

Saul & Jonathan Die and David Becomes King

1 Samuel 31:1-13; 2 Samuel 1:1—5:25



January 30, 2011

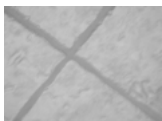


bible verse

Committing to memory

Psalm 25:4-5

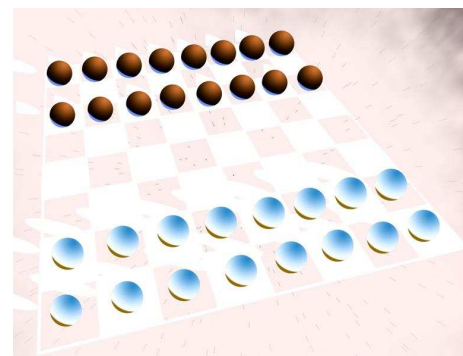
Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths;
guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are
God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.



story lesson

Bible story

The Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel. When Saul saw the Philistine army before him, he was terrified. He "inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets" (1 Samuel 28:6). So, Saul asked for the location of a woman who is a medium (we would call them 'psychics' today). The text reminds us of this fact and reveals a new one: "Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own town of Ramah. Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land" (1 Samuel 28:3). But now, Saul is asking for one of those expelled mediums... interesting.



A medium is found in Endor, so Saul disguised himself and went to meet this woman. He asked her to consult a spirit for him. The woman warned the disguised Saul that King Saul had "cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land ... why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?" (1 Samuel 28:9). The disguised Saul assured her that she would not be punished. She agreed and Saul requested Samuel to be brought up. When the woman saw Samuel she knew at once that the man who had come to her was Saul and she became very afraid. King Saul told her not to be afraid and asked her what was happening. She said that an old man wearing a robe was

coming up, and Saul knew that it was Samuel. The following dialogue is recorded in 1 Samuel 28:15-19:

"Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"

Samuel

Saul

"I am in great distress. The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has turned away from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called upon you to tell me what to do."

"Why do you consult me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and become your enemy? The LORD has done what he predicted through me. The LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors—to David. Because you did not obey the LORD or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this to you today. The LORD will hand over both Israel and you to the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also hand over the army of Israel to the Philistines."

Samuel

Upon hearing this, Saul fell prostrate on the ground and filled with fear. When the medium saw Saul's reaction she feared for her life and stammered that she had obeyed and did what Saul had told her to do. She encouraged him to eat because he had not eaten anything all day and night. At first he refused, but then he listened and ate. Then Saul left.



"Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them and many fell slain..." (1 Samuel 31:1). Three of Saul's sons were killed including Jonathan. The fighting grew fierce around Saul and he ended up being critically wounded. Saul pleaded with his armor-bearer to finish him off. Saul said that he would rather his armor-bearer do it than the Philistines. The armor-bearer refused, "so Saul took his own sword and fell on it ... when the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him" (1 Samuel 31:4-5).

When the Israelites saw that the battle had not gone their way and Saul and his sons were killed, they fled. The Philistines came and occupied the towns. When the Philistines found the bodies of Saul and his three sons, they proclaimed it throughout the land. They cut off Saul's head and stripped off his armor. They put the armor in their temple and stuck Saul's body (and probably his sons' bodies) to a wall.

Valiant men from Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done and went and took down the bodies from the wall and went to Jabesh where they burned their bodies. "Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days" (1 Samuel 31:13).



And so ends the saga of the unfaithful and disobedient King Saul. Remember that he was the choice of the people when they wrongfully wanted a king to rule over them so they could be like the other nations. This was not the choice

of the Lord. However, David was the choice of the Lord, one who has the mind and heart of the Lord in his actions and who symbolizes the kind of humanity God wants for his special people.

REGIME CHANGE

During regime change, it is always a tense and stressful time. The old is out and the new is in.

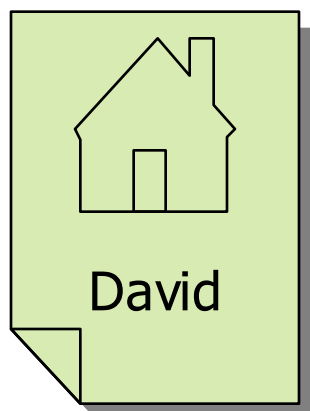


A man arrived from Saul's camp and reported to David that Saul and Jonathan had indeed been killed in battle. When David heard the news of Saul and Jonathan's death, he tore his clothes, mourned, wept and fasted. David asked what had happened and the man told a different story that the one the author of the books of Samuel tell. The man, an Amalekite, saw that Saul was wounded and told David that he was the one who finished Saul off. This man thought that David would reward him for telling him this extravagant lie. But the man was wrong. Newly minted King David had the man executed on the spot: "Your blood be on your own head...your own mouth testified against you when you said, 'I killed the Lord's anointed'" (2 Samuel 1:16). Then David made a lament song for Saul and Jonathan, which is recorded in 2 Samuel 1:17-27.

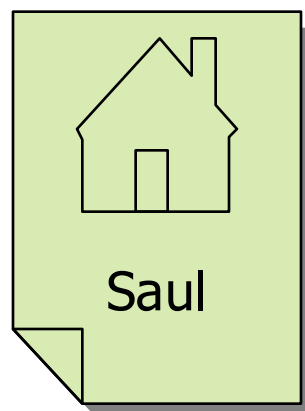
David is therefore officially anointed king over Judah. He also commended the men of Jabesh Gilead for their valiant and reverent actions regarding the bodies of Saul and his son Jonathan.



Meanwhile, the commander of Saul's army, Abner, was contesting the newly minted King David. He contended that Saul's other son, Ish-Bosheth, should be king over Israel and not David. And so there was war between the house of David and the house of Saul. Joab was the commander of David's army. Abner ended up killing one of Joab's brothers, Asahel, so Joab wanted revenge. "The war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time. David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker" (2 Samuel 3:1).



VS.





Ish-Bosheth ended up offending Abner and so Abner conspired with David to help him get control of the whole kingdom of Israel. However, when Abner was in the actual house of David in the name of peace, Joab saw him, lured Abner into his confidence and then murdered him by stabbing him in the stomach in Hebron. "When Ish-Bosheth son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel became alarmed" (2 Samuel 4:1). Two men, Baanah and Recab, assassinated Ish-Bosheth by stabbing him in the stomach and cutting off his head. These two men brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron, thinking, as the Amalekite before, that David would reward them for their actions against an enemy. They were wrong. Baanah and Recab were executed on the spot because of their wicked actions.

[Therefore], "all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'We are your own flesh and blood. In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, "You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler."' When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years" (2 Samuel 5:1-5).

Furthermore, David took on the monumental task of dislodging the Jebusites from Jerusalem and he made that city the capitol of Israel.

"David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it...and he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him" (2 Samuel 5:9-10).

Thus the kingdom was solidified under the leadership of King David. All Israel and Judah were brought together under one ruler. This is when the golden age of the monarchy of Israel was born.



Do you remember the Ark of the Covenant? The Ark where it is said that the presence of God dwells between the cherubim? The Ark that caused destruction and plague among the Philistine cities when they captured it? The Ark that was made in the wilderness with great care and precision, and placed in the tabernacle in the Holy of Holies? Well, this ark had been staying at the house of Abinadab, and David wanted to bring it to the new capitol city of Israel—Jerusalem.

So David gathered about 30,000 men or so to go and bring the Ark up to Jerusalem. They went to Abinadab's house and his two sons, Uzzah and Ahio, helped with the transfer. Everyone was partying—cymbals, harps, lyres, and singing! It was exciting! The Lord is coming to Jerusalem! Then something bad happened.

Uzzah slipped. When he did so, he grabbed the Ark of God. This was considered an

irreverent act. Therefore, the Lord struck Uzzah down and he died beside the Ark of God.

David was both angry and afraid—angry that the Lord had struck Uzzah down, and afraid of what else might happen in regard to the movement of the Ark. So,

“...he was not willing to take the Ark of the Lord to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The Ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the Lord blessed him and his entire household” (2 Samuel 6:10-11).



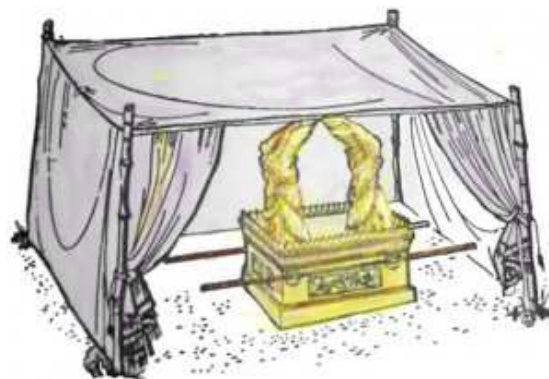
When David saw how the Lord had blessed Obed-Edom the Gittite because of the Ark of God, David's fear subsided and he went and brought the Ark up to the City of David—Jerusalem. David danced before the Lord with all his might. They sacrificed a bull and a calf in honor of the Lord. The entire house of Israel shouted and sang and blew trumpets.

Meanwhile, David's wife, Michal (the daughter of Saul), saw how David was dancing and “she despised him in her heart” (2 Samuel 6:16).

So the Ark was placed in a tent that David had prepared for it. Burnt offerings and fellowship offerings were given before the Lord. The people were blessed in the name of the Lord Almighty through David. Everyone in the crowd got a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins. Then everyone went home.

When David got home, Michal met him and lit into him: “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!” (2 Samuel 6:20). David replied that he had been anointed ruler over the people of the Lord, and he will celebrate before the Lord. “I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor” (2 Samuel 6:22). And Michal never had any children.

The Lord had told Saul that because of his disobedience his kingdom (his children) would not endure and it would be handed over to someone else (other than your sons). It seems at the end of this passage, the comment by the author seals the deal and the judgment of God upon Saul when Michal (the daughter of Saul) does not have any children.



The Ark of the Covenant ended up in a temporary tent in the City of David, Jerusalem.



life application

Making it real

Temptation Island

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:12-14).

Saul was rightfully thinking through his options when he could not hear from the Lord about what to do. Instead of resisting the temptation to consult a medium, he indulged himself. The medium even gave him a chance to bail out, because she reminded Saul of Saul's mandate expelling them from the land. But Saul did not bail out. He stayed on his sinful course and disobeyed. We, too, are plagued by disobedience in light of temptation. We are tempted all the time—especially in our media-rich culture. We do not have to indulge ourselves, however. The Lord does promise a means of escape. It is our choice to do so or not. Being tempted is not sin; following through on the temptation...that is sin.

Full Obedience to God - Listening

David listened and obeyed the Lord fully. There will be times in his life when he does not listen and obey fully, but he knows that that is what the Lord commands of him. We are also to listen and obey. Obeying is pretty clear. Listening is the hard part.

Keeping Your Promises

David made a deep promise with Jonathan to keep his family safe, even after Jonathan's death.

Respect

The Lord is holy, set apart. The whole book of Leviticus spells out the way the people of God (Israel) are to be separate from the other nations so as to bring all nations unto the Lord. The ways of the Lord are to be followed explicitly and with respect. Apparently, what Uzzah did was disrespectful of the Lord. The Word of God tells us to respect our parents; wives to respect their husbands; subjects to respect their rulers. We should respect because we *want* to and not just because we *have* to.

Dance With All Your Might

David was pumped when he found out that the Ark was blessing the house of Obed-Edom. He went and brought the Ark to Jerusalem with much procession and celebration. David was happy...full of joy...ecstatic! He danced. Not just a little, but with all his might before the Lord. Do we dance with all our might before the Lord? Do we lay all worries aside and celebrate freely?



questions

remembering

- 1. Who was the king of Israel before David?** Saul
- 2. Who was David's best friend and King Saul's son?** Jonathan
- 3. Who did King Saul try to talk to through a "medium"?** Samuel
- 4. How was King Saul killed?** The fighting grew fierce around Saul and he ended up being critically wounded. Saul pleaded with his armor-bearer to finish him off. Saul said that he would rather his armor-bearer do it than the Philistines. The armor-bearer refused, "so Saul took his own sword and fell on it ... when the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him" (1 Samuel 31:4-5).
- 5. What kind of tree did the men of Jabesh-Gilead bury King Saul under?** A tamarisk tree
- 6. Who became King after Saul?** David
- 7. Was it an easy transition between King Saul's "house" and King David's "house"?** No
- 8. Did David keep his promise with Saul about taking care of his family?** Yes
- 9. What city did David make the capitol of Israel?** Jerusalem
- 10. What did King David attempt to have brought to Jerusalem?** The Ark of the Covenant
- 11. What happened the first time David tried to bring the Ark to Jerusalem?** Uzzah slipped. When he did so, he grabbed the Ark of God. Therefore, the Lord struck Uzzah down and he died beside the Ark of God.
- 12. What was David's wife's name who did not like that he was dancing?** Michal
- 13. What was the name of David's military commander?** Joab
- 14. Why did David have the Ark of the Covenant brought to Jerusalem?** David literally wanted God's presence to be in the new capitol city of Jerusalem



coloring sheet

On the next page



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