### 1 Samuel

## Chapter 26

1Well thereafter, the Ziphites went up to see Saul again, and they told him:  
  
 ‘Look, David is hiding among us on HachiLah Hill, in front of JeshSemon.’  
  
2So Saul traveled into the Ziph Desert once more with 3,000 of IsraEl’s best men to look for David. 3Then Saul set up camp along the road to HachiLah Hill, in front of JeshSemon, as David was camped in the desert.  
  
And when David saw that Saul had come to the desert looking for him again, 4he sent spies to find out where he was and how prepared he was... 5Then David personally went to the place where Saul was and found him sleeping near his Commander-in-chief AbNer (son of Ner).  
  
Saul was there asleep in his royal chariot, with his men camped all around him.  
  
6[Before this], David had asked AhiMelech the Hittite and AbiShai (son of ZeruJah and the brother of JoAb):  
  
 ‘Who will come with me into the camp of Saul?’  
  
And AbiShai said:  
  
 ‘I’ll go with you.’  
  
7So David and AbiShai went down into the camp that night, and they walked among [Saul’s] Men!  
  
Well, {Look!} there was Saul sound asleep in his royal chariot with his spear stuck into the ground next to his head, and AbNer and his men were asleep all around him.  
8So AbiShai said to David:  
‘Jehovah has given your enemy into your hands today, so I’m going to run him through with his spear…  
I’ll only do it once, I won’t have to do it twice!’  
  
9But David said:  
  
 ‘No, don’t kill him; for, who can lift a hand against the anointed of Jehovah and not be found guilty?’  
  
10And he added:  
  
 ‘As Jehovah lives, it’s up to Jehovah to strike him and kill him, or for him to die in battle and then be [buried] with his ancestors.  
  
 11‘Since Jehovah hasn’t instructed me to raise a hand against His anointed, we’ll just take the spear that’s next to his head and his canteen of water, and leave.’  
  
12So David picked up [Saul’s] spear and canteen and they left… No one saw them or knew that they’d been there, for no one woke up! They were all sleeping tightly, because Jehovah had put them to sleep. 13David actually walked through their camp and then up the mountain.  
  
And when he was some distance away, 14David called to [Saul’s] men and to AbNer (son of Ner) saying:  
  
 ‘AbNer!  
  
 ‘Will you answer?’  
  
And AbNer asked:  
  
 ‘Who’s calling me?’  
  
15Then David said:  
  
 ‘Aren’t you a man?  
  
 ‘Who else is there like you in IsraEl? But, why weren’t you guarding your lord the king?  
  
 ‘For a man came there to destroy your lord the king this very night, 16so what you’ve done isn’t a good thing!  
  
 ‘As Jehovah lives; you’re all sons of death, because you weren’t guarding your lord the king… The anointed of Jehovah.  
  
 ‘For look! Where is the king’s spear? And where is his canteen of water? These things that he kept by his head?’  
  
17Well, Saul recognized the voice of David and said:  
  
 ‘Is that the voice of my child David?’  
  
And David replied:  
  
 ‘It’s my voice O lord… Your servant, O king!’  
  
18And he asked:  
  
 ‘So, why is my lord chasing his servant?  
  
 ‘How have I sinned and what’s the charge against me?  
  
 19‘Now listen, O my lord the king to these words of [mine,] his servant!  
  
 ‘If it’s God who’s sending you against me, then may you smell your sacrifice. But if it’s the sons of men, may they be cursed before Jehovah, because they’ve driven me away from the inheritance that I received from Jehovah, telling me to go and serve other gods!  
  
 20‘May my blood not be spilled on the ground away from the face of Jehovah... For the king of IsraEl is searching for this ‘flea’ as though he were hunting for long-eared owls in the mountains!’  
  
21And Saul said:  
  
 ‘I have sinned. Come back to me, my child David…  
  
 ‘I won’t do anything bad to you anymore, now that you’ve shown me how much you value my life.  
  
 ‘I’ve acted foolishly and ignorantly!’  
  
22And David replied:  
  
 ‘Look! Here’s the king’s spear... Send one of your servants to take it.  
  
 23‘The Lord will repay each one for his righteousness and faithfulness, just as Jehovah has saved you from my hands today, since I didn’t wish to raise a hand against the anointed of Jehovah.  
  
 24‘And look… As I’ve valued your life today, may my life be considered more valuable before my lord. May he shelter me and rescue me from all of my problems.’  
  
25Then Saul said to David:  
  
 ‘You’re blest, my child David... For whatever you do will succeed, and you can accomplish whatever you wish.’  
  
So David went his way, and Saul returned home.