



LESSON TWELVE

The History Concerning David – Persecuted and Tried by Saul (2)

Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 25:1-31 Section 1

- 25:1** Then Samuel died, and all Israel gathered together and mourned for him; and they buried him at his house in Ramah. And David rose up and went down into the wilderness of Paran.
- 25:2** Now there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel. And the man was very wealthy: He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And at that time he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.
- 25:3** And the man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. And the woman had good discernment and was beautiful in appearance. But the man was hard, and he was evil in his doings; and he was a Calebite.
- 25:4** And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.
- 25:5** So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal and greet him in my name.
- 25:6** And thus shall you say, Live long; and peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.
- 25:7** Now therefore I hear that you have shearers; your shepherds have now been with us, and we have not harmed them, nor has there been anything missing from them, all the time they were in Carmel.
- 25:8** Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let these young men find favor in your sight, for we come in a good time. Give whatever you may have on hand to your servants and to your son David.
- 25:9** So David's young men went and spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David; then they waited.
- 25:10** But Nabal answered David's servants and said, Who is David, or who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who break away from their masters.
- 25:11** Shall I then take my food and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?
- 25:12** Then David's young men turned back on their way. And they returned and came and told him all these things.
- 25:13** And David said to his men, Each man gird on his sword. And each man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And they went up after David, about four hundred men. And two hundred remained with the baggage.
- 25:14** But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, David has just sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, but he shouted insultingly at them.
- 25:15** But the men were very good to us; and we were not harmed, nor did we miss anything all the time we went with them when we were in the fields.
- 25:16** They were a wall to us both by night and by day all the time we were with them tending the sheep.
- 25:17** Now therefore know and consider what you will do, because evil has been determined against our master and against all his house; for he is so worthless a man that no one can speak to him.
- 25:18** Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves of bread and two skins of wine and five sheep ready dressed and five measures of parched grain and one hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and she put them on her donkeys.
- 25:19** And she said to her young men, Go on before me; I am coming right behind you. But she did not tell her husband Nabal.
- 25:20** And as she rode on her donkey and came down under the cover of the mountain, David and his men at that moment came down toward her; and she met them.

- 25:21** Now David had said, It was certainly in vain that I guarded all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that he has; for he has repaid me evil for good.
- 25:22** May God do so to David's enemies, and even more, if I leave so much as one male of all that he has until morning.
- 25:23** And when Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from her donkey and fell on her face before David; and she bowed herself to the ground.
- 25:24** And she fell at his feet and said, Upon me alone, my lord, be this iniquity; and let your female servant speak in your hearing, and hear the words of your female servant.
- 25:25** May my lord not take this worthless man Nabal to heart. For as his name is, so he is: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I your female servant did not see my lord's young men, whom you sent.
- 25:26** And now, my lord, as Jehovah lives and as your soul lives, since Jehovah has withheld you from entering into bloodshed and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now therefore let your enemies and those who seek harm against my lord be like Nabal.
- 25:27** And now this present which your servant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord.
- 25:28** Please forgive the transgression of your female servant, for Jehovah will no doubt make a sure house for my lord, because my lord fights the battles of Jehovah; and no evil will be found in you throughout your days.
- 25:29** And though men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, my lord's life will be bound up in the bundle of the living with Jehovah your God; and the lives of your enemies He will sling out, as from the hollow of the sling.
- 25:30** And when Jehovah has done to my lord according to all the good He has spoken concerning you and has appointed you ruler over Israel,
- 25:31** This will not be a qualm of conscience to you or a stumbling block in heart to my lord, that you shed blood without cause or that my lord has avenged himself. And when Jehovah has dealt well with my lord, may you remember your female servant.

1 Samuel 26-27 Section 2

- 26:1** And the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, David is hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite the desert!
- 26:2** And Saul rose up and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, with him three thousand choice men of Israel, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.
- 26:3** And Saul encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite the desert, by the road. And David remained in the wilderness, but he saw that Saul had come into the wilderness after him.
- 26:4** And David sent spies and knew for certain that Saul had come.
- 26:5** So David rose up and went to the place where Saul encamped. And David looked on the place where Saul and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his army, lay. Now Saul was lying within the entrenchment, and the people were encamped around him.
- 26:6** And David responded and spoke to Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai the son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul at the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with you.
- 26:7** So David and Abishai went to the people by night; and there lay Saul, sleeping within the entrenchment, and his spear was stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay around him.
- 26:8** And Abishai said to David, God has delivered your enemy into your hand today. Now therefore let me strike him with the spear even to the ground with one stroke, and I will not do it twice.
- 26:9** But David said to Abishai, Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against Jehovah's anointed and be guiltless?
- 26:10** And David said, As Jehovah lives, Jehovah will strike him down, or his day will come to die, or he will go down in battle and perish.
- 26:11** Jehovah forbid that I should stretch out my hand against Jehovah's anointed. Now therefore take the spear that is by his head and the water jug, and let us go.

26:12 So David took the spear and the water jug by Saul's head, and they went away. And no one saw it or knew about it, nor did anyone awake, for all of them were sleeping; for a deep sleep from Jehovah had fallen upon them.

26:13 And David crossed over to the other side and stood on the top of the hill far off; a great distance was between them.

26:14 And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Will you not answer, Abner? And Abner answered and said, Who are you that calls out to the king?

26:15 And David said to Abner, Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy the king your lord.

26:16 This thing is not good that you have done. As Jehovah lives, you are as good as dead because you did not guard your lord, Jehovah's anointed. Now therefore, see where the king's spear and the water jug that were by his head are.

26:17 And Saul recognized David's voice; and he said, Is this your voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king.

26:18 And he said, Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? Or what evil is in my hand?

26:19 Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is Jehovah who has stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering; but if it is the sons of men, let them be cursed before Jehovah; for they have driven me out today, so that I cannot share in Jehovah's inheritance, saying, Go, serve other gods.

26:20 Now therefore do not let my blood fall to the ground apart from the presence of Jehovah; for the king of Israel has come forth to seek a single flea, as one might hunt a partridge in the mountains.

26:21 And Saul said, I have sinned. Return, my son David; for I will not harm you anymore, because my life was precious in your sight this day. I have indeed acted foolishly and have made a very great mistake.

26:22 And David answered and said, Here is the spear, O king. Let one of the young men cross over and get it.

26:23 And Jehovah will repay to each man his righteousness and faithfulness: Because Jehovah has delivered you into my hand today, and I would not stretch out my hand against Jehovah's anointed;

26:24 Then just as great as your life was in my eyes this day, so great may my life be in Jehovah's eyes that He would deliver me from all distress.

26:25 And Saul said to David, Blessed are you, my son David. You shall most certainly both do and prevail. And David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

27:1 And David said in his heart, I will now one day perish at the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines; then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within all the territory of Israel. Thus I will escape from his hand.

27:2 So David rose up and crossed over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, the king of Gath.

27:3 And David remained with Achish in Gath, he and his men, each man with his household: David and his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the wife of Nabal, the Carmelite.

27:4 And it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, so he no longer sought him.

27:5 And David said to Achish, If now I have found favor in your sight, let me be given a place in one of the country towns; and I will dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?

27:6 So Achish gave him Ziklag that day; therefore Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah to this day.

27:7 And the length of time that David remained in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.

27:8 Now David and his men went up and attacked the Geshurites and the Girzites and the Amalekites, for they were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as you go to Shur and unto the land of Egypt.

27:9 And David struck the land; and he left neither man nor woman alive but took the sheep and the oxen and the asses and the camels and the clothing. Then he returned and came to Achish.

27:10 Then Achish said, Against whom have you conducted an attack today? And David said, Against the south of Judah and against the south of the Jerahmeelites and against the south of the Kenites.

- 27:11** Now David left neither man nor woman alive to be brought to Gath, for he said, Perhaps they will tell of us, saying, Thus did David do. And such was his custom as long as he dwelt in the country of the Philistines.
- 27:12** And Achish trusted David, saying, He has made himself utterly odious to his people Israel; therefore he shall be my servant forever.

1 Samuel 28 Section 3

- 28:1** Then in those days the Philistines gathered their camps together for war to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, Know assuredly that you shall go out with me into the camp, you and your men.
- 28:2** And David said to Achish, This being so, you will know what your servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore I will make you my bodyguard for life.
- 28:3** Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him; and they had buried him in Ramah, that is, in his own city. And Saul had the mediums and the soothsayers put out of the land.
- 28:4** And the Philistines gathered together, and they came and encamped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped in Gilboa.
- 28:5** And when Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
- 28:6** And Saul inquired of Jehovah; but Jehovah did not answer him, not by dreams or by the Urim or by the prophets.
- 28:7** Then said Saul to his servants, Seek for me a woman who is a medium that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, There is now a woman who is a medium at En-dor.
- 28:8** Then Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes. And he and two men with him went, and they came to the woman by night. And he said, Consult a departed spirit for me, and bring up to me the one whom I tell you.
- 28:9** But the woman said to him, Look, you know what Saul has done, that he has cut off the mediums and the soothsayers from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life to make me die?
- 28:10** Then Saul swore to her by Jehovah, saying, As Jehovah lives, no punishment shall happen to you for this thing.
- 28:11** So the woman said, Whom shall I bring up to you? And he said, Bring up Samuel to me.
- 28:12** Now when the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul.
- 28:13** And the king said to her, Do not be afraid. But what do you see? And the woman said to Saul, I see some divine being coming up out of the earth.
- 28:14** And he said to her, What is his appearance? And she said, An old man is coming up; and he is wrapped in a cloak. Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and paid him homage.
- 28:15** And Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up? And Saul said, I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines wage war against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, neither through the prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I shall do.
- 28:16** And Samuel said, Why then have you inquired of me? For Jehovah has turned away from you and become your adversary.
- 28:17** And Jehovah has done for Himself just as He spoke through me, for Jehovah has torn the kingdom out from your hand and given it to an associate of yours, to David.
- 28:18** Because you did not listen to the voice of Jehovah and did not execute His burning anger upon the Amalekites, therefore Jehovah has done this thing to you this day.
- 28:19** And Jehovah will also give Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me; Jehovah will also give the camp of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.
- 28:20** Then immediately Saul fell his full length to the ground, and he was very afraid because of Samuel's words. And there was no strength in him, for he had not eaten food all day and all night.
- 28:21** And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was very troubled. And she said to him, Indeed, your servant has listened to your voice; and I have put my life in my hand and have listened to your words which you spoke to me.
- 28:22** Now therefore, you listen also to the voice of your servant, and let me set a morsel of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way.

- 28:23** But he refused and said, I will not eat. Then his servants, as well as the woman, compelled him, and he listened to their voice; and he rose up from the ground and sat on the bed.
- 28:24** And the woman had a fattened calf in the house; and she hurried and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread with it.
- 28:25** And she brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. And they rose up and went away that night.

1 Samuel 29-30:19 Section 4

- 29:1** And the Philistines gathered all their camps together at Aphek; and Israel encamped by the spring that is in Jezreel.
- 29:2** And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands; and David and his men passed on at the rear with Achish.
- 29:3** And the princes of the Philistines said, What are these Hebrews doing here? And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or even these years? And I have found nothing wrong in him since the day he deserted to me to this day.
- 29:4** But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him. And the princes of the Philistines said to him, Make the man go back, that he may return to his place that you have assigned him, so that he does not go down with us into the battle and does not become our adversary in the battle. For with what might this man reconcile himself to his master? Will it not be with the heads of these men?
- 29:5** Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying, Saul has struck down his thousands; / But David, his ten thousands?
- 29:6** And Achish called David and said to him, As Jehovah lives, you are upright, and it is acceptable in my sight that you go forth and come in with me in the camp; for I have not found evil in you since the day you came to me to this day. But you are not acceptable to the lords.
- 29:7** Now therefore return and go in peace, so that you do not do anything displeasing to the lords of the Philistines.
- 29:8** And David said to Achish, But what have I done? And what wrong have you found in your servant since the day I began to be with you to this day, that I should not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?
- 29:9** And Achish answered and said to David, I know that you are as acceptable to me as an angel of God; nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us into the battle.
- 29:10** Now therefore rise up early in the morning with your master's servants who came with you; indeed rise up early in the morning, and when you have daylight, go.
- 29:11** So David rose up early, he and his men, to go in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.
- 30:1** And when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid upon the south and upon Ziklag; and they had struck Ziklag and burned it with fire.
- 30:2** And they had taken the women and all who were in it captive, both small and great; they had killed none, but had carried them off, and had gone on their way.
- 30:3** And David and his men came to the city; and there it was, burned with fire. And their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive.
- 30:4** And David and the people who were with him lifted up their voice and wept until they had no strength to weep.
- 30:5** And David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.
- 30:6** And David was very distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for the soul of all the people was bitter, every man because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in Jehovah his God.
- 30:7** And David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, Bring the ephod to me. So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.
- 30:8** And David inquired of Jehovah, saying, Shall I pursue after this band? Will I overtake them? And He said to him, Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will certainly deliver them.
- 30:9** So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him; and they came to the brook Besor, where those who were left stayed behind.

- 30:10** And David pursued, he and four hundred men; for two hundred stayed behind, who were too exhausted to cross over the brook Besor.
- 30:11** And they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David. And they gave him food, and he ate; and they gave him water to drink.
- 30:12** And they gave him a piece of fig cake and two raisin cakes; and he ate, and his spirit returned to him; for he had eaten no food and had drunk no water for three days and three nights.
- 30:13** And David said to him, To whom do you belong and where are you from? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, the servant of an Amalekite man; and my master abandoned me because I fell sick three days ago.
- 30:14** We attacked the south of the Cherethites and what belongs to Judah and the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.
- 30:15** And David said to him, Can you lead me down to this band? And he said, Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hand of my master, and I will lead you down to this troop.
- 30:16** And he led him down; and there they were, spread over the whole land, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.
- 30:17** And David struck them from twilight until the evening of the next day; and not a man of them escaped except for four hundred young men, who rode upon camels and fled.
- 30:18** And David delivered all that the Amalekites had taken; and David delivered his two wives.
- 30:19** And nothing was missed by them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil nor anything that they had taken; David brought everything back.

QUESTIONS:

Section 1:

1. What lessons can we learn from the death of Samuel?
2. What lessons can we learn from David's dealing with Nabal and Abigail?

Section 2:

1. How did David honor God's ordination and respect and regard God's authority in chapter 26 of 1 Samuel?
2. Why did David beg Saul to not drive him out of the good land? Why is it right for David to stay in the land of the Philistines?

Section 3:

1. What was David and Saul's thought about the kingship? How were they related to God's economy?
2. What caused David to fall into the dilemma of fighting against Israel?

Section 4:

1. Why did God purposely keep David away from joining the Philistines' camp to fight against Israel?
2. What will happen to God's economy if there was no David?
3. Give a comparison of the situation of David and Saul at the end of 1 Samuel.

----- [SECTION 1] -----

In this message we will consider further the matter of David's being tried and persecuted by Saul.

I. SAMUEL DYING

In 25:1a we are told that Samuel died. All Israel mourned for him, and they buried him at his house in Ramah.

A. After the Proper and Full Enjoyment of His Portion in the Good Land Promised by God

Samuel died a peaceful death after the proper and full enjoyment of his portion in the good land promised by God. Samuel enjoyed the good land throughout his entire life. His enjoyment of the land exceeded that of everyone else in the Old Testament, including Joshua and Caleb, who spent much time fighting to gain possession of the land. From his youth in the tabernacle until the time of his death, Samuel enjoyed the good land in every way and in every sense.

B. After Being a Priest, a Prophet, and a Judge

Samuel became a priest, a prophet, and a judge to usher in the Davidic kingdom for the accomplishment of God's economy on the earth. He was the one who brought in the kingship, anointing both Saul and David, the first two kings. He therefore established the kingdom of God and wrote all the regulations concerning the kingdom of God.

C. In the Disappointment of Saul's Kingship

Samuel was deeply disappointed with Saul's kingship and mourned for Saul (15:35). Samuel mourned to such an extent that eventually God said to him, "How long will you mourn for Saul, though I have rejected him from being king over Israel?" (16:1a).

D. With the Encouraging Expectation of David's Kingship

Although Samuel was disappointed with Saul's kingship, he died with the encouraging expectation of David's kingship. This was a comfort to him. When he died, he was assured regarding the Davidic kingdom, a type of the kingdom of God. I believe that as Samuel was dying he was full of joy concerning this.

II. DAVID'S DEALING WITH NABAL AND ABIGAIL

First Samuel 25:1b-44 is an account of David's dealing with Nabal and Abigail.

A. David's Seeking Help from Nabal, Considering Himself a Son to Him

In verses 2 through 9 David sought help from Nabal, a wealthy man. David sent ten young men to Nabal, instructing them to say to him, "Live long; and peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have" (v. 6). The young men were also to say, "Give whatever you may have on hand to your servants and to your son David" (v. 8). Here David was very humble, considering himself a servant and a son to Nabal.

B. Nabal's Folly in His Rejecting David's Entreating and in His Insulting David's Servants

In his folly, Nabal rejected David's entreating and insulted David's servants. Nabal said to them, "Who is David, or who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who break away from their masters. Shall I then take my food and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" (vv. 10-11). When David's servants told him what Nabal said, David charged each of his men to gird on his sword (vv. 12-13). Then David said, "It was certainly in vain that I guarded all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that he has; for he has repaid me evil for good. May God do so to David's enemies, and even more, if I leave so much as a male child of all that he has until morning" (vv. 21-22).

David's word here indicates that he was offended by Nabal. In this matter David did not pass the test. He bore the cross under Saul, but in this small cross he failed. If David had taken the cross in this situation, he might have praised the Lord for Nabal's refusal to provide food. Then God might have come in to inspire Nabal to repent and come to David with an abundance of food. However, with Nabal David did not take the cross.

The situation is often the same with us today. It may be easy for us to prevail in bearing the bigger crosses, but we may be careless in bearing

the smaller crosses. Through the small crosses the flesh is exposed.

C. The Wisdom of Abigail, the Wife of Nabal, in Appeasing David

In this chapter we see not only the folly of Nabal but also the wisdom of Abigail, Nabal's wife, in appeasing David (vv. 14-20, 23-25). She "hurried and took two hundred loaves of bread and two skins of wine and five sheep ready dressed and five measures of parched grain and one hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and she put them on her donkeys" (v. 18). When she saw David, she fell at his feet and said, "Upon me alone, my lord, be this iniquity; and let your maidservant speak in your hearing, and hear the words of your maidservant. May my lord not take this worthless man Nabal to heart" (vv. 24-25a). Abigail went on to ask David to please forgive the transgression, and then she concluded, saying, "When Jehovah has done to my lord according to all the good He has spoken concerning you and has appointed you ruler over Israel, this will not be a qualm of conscience to you or a stumbling block in heart to my lord, that you shed blood without cause or that my lord has avenged himself. And when Jehovah has dealt well with my lord, may you remember your maidservant" (vv. 30-31).

David responded to Abigail's appeal by blessing Jehovah, who sent her to meet him, and also by blessing her, who kept him from entering into bloodshed and from avenging himself by his own hand. David then took from her hand what she had brought and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have listened to your voice and have accepted your person" (v. 35). Here we see that David's anger was appeased by Abigail's wisdom.

D. Nabal's Death under God's Striking

When Abigail told Nabal all these things, "his heart died within him, and he became like a stone. And about ten days later Jehovah struck Nabal, and he died" (vv. 36-38).

E. David's Marriage to Abigail

This chapter concludes with a word regarding David's marriage to Abigail (vv. 39-44). Her beauty and wisdom caught David, and after Nabal's death he took her as his wife. Here we see the weak point in David's life. He was quite

prevailing and overcoming in nearly everything, but he was weak in the matter of sex. David overcame the lion and the bear, but he did not overcome his sexual lust. Eventually, David's weakness and indulgence contaminated the kingship of God's holiness. The root of his later failure in murdering Uriah and taking Bathsheba was manifested here.

----- [SECTION 2] -----

III. JEHOVAH DELIVERING SAUL INTO THE HAND OF DAVID, BUT DAVID NOT KILLING HIM BECAUSE OF HIS FEAR OF GOD IN THAT SAUL WAS GOD'S ANOINTED

According to chapter twenty-six Jehovah delivered Saul into the hand of David, but David would not kill him because of his fear of God in that Saul was God's anointed. This indicates that before David became king, he set up a good order and pattern showing us how in God's kingdom we should honor God's ordination and respect and regard God's authority. Therefore, when David became king, everything was headed up.

A. David Hiding Himself on the Hill of Hachilah

David hid himself on the hill of Hachilah, and Saul was informed of this (v. 1).

B. Saul Seeking David Again

Saul sought David again (vv. 2-4). He went out with three thousand choice men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. David sent spies and thereby learned for certain that Saul had come.

C. Jehovah Delivering Saul into the Hand of David, but David Not Killing Him

In verses 5 through 16 we see that whereas Jehovah delivered Saul into the hand of David, David would not kill him. Saul was "sleeping within the entrenchment, and his spear was stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay around him" (v. 7). Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand today" (v. 8a). He then encouraged David to have Saul killed by striking him with the spear to the ground. But David would not destroy Saul

because of his fear of God in that Saul was God's anointed (vv. 9-11). David said to Abishai, "Jehovah forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against Jehovah's anointed" (v. 11a). Although David was weak in losing his temper with Nabal and in taking Abigail his wife, in dealing with Saul David was an outstanding success.

D. David's Appeal to Saul

Verses 17 through 20 are concerned with David's appeal to Saul. When Saul recognized David's voice, David asked him, "Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? Or what evil is in my hand?" (v. 18).

1. Begging Saul Not to Drive Him Out so that He Could Not Share in Jehovah's Inheritance

David begged Saul not to drive him out so that he could not share in Jehovah's inheritance, the good land, but go to serve other gods (vv. 19b-20a). David considered that to remain in the good land was the greatest blessing. To be driven out of the good land and to go to another land to serve other gods was a curse. By this we can see that this book is on the enjoyment of the good land, that is, the enjoyment of Christ.

2. Likening Himself to a Single Flea and a Partridge in the Mountains

In his appeal to Saul, David likened himself to a single flea and a partridge in the mountains (v. 20b).

E. Saul's Repenting

Even though Saul was wicked, he was still human and was touched by David's word and repented (vv. 21-25).

1. Admitting That He Had Sinned

Saul admitted that he had sinned, acted foolishly, and made a very great mistake (v. 21).

2. Blessing David by Saying That David Would Most Certainly Do Great Things and Prevail

Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, my son David. You shall most certainly both do and prevail" (v. 25). However, Saul did not say anything about the kingship or kingdom, because he still wanted his son Jonathan to succeed him as king.

IV. DAVID'S ESCAPING TO AND STAYING IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES

A. Escaping to Achish King of Gath

"David said in his heart, I will now one day perish at the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines; then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within all the territory of Israel. Thus I will escape from his hand" (27:1). After realizing this, David and his men crossed over to Achish (vv. 2-3).

B. Saul Ceasing to Seek David

Because David had escaped into the land of the Philistines, Saul ceased to seek him (v. 4). Saul felt that he was at peace because David had gone out of the holy land. This indicates that David had done the right thing in leaving the holy land temporarily.

C. Staying in Ziklag

David stayed in Ziklag (27:5—28:2). According to verse 7 he stayed in the land of the Philistines a year and four months. During that time he attacked and destroyed the Geshurites, Girzites, and Amalekites, but he pretended before King Achish that he attacked the south of Judah (vv. 8-12).

D. Achish Making David His Bodyguard for Life

In 28:1-2 we are told that Achish made David his bodyguard for life.

----- [SECTION 3] -----

From the tragic end of Saul we can learn many things concerning God's economy. The tragedy suffered by Saul was altogether due to his not being properly related to God's economy. God is carrying out His economy on earth, and He brought Saul into His economy. Instead of participating in God's economy and cooperating with it, Saul was selfish. God wanted to build up His kingdom among His chosen people, but Saul usurped God's kingdom to build up his own monarchy. With David the situation was entirely different. When David was anointed by Samuel, he had a clear understanding that he had been assigned by God to be the king, but he did not have any thought about kingship. After Saul was appointed to be the king, he was immediately

filled with thoughts of the kingship, including how his son would succeed him (20:31). In this Saul was selfish and wrong to the uttermost. He sought to build his selfish monarchy rather than the kingdom of God.

Eventually, God gave Saul up and cut him off, tearing the kingdom away from him. In 15:28 Samuel said to Saul, "Jehovah has torn the kingdom of Israel away from you today and has given it to an associate of yours, who is better than you." Because Saul was given up by God, he was left alone, like an orphan, having no provision of help when trouble came. Even though David was the most skillful and experienced fighter, he was of no use to Saul because of Saul's selfishness and envy. Actually, because Saul wanted to do away with him, David was forced to go to a country that was Israel's biggest enemy (27:1-2).

David went to the Philistines, in particular to King Achish. When the Philistines gathered their camps to fight against Israel, David, who had become the bodyguard to King Achish, was in a dilemma of being one with the Philistines to fight against Israel. This dilemma was the result of Saul's selfishness. The people of Israel suffered defeat and were slaughtered also because of Saul's selfishness. But God in His sovereignty came in to deal with Saul and to rescue David from his dilemma.

We need to muse upon every aspect of this story, for it contains some lessons that we need to learn. First, from this story, this illustration, we should learn the lesson of crucifying our flesh. Next, we should learn to condemn our selfishness—our self-interest and self-seeking. Furthermore, Saul was full of self, and from his tragic end we must learn to deny our self. As the Lord Jesus said, if we would follow Him, we must deny the self and take up the cross (Matt. 16:24).

At this juncture let us consider some further matters concerning David's being persecuted and tried by Saul.

V. SAUL'S TRAGIC END PRETOLD BY SAMUEL

In 1 Samuel 28:3-25 we see that Saul's tragic end was pretold by Samuel.

A. Samuel Having Died

First Samuel 28:3a tells us that Samuel was dead and that all Israel had mourned for him and had buried him in his own city, Ramah. The death of Samuel was a great loss to Saul.

B. Saul Having the Mediums and the Soothsayers Put Out of the Land

By the time of chapter twenty-eight Saul had the mediums and the soothsayers put out of the land (v. 3b). Since mediums and soothsayers contact evil spirits, Saul did a good thing in having them removed from the country of Israel.

C. The Philistines Gathering Together against Israel, and Saul Being Greatly Afraid of Them

The Philistines gathered together against Israel, and Saul was greatly afraid of them (vv. 4-5). He was afraid because his courage and boldness had been taken away by God. God is our real encouragement and boldness. Without Him, we have nothing.

D. Saul Inquiring of Jehovah, but Jehovah Not Answering Him

Saul inquired of Jehovah, but Jehovah did not answer him, not by dreams or by the Urim or by the prophets (v. 6).

E. Saul Seeking a Medium and Inquiring of Her

Saul sought a medium and inquired of her (vv. 7-11). In chapter fifteen Samuel had warned Saul that his rebellion was like the sin of divination (v. 23). But here in chapter twenty-eight Saul practiced divination, which involves contact with evil spirits and is even worse than idol worship.

F. Samuel Coming and Speaking to Saul

Without the medium doing anything, Samuel came and spoke to Saul (vv. 12-19). Samuel told Saul that Jehovah had turned away from him and had become his adversary (v. 16). Then Samuel told Saul that Jehovah had torn the kingdom out from his hand and had given it to David, an associate of his (v. 17). Finally, Samuel told Saul that Jehovah would also give Israel with Saul into the hand of the Philistines and that the next day he and his sons would be destroyed (v. 19).

G. Saul Being Threatened

Saul was threatened and fell to the ground, and then he went away from the medium (vv. 20-25).

----- [SECTION 4] -----

VI. DAVID BEING SOVEREIGNLY KEPT AWAY BY GOD FROM JOINING THE PHILISTINES' CAMP TO FIGHT AGAINST ISRAEL

In chapter twenty-nine David was sovereignly kept away by God from joining the Philistines' camp to fight against Israel. The lords of the Philistines refused to have David go with them into battle against Israel, and Achish therefore sent him away (vv. 6-11).

A. Not to Get Involved in the Destruction of Saul, His Sons, and the Men of Israel

If David had fought against Israel, he would have had a bad name for the rest of his life. David, however, was not involved in the destruction of Saul, his sons (including Jonathan), and the men of Israel (31:1-6).

B. To Rescue His Two Wives and the Families of His Men

Under God's sovereignty David was kept from joining the camp of the Philistines so that David could rescue his two wives and the families of his men, who had been captured by the Amalekites (30:18-20).

C. To Save Himself from the Turmoil of His Men in Losing Their Families

Under God's sovereignty, David saved himself from the turmoil of his men in losing their families to the Amalekites (30:1-6a).

D. To Send Some of the Spoil as Presents

Finally, as a result of being sovereignly kept by God from joining the Philistines' camp to fight against Israel, David, after defeating the Amalekites, sent some of his spoil as presents to his friends and friends of his men in many cities (vv. 26-31).

VII. DAVID CONQUERING THE AMALEKITES AND CAPTURING THEIR CAPTIVES

Chapter thirty tells us that David conquered the Amalekites and captured their captives.

A. The Amalekites Conquering Ziklag and Burning It

The Amalekites had conquered Ziklag and burned it and captured all the women, including the families of David's men and his two wives (vv. 1-6a).

B. David Strengthening Himself in Jehovah and Seeking for Jehovah's Leading to Pursue after the Amalekites and Capture Their Captives

The soul of all the people was bitter, and they spoke of stoning David, but he "strengthened himself in Jehovah his God" (v. 6b). Following this, he told Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod to him, and he inquired of Jehovah, saying, "Shall I pursue after this band? Will I overtake them?" Jehovah said to him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will certainly deliver them" (v. 8). Then David and four hundred of his men pursued the Amalekites, with the assistance of a young man of Egypt who was a servant of an Amalekite. The provision of the help from this Egyptian indicates that the details of David's environment were under God's sovereignty. Eventually, David conquered the Amalekites and captured their captives, delivering all that the Amalekites had taken. "Nothing was missed by them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil nor anything that they had taken; David brought everything back. And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before the other cattle and of which they said, This is David's spoil" (vv. 19-20).

C. David Sharing the Spoil with the Two Hundred Men Who Had Not Been Able to Follow Him

David shared the spoil with the two hundred men who had not been able to follow him in pursuing the Amalekites (vv. 21-25). Concerning this David said, "As his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike" (v. 24). From that day forward David made this a statute and an ordinance for Israel (v. 25).

**D. David Sending Presents
from His Spoil to His Friends
and the Friends of His Men in Many Cities**

Finally, according to verses 26 through 31, David sent presents from his spoil to his friends and the friends of his men in many cities.

I wish to say once again that we need to relate everything in these chapters to God's economy. All the small things in this record show that God was working in a detailed way to carry out His economy. God exercised His sovereignty to rescue David from his dilemma. God did this not only for David's sake but also for the sake of His economy. God preserved David, keeping him in His hands, for the accomplishment of His economy. In Matthew 1:1 Jesus Christ is called the son of David. This indicates that David was very much related to God's becoming a man named Jesus and to fulfill what had been determined in eternity past. Without David there would not have been the genealogy through which Christ as God became a man to be one with mankind. If David had been destroyed, the genealogy of Christ would have been terminated, and God would not have had a way to carry out His economy.

At this point it would be helpful to compare the situations of David and Saul toward the end of 1 Samuel. By fighting the Amalekites David gained many rich spoils. While he was becoming rich, Saul was being defeated. David was flourishing, but Saul was diminishing, even to death. If Saul had had the proper view regarding the kingdom of God, he would have realized that David, a skilled and vigorous fighter, could have been of great help to him in defeating the Philistines for the building up of the kingdom of God. But due to his selfishness Saul lost this provision and even persecuted David and forced him to flee. However, under God's sovereignty this persecuted one became flourishing and was established in the good land to enjoy God's portion. David's situation became brighter and brighter, whereas Saul's situation became darker and darker until, with his sons, he died a tragic death.

Saul's tragic ending should warn us not to play with God. We should not try to build up any kind of monarchy. We are all here to build up the kingdom, the Body of Christ. ...No matter where we may be, we have only one work. We should not be today's Saul, considering only the work in

our region and trying to build up a monarchy for ourselves.

We all should realize that we are not involved in a small work. David probably never realized that his history was fully related to God's becoming a man to join Himself to mankind and to live on earth to accomplish His eternal will. Nevertheless, David was related to the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1, and what we are doing today is related to the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 and 22. Therefore, we must have the confidence that we are of God, that we are under His sovereignty, and that we are doing one unique work—the work in His recovery to carry out His economy, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem.