

Lesson 5 – 1 Samuel 26-31

Text: 1 Samuel 26-31; 1 Chronicles 10

Main Characters: God, David, Saul, Samuel, Achish, Philistines

Key Passages:

- 1 Samuel 26:9-10 – David admonished Abishai for wanting to kill Saul; David trusted God.
- 1 Samuel 28:16-19 – Samuel revealed that Saul would be killed for his disobedience to God.

Main Storyline:

David continued to flee from Saul, hiding in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul heard from the Ziphites that David was hiding there, so he took 3000 soldiers with him to look for David in that area. David saw Saul coming, so one night while Saul and his men were sleeping, David and Abishai (Joab's brother) crept into the camp. Abishai begged David to allow him to kill Saul, but David warned him that it would be wrong to kill the Lord's anointed. David knew that if God wanted to kill Saul, He would do it. David took Saul's spear and his jug of water before they ran away and went to a hill safely away from the camp.

Once there, David called out to rebuke Abner, the commander of Saul's army, for not protecting Saul. David then questioned Saul about why he still pursued him, as he had not done any evil to Saul. When Saul heard David's voice and realized that David had spared him once again, he confessed his sin and promised that he would not harm David. Saul blessed David from afar, and they went their ways.

Despite this, David knew that Saul would continue to try to kill him. David thus decided to take refuge with the Philistines. He and his household with 600 of his men and their households asked Achish, king of Gath, to be given a place to live. Achish agreed, so they lived in the city of Ziklag for 16 months. David and his men regularly raided Israel's enemies, killing everyone they contacted to prevent them from reporting to Achish. When he would ask about the raid, David, lying, would tell them that they had been raiding Judah (or another enemy). As a result, Achish believed David was loyal to him.

The Philistines prepared to fight Israel again, and Saul became terrified. Since God would not answer him, Saul consulted a medium to bring up Samuel (note: mediums had no power, but were just glorified ventriloquists). When she began to "conjure" him, Samuel appeared, terrifying both Saul and her. Samuel, apparently sent back by God, rebuked Saul. Saul begged for advice, but Samuel reminded him that God had rejected him. Samuel told Saul that he and his sons would die the next day in battle.

In the meantime, David had been sent away from the Philistine battle front, as the other Philistines lords did not trust David as Achish did. David and his men returned to Ziklag only to find that the Amalekites had burned the city and captured all of their wives and children. David asked God what to do, and God told him to pursue them. Some of the men guarded the supplies while David pursued the Amalekites and defeated them, rescuing the people and gaining many spoils. Even though some of David's worthless men protested, David shared the spoils with the men who guarded their supplies.

Finally, the Philistines and the Israelites fought, and the Israelites were defeated. The Philistines pursued the Israelites, killing three of Saul's sons, Jonathan, Abinidab, and Malchishua. They also wounded Saul severely, such that he was not going to survive the battle. He asked his armorbearer to kill him so he would not be captured by the Philistines, but the armorbearer refused. Saul decided to kill himself by falling on his sword. When the Philistines found his body, they desecrated it. When the men of Jabesh Gilead heard (whom Saul had helped in 1 Samuel 11), they took his body back and buried it.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) We must not take the easy way out of difficult situations if it means sinning against the Lord.
- 2.) We will all be held accountable for our sins, even if it takes a long time to get the consequences.