

Introduction: Peace, when defined as the absence of violence, is impossible in this world. Humans are incapable of bringing about lasting peace because all people are born with a tendency to sin. *** Only God can bring about peace. The first biblical word for peace has many shades of meaning, but each one assumes that it is God who gives peace to people. It basically means wholeness and completion, restoration of relationships: first with God, then people with people so unity is possible. Never was God's peace more needed than in the world today. On a practical, everyday, level peace means welfare, safety, health and God-given prosperity. *** The most important peace for everyone is peace with God through Jesus Christ after being made right with Him through faith (Romans 5:1). This leads to having the peace (which is) of God that is precious above all human understanding (Philippians 4:4-7). *** The troubling reality is that people who are not at peace with God are angry at the people who are at peace with God and are enjoying the peace of God. Many such people inflict physical violence on God's people. When this happens, God's people must call on Him in prayer and accept the fact that, for now, they will not have the peace that is the absence of violence. *** But, God's people can have inner peace and welfare because God always meets the needs of needy people (Psalm 35:10; 113:6-11). In His instruction to His people through Moses, God commanded His people to freely do all they could to help the poor and needy (Deuteronomy 15:7-8); and, He gave the same message through His prophets (Isaiah 58:6-11). Through the apostle Paul, God promised to meet all the needs of people who will together pick up their cross to worship Him with sacrificial giving to participate in the fellowship of proclaiming the Gospel (Philippians 4:15-19). *** In today's story, Saul continues to try to kill David. David must flee from this violence with the help of his wife, Saul's daughter. David finds the prophet-priest Samuel, and as Saul advances on David and Samuel, God's Spirit overwhelms Saul and his violence subsides. *** In David's Psalm, he asks his covenant God to pursue those who are pursuing him. He asks to be saved from those who are seeking his life. *** As we look at our passages this second Sunday of Advent, may we realize that God's peace is not always what we think of as peace.

I. Mical helps David escape death at Saul's command; then, she deceives his messengers and Saul accuses her of deception; then Saul pursues David until the Holy Spirit comes upon him and the people are amazed. (1 Samuel 19:11-24)

- A. Mical helps David escape from Saul's death command by deceiving his messengers and he calls her out for her deception. (Verses 11-17)

1. Then Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning; and David's wife, Mical, told him: If thou are not escaping (with) thy soul tonight, tomorrow thou are being killed; then Mical let David down through the window; then he fled away and escaped. (Verses 11-12)

Saul's death order: Saul told his messengers (angels in Hebrew) to watch over David's house all night and kill him in the morning.

Mical: David's wife gets wind of the plot soon enough and warns him in time to escape.

2. Then Mical took a (large) household idol and put it on the bed, and a net of goat's hair she put at its head, then she covered it with clothes. (Verse 13)

Fake David: For Mical to have any idol in the house was a violation of the second commandment. Then she attempted to make it look like a man, perhaps her husband.

3. Then the messengers Saul sent to take David (came), and then she said: He is being sick. (Verse 14)

Lie: This is an outright lie by Mical to Saul's men in violation of the ninth commandment.

4. Next, Saul sent messengers to see David (he) said: You all must bring him up in the bed to me so I kill him. (Verse 15)

Saul sends to kill: Saul is so bent on killing David, he commands his men to pick up David on his so called sick bed and take him to Saul to finish him off!

5. Then the messengers came: Behold! (There was) the household idol on the bed, and a net of goat's hair (was) at its head; then Saul said to Mical: Why thus have thou deceived me? And thou let my enemy go and he escaped; then Mical said to Saul: He said to me, thou must send me away, why will I cause thee to die? (Verses 16-17)

Discovery: On close inspection the messengers discovered Mical's ruse!

Saul to daughter: Saul demanded to know why his daughter did not honor him, but instead deceived him and let his enemy escape.

Mical's excuse: Mical excuses herself by saying David forced her to let him escape and threatened to kill her if she did not. The Author previously told us Mical had defiantly warned and aided David in his escape; but, now she lies again to her father at David's expense to save herself from her father's wrath.

Application: We should all follow Mical's first action of saving an innocent man from a king bent on evil.

We must all decide how far we will go to save innocent people from unjust rulers.

Consider Rahab with the Israelite spies (Joshua 2) and Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:19-20).

- B. Saul pursues David with his messengers to kill David, but the Holy Spirit comes upon all of them and they prophecy from Yahweh to the amazement of the people. (Verses 18-24)

1. Then David fled and escaped and came to Samuel at Ramah, then he told him all Saul had done; then he went (with) Samuel and they dwelt in Naioth. (Verse 18)

To Samuel: Ramah means hill, and was Samuel's home base in the western hills of Ephraim, northwest of Jericho. Naioth was a village in Ramah about five miles from where David had been.

2. Then it was told to Saul: Behold! David is at Naioth in Ramah; then Saul sent messengers to take David; and then they saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing, appointed over them; then it was upon the messengers, the Spirit of God, and they also prophesied. (Verses 19-20)

God's Spirit: Unexpectedly, the Holy Spirit came on Saul's men so they spoke words about God consistent with what Samuel and his students spoke. Thus God overcame the mission of these killers!

The Holy Spirit can overcome those bent on evil

3. Then (when) it was told to Saul; he sent other messengers and they also prophesied; and again Saul sent messengers (a) third time; and they also prophesied. (*Verse 21*)

Twice more: So, in total, three times the Holy Spirit thwarted Saul's evil intentions toward David!

The Holy Spirit can overcome those bent on evil

4. Then he, himself, went to Ramah to the great well in Sicu; then he asked: Where are Samuel and David? And one said: Behold! At Naioth in Ramah; he went there, and also came upon him the Spirit of God and he went and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. (*Verses 22-23*)

Saul himself: When Saul decides to kill David himself, he discovers David is at Naioth.

God's Spirit: On his way there, the Holy Spirit also comes over Saul and he too prophesies!

Finally, God's Spirit overcomes the instigator of the evil plan to kill God's chosen king, David

The Holy Spirit can overcome those bent on evil

5. He also put off his garment and also prophesied before Samuel; then he fell down naked all that day and night; therefore they said: Is Saul also among the prophets? (*Verse 24*)

People amazed: All those who observed these events were amazed. Even Saul, who opposed God, is temporarily overwhelmed by God!

God's way: The way God rescues His people is often UN-expected! No one could have seen this coming! But, once again, David is rescued from Saul's violence and has a respite of peace.

Application: We must accept that we are in an ongoing spiritual battle, but the peace of God is protecting us by His Spirit; however, full peace will not come until the second advent of Jesus! For now, let's rejoice that:

The Holy Spirit can overcome those bent on evil

II. David asks Yahweh to fight those pursuing him and to be his salvation; then he prays against those devising evil for him, believing the Angel of Yahweh is pursuing them. (*Psalm 35:1-6*)

- A. David intercedes with Yahweh to deal with those fighting and pursuing him, and to become his salvation. (*Verses 1-3*)

1. { to David } Thou must strive Yahweh (with) strivers (with) me / Thou must fight with those fighting me. (*Verse 1*)

Reciprocity: David petitions Yahweh for 'eye-for-eye' justice (Exodus 21:23-27) on those striving and fighting against him. David's 'son', Jesus, changed the rules by commanding His disciples be like the Father in heaven, and love and their enemies (Matthew 5:38-48) so they may know peace with God.

2. Thou must take hold of (small) shield and large shield / and Thou must rise up in help of me. (*Verse 2*)

Help me: David now asks Yahweh to help him by fully shielding him from his enemies.

3. Thou must make empty the spear and stop to encounter those pursuing me / Thou must say to my soul: Thy salvation, I (am). (*Verse 3*)

Being pursued: As David is being pursued, he requests that Yahweh must disarm his pursuers.

Asks for salvation: Then, he asks Yahweh to assure his inner soul that He is David's salvation. In Psalm 68 (verse 19) David calls Yahweh his salvation. In Scripture salvation of people always comes from God! He makes a wide path for His people to be delivered (Isaiah 43:15-17). Salvation is also protection as a refuge; and, [God spiritually saves people by sins forgiven and changed character.

Application: We must all pray for full salvation whenever we are overwhelmed; and that we will follow Jesus' command to love our enemies, praying for them to receive God's salvation and justice.

- B. He then prays in faith, first on those devising evil against him, and then concerning the Angel of Yahweh pursuing them. (*Verses 4-6*)

1. They will be put to shame and dishonor, those seeking my soul / they will be turned back and confounded, those devising my harm. (*Verse 4*)

Not imprecation: David tells his covenant God that he is sure God will bring great harm on those seeking to harm him. Rather than an imprecation on his enemies, he declares God will punish them.

2. They will be like chaff before the wind / and the Angel of Yahweh is casting them down. (*Verse 5*)

Angel of Yahweh: This is the pre-incarnate Word of God, Jesus (John 1:1-4).

3. Their way will be dark and slippery / and the Angel of Yahweh is pursuing them. (*Verse 6*)

Prayer of faith: David closes this poetic paragraph as he began it: he has full faith in Yahweh, and His Angel, that his enemies will slip in darkness as the Angel of Yahweh pursues them.

He will get what he has asked because he believes it is Yahweh's will.

David asks Yahweh to pursue those pursuing him

Application: Let us pray in the spirit of David when he was attacked by enemies; but, with our faith in the fully revealed Angel of Yahweh, Savior-Jesus, who is containing evil, and will ultimately fully overcome it.

Conclusion: Michal helps David escape death at Saul's command. She deceives his messengers and Saul accuses her of deception. Saul pursues David until the Holy Spirit comes upon him and the people are amazed. David asks Yahweh to fight those pursuing him and to be his salvation. Then, he prays against those devising evil for him, believing the Angel of Yahweh is pursuing them.

The Holy Spirit can overcome those bent on evil