認他是個愚昧的人。他還感謝大衛饒了他一命。掃羅的認罪是真誠的嗎？欠缺了什麼東西？真正的悔改不只是一句簡單的「對不起」。許多名人在被抓到時都會這樣說。只有他們才

知道，他們是否真的為自己的行為感到懊悔。按照聖經，認錯只是悔改的第一步。我們承認冒犯了神和別人。但是之後必須彌補錯誤。例如，稅吏撒該得到耶穌的接納。然後他把錢還給他曾經欺騙的人。此外，我們必須有不再犯錯的決心。最後，犯罪的人還必須與他們所冒犯的人以及與神和好。或許這時候掃羅只覺得失去面子。兩人隨後分道揚鑣。這實際上是掃羅和大衛最後一次的見面。

結論 CONCLUSION

當我們為義受苦時，我們必須盡力與人保持和睦，並等待神來主持公道。在適當的時候，神會按照祂的計劃來處理事情。在開始的時候我分享了自己過去的失敗經歷。我沒有向別人表達友善。在另一次衝突中，我是個受害人。一位弟兄在我結婚前是我的室友。出於某些我甚至不記得的原因，他對我生氣。從此我們在公寓裡也很少見面。後來他也停止去教會聚會。我和太太結婚後不久，我們就開始在半夜接到騷擾電話。我們懷疑是那位弟兄打來的。但我們需要一些證據。因此，我們申請了來電顯示服務。然後我們確認那些電話是來自同一個號碼。然後我們追蹤到電話是從校園內的某個求救電話打出來的。一天晚上，我們的電話又響起來。我馬上請另一位弟兄趕到現場。結果，那個人當場被抓到。現在我們有人證和物證。我考慮下一步該怎麼做。我應該找那位弟兄理論還是應該報警？第二天晚上下了暴風雨，電力中斷了幾分鐘。然後我發現來電顯示記錄通通沒有了。我再清楚不過了，神不要我追究這件事。我從心裡原諒了那位弟兄，我也求神赦免我想要報復的惡念。我不再有怒氣。那些電話也停止了。當我們受到不公平待遇時，神是知道的。祂要求我們無論如何都要做正確的事。耶穌禱告說：「父啊，赦免他們，因為他們所作的，他們不曉得。」當耶穌還掛在十字架上之時，祂懇求天父饒恕那些把祂釘在上面的人。我們無法控制敵人會做什麼，也無法預計神最終會如何解決事情。但我們可以決定自己如何回應。我們作為神的兒女，必須效法耶穌的榜樣。