

Recap of 4/26/26 message by Chris Sommerfield
("Covenants and Consequences) 2 Samuel 21:1-22

- This passage recounts David's response to a famine in Israel, revealing how godly leadership, exemplified by David, can bring about repentance, restoration, and change in a nation. Leadership that operates apart from God and His will becomes destructive rather than redemptive regardless of how noble, zealous, or pious that leadership may appear. Godly leadership keeps God's covenants, acts to set things right, and inspires others even changing a nation. Howard Hendricks: "The greatest crisis in the world today is a crisis of leadership, and the greatest crisis of leadership is a crisis of character."
- With the famine in Israel David first inquires of the Lord showing his desire to act according to God's will and wisdom. It is revealed that the famine is a curse upon the land due to Saul breaking a covenant made with the Gibeonites in the time of Joshua. David acts to set things right with the Gibeonites, and as he does so he keeps the covenants he has made, including the covenant with Mephibosheth. Saul's attack on the Gibeonites stemmed from his zeal for Israel and Judah, despite an ancient covenant protecting them demonstrating a profound leadership failure rooted in misguided piety rather than genuine faithfulness to God's will. David; however, responded to the Gibeonites with compassion while maintaining covenants, standing in sharp contrast to Saul's covenant-breaking approach. Saul's leadership failure illustrates how religious zeal divorced from careful discernment of God's will and respect for binding obligations becomes destructive rather than redemptive.
- Godly leadership inspires others and can even change a nation. More battles with the Philistines occur and four more giants are mentioned. This time; however, it is the soldiers of Israel who kill these giants and even tell David to stay in safety, so his leadership is not extinguished. When David arrives on the scene as a young shepherd boy the entire nation of Israel was fearful and refused to meet Goliath on the battlefield. Now they are not acting in fear, but are following the example David has shown, and his godly leadership, modeled by repentance and a desire to remain in God's will, inspires the nation.
- When we are pressed, we may be tempted to compromise our character and adopt an "ends justify the means" approach. We need to remember that the way in which a goal is achieved is just as important as the goal itself. Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), an Irish Christian missionary spent 55 years in south India working to help children be free of ritual sexual exploitation in Hindu temples. She famously wrote, "So many places, to judge by results, seem to be great biscuit manufacturers and they turn out tidy boxes of biscuits. I pray for soldiers, not biscuits!" Her point was that in an effort to rapidly produce missionaries' organizations were using a standardized method and rushing the process to the point where many of the people compromised their character and integrity when things became hard. The biscuits crumbled under pressure. They looked good, but they lacked value and eventually broke apart. Are you a biscuit or a soldier?