

When Prudent Men Make Stupid Choices

1Samuel 27:1 - 30:9

When Prudent Men Make Stupid Choices

- Bible students who admire heroes of faith often forget that they had feet of clay
- We even go so far as to believe that God excused foolish, even sinful, behavior because they are heroes of faith
- Job questioned God, Abraham lied twice, Jacob was deceptive, David numbered Israel, and Judah hired harlots

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- While the texts do not specifically state that God disapproves, and the matter turned out for the good, we must never conclude that bad judgment and sinful behavior were overlooked by God because these were special people.
- Sin is sin, and God is not a respecter of persons, and that includes with heroes of faith.

When Prudent Men Make Stupid Choices

- Imagine being David
 - Told as a teenager that he would be the next king of Israel
 - Then in the royal palace performing for the king
 - Brought into national prominence
 - Killed the champion of Philistia, Goliath, with a single stone
 - Married the king's daughter and best friends with the king's son
 - Everything leading up to the point where he would become king in a decisive way

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- And then it starts coming apart
 - He is no longer in favor with the king, his wife leaves him, he can no longer see his best friend Jonathan, he is demoted and discharged from the army, and he is running from Saul, who is determined to kill him.
 - He continues to show compassion to others he could have robbed, harmed, or killed; but, he is treated poorly in return

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- Then one day he has had enough
 - It appears that God has forgotten him; it appears that his enemies are going to win; he becomes disillusioned and without hope
 - Something broke in David; he went from the pinnacle of influence to the pit of the fugitive.
 - While he was in that condition, he made a tragic decision and paid a high price.

Reasons For David's Decision

- David trusted the wrong confidant, instead of turning to God in prayer as he had so often done
 - 1Sam. 27:1 - “And David said in his heart, Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand.”

Reasons For David's Decision

- David believed the wrong counsel
 - When David communed with his heart, he forgot what God said to him.
- God promised David that he would be king - 1Sam. 16:1, 13
 - Jonathan confirmed it - 1Sam. 23:17
 - Confirmed by Abigail - 1Sam. 25:30-31
 - Even verified by Saul - 1Sam. 24:20

Reasons For David's Decision

- David forgot all of this when he believed he was in charge of his own future
 - Psalm 135:6 - “Whatever the LORD pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.”
 - Eph. 1:11 - “In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will”

Reasons For David's Decision

- David reached the wrong conclusions
 - He decided that he would be better off fleeing to the Philistines, where he thought he would be safe from King Saul. The future king of Israel ran to the arch enemies of God to beg for help

Reasons For David's Decision

- Beware of trusting your own heart. When we consult the heart, we access our human nature. Our human nature looks at things from the flesh
 - Gal. 5:19-21

Reasons For David's Decision

- When people say, “Well, I feel it in my heart,” they are usually headed for trouble
 - Jer. 17:9 - “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”
 - Prov. 28:26 - “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.”
- When someone says to you, “Just listen to what your heart is telling you,” they have given you advice that can lead to spiritual ruin

Results Of David's Decision

- The people in his life were affected
 - 1Sam. 27:2-3 - “Then David arose and went over with the six hundred men who were with him to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. 3 So David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's widow.”
 - Rom. 14:7 - “For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.”

Results Of David's Decision

- There is a price to pay for impacting others negatively
 - Luke 17:1-2 - “Then He said to the disciples, It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

Results Of David's Decision

- The pattern of his life was affected - 1Sam. 27:5-12.
- His decision to walk away from the Lord changed him completely.
 - v. 4 - He lived with a sense of false security.
 - v. 5 - He sought help from and ran with the wrong crowd.
 - v. 8-12 - He did things there that he never would have done before: murdered, lied, and aided the enemy of God.
 - v. 7 - He stayed in sin for 16 months.
 - Notice that no Psalms are attributed to David during this period of his life. The “Sweet Singer of Israel” lost his voice.

Results Of David's Decision

- Backsliders believe they will remain the same and return unchanged
- They live with a false sense of security
 - Rev. 3:19 - “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.”
 - Heb. 12:6-12

Results Of David's Decision

- They find they are soon doing things they would not have done before with a crowd they would not have run with
 - 1Cor. 15:33 - “Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.”

Results Of David's Decision

- They will find that their lifestyle has changed and find that years have passed while they languished in the far country.
- They find that their desire for spiritual things has dried up.

Results Of David's Decision

- The peace of his life was affected
 - 1Sam. 29:1 - 30:6
 - “Sin will take you farther than you want to go; keep you longer than you want to stay; and cost you more than you want to pay.” *(Ted Haggard, tent preacher)*

Results Of David's Decision

- David has fallen as far as a man can fall.
 - 1Sam. 29:1-5 - David lost his identity; he united with the Philistines, and they didn't even want him; they knew he wasn't truly one of them; at this point David didn't belong in either world
 - 1Sam. 29:6-8 - David showed how far he had fallen. The future king of Israel grovels at a pagan king's feet

Results Of David's Decision

- David has fallen as far as a man can fall.
 - 1Sam. 29:9-11 - David is declared to be a faithful servant of Achish
 - 1Sam. 30:1-5 - David reaps what he has sown. The Amalekites retaliate against David and his men for their earlier actions. Their families are taken captive and their city is burned to the ground. But, the pagans showed more mercy than David.
 - 1Sam. 30:6 - David reached the bottom. His men turn on him and threaten to kill him. They realize all of this is the result of David's foolish decision.

Results Of David's Decision

- There will be a price to pay, and God will have no trouble collecting it from our lives
 - Num. 32:23 - “Rest assured your sin will find you out”
 - Psalm 13:1-2 - “How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?”

Recovery From David's Decision

- David repented before the Lord
 - 1Sam. 30:6
- He turned his gaze back toward heaven when he saw the havoc he had wrought on earth

Recovery From David's Decision

- David relied on the Lord
 - 1Sam. 30:7
- He called on the Lord in prayer to seek God's will and His help.

Recovery From David's Decision

- David returned to the Lord
 - 1Sam. 30:8-9
- He goes out immediately to do what the Lord told him to do.

Recovery From David's Decision

- The first step in making things right is repentance
 - Prov. 28:13 - “He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”
 - 1John 1:9 - “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Recovery From David's Decision

- There is a temporal price to pay for the sins we commit
 - Gal. 6:7 - “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”
- But, when God forgives, He forgives immediately, completely and eternally.