

CONFLICT ON A DEATH BED

Opening: Woody Allen: I'm not afraid to die – I just don't want to be there when it happens

Text: I Kings 1: 1-30

This is the final edition of our study of the Conflicts in the life of David –Today we come full circle

We started out with his adolescent years, a teenager tending his father's sheep, who never had heard the name Goliath

Today we focus on last days of David's life

Let's start with a question ...What do you want on your tombstone?

Several years ago a pizza company promoted their product with a catch sales pitch ...

What do you want on your tombstone?

It was clever pun ... Tombstone was the name of the Company - what toppings did you want added to customize it?

What if it was that easy ... What if you could chose what you wanted for your epitaph?



Douglas Ledger wanted the short epitaph attached to his announcement of death – he got his wish it was two words - Doug Died

Enoch's was, "He walked with God"

Abraham's "A friend of God."

Saul wrote his own ... "I have played the fool"

Jesus sadly said of Judas "... better if he had not been born."

God wrote David's epitaph for us. But before we go there – Let's check out the last part of David's life

Erwin W. Lutzer describes David's final conflicts of life as clouds:

Cloud #1 BEGINS ON A POSITIVE NOTE:

- David is stationed at the Jordon River ready for a victorious return as king
- Thousands come out to celebrate his return and be part of seeing him re-instated as king
- But David is still grieving the death of his son Absalom while all of this is happening -
- At the last moment a man named, a man named Sheba, stirs up another revolt against David

An older, tired David wrote these words in Psalm 55:

Psalm 55:6-8 (NLT)

⁶Oh, that I had wings like a dove;
then I would fly away and rest!

⁷I would fly far away
to the quiet of the wilderness.

⁸How quickly I would escape—
far from this wild storm of hatred.

I can relate to those words –sometimes situations feel overwhelming?

Operation Face Lift renovation moments I was tempted to take a nice long vacation.

Life's conflicts brings us face to face with those kind of moments (Is that why God reiterated to Joshua 4 times not to be discouraged or afraid?)

Cloud #2 THE PLAGUE

Disease and death strike the nation, leaving a wake of 70,000 people dead behind it.

⇒ Compare those numbers to the killer quake that just hit Mexico, 337 dead 50 still missing

Psalm 63:1 (NLT) David cries out to God for help and as an intercessor for his people

¹ O God, you are my God;
I earnestly search for you.
My soul thirsts for you;
my whole body longs for you
in this parched and weary land
where there is no water.

The plague, it turns out, was connected to David's rebellious act against God in taking a Census

Cloud #3 ONE LAST REBELLION

David's oldest son (Ad-on-ijah) decided he'd stage a coup to usurp the throne from his dying father.

On his death bed, David rises to the occasion!

1 Kings 1:1-30 (MSG)

¹ ¹⁻⁴ King David grew old. The years had caught up with him. Even though they piled blankets on him, he couldn't keep warm. So his servants said to him, "We're going to get a young virgin for our master the king to be at his side and look after him; she'll get in bed with you and arouse our master the king." So they searched the country of Israel for the most ravishing girl they could find; they ... brought her to the king. The girl was stunningly beautiful; she stayed at his side and looked after the king, but the king did not have sex with her.

This reinforces the idea just how deathly ill David was ...

⁵⁻⁶ At this time Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, puffed himself up saying, “I’m the next king!” He made quite a splash, with chariots and riders and fifty men to run ahead of him. His father had spoiled him rotten as a child, never once reprimanding him. Besides that, he was very good-looking and the next in line after Absalom.

⁷⁻⁸ Adonijah talked with Joab ... and with Abiathar the priest and they threw their weight on his side. But neither the priest Zadok, nor Benaiah ... or Nathan the prophet, nor Shimei and Rei, nor David’s personal bodyguards supported Adonijah.

⁹⁻¹⁰ Next Adonijah held a coronation feast, sacrificing sheep, cattle, and grain-fed heifers at the Stone of Zohemoth ... He invited all his brothers, the king’s sons, and everyone in Judah who had position and influence—but he did not invite the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, the bodyguards, or his brother Solomon.

The Plot thickens

¹¹⁻¹⁴ Nathan went to Bathsheba, Solomon’s mother, “Did you know that Adonijah, Haggith’s son, has taken over as king, and our master David doesn’t know a thing about it? Quickly now, let me tell you how you can save both your own life and Solomon’s. Go immediately to King David. Speak up: ‘Didn’t you, my master the king, promise me, “Your son Solomon will be king after me and sit on my throne”? So why is Adonijah now king?’ While you’re there talking with the king, I’ll come in and corroborate your story.”

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Bathsheba went at once to the king in his palace bedroom. He was so old! ... As Bathsheba bowed low, honoring the king, he said, “What do you want?”

¹⁷⁻²¹ “My master,” she said, “you promised me in GOD’s name, ‘Your son Solomon will be king after me and sit on my throne.’ And now look what’s happened—Adonijah has taken over as king, and my master the king doesn’t even know it! He has thrown a huge coronation feast—... inviting all the king’s sons, the priest Abiathar, and Joab head of the army. But ... Solomon was *not* invited. My master the king, every eye in Israel is watching you to see what you’ll do—to see who will sit on the throne of my master the king after him. If you fail to act, the moment you’re buried my son Solomon and I are as good as dead.”

²²⁻²³ Abruptly, while she was telling the king all this, Nathan the prophet came in and was announced: “Nathan the prophet is here.” He came before the king, honoring him by bowing deeply, his face touching the ground.

²⁴⁻²⁷ “My master the king,” Nathan began, “did you say, ‘Adonijah shall be king after me and sit on my throne’? Because that’s what’s happening. He’s thrown a huge coronation feast—cattle, grain-fed heifers, sheep—inviting all the king’s sons, the army officers, and Abiathar the priest. They’re having a grand time, eating and drinking and shouting, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’ But I wasn’t invited, nor was the priest Zadok, nor Benaiah son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon. Is this something that my master the king has done behind our backs, not telling your servants who you intended to be king after you?”

²⁸ King David took action: “Get Bathsheba back in here.” She entered and stood before the king.

²⁹⁻³⁰ The king solemnly promised, “As GOD lives, the God who delivered me from every kind of trouble, I’ll do exactly what I promised in GOD’s name, the God of Israel: Your son Solomon will be king after me and take my place on the throne. And I’ll make sure it happens this very day.”

You can feel God’s authority in David even in so weakened a condition

Personal I’ll never forget the first time I had the chance to sit down and have a one on one meeting with Pastor Jerry – He shared his desire for his last days ... *I want to die climbing*

So do I ... so did David ... so do you

Life delivers both good and bad things to our door step for each stage of our life – when we’re very young – when we’re approaching the finish line.

Someone once wrote: “**Do not regret growing older. It’s a privilege denied to many.**”

Personal I had a birthday this week – Jen and I spent Wednesday evening with Anne and Joe ...

Going to their home is always a delight – you are treated like royalty great food, my favorite desert, black forest cake. Gifts and lots of love

You’re probably thinking Hmmm how can I get invited? Maybe if you’re really nice to them ...

It was a relaxing fun evening but the next day I received a phone call from one of my daughters so upset she was crying on the phone from a situation that seemed overwhelming. I listened and prayed with her and Jen and I are still praying.

That's how life is. It's not a matter of if but when Conflict will strike and when they do who do we turn to?

Birthdays give us a chance to escape the routine that separates us from the people we love

Especially for New Yorkers, we have so much going on each day that we're forced to set up routines to better cope with it all.

What goes into an average day for a young NY family?

- Getting the kids up washed and dressed on time
- Having breakfast on the table,
- Lunches and backpacks ready
- Out to the bus stop on time
- For working parents: taking a younger child to day care
- Battling traffic on way to work
- Coping with the demands of the job
- Remember to schedule: oil deliveries, car maintenance, dentist appointments to adjust braces, allowing time for soccer games and concerts
- Battling traffic home
- Dealing with household demands
- Providing a healthy dinner
- Checking homework
- Praying for their children's success and safety

We need to establish routine just to survive the daily grind

Problem when routine becomes robotic –Relationships suffer – with the people we love and with God

We've struggled with that here at Patchogue ... during this period of transition – Pastor Nick and leaders have struggled to cover responsibilities after Pastor Jerry our full time pastor retired

We don't want to be trapped in routine ... it's our desire that you to have fresh encounter with God every time you enter these doors

How does that happen?

1. We need to focus on others - to care about others more than ourselves.
2. By letting God show us a need and then being willing to do something about it
3. It could be something as simple as listening – people aren't always looking for the answer they just need someone who cares enough to listen

Life's conflicts can wear us down but God has a way of turning wrecking balls into building blocks

God did it for David through his writing.

Writing the Psalms were his refuge – energizing him but also bringing him release

Psalm 23 was written in David's last days

The LORD is my shepherd;
I have all that I need.

²He lets me rest in green meadows;
he leads me beside peaceful streams.

³ He renews my strength.
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.

⁴Even when I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.

Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.

⁵You prepare a feast for me
in the presence of my enemies.

You honor me by anointing my head with oil.
My cup overflows with blessings.

⁶Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

What a difference context makes!

What avenue has God given you to cope with conflicts?

1. It might be baking or carpentry
2. Planning a getaway trip
3. Painting or sketching or photography
4. Maybe trying something new
5. Playing an instrument
6. Taking in the beauty of a lake, bay, or a walk in the moonlight
7. Or maybe like David - you're a writer

God has built some form of expression for self healing into you, how long since you used it?

We admire David's faith, courage and heroism

But it's not his faith or deeds that mean the most to us, it's his humanness ... his faith in spite of failures

What was God's epitaph for David? "David my servant"

God affords the same opportunity to us ... to put your name in place of his

My servant Frank: My servant Anne: Elizabeth, Mary, Louis

Let's pray