

Tapes For Growing Christians 

Study Guide for

I Samuel

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lesson 1

I Samuel :1-18 The Account of Samuel's Parents

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God works through all kinds of situations.
2. God works through all kinds of people.

practical application

1. Husbands, try to be sensitive to your wives' feelings.
2. Don't be surprised if people misread your actions.

questions

1. What time period does the book of 1 Samuel cover?
2. What transitional role did Samuel have in the nation of Israel?
3. Is polygamy condoned in the Bible?
4. What was the spiritual state of the nation of Israel at this point in history?
5. What did Hannah vow to do if God would give her a son?

answers

1. 1 Samuel takes us from the time of the Judges of Israel to the time of the kings.
2. Samuel is often referred to as the last judge in Israel and the first prophet in Israel.
3. No. From the beginning, God's design and direction for marriage was one man and one woman for life. However, polygamy was practiced and allowed in the Old Testament.
4. The fact that Israel did not fully drive out the Canaanites from the land during the Conquest under Joshua led to the dark days of the Judges. The course of the nation of Israel will be changed when Samuel turns the heart of the people back to the Lord.
5. She vowed to dedicate him to the service of the Lord.

discuss / consider

1. Review the unlikely set of circumstances which God worked through to accomplish His purpose in 1 Samuel 1. How have you seen God work through difficult circumstances in your life to bring about good?
2. Eli misread Hannah's fervent prayers and accused her of being drunk. Review the two pieces of advice when people misread your actions:
 - 1) Like Hannah, if you get a chance, you explain your actions.
 - 2) Don't be surprised that this happens.

challenge

Husbands, think of ways to be especially sensitive to your wives' feelings this week.

memorize

"O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and... will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life." 1 Samuel 1:11

"Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him." 1 Samuel 1:17

lesson 2

I Samuel 1:19-28
The Birth of Samuel and the Dedication of Samuel at the Tabernacle

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The prayers of godly mothers are answered in God's way.
2. The children of godly mothers are blessed in God's way.

practical application

Mothers, are you willing to give up your children to the Lord?

questions

1. What was Hannah's vow before the Lord??
2. What is the meaning of Samuel's name?
3. How does Isaiah 55:8-9 relate to this lesson?
4. Why is it important for us to continue to pray?
5. Did Hannah keep her vow to the Lord?

answers

1. If the Lord would give her a son, she would present him to the Lord as a Nazirite.
2. Samuel means “heard of God.”
3. Sometimes God does not answer our prayers in the way we hope or expect; He will answer them His way.
4. As we continue to pray for our desires, the Lord continues to give us insight into His answer, and brings our heart in tune with His.
5. Yes, she “lent” Samuel to the Lord, as she vowed.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss how God normally answers prayer. Don’t expect some out-of-the-ordinary, dramatic way for God to answer your prayers. Normally God controls and times natural events and circumstances to bring about answers to our prayers. How have you seen this in your life?
2. How should you as parents pray for God’s blessing on your children? The children of godly mothers are blessed in God’s way.

challenge

Don’t be discouraged if God does not answer your prayers in your time and in your way. His way is best!
James 5:16, “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

memorize

“Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel.” 1 Samuel 1:19-20

“For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the LORD.” 1 Samuel 1:27-28

lesson 3

1 Samuel 2 Hannah's Song of Praise to the Lord after the Birth of Samuel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Hannah is an example of a faithful and dedicated servant.
2. Eli is an example of an unfaithful and undisciplined servant.

practical application

Don't dishonor the Lord by failing to discipline your children.

questions

1. What is the contrast in this chapter?
2. Where else in Scripture do we see a song of praise similar to Hannah's?
3. How did Eli's sons break God's ceremonial and moral laws?
4. During what time period did these events take place?
5. What was the consequence for Eli's unfaithfulness and the sins of his sons?

answers

1. There is a contrast between a faithful mother, Hannah, and an unfaithful father, Eli. There is also a contrast between the godly son, Samuel, and the ungodly sons, Hophni and Phineas.
2. In Mary's Magnificat, found in Luke 1
3. They broke God's ceremonial laws by:
 - taking more of the meat of the sacrifices than they were allowed (Leviticus 7)
 - taking the meat of the sacrifices before the fat had been burned (Leviticus 3)
 - They broke God's moral laws by:
 - despising the offering of the Lord
 - committing fornication
4. This was in the dark days of the Judges, when the moral and spiritual condition of the nation of Israel was at a low. But even during this time, God had a godly remnant.
5. Eli learned that his sons, Hophni and Phineas, would die on the same day.

discuss / consider

1. Review Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Hannah praises the Lord for His holiness and omniscience. Hannah praises the Lord for His power in all areas of life. Hannah praises the Lord for His perfect and sovereign judgments. Do your prayers contain these praises?
2. Eli's unfaithfulness and lack of discipline in his own life not only had negative effects on himself, but also his sons, and his descendants. Discuss the application for your life.

challenge

Idle threats in disciplining your children actually dishonor the Lord. Have the strength of character to teach your children what is right, and you will both bring honor to the Lord.

memorize

"No one is holy like the LORD, For there is none besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God." 1 Samuel 2:2

"And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the LORD and men." 1 Samuel 2:26

"Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever." 1 Samuel 2:35

lesson 4

I Samuel 3
The Call of Samuel by the Lord to the Office and Ministry of Prophet

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God can commune with children.
2. God can work through children.

practical application

Have you ever prayed, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening”?

questions

1. What was Samuel’s unique role in the nation of Israel?
2. What is the basic difference between a prophet and a priest?
3. Were there prophets before Samuel?
4. What does 1 Samuel 3:1 mean when it says, “*And the word of the LORD was rare in those days*”?
5. What message did God give Samuel?

answers

1. He is considered the last judge and the first prophet in Israel.
2. A prophet is one who speaks to the people for God, while a priest speaks to God for the people.
3. Yes, there were many men who spoke to the people for God before Samuel. But the office of prophet had not yet been established. Samuel was called by God to the prophetic office and began the great tradition of the prophets in Israel.
4. During the times of the judges the moral and spiritual conditions in Israel were so bad that people were not open to listening to the Lord and His Word.
5. God revealed His plans to punish Hophni and Phineas and remove Eli as high priest.

discuss / consider

1. God spoke to Samuel and gave him an important message that impacted the priesthood. What is your attitude about children and their spiritual capabilities? Does your attitude about children line up with Scripture?
2. As God worked through young Samuel in Old Testament days, so God can work through children today. Do you know a story where a Christian child has brought the whole family to the Lord?

challenge

When you pray to the Lord to meet your needs and help you, also be willing to listen and obey.

memorize

“And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.”

“Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.” 1 Samuel 3:9

“And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the LORD.” 1 Samuel 3:20

lesson 5

**I Samuel 4
The Ark of the Covenant is Captured by the Philistines & The Death of Eli and His Sons**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Lord's people are defeated when they turn away from God.
2. The Lord's people are defeated when they play games with God.

practical application

Let's not give the name "Ichabod" to any of our churches or children!

questions

1. Who were the Philistines?
2. Summarize the battles in 1 Samuel 4.
3. How did Eli the high priest die?
4. What should the Israelites have done before going into the battle with the Philistines?
5. What does the name "Ichabod" mean?

answers

1. The Philistines were Israel's perennial enemy all during the days of Samuel, Saul, and David. They were people who had migrated to the land of Canaan from Crete and other islands and settled along the Mediterranean Coast – the Gaza Strip today.
2. Israel was defeated by the Philistines, and lost about 4,000 men in battle. Israel then regrouped and called for the Ark of the Covenant to be brought into the camp for the second battle. The Philistines defeated the Israelites in a second battle, in which 30,000 more died and the Ark was taken by the Philistines.
3. When he heard the news that the Ark had been taken and his sons were dead, he fell backwards and died of a broken neck.
4. They should have prayed to the Lord and sought his guidance about going to battle with the Philistines. Israel recognized Samuel as a prophet, but we don't read of Israel consulting him for council before this battle.
5. Ichabod means "no glory."

discuss / consider

1. Discuss: The Lord's people are defeated when they turn away from God. Are you suffering defeat in your life right now? Is it possible that you have turned away from the Lord?
2. The Israelites tried to use the Ark of the Covenant as a good luck charm for their battle. God allowed His people to be defeated. Have you ever seen people play games with God, or done it yourself? What is the correct approach?

challenge

Don't let the glory and blessing of the Lord depart from your fellowship and family. Make sure you and your children have a growing heart for the Lord.

memorize

"Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh to us, that when it comes among us it may save us from the hand of our enemies." 1 Samuel 4:3

"The ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died." 1 Samuel 4:11

"The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured." 1 Samuel 4:22

lesson 6

I Samuel 5
The Ark of the Covenant in Philistine Country – God Makes His Presence and Power Known Even in Enemy Territory

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will not be reduced to a “small g” god.
2. God will not be appeased like a “small g” god.

practical application

Don't prop up your idols.

questions

1. Review the background events of this chapter.
2. What were the five main cities of the Philistines?
3. What did the Philistines do with the captured Ark?
4. Who was Dagon?
5. What happened to the image of Dagon and what was the Philistines' response?

answers

1. In the previous chapter of 1 Samuel we saw Israel defeated and the Ark of God taken by the Philistines.
2. Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza
3. They put the Ark into the temple of their god, Dagon.
4. He was the false fish god or fertility god of the Philistines. The image of Dagon was a torso of a man with the tail of a fish.
5. During the night the image of Dagon fell over before the Ark of God. The Philistines propped Dagon up, but the next night it fell over again and was broken.

discuss / consider

1. Many people today try to be polytheists like the Philistines. While they might acknowledge the God of Israel and Jesus of Nazareth, He is just one of many gods they recognize. Why is this status not acceptable to God?
2. The Philistines tried to move the Ark of the Covenant to a location that would appease the God of Israel. Discuss the truth that our God is not appeased like the pagan gods. Salvation is not attained by appeasement, but by propitiation.

challenge

Idols are things that prevent us from making God #1 in our lives. God has ways of having our idols fall over before Him. Don't prop up your idols.

memorize

"There was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD." 1 Samuel 5:3

"But the hand of the LORD was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and He ravaged them and struck them with tumors." 1 Samuel 5:6

"Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go back to its own place." 1 Samuel 5:11

lesson 7

1 Samuel 6

The Ark of the Lord was Brought Back to Israel from the Land of the Philistines

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God shows mercy when people are ignorant of His laws.
2. God holds people accountable when they are not ignorant of His laws.

practical application

Let's trust God to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.

questions

1. Who was in possession of the Ark of the Covenant when this chapter begins?
2. Why were they so frantic to send the Ark back to Israel?
3. Why did the Philistines send the Ark back with an offering of molded golden tumors and rats?
4. What specific instructions had God given in His law as to how the Ark of the Covenant was to be handled and carried?
5. Were the people of Beth Shemesh ignorant of God's laws?

answers

1. The Ark of the Covenant had been taken captive by the Philistines and put in the Temple of Dagon.
2. God showed His supremacy by causing the idol of Dagon to fall down before the Ark. Everywhere the Ark was moved for the next seven months, the Philistines were smitten with tumors.
3. The Philistines believed they could appease the angry gods by presenting an offering that represented their problem and showed how they were experiencing the judgment of the gods.
4. Only the priests and Levites were to be involved. The Ark must be carried on poles, and not handled by human hands. Anyone who disobeyed did so at the cost of their own life.
5. No. Beth Shemesh was a Levitical city, and the Levites were responsible to know God's laws and communicate them to others.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss how God shows mercy when people are ignorant of His laws. Should this truth be used as an excuse for sin?
2. When we come into God's family we are expected to obey His Word. When we come to know His Word, then we are held accountable when we disobey His Word. Discuss how and why God must discipline His disobedient children.

challenge

Samuel and other godly Israelites must have been amazed when the Ark of the Covenant was returned by itself without war. God is able to dramatically answer your prayers as well.

memorize

"Now the people of Beth Shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it." 1 Samuel 6:13

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21

lesson 8

1 Samuel 7
The Return of Israel to the Lord & the Resulting Revival that Takes Place Under the Leadership of Samuel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God gives victory to His people when they return to Him.
2. God restores losses to His people when they return to Him.

practical application

Let's follow Samuel's Ebenezer example.

questions

1. Where was the Ark of the Covenant taken after it returned from the Land of the Philistines?
2. What was Samuel's role in the nation of Israel at this time?
3. What does verse 2 mean when it says Israel lamented after the Lord?
4. What did the people of Israel have to do before revival could come?
5. What happened when the Philistines attacked the Israelites while they were gathered at Mizpah?
6. What does "Ebenezer" mean?

answers

1. It was taken to the town of Kiriath Jearim and remained there for at least 100 years in the house of Abinadab.
2. He was a circuit riding judge who traveled to various cities judging the people.
3. They sought after the Lord for blessing and mourned the fact that they were not being blessed.
4. They had to rid themselves of their idols.
5. The Lord answered with a great thunder that confused the Philistines, and God gave Israel a great victory.
6. Stone of help

discuss / consider

1. The people of Israel lamented after the Lord, but revival could not come until they rid themselves of their idols. Is this possible in our lives as well? Idols are anything that comes between us and our full commitment and worship of the Lord.
2. Territory that had been lost to the Philistines was restored to Israel when they returned to the Lord. For us as believers, when we're not walking with the Lord we lose ground. But when we return to the Lord we can recover spiritual blessings that were lost. Can you give examples of this?

challenge

As we see the Lord at work in our lives, we should set up "Ebenezers" to honor Him for His help.

memorize

"Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, 'Thus far the LORD has helped us.'" 1 Samuel 7:12

"Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel." 1 Samuel 7:14

Lesson 9

1 Samuel 8

Israel's Demand for a King Because the Sons of Samuel were Not Following in their Father's Footsteps and Israel Wanted to be Like the Other Nations

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers cannot pass on their spirituality.
2. Believers can settle for God's permissive will.

practical application

Watch out for the "We want to be like other nations" syndrome.

questions

1. What was the state of the priesthood at the time of Samuel?
2. Did Samuel's sons carry on his lineage?
3. Can you guarantee your child will grow up spiritually healthy and active?
4. What was God's perfect will for the people regarding a king?
5. Why did the people of Israel ask for a king?
6. What problems did Samuel foretell the people would face if they chose to have a king over them?

answers

1. The priesthood was in sad shape. Eli was dead, and God had removed his sons, Hophni and Phineas. Samuel was not a priest, but he was a Levite and a Judge, who offered sacrifices on behalf of Israel.
2. No. Samuel had decided to spread his workload and had his two sons appointed as judges. He sent them to Beersheba in the southern part of Israel while he remained in the north. But Samuel's sons did not walk in their father's footsteps (verse 3).
3. No. Parents are responsible to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), but you cannot make your children spiritual. That is a matter of their individual walk with the Lord.
4. God's perfect will was not for Israel to have a king at this point. God was to be their king, but they had rejected the Lord from being king over them (verse 7).
5. Because Samuel was old and his sons did not walk in his ways, and because they wanted to be like the other nations.
 - They would be taxed.
 - There would be a draft for military and domestic service.
 - The best of their crops would go to the king.
 - They would regret their choice of God's permissive will.

discuss / consider

1. Samuel's spirituality was not passed on to his sons. Perhaps this is because he was on the road a lot judging Israel, and thus did not give enough time to the spiritual welfare of his family. This is a problem that faces many men in the ministry today. Do you have a proper balance between your ministry and your God-given family responsibilities?
2. In God's permissive will He told Samuel to listen to the voice of the people and give them a king. Discuss other cases in the Bible where there is a clear distinction made between God's perfect will and His permissive will.

challenge

Beware of wanting to be like other Christian families, ministries, or churches. The Lord may give you exactly what you request, but it may not be His perfect will. It is better to humbly walk step by step with the Lord and be guided in His perfect will and timing.

memorize

"Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." 1 Samuel 8:5

"Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." 1 Samuel 8:7

lesson 10

1 Samuel 9

The Prophet Samuel Meets a Young Man Named Saul and Announces to Him that He will be the First King of Israel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God is sovereign over the details of His will that He chooses to use in His plan.
2. God is sovereign over the details of His will that He chooses to reveal to His people.

practical application

Praise the Lord! He does not forget about the lost donkeys!

questions

1. What is a theocracy?
2. What kind of man was Saul?
3. How was Saul to be brought into contact with Samuel so he could be anointed king?
4. How did Saul respond when Samuel told him he would be king of Israel?
5. Did Saul get his donkeys back?

answers

1. A theocracy is a government with direct rule by God. Israel was supposed to be a theocracy with God as king.
2. Saul was an impressive looking man. He was tall and handsome and descended from a military hero in Israel. Saul was the people's choice to be king, but he was not a man after God's own heart.
3. Through detailed circumstances that were all part of God's plan.
4. He was quite humble, saying he was no one special.
5. Yes (verse 20).

discuss / consider

1. God works through detailed events and circumstances – big and small – to accomplish His plan for our lives. Can you give examples of this from your life?
2. God revealed a number of details to Samuel about Saul, but He omitted several details that would have been easy to include. In the same way today, we don't know why God chooses to reveal some of the details of His will for our lives and chooses not to reveal other details. Can you give examples of this as well?

challenge

While God is working to reveal His will in guiding our lives, He cares about little details as well! Praise the Lord that He does not forget about the lost donkeys!

memorize

"There was not a more handsome person than [Saul] among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people." 1 Samuel 9:2

"And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house?" 1 Samuel 9:20

lesson 11

1Samuel 10
Saul is Anointed and Announced as the First King of Israel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will show His people the paths they should follow.
2. God will show His people the leaders they should follow.

practical application

Expect support and opposition if you are God's chosen leader.

questions

1. Describe how Saul met Samuel from the human perspective and from the divine perspective.
2. Why were people anointed with oil in Old Testament times?
3. Review the three signs God gave Saul through the prophet Samuel.
4. Was it God's perfect will for Israel to have a king?
5. How should elders and church leaders be chosen today?

answers

1. From the human perspective, Saul was looking for his lost donkeys, but from the divine perspective, God was sending Saul to Samuel to be anointed as the first king of Israel.
2. To symbolize that the person was set apart for divine service
3. Two men would meet him at Rachel's tomb and tell him the lost donkeys had been found. Three men would meet Saul at the Oak of Tabor, carrying three young goats, three loaves of bread, and a jug of wine. They would give him two loaves of bread. When Saul came to Gibeah, a group of prophets would meet him and the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him and he would prophesy.
4. No, God wanted to be their ruler. But God allowed them to have a king and even chose a king for them.
5. Elders and church leaders should not be chosen by popular vote. God raises up His chosen leaders and they will be known and shown by the work they are doing. It is the responsibility of God's people to recognize the leaders that God has raised up.

discuss / consider

1. The way the Lord lead Saul is generally the way He leads His people today. Not with shooting stars or voices from heaven, but through normal events that confirm the direction we are going as we seek to walk with the Lord, serve Him, and follow His plan for our lives. The three signs God gave Saul can be divided into three categories:
 - i. Circumstances
 - ii. Needs supplied
 - iii. Counsel of godly Believers
2. How has God used these ways to show you the path that you should follow?

challenge

Some valiant men supported King Saul, while other men opposed him. If God has called you to be a spiritual leader in some ministry, don't quit because there is opposition. Expect support and opposition if you are God's chosen leader.

memorize

"Is it not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His inheritance?" 1 Samuel 10:1

"You have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!'" 1 Samuel 10:19

lesson 12

1 Samuel 11
Saul Proved Himself as a Young King by Defeating the Ammonites who had
Attacked Jabesh Gilead

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The enemy will attack God's people where they are vulnerable.
2. The enemy will blind God's people if they compromise.

practical application

Let's be angry for God's sake.

questions

1. Where was Jabesh Gilead?
2. Were the Ammonites the same as the Ammorites?
3. Why would the men of Jabesh Gilead be helpless withoutt their right eyes?
4. Why was Saul so motivated to go and help Jabesh Gilead?
5. Why did God want all of His people to cross the Jordan and dwell in the heart of the Promised Land?

answers

1. Jabesh Gilead was in the territory of the half tribe of Manasseh that had settled east of the Jordan River, 25 miles south of the Sea of Galilee.
2. No, they were both enemies of Israel, but the Ammonites were descended from Lot.
3. Most people were right handed and held their shields in the left hand, which covered the left eye. Therefore a warrior would be helpless to revolt if he did not have his right eye.
4. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin, which had almost been wiped out in civil war during the time of the judges. Four hundred maidens from Jabesh Gilead were given to the men of Benjamin who survived the war. Saul's lineage could have included a woman from Jabesh Gilead.
5. For unity and security

discuss / consider

1. Jabesh Gilead and the rest of the territories on the east side of the Jordan were vulnerable to enemy attack. They settled for less than God's perfect will by choosing to settle there. The Enemy will attack God's people where they are vulnerable today as well. Have you settled for less than God's perfect will in your life? Are you more vulnerable to the Enemy's attack? Read 1 Peter 5:8.
2. If the people of Jabesh Gilead had surrendered to the enemy, the result would be their literal blindness. Many people today are blinded to spiritual realities and the truth of God's Word. They are ineffective in spiritual battle because they have surrendered to the enemy in some area of their walk of faith. If you are in this group, don't compromise! Ask God to send help and victory.

challenge

King Saul was filled with good and righteous anger when he heard of the threat of the Ammonites. We should be angry when we see God and His Word mocked and slandered. Let's be angry for God's sake.

memorize

"Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger was greatly aroused." 1 Samuel 11:6

"So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal." 1 Samuel 11:15

lesson 13

1 Samuel 12
Samuel's Farewell Address to the Nation of Israel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God's people need to be reminded about the proof of God's faithfulness.
2. God's people need to be warned about the possibility of their own unfaithfulness.

practical application

Let's not sin by failing to pray for others.

Let's remember to remember!

questions

1. Why did all the people gather at Gilgal?
2. Now that all the people affirmed Saul's kingship, what did Samuel do?
3. Did Samuel retire from ministry at this point?
4. What was the point of Samuel recounting the history of Israel from the Exodus until the victory of King Saul over the Ammonites?
5. Did God's faithfulness to His people end because they wrongly desired a king?

answers

1. To confirm Saul as the king of all Israel
2. Samuel stepped down from his recognized position as judge in Israel. This chapter is his farewell address.
3. No, he continued to carry on his priestly and prophetic duties within Israel, but his administrative responsibilities as judge were relinquished.
4. To show that God was faithful and righteous in all His dealings with His people.
5. No, God continued to be faithful. He will never abandon His people.

discuss / consider

1. Samuel recounted the history of Israel to remind the people of God's righteous acts and faithfulness. Believers today need to be reminded of this as well. Briefly recount your history. Does it testify of 1 Corinthians 1:9?
2. Recall a time in your life that you were unfaithful to the Lord. How did God's discipline demonstrate His faithfulness to you? See Hebrews 12:7 and 1 Peter 4:17.

challenge

We are a forgetful people, who quickly forget God's faithfulness to us. Set aside time this week to reflect on what God has done for you. *"Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you."* 1 Samuel 12:24

memorize

"If you fear the LORD and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the LORD your God." 1 Samuel 12:14

"Far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way." 1 Samuel 12:23

lesson 14

1 Samuel 13
**King Saul's Disobedience in Refusing to Wait for Samuel to Offer the Sacrifice
Before Going Out to Battle Against the Philistines**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Disobeying the Lord is never justified by circumstances.
2. Disobeying the Lord results in loss of status.

practical application

Give credit where credit is due.

questions

1. How does archeology back up the teaching of 1 Samuel 13:19?
2. Should we be concerned by the two manuscript discrepancies in 1 Samuel 13?
3. Why were the men of Israel scared as they faced battle with the Philistines?
4. What did Saul decide to do in face of the discouraging circumstances?
5. What was the sad consequence of Saul's disobedience?

answers

1. The archeological record confirms that until the time of David, the Philistines had a monopoly on iron technology.
2. No, these variations are relatively few in the Bible, and they do not affect doctrine.
3. The Israelites were hopelessly outnumbered, with no chariots or cavalry. Furthermore, all Israel had to use as weapons were their farm implements – pitchforks and pickaxes!
4. Saul did not wait for Samuel to come and offer sacrifices before the battle. He took matters into his own hands, and wrongly offered the sacrifices himself.
5. Saul's sons would not carry on his role as king of Israel. Instead, God would appoint as king a man after His own heart, David.

discuss / consider

1. Many Christians behave like Saul, cheating in their Christian lives because of the circumstances. But disobeying the Lord is never justified by circumstances. Discuss this principle. Can you think of any exceptions to the rule?
2. The consequence of Saul's disobedience was that his sons would not continue his dynasty as king of Israel. This was a sore consequence for Saul and all of his ancestors to follow. Discuss how your actions and decisions today can have a long-term effect on your family.

challenge

Saul apparently took credit for Jonathon's victory over the Philistines. He often took credit where it was not his due. Is this your character? Watch out for your pride, give credit to others.

memorize

"Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering." 1 Samuel 13:12

"For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue." 1 Samuel 13:13-14

lesson 15

1 Samuel 14:1-23
Jonathon's Victory Over the Philistines, Against Great Odds

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God can bring victory against all odds.
2. God can cause confusion in the enemy camp.

practical application

Thank the Lord for the armor bearers He provides.

questions

1. Where was King Saul's capital in Israel?
2. What was the Israelites latest problem with the Philistines?
3. What sign did God use to direct Jonathon and his armor bearer?
4. What is one interpretation of verse 19?
5. Who were the "Hebrews" of verse 21?
?

answers

1. Saul's capital was in Gibeah, a few miles north of Jerusalem.
2. The Philistines in Michmash were sending out raiding parties in all directions and attacking the towns and villages of Israel.
3. If when they exposed themselves to the Philistines they were invited to come across the steep valley, they would know that God was directing them to move out by faith.
4. The confusion was so great in the enemy camp that Saul told Abijah the priest not to bother consulting the Urim and Thummin, because it was obvious that God was directing Israel to attack the Philistines.
5. They were Hebrew mercenaries who had been wrongly fighting for the Philistines. Now they turned back and fought for Israel.

discuss / consider

1. Recall other events in Israel's history where God gave them victory against great odds.
2. God gives victory against great odds in spiritual warfare as well. Discuss examples of this from history and your own life.

challenge

Jonathon had a willing and courageous armor bearer to go into the battle with him. Who has God provided as an "armor bearer" to support you in your Christian ministry today?

memorize

"For nothing restrains the LORD from saving by many or by few." 1 Samuel 14:6

"So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle shifted to Beth Aven." 1 Samuel 14:23

lesson 16

1 Samuel 14:24-52

Two Foolish Vows that King Saul Made and the Consequences that Followed

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Foolish decisions result in needless hardships.
2. Foolish decisions result in tragic situations.

practical application

Don't make decisions in the emotion of the moment.

questions

1. What title was suggested for 1 Samuel 14?
2. Who was Abner?
3. What rash oath did Saul make on behalf of his soldiers?
4. What tragic situation occurred that night after the battle?
5. What foolish decision did Saul make next?
6. Did Jonathon die that night?

answers

1. "Faith in contrast to Folly," the faith of Jonathon contrasted with the foolishness of Saul
2. Saul's uncle, and the commander of his army
3. That they would not eat any food until evening, when they had taken vengeance on their enemies
4. The people were so hungry they started ravenously slaughtering and eating the animals taken from the Philistines, without first draining the blood. This was a violation of the Mosaic Law.
5. Because God would not answer Saul as to whether to pursue the Philistines further, Saul wrongly assumed that someone had sinned by breaking his foolish fasting vow. He said that even if his son Jonathon had broken the fast, he would surely die.
6. No, God intervened and the people rescued Jonathon, protecting him from Saul.

discuss / consider

Foolish decisions result in needless hardships and tragic situations. Consider by yourself decisions that you have made regarding your family, church, and workplace. Did these decisions follow biblical principle of decision making? You can read about these principles in Dr. Dave's essay, "The Seven C's of Decision Making." <http://www.growingchristians.org/dfgc/seven2.htm>

challenge

Even well meaning decisions made in the emotion of the moment can have sad consequences. Don't make decisions in the emotion of the moment.

memorize

"Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies." 1 Samuel 14:24

"Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul." 1 Samuel 14:52

lesson 17

1 Samuel 15
King Saul's Act of Partial Obedience in his Failure to Obey the Word of the Lord
Concerning the Destruction of the Amalekites

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Obedience is better than sacrifice.
2. Obedience is better than repentance.

practical application

Don't build monuments to yourself.

questions

1. Why did the Lord call for total destruction of the Amalekites?
2. Did Saul follow God's command to utterly destroy the Amalekites?
3. How did Saul justify his selective obedience?
4. What was a result of Saul's disobedience?

answers

1. God did not want the idolatry and immorality of the Amalekites or any of the pagan peoples of the land to infiltrate and corrupt God's people through intermarriage or other cultural ties. Because of the Amalekites' past sin of attacking Israel in the wilderness. This command of God was just and righteous punishment. All of the battles against the enemies of God's people in the Old Testament picture the spiritual warfare of believers today.
2. No, he kept alive King Agag and all of the best animals in the flocks and herds.
3. He told Samuel that he planned to sacrifice the animals to the Lord. He also shifted the blame to the people.
4. Samuel told Saul again that God had rejected him from being king over Israel.

discuss / consider

1. To obey is better than sacrifice. This biblical truth is just as true today. Discuss how it can be lived out in a believer's life.
2. Obedience is better than repentance. Many Christian leaders who were once greatly used of God have been set aside from their position of leadership, because of disobedience. Even though many have repented and been restored to the Lord, the consequences of their disobedience limits their future ministry. Discuss this sad truth.

challenge

Do you try to build monuments to yourself in the way you describe your good deeds to others? Self monuments are an indication of pride. Let God build your monuments.

memorize

"I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments." 1 Samuel 15:11

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Samuel 15:22

lesson 18

1 Samuel 16:1-5
Samuel is Told to Anoint David as the Next King of Israel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Bible never condones lying and deceiving.
2. The Bible sometimes condones secrecy and concealment.

practical application

Remember, getting killed is not the worst thing that can happen!

questions

1. What test did King Saul fail in 1 Samuel 15?
2. What was the consequence of Saul's disobedience?
3. Why was Samuel afraid to go to Bethlehem?
4. What did God instruct Samuel to tell King Saul?
5. What are situational ethics?

answers

1. Saul was given one last chance to obey the Lord, but he failed to utterly destroy the Amalekites as God instructed.
2. The kingdom of Israel would be taken from him and given to a better man.
3. Because if proud and disobedient King Saul heard that Samuel had anointed his successor as king, he would have Samuel killed.
4. That he was going to Bethlehem to offer sacrifice (which he did!).
5. Situational ethics teach that it is okay to lie in time of war or if you think it is the more loving thing to do.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss the Bible's position on lying and deceiving. Consider Samuel here, the Hebrew midwives, and Rahab. The Bible teaches non-conflicting moral absolutes; to make the right choice you do not have to break one of God's moral laws or choose the lesser of two evils. Consider the example of Jesus.
2. Discuss how creative concealment can be used in order to obey the command of the Lord. For more information, refer to Dr. Dave's essay, "An Exercise in Ethics."
<http://www.growingchristians.org/dfgc/ethics.htm>

challenge

Bringing God glory by doing the right thing is the highest priority. Remember, getting killed is not the worst thing that can happen!

memorize

"How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided myself a king among his sons." 1 Samuel 16:1

lesson 19

1 Samuel 16:6-23

**David is Selected from the Sons of Jesse to be the Next King of Israel & David's
Early Employment as King Saul's Harp Player and Armor Bearer**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. All human hearts are under the searching eye of God.
2. All evil spirits are under the sovereign control of God.
- .

practical application

Listen to hymns in order to soothe your soul.

questions

1. Why did Samuel travel to Bethlehem?
2. Why did the elders of the city tremble when they met Samuel?
3. What did anointing with oil symbolize in the Old Testament?
4. How did Saul first come to know David?
5. Do Satan and his angels have complete freedom on this earth?

answers

1. The Lord sent him to secretly anoint one of the sons of Jesse as the next king of Israel.
2. Samuel was a circuit riding judge. The elders of Bethlehem thought that Samuel had come to their city to pronounce and execute judgment concerning some matter.
3. Kings and High priests were anointed to symbolize that this person was set apart for God's holy service.
4. David was called to be Saul's harp player. He made such a good impression on the king, that he was made Saul's armor bearer.
5. No, they are under the sovereign control of God and are only permitted to do what God allows.

discuss / consider

1. As humans we tend to be impressed by outward credentials, such as good looks or talent. God is not impressed with such outward appearances; He looks at the heart. If you are a parent, how can you teach your children to prioritize heart attitude over outward appearance?
2. While God is not the source of evil, He can use the evil of mankind or fallen angels to accomplish His purpose. Discuss this principle. Refer to Ephesians 1:11.

challenge

Saul's soul was refreshed when David played his harp. Is your soul distressed by the pressures of life? Try listening to music that contains Scripture to calm your troubled soul.

memorize

"For man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

"And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him." 1 Samuel 16:23

lesson 20

1 Samuel 17:1-30

A Description of Goliath and The Challenge He Presented to the Camp of Israel

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The enemy will always have his Goliaths.
2. The Lord will always have His Davids.

practical application

Let's fight the Goliaths and not our brothers!

questions

1. Where is the Valley of Elah?
2. How tall was Goliath? How much did his armor weigh? How much did the head of his spear weigh?
3. What was Goliath's challenge to the Israelites?
4. What would be given to the man who defeated Goliath?
5. What do the battles in the Old Testament between God's people Israel and their enemies represent?
6. What does the number 40 represent in Scripture?

answers

1. About 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem
2. He was 9' 9" tall. His armor weighed about 125 pounds and his spear about 16 pounds.
3. Goliath challenged the Israelites to send out a warrior for a contest, which would determine the outcome of the battle. This was a common strategy in the ancient world.
4. King Saul had promised to give the champion his daughter as a wife. Furthermore, he would be made wealthy and his family would be tax-free.
5. They generally illustrate some aspect of our spiritual warfare.
6. It is the number of testing.

discuss / consider

1. Secular science is one of Satan's "Goliaths" facing us in spiritual warfare today. Can you list some other giants of the Enemy?
2. David did not waste time arguing when his brother questioned his motives. Have fellow believers ever misread your motives? Did you focus on fighting the Goliath rather than your brothers?

challenge

God raises up Davids to fight the spiritual battle against the enemy. Are you willing and prepared to fight?

memorize

*"And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span."
1 Samuel 17:4*

"For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" 1 Samuel 17:23

lesson 21

1 Samuel 17:31-58
David's Victory Over Goliath Using a Sling Shot and Goliath's Own Sword

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God is not confined to conventional methods in spiritual warfare.
2. God can use a believer's former experience in spiritual warfare.

practical application

Don't practice fanciful interpretation of Scripture.

questions

1. Why does it seem at the end of the chapter that King Saul didn't know David?
2. Who do David and Goliath represent as an illustration of spiritual warfare?
3. What was Saul's response when David volunteered to fight Goliath?
4. How did God use David's former experience in his victory over Goliath?
5. What principle can verse 48 teach us about spiritual warfare?

answers

1. One possible answer is that while Saul knew David as his harp player and armor bearer, now that he was about to become his son-in-law, Saul was asking about his lineage.
2. Goliath represents satanic forces opposed to God's people. David represents committed and courageous believers who are willing to step out in faith and fight the Goliaths.
3. He objected that David was an untrained youth. He insisted that David wear his armor into battle.
4. David became skilled in using a slingshot when he shepherded his sheep. David had killed a lion and bear while tending his sheep, which certainly gave David confidence and courage against Goliath.
5. That David ran toward Goliath is an illustration of staying on the offensive in spiritual warfare.

discuss/consider

1. Discuss how David is ultimately a spiritual picture of Christ Himself who conquered Satan. A number of points were mentioned in the background section of this Talk.
2. What former experience do you have that God can use in spiritual warfare? Have you seen this happen in your life?

challenge

Don't practice fanciful interpretation of Scripture, the story of David and Goliath is incredible as it is!

memorize

"The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." 1 Samuel 17:35

"You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." 1 Samuel 17:45

"The battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands." 1 Samuel 17:47

lesson 22

1 Samuel 18
Jonathan's Friendship with David & Saul's Increasing Jealousy of David

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. There will always be people who honor the Lord's servants.
2. There will always be people who are jealous of the Lord's servants.

practical applications

Don't miss the spiritual picture of Jonathan's love for David.

questions

1. What were the results of David's victory over Goliath?
2. How did Saul respond to David's popularity?
3. How did Jonathon fit into this power struggle?
4. Review how this passage shows the progress of jealousy.
5. What dowry did Saul require of David? How did David fulfill this?

answers

1. Saul set him over the army of Israel. David also became a popular hero in Israel.
2. He became insanely jealous and tried to kill David twice.
3. Jonathan would have been king after his father Saul, but he recognized that the kingdom had been given to David. Jonathan showed David respect, honor, loyalty, and help.
4. Jealousy sees others as a threat (verses 8-9). Jealousy cannot stand seeing the blessing of God on others (verses 12, 14-15). Jealousy does not keep promises (verse 13).
5. Saul demanded 100 foreskins of the Philistines as a dowry for his daughter, hoping in the process David would be killed. David returned with 200 foreskins, increasing Saul's jealousy.

discuss / consider

1. Consider Jonathan's remarkable reaction to David's popularity and authority. Contrast this with Saul's reaction. Think of the people God has raised up to be spiritual shepherds and leaders in your life. Do you react to them as Jonathan or as Saul?
2. Jealousy destroyed the relationship between Saul and David. Even today the sin of jealousy can destroy friendships, fellowships, and churches. What are some practical ways you can guard against jealousy in your own heart?

challenge

Jonathan is a spiritual picture of the committed Christian who shows love and devotion to the Lord at all costs. Be a Jonathan today.

memorize

"Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul." 1 Samuel 18:3

"Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David...and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually." 1 Samuel 18:28-29

lesson 23

1 Samuel 19
David is Protected from the Attempts of King Saul to Take His Life

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God can use natural means to protect His servants.
2. God can use supernatural means to protect His servants.

practical applications

Let's be peacemakers like Jonathan.

questions

1. What was David's status in Israel in the beginning of the chapter?
2. What was the bad news for David at this point?
3. Why was there an idol in David's household, as we see in verse 13?
4. List the four natural means God used to protect David from King Saul.
5. Recount the humorous event of God's supernatural protection of David.

answers

1. David was a popular hero and a young general in the Israelite military forces. He was married to Michal, one of King Saul's daughters, and was close friends with Saul's son, Jonathan.
2. Because of David's popularity, Saul became extremely jealous of David.
3. Possession of these household idols in that culture did not necessarily mean the owner was involved in idolatry. Small idols were used as title deeds to property, and this large idol may have been a cultural decoration.
4. Friends. Human ability. Family. Circumstances
5. When King Saul heard that David was with Samuel, he sent messengers there to take David. But the Spirit of God came upon these henchmen and they prophesized in spite of themselves. This happened 3 times, until Saul himself came. He also was forced by the Spirit of God to prophesy in spite of himself.

discuss / consider

1. This story of David's protection is similar to God's protection of Elijah in 1 Kings 17. In both cases, God used natural and supernatural means to protect and provide for His servants. Discuss the parallels in these stories.
2. Can God use supernatural means to protect His people today? Yes! Do you know about personal accounts of this?

challenge

Jonathan was willing to speak to his father and make a temporary peace with David. He did this even at the risk of his own life. How can you be a peacemaker between the people in your life?

memorize

"Jonathan told David, saying, 'My father Saul seeks to kill you.'" 1 Samuel 19:2

"Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence." 1 Samuel 19:10

lesson 24

1 Samuel 20
David's Decision to Leave the Royal Court and Become a Fugitive & The Painful Separation Between David and Jonathan

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. There will be painful decisions in the life of faith.
2. There will be painful separations in the life of faith.
- .

practical applications

Use 1 Samuel 20:42 instead of Genesis 31:49 as a blessing.

questions

1. What sort of painful decisions was David facing at this point in his life?
2. Were these painful decisions the result of something David had done wrong?
3. What plan did David and Jonathan devise to communicate whether it was safe for David to return to the palace?
4. What covenant did David and Jonathan make with one another?
5. Why is 1 Samuel 20:42 a better blessing than Genesis 31:49?

answers

1. Whether to stay with his wife or flee for his life. Whether he should rescue his family in Bethlehem, or go into hiding as a fugitive.
2. No, David had done nothing wrong. These painful decisions were just part of his life.
3. Jonathan would come out to the field where David was hiding, and shoot some arrows. When his messenger boy ran to fetch them, if Jonathan said, "Look the arrow is beyond you," David would know he needed to flee for safety.
4. They promised to care for one another's families in the future, no matter what else happened.
5. The verse in Genesis is not a blessing in context, but the verse in Samuel is.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss whether or not David asked Jonathan to lie to his father in this chapter. Is lying justified in some circumstances? How could David be called a man after God's own heart, if this was a lie?
2. Think of a painful decision you have faced in your life of faith. Did the outcome of that decision strengthen your faith in God?

memorize

"You shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live...but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever." 1 Samuel 20:14-15

"May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever." 1 Samuel 20:42

lesson 25

1 Samuel 21
David Seeks Provision from Ahimelech, the High Priest and Protection from Achish, the Philistine King of Gath

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The testimony of believers is compromised when they lie to fellow believers.
2. The testimony of believers is compromised when they turn to the world for security.

practical applications

Let's learn from our mistakes.

questions

1. What painful decision did David make in 1 Samuel 20?
2. Who was usually allowed to eat the showbread? Why was an exception made here?
3. What did Jesus teach in relation to this story?
4. When did David lie to the high priest Ahimelech in this chapter?
5. Why did David pretend to be crazy before King Achish?

answers

1. David became a fugitive and left his wife and position in the royal court, because King Saul continued to threaten his life.
2. According to the Law in Leviticus 24, this bread was normally for the priests. In this case, the preservation of David's life was more important than a ceremonial regulation.
3. The Lord referenced this event in Matthew 12 when the Pharisees were criticizing the disciples for picking and eating grain on the Sabbath. His point was that moral obligations in life supersede civil or ceremonial regulations.
4. In verse 2 he claimed to be on secret business for the king. In verse 8 he said the king's business required haste.
5. He wanted the Philistines to think he was harmless, so they would give him refuge from King Saul.

discuss / consider

1. This lesson taught that "moral obligations in life supersede civil or ceremonial regulations." Give an application for this biblical principle today. The Bible is not teaching that is permissible to break God's *moral* laws on occasion.
2. Lying is never justified, and David's lies in this chapter were no exception. How does this compare to discussion question #1. What was the sad consequence of David's lie?

challenge

David made several mistakes in this chapter, but he learned from his mistakes. This does not excuse the mistake, but hopefully we will also learn from our mistakes and make less in the future.

memorize

"So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the LORD."
1 Samuel 21:6

"Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath." *1 Samuel 21:10*

lesson 26

1 Samuel 22

David with His Ragtag Army of Men Living in the Wilderness at the Cave of Adullam & Saul's Massacre of the Community of Priests

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / learning points

1. Following the right leader leads to eternal rewards.
2. Following the wrong leader leads to tragic results.

practical applications

Let's be willing to admit our mistakes.

questions

1. Why did David take his parents to the land of Moab?
2. Who was Gad?
3. What kind of men gathered themselves around David?
4. Why were 85 priests and many women, children, and animals killed in the village of Nob?
5. Who slaughtered this community?

answers

1. He took them there for safety from King Saul. Saul was enemies with Moab, so they were open to David's request. David also had distant relatives in Moab, through his great grandmother Ruth.
2. Gad was a prophet the Lord provided to exhort, advise, and counsel David during these times of trouble. He also wrote a record of much of David's life (see 1 Chronicles 29:29).
3. Men who were in distress, in debt, discouraged, and discontent. But they chose the right leader to follow.
4. Because Doeg the Edomite reported that Ahimelech the high priest had aided David in his flight from Saul.
5. Doeg did it himself, because Saul's guards would not strike the priests of the Lord.

discuss / consider

1. In this chapter we see that following the right leader leads to reward. How was this true for David's army? How is this true for us as believers? Discuss how David is a spiritual picture of Christ in His time of rejection.
2. Following the wrong leader led to tragic results for Doeg the Edomite. This is also true for people today who reject Christ and follow Satan. Discuss the tragic results for those who choose to follow the Antichrist in the end times.

challenge

David did the right thing by admitting his mistake in this chapter. Are you willing to admit your mistakes and take the blame? Don't shift the blame to others. Admit when you are wrong and humbly repent.

memorize

"And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to [David]. So he became captain over them." 1 Samuel 22:2

"Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me." 1 Samuel 22:17

lesson 27

1 Samuel 23
God's Continued Protection and Encouragement for David as King Saul Continued His Evil Pursuit

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Lord provides protection during times of trouble.
2. The Lord provides encouragement during times of trouble

practical application

Don't assume that every opportunity is from the Lord.

questions

1. What report did David hear while he was hiding in the wilderness from King Saul?
2. In what unique way did the Lord communicate to David through the garments of the high priest?
3. How is David a spiritual picture of the Lord Jesus in this chapter?
4. What stopped Saul during his pursuit of David?
5. Why was Jonathon able to find David when Saul was not able to find him?

answers

1. He heard that the Philistines had attacked the border town of Keilah and were plundering the threshing floors.
2. The ephod of the high priest was an apron-like garment over which was a breastplate. Twelve precious stones on the breastplate represented the twelve tribes of Israel. The Urim and the Thummin were probably two additional stones in the breastplate, which the high priest used to determine yes or no answers about the Lord's will.
3. Like David, the Lord was rejected and betrayed by the very people He came to save.
4. An urgent message came to Saul telling him that the Philistines had invaded the land.
5. This is another indication that the Lord was protecting David.

discuss / consider

1. When David was in trouble, he could not look to the people for protection, because they were willing to betray him! Instead he looked to the Lord. What kind of troubles are you facing in your life? Have you sought the protection only the Lord can provide?
2. Jonathan encouraged David by reminding him of the promises of God. Did you know that is the most important thing you can bring people who are hurting and in times of trouble? Think of one person you can encourage this week by reminding them of God's care and control in their situation.

challenge

Saul wrongly assumed the "open doors" to pursue David were from the Lord. We can be deceived this way as well! The devil can provide all kinds of opportunities and open doors for you to do your own will! Be aware.

memorize

"Saul sought [David] every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand." 1 Samuel 23:14

"Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God." 1 Samuel 23:16

"The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him." Nabum 1:7

lesson 28

1 Samuel 24

David's Stay in the Strongholds of En Gedi & David Spares Saul's Life

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The godly let the Lord plead their cause.
2. The ungodly say one thing and do another.

practical applications

Wait for the Lord in all areas of life.

questions

1. Where is En Gedi?
2. When did David have the opportunity to retaliate against King Saul?
3. What did David do in the face of this opportunity?
4. How did Saul respond when David revealed himself and showed the corner of Saul's robe?
5. What significant landmark might have been David's stronghold (verse 22)?

answers

1. En Gedi, which means “the fountain of the young goat,” is a beautiful fresh water spring amongst the rocks in the hills along the west side of the Dead Sea.
2. As David and his men were hiding in the inner recesses of a cave, Saul came into the cave to either take a rest or go the bathroom. David had a golden opportunity to kill King Saul.
3. He crept up to Saul and cut off the corner of his robe. Later he regretted even doing that to the king.
4. Saul wept and acknowledged that David was right and had shown mercy to him. He even acknowledged that David would be the next king, although this repentance did not last long.
5. This might have been Masada, a natural fortification running south along the coast of the Dead Sea. Masada played a significant role in Jewish history in the first century, AD.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss how David followed the principle of Romans 12:19. He did not take matters into his own hands and take his own revenge. Are you facing opposition in some area you know God has led you? How will you let the Lord plead your cause against your enemies?
2. Have you ever put your trust in ungodly people, institutions, or organizations? Did you experience the principle that the ungodly say one thing and do another? How can you prove yourself as a godly person that others can trust?

challenge

David learned from his experiences with Saul how to wait for the Lord. Has the Lord allowed you to go through testing and trying situations so you will learn to wait for Him? Be encouraged by Psalm 27:14

memorize

“Then Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his band in God.” 1 Samuel 24:12

“Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!” Psalm 27:14

lesson 29

1 Samuel 25
The Death of Samuel & David's Dealings with Nabal and Abigail

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God allows the Nabals to test our faith and patience.
2. God provides the Abigails to save the day.

practical applications

Let God handle the Nabals.

questions

1. Who was Nabal?
2. What did David request of Nabal, and what was Nabal's response?
3. How did David then respond to Nabal's insult?
4. How did Abigail intervene and save the day?
5. How does the story of David, Nabal, and Abigail end?

answers

1. Nabal was a wealthy rancher who owned 4000 head of sheep and goats. David and his men were camped in the same area as Nabal's flocks, thus providing protection against any sheep thieves.
2. David asked Nabal for some provisions for his men in return for the protection they had offered his flocks. Nabal responded with rudeness and pride and sent David's men away empty-handed. He also denounced David's character in the process.
3. David failed the test of faith and patience. He became enraged at Nabal's insult and wanted to take his own revenge by killing Nabal and robbing his ranch.
4. Abigail brought a gift of food to meet the needs of David and his men. She showed humility and spoke softly. She acknowledged that David was in the right, and Nabal was wrong, but that did not justify David shedding blood. Abigail also reminded David that he would be king, and he should not be the cause of this bloodshed.
5. After Abigail saved the day, Nabal was struck with what may have been a stroke, and he later died. David took Abigail to be his wife!

discuss / consider

1. When was the last time God tested your faith and patience? Was there a Nabal-type person involved? How does James 1:3-4 encourage you to respond the next time such a situation arises?
2. Review Abigail's approach to David. What lesson on being a peacemaker can you learn from her example? *Matthew 6:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*

challenge

God's justice will always prevail in time. Let God handle the Nabals!

memorize

"David said to his men, 'Every man gird on his sword.'" 1 Samuel 25:13

"...knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." James 1:3-4

"And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand." 1 Samuel 25:33

lesson 30

1 Samuel 26

Once Again The Ziphites are Willing to Betray David, The Lord Delivers David, & David Does Not Take the Life of King Saul When He Has the Chance to Do So

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Lord will test the righteousness of every believer.
2. The Lord will reward the righteousness of every believer.

personal applications

Expect to be tested again!

questions

1. This is the third time David had the opportunity to take his own revenge. When were the previous two times?
2. Why did Saul so easily break the promise he made in 1 Samuel 24:17-22?
3. How did David gain another opportunity to take revenge on King Saul?
4. What was Abishai's counsel to David?
5. What did David do to Saul?

answers

1. David spared Saul's life in a cave in En Gedi, although he cut off the corner of his robe (chapter 24). David wanted to take revenge on the rude and prideful Nabal, but Abigail saved the day (chapter 25).
2. There were probably certain men in Saul's court who hated David and stirred up lies about him in Saul's mind.
3. David and his men were able to sneak up on Saul's camp at night. While Saul was sleeping, David and his nephew Abishai were able to get so close to Saul that they could have killed him with his own spear.
4. Abishai told David that this was an opportunity from the Lord. Abishai pleaded with David to at least let him do the job.
5. David only took Saul's spear and water to prove to Saul and to General Abner that David could have killed the king and that Abner was not protecting the king.

discuss / consider

1. David had a second opportunity to take revenge on Saul, but again he passed the test of righteousness. Would you have passed? The Lord will test the righteousness of every believer in the areas of honesty and integrity, submission, and much more. Will you pass?
2. The Lord will reward the righteousness of every believer. Your reward for righteous living may not come overnight or even in this lifetime, but when you do the right thing, you will be rewarded. Do you believe this is true?

challenge

Although David had already passed the test of faith and patience, he was tested again. Your faith and righteousness will be tested throughout your lifetime. Graduation does not come until we get to heaven.

memorize

"The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed." 1 Samuel 26:11

"May the LORD repay every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness." 1 Samuel 26:23

lesson 31

1 Samuel 27
**David Falters in His Faith, as He Returns to the Philistine King, Achish, for
Protection from King Saul**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching point

1. Believers can make the same mistake more than once.
2. Believers should not justify the means by the ends.

practical application

Try to see your dilemmas coming before they face you.

questions

1. What is the major theme in this second half of 1 Samuel?
2. Where do we find David at the beginning of this chapter 27?
3. Where did we previously see David seek protection from the Philistines? What was the outcome that time?
4. Explain the expression “The end justifies the means.”
5. What “good ends” was David accomplishing while hiding out in Ziklag?
6. What ugly means did David use to accomplish these ends?

answers

1. Ups and downs in David's life of faith
2. Spiritually, he is down in the valley of little faith. He has gone back to King Achish and the Philistines for protection from King Saul. We do not see him seeking the Lord's guidance in this major decision.
3. In 1 Samuel 21, David sought protection from the Philistines and had to pretend insanity in order not to be killed.
4. As long as the outcome is successful, the way you get there does not matter.
5. He was protecting his family, building up support for his future kingdom, and eliminating some of Israel's ancient enemies.
6. David and his men became mercenaries for King Achish, massacring large settlements of people without the Lord's direction. David used lying and deceit to cover his tracks in all of this.

discuss / consider

1. The second half of 1 Samuel traces the ups and downs of David's life of faith. If you made a graph of your spiritual life over the years, would it peak and fall like David's. Where are you spiritually right now? What can you do to either stay there or improve?
2. David did not look ahead to see the dilemmas his deceit would cause. Discuss which examples struck you from the lecture about the dilemmas our country and we as believers face because we do not look ahead.

challenge

Believers should not justify the ends by the means. Have you been justifying some ungodly attitude or activity in your life? Consider David and change your ways.

memorize

"There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines." 1 Samuel 27:1

"David would save neither man nor woman alive, to bring news to Gath." 1 Samuel 27:11

lesson 32

1 Samuel 28

David's Dilemma of Having to Fight for the Philistines Against His Own People & The Account of King Saul Consulting the Witch of Endor

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching point

1. Spirit mediums cannot contact departed spirits.
2. Spirit mediums are under God's sovereign control.

practical application

Don't turn to the occult when God doesn't answer.

questions

1. In the previous chapter, David fled to the Philistine King Achish for protection from King Saul. What consequence do we see for his lack of faith?
2. Meanwhile, what dilemma is King Saul facing?
3. Why would the Lord not answer Saul (verse 6)?
4. When Samuel appeared to King Saul and the witch, was it really Samuel or a spirit that took on his appearance?
5. What message did God lead Samuel to give Saul?

answers

1. David is expected to go with Achish in battle against Israel, David's own people. Achish makes David his personal body guard, so he can keep his eye on him!
2. Saul was frightened by the Philistine threat, and the Lord would not answer Saul's request for direction. So Saul turned to the world of the occult in order to get some kind of answer.
3. Because Saul had turned away from the Lord and was unwilling to obey him.
4. In this case we believe it was really Samuel. This is why the woman was so surprised as well. Usually mediums contact demonic spirits that can mimic the voice and appearance of the dead person.
5. That the kingdom would be taken from Saul and given to David. The following day Saul and his sons would join Samuel in death.

discuss / consider

1. David's lack of faith put him in an awful dilemma in this chapter. Recall a time when you faced a dilemma because of a previous lack of faith. Did you continue in your unfaithfulness, or was the dilemma a motivation to get back on track with God?
2. Occult practices are extremely popular in our society today through the entertainment media. Discuss the potential dangers of viewing the occult as entertainment. Discuss what boundaries you have set for yourself and your family in this regard. Read 1 John 4:4.

challenge

Has it ever felt like God is not listening to you and doesn't care? Don't turn to the occult in this situation. There are many reasons why God may be silent, but it is not because He doesn't care.

memorize

"Achish said to David, 'You assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle, you and your men.'" 1 Samuel 28:1

"For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David." 1 Samuel 28:17

lesson 33

1 Samuel 29

David is Rescued by the Lord From a Huge Dilemma of David's Own Making

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Moral mistakes of believers always result in greater problems.
2. God sometimes delivers believers from the consequences of their mistakes.

practical application

Take the way of escape that God provides.

questions

1. What were the Philistines planning according to 1 Samuel 28?
2. What had God prophesied would happen in this battle?
3. What dilemma did David cause for himself here?
4. What are moral mistakes?
5. What was King Achish' opinion of David?
6. How did God deliver David from this dilemma?

answers

1. The Philistines had joined their various military divisions together and were planning to attack Israel.
2. King Saul and his sons would die, and the army of Israel would fall into the hands of the Philistines.
3. David and his men had turned to the Philistine King Achish for protection from King Saul. They had served him as a mercenary army, and now were obligated to fight for the Philistines against their own countrymen.
4. Moral mistakes in life are sinful. They involve not doing what we know we should do.
5. That David was a loyal servant who had faithfully served him well.
6. He caused the Philistine commanders to pressure King Achish with questions about David's loyalty, until the King was compelled to send David home.

discuss / consider

Discuss the Law of Multiplication in moral mistakes. How is this principle sobering to you?

Our sins can be eternally forgiven because of Jesus' death on the cross. But we may have to live with the consequences of our sin. Recall a time when the Lord graciously delivered you from the consequences of a mistake.

challenge

God provides a way of escape from a temptation or test of faith you may face. Take the way of escape when God provides it!

memorize

"Is this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or these years? And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me." 1 Samuel 29:3

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13

lesson 34

1 Samuel 30
David and His Men Attack and Defeat the Amalekites

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God provides help and strength for defeating the enemy.
2. God provides illustrations and principles for Christian service.

practical application

Look for solutions, not scapegoats.

questions

1. Why were David and his men gone from Ziklag, leaving the women and children unprotected?
2. What happened in Ziklag while David was gone?
3. What good choice did David make after he found Ziklag in ruin?
4. In what ways did the Lord help David in his pursuit of the Amalekites?
5. What controversy arose when David and his men returned home with the spoils?

answers

1. David and his men had been called by the Philistine king to fight with the Philistines against the Israelites. God graciously delivered them from this dilemma (Chapter 29).
2. The Amalekites had raided Ziklag, burned it to the ground, and taken the people captive.
3. He turned to the Lord for help and strength.
4. Although David and his men became exhausted, the Lord strengthened some of them to continue their pursuit. The Lord also led them to an Egyptian slave who led them to the Amalekite camp.
5. The controversy was whether the 200 exhausted men who had stayed with the equipment should share in the spoils of war with the 400 men who went on to battle.
6. Christians, as well as unbelievers, sometimes pursue idols – power, money, pleasure. These idols will not answer them when they stand before God; earthly idols will be silent. "Keep yourselves from idols," (1 John 5:21) is addressed to Christians.

discuss / consider

1. Are you in a situation right now where you have suffered losses because of your bad decisions? Be like David and look to the Lord. Read the following verses and discuss their application to your situation: 2 Timothy 2:26, Hebrews 4:16, Isaiah 40:31.
2. Discuss the important principles for Christian service that we draw from this chapter. Some believers are called to the front lines of Christian service. Others are called to more supporting roles. Both are important and necessary.

challenge

When problems and conflicts arise in your home or church, do you look for a scapegoat or for a solution?

memorize

"David strengthened himself in the LORD his God." 1 Samuel 30:6

"And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; David recovered all." 1 Samuel 30:19

lesson 35

1 Samuel 31
The Suicide of King Saul & The Defeat of Israel by the Philistines

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Bible does not condone suicide.
2. The Bible does not condemn cremation.

practical application

In all your ways acknowledge His and He will direct your paths.

questions

1. What happened to the Israelites on Mount Gilboa?
2. How did the Philistines boast of their victory over Saul in his death?
3. List some other suicides that are recorded in Scripture.
4. Why did the men of Jabesh Gilead put themselves in danger to rescue the bodies of Saul and his sons?
5. Read Proverbs 3:5-6. Does "*all your ways*" include the decision about cremation and burial?

answers

1. The Philistines defeated the Israelites and Saul and his sons died.
2. They hung the bodies of Saul and his sons on the high walls of Beth Shan, where they would be seen for miles around.
3. Abimelech in Judges 9. King Saul here in 1 Samuel 31. Ahithophel in 2 Samuel 17. King Zimri in 1 Kings 16. Judas Iscariot in Matthew 27.
4. Forty years earlier King Saul had raised an army to rescue the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead from the siege and threat of the Ammonites (Chapter 11).
5. Of course. God will guide you in any area if you seek His will.

discuss / consider

1. Review what you have learned about the life of King Saul. This king started out well; even the Spirit of God came upon him. But then he fell to pride, partial obedience, and jealousy. What lesson does his life teach you?
2. Discuss principles from the Bible concerning burial versus cremation.

challenge

Reflect on the lessons you learned from the life of King Saul as you conclude this study of 1 Samuel.

memorize

“So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.” 1 Samuel 31:6

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6