

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 35

1 Samuel ch. 25 – 31, 2 Samuel ch. 1, 1 Chronicles ch. 10

Tuesday Night Bible Study, September 22, 2009

--OUTLINE:

- I. INTRO / RECAP
- II. DAVID SLIPS INTO SIN BUT THEN QUICKLY REPENTS DURING HIS ENCOUNTER WITH NABAL.
- III. DAVID WALKS IN THE SPIRIT AND EXERCISES THE LESSON HE LEARNED THROUGH NABAL BUT THEN DRIFTS INTO THE FLESH AGAIN AND MAKES AN ALLIANCE WITH THE PHILISTINES.
- IV. SAUL'S DEATH AND AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE SURPRISE THAT AWAITS MOST PEOPLE WHEN THEY DIE.

I. INTRO / RECAP:

--rather than seeing God as their king through the eyes of faith (Hebrews 11:27-28) Israel wanted to have a visible human king so that they could be like other nations (1 Samuel 12:12)

--God commanded the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul as Israel's first king, but this was more of a form of judgment than a blessing for Israel...

--God chose Saul based on physical qualities that were most important to Israel rather than spiritual qualities that were most important to God, and because of this Saul failed miserably as Israel's king.

--Saul's failures eventually led to God revoking his commission to be Israel's king and giving it to David.

--rather than recognizing his sin, Saul continued to go deeper and deeper into sin and do all that he could to prevent David from becoming king.

--at a few brief moments Saul appears to recognize his sin (after David spares his life) but Saul quickly returns to the path of sin without any real change.

--by the end of 1 Samuel a spiritual pattern can be seen in the contrast between Saul and David's lives that has an important application in our lives...

--David was by no means perfect, but when he drifted from the straight and narrow path he recognized his sin, repented, and got back on the straight and narrow path.

--we'll see this pattern throughout David's entire life because he was *a man after God's own heart...* (1 Samuel 13:14)

--Saul on the other hand drifted from the straight and narrow path and rather than recognizing his sin went further and further into sin until it cost him his life.

--life is a spiritual battle and many things try to pull us away from the straight and narrow path of following God and experiencing the spiritual blessings that result...

--we must spend regular time in God's Word and prayer so that we are sensitive to sin and quick to turn from our sin and get back on the straight and narrow path as David did.

--more and more damage occurs the further we go on the path of sin...

--in ch. 28 we'll see an interesting insight into the question of how far we can drift.

--in ch. 30 we'll see how God can provide great restoration from the damage that occurs as a result of our sin.

--in ch. 31 and 2 Samuel ch. 1 we'll see insights into the safety net that provides eternal security underneath the treacherous path of the straight and narrow way.

II. DAVID SLIPS INTO SIN BUT THEN QUICKLY REPENTS DURING HIS ENCOUNTER WITH NABAL

<ch. 25>

--in 1 Samuel ch. 24 David and Saul parted ways peaceably after David spared Saul's life, but Saul still held onto the throne and David and his following remained in exile.

--ch. 25 begins with the record of Samuel's death which we'll take a closer look at in ch. 28.

--David and his following then moved to the central region of the Sinai Pinnensula south of Israel and sought help from a wealthy business owner named Nabal.

--David sent messengers to Nabal and Nabal rejected their request for help, saying, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. 11 Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?"

--verse 14 seems to indicate that Nabal's servants knew who David was, so it is probable that Nabal knew also but didn't care.

--Nabal's wife Abigail speaks of him as a "scoundrel" (verse 17) and later Nabal is seen drunk at a feast and "eating like a king" (verse 36) after refusing to help the anointed king of Israel.

--Nabal's initial response to David's messengers angered David and causes him to assemble 400 of his soldiers to slaughter Nabal's entire household.

--even though Nabal was a scoundrel God didn't call David to execute this judgment on him and thus for a brief moment we see David straying off the straight and narrow path.

--Nabal's wife Abigail assesses the situation and goes over Nabal's head and has a wagon full of supplies brought to David's camp.

--David replies to Abigail, "Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! 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 Sam 25:32-34)

--God then strikes Nabal dead and Abigail becomes David's wife.

--an important principle seen here is that when we feel wronged it is best to leave the matter in God's hands rather than trying to take matters into our own hands...

--Romans 12:17-21: "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

--if David would have continued to take matters into his own hands then Abigail along with Nabal's entire household would have been killed and David would have missed out on the blessing of Abigail becoming his wife.

--in these dealings with Nabal's household we see the pattern of David quickly repenting and turning back to the straight and narrow path.

III. DAVID WALKS IN THE SPIRIT AND EXERCISES THE LESSON HE LEARNED THROUGH NABAL BUT THEN DRIFTS INTO THE FLESH AGAIN AND MAKES AN ALLIANCE WITH THE PHILISTINES.

<ch. 26>

--after his encounter with Nabal, David has a second encounter with Saul where he has opportunity to kill Saul; but rather than taking matters into his own hands and repeating the mistake he made in ch. 25, he leaves Saul's fate in God's hands...

--when David's sister Abigail told David that he should kill Saul at this opportunity, David replied, "As the LORD lives, the LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish. The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed..." (1 Samuel 26:10-11)

<ch. 27>

--David drifts back into the flesh and relies on his own scheming rather than trusting God for protection...

--1 Samuel 27:1: "And David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand."

--David then makes an alliance with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath, one of Israel's arch enemies, and then turns his army into a mercenary army that fought battles for the Philistines...

--in order to gain the trust of Achish David would raid Canannite cities and return the spoils to him, but then he would lie and say that the spoils came from raids on towns in Israel.

--1 Samuel 27:12: "So Achish believed David, saying, 'He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; therefore he will be my servant forever.'"

--in return Achish allowed David and his followers (600 soldiers and their families) to make a home in Ziklag where they ended up staying for 16 months.

<ch. 29>

--when the Philistines plan for a major attack on Israel David's scheme of fighting for the Philistines backfires... 1 Samuel 29:1-5: "Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. 2 And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. 3 Then the princes of the Philistines said, 'What are these Hebrews doing here?' And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, 'Is this not David, the servant of Saul 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.' 4 But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of the Philistines said to him, 'Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these men?' 5 Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands?'"

--David's scheming almost led to him fighting his own nation which would have resulted in major complications when he finally took the official throne of Israel, as people would have been more likely to reject him as their king if he had at one time fought against them.

<ch. 30>

--while David and his men were assembled with the Philistine army, the Amalekites (who David had previously raided – 27:8) attacked Ziklag, burned it to the ground and took all the people there captive, including David's two wives and the wives and children of the soldiers David's army.

--1 Samuel 30:6-8: "Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.** 7 Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, 'Please bring the ephod here to me.' And Abiathar brought the ephod to David. 8 So David inquired of the LORD, saying, 'Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?' And He answered him, 'Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all.'

--again, unlike Saul, David turned to the Lord after his mistakes.

--it is a mystery how the ephod worked, but it was part of the levitical priesthood that applied only to Old Testament times and was used to determine God's will in certain matters.

--David and 400 men of his army then tracked down the Amalekites who raided Ziklag, defeated them and recovered all that they had taken... 1 Samuel 30:18-19: "So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. 19 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."

--in this restoration we see a picture of how God can bring restoration after destruction that results from periods of sin in our lives if we turn back to the Lord...

--they lost their homes but they regained what was most important.

--the homes they lost were further discounted by the fact that they were temporary and Saul's death was right around the corner which would open the way for them to return to Israel.

IV. SAUL'S DEATH AND AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE SURPRISE THAT AWAITS MOST PEOPLE WHEN THEY DIE

<ch. 28>

--rather than repenting of his sin and restoring his relationship with God and seeking guidance from God, Saul goes deeper into sin and consults a medium to call Samuel from the dead to give him guidance...

--under the Mosaic Law the penalty for practicing sorcery was death (Exodus 22:18) because of the spiritual dangers that can result from it – "Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus 19:31)

--earlier in Saul's career as king he had all such people expelled from the land of Israel (1 Samuel 23:8) yet now in a delusional state he tracks one down.

--exactly what happened in the spiritual dimension that allowed Saul to speak to Samuel is a mystery, but it probably was in spite of the skills of the spiritist.

--before Christ died and rose from the grave, when saved people died their body went to the grave and their spirit went to "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:19-31) or "paradise" as Jesus called it when He hung on the cross (Luke 23:43). This place was a kind of spiritual holding place before it was possible to go directly to the presence of God in heaven. When Jesus died He opened the way for people in this spiritual holding place to be taken to the presence of God in heaven.

--conversation between Saul and Samuel... 1 Sam 28:15-20: "Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do." 16 Then Samuel said: "So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? 17 And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. 18 Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. 19 Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And **tomorrow you and your sons will be with me.** The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." 20 Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel."

--Samuel's statement to Saul that "tomorrow you and your sons will be with me" raises an interesting question about whether or not Saul was saved...

--we can't draw any definitive conclusions, but it would seem that Samuel meant that Saul would be "with" him in the place ("Abraham's bosom", "Paradise") where Samuel himself was (that is, Samuel's spirit).

--this could be possible because our salvation is not based on our own righteousness but rather the righteousness of Christ that is credited to our account. (as we'll take a closer look at in part V of this study)

--if Saul was saved, then he is an example of just how far we can fall away from God, but the further we fall the more we suffer the damaging consequences of sin.

<1 Samuel ch. 31 & 2 Samuel ch. 1>1 Chronicles ch. 10

--in the final chapter of 1 Samuel we see the prophetic words of Samuel come to pass when Saul and his sons die in Israel's battle against the Philistines...

--1 Samuel 31:1-6: "Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. 2 Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. 3 The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers. 4 Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. 5 And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him. 6 So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day."

--1 Chronicles ch. 10 gives the same account and concludes with a summary of why Saul died: "Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance, and did not inquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse." (1 Chronicles 10:14)

--in 2 Samuel ch. 1 a survivor from the battlefield where Saul died goes to David and fabricates a story about how he killed Saul, thinking that he would win favor with David; but he didn't understand how David viewed the life of Saul as sacred because he was the king of Israel...

--rather than rewarding this person David had him executed... "So David said to him, 'How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?' 15 Then David called one of the young men and said, 'Go near, and execute him!' And he struck him so that he died. 16 So David said to him, 'Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, "I have killed the LORD's anointed."' (2 Samuel 1:14-15)

--this incident of David reacting differently than expected is a simple illustration of how on judgment day God will react differently than most people expect...

--many who trust in their own good works will one day stand before God thinking that their good works will earn their way to heaven, but to their surprise God will reject their good works.

--Isaiah 64:6: "And all our righteousness are like filthy rags..."

--Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

--our entrance to heaven is based on the righteousness of Christ being "credited" (Romans 5:22-25) to our account, "the righteousness of God apart from the law..."

--Romans 3:21-24: "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

--even though we can suffer greatly in this life as a result of our sin, we always have the hope of restoration when we repent of our sins and the safety net of not being able to lose our salvation since it is not based on our own good works!