

Payback with Honor

Part three of the series, "Made for Greatness: After God's Heart"

Sunday, October 16, 2022 | Vien Laureta

HONORING God will lead to persecution.

"When the victorious Israelite army was returning home after David had killed the Philistine, women from all the towns of Israel came out to meet King Saul. They sang and danced for joy with tambourines and cymbals. ⁷This was their song: 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!' ⁸This made Saul very angry. 'What's this?' he said. 'They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they'll be making him their king!' ⁹So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David. ¹⁰The very next day a tormenting spirit from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did each day. But Saul had a spear in his hand, ¹¹and he suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David escaped him twice. ¹²Saul was then afraid of David, for the Lord was with David and had turned away from Saul. ¹³Finally, Saul sent him away and appointed him commander over 1,000 men, and David faithfully led his troops into battle. ¹⁴David continued to succeed in everything he did, for the Lord was with him. ¹⁵When Saul recognized this, he became even more afraid of him. ¹⁶But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was so successful at leading his troops into battle." (1 Samuel 18:6-16 NLT)

We grow in **FAITH** and **CHARACTER** in and through persecution.

"After Saul returned from fighting the Philistines, he was told that David had gone into the wilderness of En-gedi. ²So Saul chose 3,000 elite troops from all Israel and went to search for David and his men near the rocks of the wild goats. ³At the place where the road passes some sheepfolds, Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. But as it happened, David and his men were hiding farther back in that very cave! ⁴'Now's your opportunity!' David's men whispered to him. 'Today the Lord is telling you, "I will certainly put your enemy into your power, to do with as you wish.'" So David crept forward and cut off a piece of the hem of Saul's robe. ⁵But then David's conscience began bothering him because he had cut Saul's robe. ⁶He said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this to my lord the king. I shouldn't attack the Lord's anointed one, for the Lord himself has chosen him.' ⁷So David restrained his men and did not let them kill Saul. After Saul had left the cave and gone on his way..." (1 Samuel 24:1-7 NLT)

Our **RESPONSE** to persecution is worshipping God.

"David came out and shouted after him, 'My lord the king!' And when Saul looked around, David bowed low before him. ⁹Then he shouted to Saul, 'Why do you listen to the people who say I am trying to harm you? ¹⁰This very day you can see with your own eyes it isn't true. For the Lord placed you at my mercy back there in the cave. Some of my men told me to kill you, but I spared you. For I said, "I will never harm the king—he is the Lord's anointed one." ¹¹Look, my father, at what I have in my hand. It is a piece of the hem of your robe! I cut it off, but I didn't kill you. This proves that I am not trying to harm you and that I have not sinned against you, even though you have been hunting for me to kill me. ¹²May the Lord judge between us. Perhaps the Lord will punish you for what you are trying to do to me, but I will never harm you. ¹³As that old proverb says, "From evil people come evil deeds." ¹⁴So you can be sure I will never harm you. Who is the king of Israel trying to catch anyway? Should he spend his time chasing one who is as worthless as a dead dog or a single flea? ¹⁵May the Lord therefore judge which of us is right and punish the guilty one. He is my advocate, and he will rescue me from your power!" (1 Samuel 24:8-15 NLT)

"Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony." (Colossians 3:12-14 NLT)