

I WON'T DO IT

"Mine hand shall not" I Samuel 24:12

THE PROVOCATION OF DAVID

The truth is the truth, no matter what anyone says. And as David stood in that cave in En-gedi that day, the truth was as follows: David.

- Did not deserve Saul's jealousy and hatred.
- Had served Saul and Israel faithfully.
- Had been obedient to Saul.
- Had risked his life to prove his loyalty to Saul.
- Was guiltless in the face of Saul's accusations.

Yet, despite these truths, David found himself living a fugitive's life, constantly running from Saul.

THAT DAY IN THE CAVE

And then there he was. King Saul was in En-gedi pursuing David. But as with all of us, nature called, and Saul went into a nearby cave for privacy to attend to his needs. It was the cave where David and his men were hiding from Saul. In the back of the cave, David's men assured him God had brought Saul into that cave so David could kill him and end Saul's unjust pursuit. At that moment, David must have contemplated the many provocations he had experienced at the hands of Saul and his acolytes, which in the minds of many would have justified David taking his revenge on his enemy. Was it a partial yielding to those wholly justified temptations that compelled him to cut off a small piece of Saul's laid-aside clothes? Or did he plan to use it as he did to prove to Saul he could have killed him? Whatever his thoughts, immediately, he regretted doing it. He held his men back from harming Saul.

THEIR SHARED EXPERIENCE

As any good soldier would, David let Saul get a reasonable distance away before revealing his location. He called to Saul and bowed himself to the ground. David then showed him the proof that he could have killed him that day, which so many were telling Saul was David's goal, if he had wanted to. But David believed something. Something true. And that was the truth that God had anointed Saul to be captain of His people. David was the only other person on earth at that time who knew the transformative power of that experience. He knew what that touch of God had meant to him. And Saul had known that as well. And whatever had happened, David honored Saul as having been touched by God.

MINE HAND SHALL NOT

Therefore, David believed it would be wrong for him to harm Saul. And that belief caused him to vow to Saul, *"Mine hand shall not be upon thee"*. His conviction on this issue overpowered the advice of others, and whatever provocation came, and would come, his way. We used to call that holding a conviction. A, no matter what happens, I believe this, and I will not yield in a way contrary to this truth. Oh God, renew the power of conviction in your people. We need it so.