

STUDY NUMBER SEVEN - 1 Samuel 26:1-28:2

- v. 1 The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?”
- v. 2 So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand chosen men of Israel, to search there for David.
- v. 3 Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the desert. When he saw that Saul had followed him there,
- v. 4 he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived.
- v. 5 Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him.
- v. 6 David then asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeriaha, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?” “I’ll go with you,” said Abishai.
- v. 7 So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.
- v. 8 Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won’t strike him twice.”
- v. 9 But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless?”
- v. 10 As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish.
- v. 11 But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.”
- v. 12 So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.
- v. 13 Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them.
- v. 14 He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Aren’t you going to answer me, Abner?” Abner replied, “Who are you who calls to the king?”
- v. 15 David said, “You’re a man, aren’t you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn’t you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king.
- v. 16 What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men deserve to die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord’s anointed. Look around you. Where are the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head?”

- v. 17 Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is that your voice, David my son?" David replied, "Yes, it is, my lord the king."
- v. 18 And he added, "Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of?"
- v. 19 Now let my lord the king listen to his servant's words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, men have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have now driven me from my share in the Lord's inheritance and have said, 'Go, serve other gods.'
- v. 20 Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains."
- v. 21 Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have erred greatly."
- v. 22 "Here is the king's spear," David answered. Let one of your young men come over and get it.
- v. 23 The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord's anointed.
- v. 24 As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble."
- v. 25 Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, my son David; you will do great things and surely triumph." So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.
- 27:v. 1 But David thought to himself, "One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand."
- v. 2 So David and the six hundred men with him left and went over to Achish son of Maach king of Gath.
- v. 3 David and his men settled in Gath with Achish. Each man had his family with him, and David had his two wives: Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, the widow of Nabal.
- v. 4 When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.
- v. 5 Then David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be assigned to me in one of the country towns, that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?"
- v. 6 So on that day Achish gave him Ziklag, and it has belonged to the kings of Judah ever since.
- v. 7 David lived in Philistine territory a year and four months.
- v. 8 Now David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites and the Amalekites. (From ancient times these people had lived in the land extending to Shur and Egypt.)

v. 9 Whenever David attacked an area, he did not leave a man or woman alive, but took sheep and cattle, donkeys and camels, and clothes. Then he returned to Achish.

v. 10 When Achish asked, “Where did you go raiding today?” David would say, “Against the Negev of Judea” or “Against the Negev of Jerahmeel” or “Against the Negev of the Kenites.”

v. 11 He did not leave a man or woman alive to be brought to Gath, for he thought, “They might inform on us and say, ‘This is what David did.’” And such was his practice as long as he lived in Philistine territory.

v. 12 Achish trusted David and said to himself, “He has become so odious to his people, the Israelites, that he will be my servant forever.”

28:v.1 In those days the Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel. Achish said to David, “You must understand that you and your men will accompany me in the army.”

v. 2 David said, “Then you will see for yourself what your servant can do.” Achish replied, “Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.”

INTRODUCTION:

Wetherell Johnson said, “To choose a leader whom God has not chosen may result in numbers, in outward success, in financial gain. But there will lack that spiritual power and fruit for eternity which only God can give.”

David is a young man that his family forgot but he made the name of his family unforgettable.

Psalm 35:1

“Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. Take hold of buckler and shield and rise up for my help.”

Psalm 35:7, 8, 9

“For without cause they hid their net for me; without cause they dug a pit for my soul. Let destruction come upon him unawares, and let the net which he hid catch himself; in that very destruction let him fall. And my soul shall rejoice in the Lord; it shall exult in his salvation.”

Psalm 35:19

“Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me.”

Psalm 35:27, 28

“Let them shout for joy and rejoice who favor my vindication, and let them say continually, ‘The Lord be magnified, who delights in the prosperity of his servant.’ And my tongue shall declare thy righteousness and thy praise all day long.”

chap. 26:v. 1

The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?”

Once again, these same Ziphites who betrayed David to Saul at Gibeah in chap. 24 are back at it again. They make the long trip north to Gibeah for the purpose of telling Saul that David is hiding among them once again.

Vos raises the question, “It may be asked why David would return to the general vicinity of Ziph, when the people of the region had betrayed him once. He possibly felt that Saul had moderated toward him and it was safe now. But more likely, he rather naturally found himself in this general vicinity. Ziph was about four miles southeast of Hebron and Carmel, and Maon was another four miles further southeast. His care of Abigail’s livestock probably took him up to a couple of miles north of Carmel, and that is about where the Ziphites reported he was. If the reason for betraying him before was their worry about his encroachment on their resources and their territory, that threat was even greater now that he owned property in the area.”

I am sure the marriage to Abigail has created a lot of tension in the area since David by that marriage inherited a sizeable estate of land and livestock.

v. 2 So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand chosen men of Israel, to search there for David.

This is the same size force that Saul took when he went down to search for David in the area of Engedi. It was on that occasion that Saul went into the cave and had his robe cut by David while he was sleeping.

1 Sam. 24:17

“You are more righteous than I. You have treated me well but I have treated you badly. You have just now told me of the good you did to me. The Lord delivered me into your hands but you did not kill me.”

The statistics are the same as they were for the last encounter at Engedi. David has his 600 men, and Saul his three thousand; so that’s one in five.

v. 3 Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the desert.

Geographically, Saul and David again are very close to each other in the same region.

v. 4 When he saw that Saul had followed him there, he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived.

David sent out several of his men as scouts to gather intelligence and find out the location of Saul. They came back with the report that he had definitely arrived in the area.

v. 5 Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him.

Abner is Saul's first cousin and general of the armed forces. We met him back at the end of chapter 17 when Saul asked Abner whose son this boy was who had just gone out against Goliath.

The army of three thousand men were encamped in a large circle, evidently, and Saul and Abner were the most secure, right in the middle of that big circle.

The Ziphites again betrayed David, hoping to gain prestige and position with Saul. They stirred up Saul's jealousy of David all over again. This jealousy kept coming over Saul over and over because he never judged it properly as sin. This is one of the big differences between he and David. David thoroughly judged his sin.

If we don't do something about sin, we will end up in more sin and ultimately in death:

Romans 8:13

“For if you are living according to the flesh, you must die. But if by the Spirit, you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Arthur W. Pink points out, “The action of Saul here provides a solemn illustration of a well-known principle. If sin be not dethroned and mortified, it will soon recover its strength and when a suitable temptation is presented, break out again with renewed force.”

v. 6 David then asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?”

Zeruah is David's sister, and she is the mother of Joab, Abishai and Asahel.

So Abishai and Joab are brothers and nephews to David.

Here is going to be David's second opportunity to take Saul's life and end his exile. This was another test for David. Two years before in the cave he resisted the temptation to kill Saul. This time he needed even more faith and more confidence in the Lord. Saul was alone the first time. This time he was in the middle of three hundred men with Abner as his bodyguard.

David was walking with God at this time, and it was with complete reliance upon God that David crept into the midst of this hostile army and took away the spear and water jug from Saul's side.

Proverbs 28:1

“The wicked flee when no one is pursuing. But the righteous are bold as a lion.”

Ahimelech and Abishai are with David. David addresses the two of them: “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?”

Wow, what a scary and dangerous opportunity given to these two companions of David.

“I’ll go with you,” said Abishai.

I guess Ahimelech decided it was too dangerous; and since there as an eager volunteer in Abishai, the better part of valor was to keep one’s mouth shut on this occasion.

2 Tim. 1:7

“God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Proverbs 29:25

“The fear of man brings a snare, but whoso puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”

“I’m going down,” David whispered. “I’ll go with you,” were the words of Abishai, the son of David’s sister. David motioned him on and began to creep down the rest of the hill, Abishai following.

Gehrke points out, David's daring enterprise reminds us of Jonathan's daring exploit in 1 Sam. 14:1.

“Now the day came that Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to the young man who was carrying his armor, ‘Come, and let us cross over to the Philistines’ garrison that is on yonder side,’ but he did not tell his father. Then Jonathan said to the young man who was carrying his armor, ‘Come, and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. Perhaps the Lord will work for us, for the Lord is not restrained to save by many or by few.’ And his armorbearer said to him, ‘Do all that is in your heart; turn yourself; and here I am with you according to your desire.’ The Jonathan said, ‘Behold, we will cross over to the men and reveal ourselves to them. If they say to us, “Wait until we come to you,” then we will stand in our place and not go up to them. But if they say, “Come up to us,” then we will go up, for the Lord has given them into our hands, and this shall be the sign to us.’ “

It was undoubtedly prompted by the same faith in the Lord, for the purpose of this dangerous safari into Saul's camp is not to harm Saul but to remove the ill feeling Saul still harbored against David.

v. 7 So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

This is an uncle and nephew team moving down into the camp of the Israelites while everybody is sound asleep.

v. 8 Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won't strike him twice.”

Abishai is going to need to be restrained on numerous occasions because he loves to take action and also to get revenge.

His interpretation of the circumstances are “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands.”

1 Sam. 24:4

“The men said, ‘This is the very day the Lord spoke of when He said to you, “I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.”’

Just as that was a wrong assumption, so is this on this occasion.

Abishai is so eager. He requests of David, “Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won’t even have to strike him twice.” I can get him with one shot, and it’ll just be so quick and easy.

Smith points out, “Abishai wishes to avail himself of the opportunity. ‘Let me smite him with his spear into the earth,’ meaning to strike the spear through him into the earth. There may be a designed reminiscence of Saul’s purpose to pin David to the wall in chap. 18:11 and chap. 19:10. One blow would be all that was needed.”

Winter points out, “Abishai, the son of David’s sister Zeruah and brother of Joab, proposed that they slay Saul while he lay sleeping. Abishai seems ever-ready to take immediate action against David’s enemies. He made this same proposal when Shimei cursed David as David fled from Jerusalem during the revolt of Absalom (2 Samuel 16:9).”

On the prior occasion when David had Saul in his hands, he slipped up and cut off the corner of his robe and returned to his men

v. 9 But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless?”

Abishai begged David to let him kill the king. But once again David protected Saul. He knew that God would take care of Saul in his perfect time.

Hebrews 10:30

“For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay,’ and again ‘The Lord will judge His people.’”

Barber points out, “In this respect we have a great deal to learn from David. It is hard for us to wait for God’s appointed time. We want everything now, and so we engage in compromises and shortcuts, make rash purchases, rush into marriage, make unwise investments, neglect the real things of life for the trivial, and spend the mature years of our lives regretting our impatience and indiscretion. Patience is one of the first lessons we learn in God’s school. To prevent discouragement, which often accompanies delay, from having a negative effect on us, we need to have confidence in God’s all wise providence. In this respect the life of David is a singularly fitting commentary on passages of Scripture such as Proverbs 3:5, 6 ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path,’ and Romans 8:28, ‘Now we know that God is working all things together for good to them that love God and to those who are called according to His purpose.’ God was watching over David.”

Davis points out, “Perhaps David had the law of Exodus 22:28 in mind: ‘You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people. David’s patience, spiritual insight and deep sense of faithfulness to the crown are unparalleled in ancient history.”

v. 10 As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish.

David has such confidence in the Lord that he says to Abishai, “As surely as the Lord lives, (and we know that he does) the Lord himself will strike him,” just as he had learned back in the prior chapter in the experience of Nabal—1 Sam. 25:38
“About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died.”

There are two options that David considers with Abishai on this occasion:

1. Either his time will come and he will die,
or
2. He will go into battle and perish.

It is the second of these options that we are going to see become a reality in our last episode of Part I.

v. 11 But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.”

David now concludes his little speech to Abishai. It is a fantastic sermon on being willing to wait God’s time in things.

v. 12 So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

David and Abishai went right into the center of the camp and took the spear and water jug from Saul's head. Then the two of them left. No one saw them or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. The reason being they were all sleeping because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.

Acts 12

“Now about that time Herod the King laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them. And he had James the brother of John put to death with the sword. And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; and when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people. So Peter was kept in the prison but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church of God; and on the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him saying, 'Get up quickly,' and his chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, 'Gird yourself, and put on your sandals,' and he did so. And he said to him, 'Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.' And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. And when they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself, and they went out, and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter came to himself, he said, 'Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.' “

v. 13 Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them.

David and Abishai get over on another hill, far enough away from the camp that they can flee any unpredicted uprising.

v. 14 He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Aren't you going to answer me, Abner?” Abner replied, “Who are you who calls to the king?”

Abner immediately is awakened when David makes this shout, and he too has a question, “Who are you who calls to the king?”

v. 15 David said, “You’re a man, aren’t you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn’t you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king.

There are three questions here in this 15th verse asked by David:

1. “You’re a man, aren’t you?”
2. “Who is like you in Israel?”
3. “Why didn’t you guard your lord the king?”

“Someone came to destroy your lord the king.”

v. 16 What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men deserve to die, because you did not guard your master, the Lord’s anointed. Look around you. Where are the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head?”

As David continues in his speech, he embarrasses Abner by telling him that what he has done is not good and that he deserves to die. The reason is he didn’t guard his master.

To prove his point, he invites Abner to look around to see if he can find the king’s spear and water jug that were near his head.

David’s speech to Abner is classic. He taught Saul a lesson even though he was directing his words at Abner.

David’s point is obvious. David himself had served as a better bodyguard to Saul than Abner. Furthermore, David was saying that someone so careless should die. Saul got the point.

v. 17 Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, David my son?” David replied, “Yes it is, my lord the king.”

1 Sam. 24:16

“When David finished saying this, Saul asked, ‘Is that your voice, David, my son,’ and he wept aloud.”

v. 18 And he added, “Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of?”

David has two questions for Saul in this little dissertation:

1. “Why is my lord pursuing his servant?”
2. “What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of?”

Here David wants to know why it is that Saul once again is pursuing him. And then he wants to know what crime he has committed to justify the chase involved.

v. 19 Now let my lord the king listen to his servant’s words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, men have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have now driven me from my share in the Lord’s inheritance and have said, ‘Go, serve other gods.’

Acts 5:38, 39

“And so in the present case I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown. But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, or else you may even be found fighting against God.”

David is implying that it is totally irrational for Saul to seek his life when those who are on Saul’s side were not as concerned for his life as David was.

Also David reminded Saul that he had driven David out from God’s inheritance, and that was just as good as saying that he should serve other gods. He was not allowed to come near the tabernacle and was hunted like a flea or a partridge.

v. 20 Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains.

Davis points out, “David also likened Saul’s pursuit to a partridge hunt in the mountains. It is appropriate that the illustration used here made reference to the partridge hunt in Palestine. The nature of the hunt paralleled quite

accurately the situation of David. The common species of partridge in the Holy Land attempts to save itself by running rather than by flight. The bird is continually chased until it is fatigued. Then it is knocked down with sticks thrown along the ground. This in a very vivid way reflects the nature of Saul's pursuit. Even more interesting is the fact that David compared Saul's actions to a partridge hunt in the mountains, a very unlikely place."

Vos also speaks of this, "David now shuddered at the thought of operating outside the special sphere of the rule of Yahweh. Furthermore, he found it repugnant that if he died a violent death on foreign soil, his blood would not be avenged. Saul searching for a flea emphasized David's insignificance. David's being hunted as a partridge referred to the manner of taking one's prey. The way a partridge was hunted was to keep following it around, constantly rousing it from its hiding places. Then when it was totally exhausted, it was brought down by hitting it with sticks and stones. No doubt David felt very much like a partridge at the moment."

v. 21 The Saul said, "I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have erred greatly."

Whereas the Saul of the Old Testament says, "I have sinned...", the Saul of the New Testament says, "I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course."

1 Sam. 15:24-29

"And then Saul said to Samuel, 'I have sinned. I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words because I feared the people and listened to their voice. Now therefore please pardon my sin and return with me that I may worship the Lord.' But Samuel said to Saul, 'I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel.' And as Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe and it tore. So Samuel said to him, 'The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you; and also, the Glory of Israel will not lie or change his mind, for He is not a man that He should change his mind.'"

There are three things that Saul confesses himself to be guilty of here in verse 21:

1. I have sinned.
2. I have acted like a fool

3. I have erred greatly.

Once again, Saul realized that he was falsely judging David. He invites David to come with him and promises never to attempt to take his life again.

Laney points out, “Saul confessed his sin and wrongdoing. In addition, he invited David to return, promising not to make another attempt on his life. Although Saul may have been sincere, he could not be trusted; and David wisely did not accept that invitation. After offering the return of Saul’s spear, David requested that his life be valued as much as he valued Saul’s. As the two parted, Saul recognized the certain success of David’s future as Israel’s king. That was the last meeting of King Saul and David, the king-elect.”

Alan Redpath, speaking on this speech of Saul’s says, “But what a miserable picture Saul is. This man let passion and sin drive him right over the precipice until he seems almost beyond hope. What is the use of saying ‘I have played the fool,’ if he goes on playing the fool? What use are his tears and confession before David if he doesn’t act upon his remorse? We sometimes see people streaming down the aisle in an evangelistic meeting with tear-stained faces. But what difference does emotion make if it does not lead to obedience? What profit is it that a heart has been stirred, unless from that moment the man lives in submission to the will of God. Indeed, it does make a difference, for if a man is emotionally upset as Saul was and awakens to his condition, but only weeps about it and still doesn’t obey God, his second state is a thousand times worse than the first. Emotion that does not lead to action only leads deeper into sin and rebellion.”

Gulston says, “Significant words, and the last he was ever to address to the person he had an obsession to destroy. Like Nabal, Saul’s days were now numbered. Like a king who would later rule in Babylon, ‘he was weighed in the balances and found wanting’ ([Daniel 5:27](#)). His kingdom too, like that of Belshazzar, would be given to another, who would, as he had prophesied, do great things.”

v. 22 Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it.

David is unable to consider seriously the proposal of Saul in the previous verse, “Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again.” So he says, “Let one of your young men come over and get the spear.” Of course, he will also return the water jug.

v. 23 The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord's anointed.

David reminds Saul that the Lord's REWARDS are based on two things:

1. A man's righteousness
2. His faithfulness.

This is the second time that Saul has been delivered into David's hands, and he has been unwilling to bring about his own deliverance by laying a hand on Saul, the Lord's anointed.

v. 24 As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble."

David's last words to Saul on this earth are in this 24th verse: "As surely as I valued your life today," his wish is that the Lord will value his life, and that the Lord will deliver him from all trouble.

Psalm 34:7

"The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and rescues them."

David, however, could no longer trust the king. He returned Saul's spear, but turned and went on his way. David knew that he could never be totally safe in Saul's presence. But he also knew he had conveyed to the king his own pure motives. His conscience was clear, even though he would have to live as a fugitive until the Lord himself removed Saul.

This was the last time that David and Saul would speak to one another on earth. David hid from Saul for four more years, then Saul died in battle.

v. 25 Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, my son David; you will do great things and surely triumph." So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.

Saul's wish is three-fold for David. His wish is:

1. That David will be blessed.
2. He will do great things.

3. Surely triumph.

Theodore Epp points out, “It was following this that David and Saul exchanged words for the last time on earth. Saul said to David, ‘Blessed be thou, my son David. Thou shalt both do great things and also shall still prevail.’ So David went in his way and Saul returned to his place. In another passage we are told that ‘Saul sought him no more,’ yet David hid from Saul for four more years, not being sure when the king might seek his life again. At the end of that time, Saul died in battle.”

Gehrke points out, “Thus they part—David going on a path that will take him away from the beloved Promised Land, and Saul going to Gibeah and the final crisis that will claim his life.”

Gene Getz in his book about David had a personal project at the end of the chapter that was about this encounter. It might be that it would be helpful to some of us. “All of us have people in our lives who try to hurt us. Identify one of those individuals and use David’s example to evaluate your own attitudes and actions:

1. I have done all I can to approach this person on a spiritual basis, realizing they too are made in the image of God.
2. In my relationships with this person, my conscience is tuned to the will and word of God, not to what I want to do to the person.
3. When I am tempted to return evil for evil to this person, I am able to check my behavior before I’ve done something irreversible and damaging to my own personal testimony.
4. I do not go along with the crowd in my attitudes and actions toward this unlovable person.
5. I defend myself when I am wronged, but I do so with humility and respect.
6. My attitudes and actions toward this person reflect the fact that I believe that God will ultimately make things right, even if I cannot.
7. Recognizing that some people will never be trustworthy, I’ve not allowed mistrust to become a part of my behavior prematurely. In other words, I’ve done all I can possible do to correct the situation. Furthermore, I have not allowed a bad experience with one or several people to cause me to mistrust people in general.

27:v. 1 But David thought to himself, “One if these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the

Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.”

We had great ACTION on chap. 26, and we’re getting great REACTION in chap. 27.

The word ‘but’ forms the contrast. “But David thought to himself,…”

Here David needed to “gird up the loins of his mind,” to “bring every thought captive unto the obedience of Christ.”

Satan always makes his attack on the mind, and David begins to think inwardly to himself. His thought is put into words in this first verse, “One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul.”

He got his eyes on Saul and his circumstances. He forgets

THE PLAN

THE PURPOSE

AND THE PROMISE

“The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines.” The correct approach to the whole thing is, the best thing he can do, is to call upon the Lord.

The reason he is thinking this way is “then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.”

You can look hard in the first verse, and you will find no mention of the Lord. But there are 3 ‘T’s’ and 1 ‘me’ in this verse.

Here David is going to take matters into his own hands once again and deal from the standpoint of human perspective and leave God out of the picture.

You might entitle this chapter:

DAVID’S LAPSE OF FAITH

or

DAVID LOSES PERSPECTIVE

or

DAVID HAS A FIT OF DEPRESSION

regardless, it is a sad chapter for us to read about this great hero. Here he doesn’t sound much like a man after the heart of God.

In fact, God is not even mentioned in this chapter.

Scholars believe that during this period of David's story, he wrote Psalm 10, 13 and 22.

Psalm 13:1 says,

“How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?”

Psalm 10:1 says:

“Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?”

Psalm 22 says:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?”

David is really tired. A man who talks like this is at the breaking point. He is depressed. Satan's attacks on us are often heaviest right after we experience a great victory of faith. Elijah, Abraham, Jacob—they all had low periods in their lives. The devil never takes five minutes vacation.

Our Christian life is not made up of mountain-top experiences one right after another. There are valleys in between. These valleys don't need to be defeats, even though they are valleys of testing. David's failure here can teach us alot.

Blakie points out, “David may have shrunk from prayer because he knew what the answer would be.”

Redpath says, “He traded the smile of God for the grin of the devil.”

David's return to Philistine has been called a lapse of faith. He has been told by the prophet Gad not to flee outside the borders of Israel. David must have given up hope of living safely in Israel. He disobeyed God's commandment and returned to Achish, the king of Gath. What are the LESSONS for our learning?

1. The weakness of the flesh - David had demonstrated many times that he was a man of great faith. He finally weakened and went against the instructions of God. We look to David as a hero, but we realize that he was human. He reached the end of his endurance and gave in to the wisdom of the world, which was not the wisdom of God.
2. A lie is never justifiable - David lied to Achish when he said that he had attacked the south of Judah.

1 Sam. 22:5

“And the prophet Gad said to David, ‘Do not stay in the stronghold. Depart and go into the land of Judah.’ So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.”

Dr. Paul Jordan points out, “The depression he experienced was not simply an emotional low. It became a way of life for 16 months. David took his wives, his 600 men, and their households and traveled to the land of the Philistines to dwell with Achish at Gath. Achish was the king before whom David had feigned insanity in order to escape. When Saul learned that David was in Gath, he sought him no more. David was at least right on that score. When David requested a place where he and his men could live, Achish generously gave him Ziklag, where David remained for 16 months. If you voluntarily go into the land of the Philistines, Satan will move in the hearts of your enemies to help you stay there as effortlessly as possible.”

Laney points out, “The 16 months he spent in Philistine territory prepared David for later Philistine wars by giving him the opportunity to become familiar with the geography of Philistia.”

Alan Redpath points out, “At one moment we find David facing circumstances calculated to tempt him to blazing anger, and immediate retaliation. At the next moment, he is surrounded by such constant and overwhelming attacks from his lifelong enemy that he is discouraged and almost ready to give up. Here is the anvil upon which the character of a man of God is hammered out, the fiery furnace through which he is melted and poured as steel for the glory of his God. Thus the iron gets into a man’s soul. The language of David at this point in his life is in the minor key of depression and sadness, as we hear in extracts from Psalms which he wrote at this period:

‘Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?’ “

In this depressed mood, David was saying in effect, “I am afraid the Lord has undertaken something more than he can accomplish. I know that he has kept me so far, but the situation is getting too tough for him. Sooner or later Saul is going to get hold of me. After all, it is stupid to attempt the impossible. I have waited for the Lord long enough, and I am tired of waiting. It is time I took things into my own hands and used my own wits to get out of this situation.” O David! O you, O me. It is one thing to counsel others or to condemn them when they give in to the relentless attacks of the devil. But what about our own behavior when the waters threaten to overwhelm us? Are we dishonoring the Lord by refusing to wait and trust him?

John Davis points out, “This year and four months that David dwelt among the Philistines provided him with many opportunities to help his countrymen in Judah. David took this opportunity to destroy some of the enemies of Judah, and such victories by their very nature had to be complete in order that survivors could not inform the king of Gath regarding the nature of David’s raids.”

Getz points out, “Like most of us enmeshed in this kind of predicament, David felt sorry for himself. Self-pity began to dominate his total being. After all, he had turned the other cheek. He had gone the extra mile. He had just spared his arch-enemy the king of Israel. Had he not been loyal and faithful both to his king on earth and to his King in heaven? Why weren’t things going better? A logical question, indeed. David’s feelings are understandable, but unfortunately his emotional state of self-pity led him to take actions that were definitely out of God’s will. After thinking through the situation, he decided he would once again take matters into his own hands and resolve the problem. Without consulting God, he made the decision to leave the land of Israel and travel into enemy territory, seeking asylum.”

On numerous occasions the Lord had warned Israel never to develop deep relationships with pagan people, knowing full well that the Israelites would

imbibe their lifestyle, be influenced by their value system and eventually to worship their false gods. I am confident David knew in his heart that he was violating God's commandments and that he was subjecting his family and hundreds of other families to a pagan and degenerate environment.

F. B. Meyer points out, "The psalms which with more or less probability may be assigned to this period of David's life are marked with growing sadness and depression. Among them may be reckoned the 10th, the 13th, the 17th, the 22nd, the 25th, the 44th, and perhaps the 40th and the 69th."

David said in his heart on other occasions, as we have observed more than once, it had been his desire to summon the priest with the sacred ephod or to inquire of God through Gad. But in this resolution he had recourse to neither the one nor the other. In the matter of Nabal, he had acted under the sudden impulse of passion, here under that of panic. He looked at circumstances, perhaps listened to the counsels of men who were attracted to him by the qualities of daring, bravery, and frank generosity which made him the popular hero of his time, but had no sympathy with the deeper springs of his life in God and faith and prayer. Never act in a panic nor allow man to dictate to thee. Calm thyself and be still. Force thyself into the quiet of thy closet until the pulse beats normally and the scare has ceased to disturb. When you are most eager to act is the time when you will make the most pitiable mistakes. Do not say in thine heart what thou wilt or wilt not do, but wait upon God until he makes known his way. So long as that way is hidden, it is clear that there is no need of action, and that he accounts himself responsible for all the results of keeping thee where you are. Surely then, it was unworthy of David to say in effect, 'I am beginning to fear that God has undertaken more than he can carry through. True, he has kept me hitherto, but I question if he can make me surmount the growing difficulties of my situation. Saul will sooner or later accomplish his designs against me. It is a mistake to attempt the impossible. I have waited until I am tired. It is time to use my own wits and extricate myself while I can from the nets that are being drawn over my path.

J. Vernon McGee points out, “This is obviously a departure from the high plane of faith that characterizes the life of David. It is a period of just letting down. We find that the same thing happened to Abraham, it happened to Isaac and it happened to Jacob. In fact, it seems that most of God’s men have had this low period in their lives. Perhaps you have been in a dark valley for a long time and you wonder if you will ever come through it. There seems to be no solution to your problems. Well, if it is any comfort to you, there are many others who have been in that same valley. It is a well-worn route.”

Pink points out, “After Saul’s departure, David took stock of his situation, but unfortunately, he left God out of his calculations. During tedious and trying delays and especially when outward things seem to be all going against us, there is grave danger of giving way to unbelief. Then it is we are very apt to forget former mercies and fear the worst. And when faith staggers, obedience wavers, and self-expedience is frequently employed which later involve us in greater difficulties.”

Philippians 2:1

“If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is and fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,…”

And yet the hour of Saul’s fall and of his own deliverance was close at hand. The Lord was about to interfere and to extricate his faithful servant from his long and sore afflictions. Almost the very last hour of his trial under Saul had come. Yet at this last moment he failed. So hard it is for patience to have her perfect work. David had just said, “Let the Lord deliver me out of all tribulation.” It was a strong and no doubt a sincere expression of confidence in God. But the feeling of the heart, as well as the expression of the lips may often exceed the reality of our spiritual strength and therefore not unfrequently, when strong expressions have been used, they who have used them are tested by some peculiar trial, that so if there be weakness, it may be detected and no flesh glory in the presence of God.

But David thought to himself: One of these days I’ll be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The alternative to that is: the best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.

The last time that David went to the land of the Philistines, he had a horrible and an embarrassing set of circumstances transpire. He was recognized for who he was because he had the sword of Goliath on his hip, and he was recognized as the one who had slain the ten thousands. Because of this, David greatly feared and feigned insanity by allowing saliva to run down his beard and marking on the doors and gates to the point that Achish had him immediately deported from the country.

Mackintosh points out, “David laid up these words in his heart and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. And he changed his behavior before them. Thus must it ever be when a saint deserts the path of simple dependence upon God and strangership in the world. The behavior must be changed, the real character abandoned. And instead thereof a course is adopted which is marked by positive deceit before God and folly before the world. This is most sorrowful. A saint should always maintain his dignity, a dignity which flows from the consciousness of the presence of God. But the moment faith gives way, the power of testimony is gone. The man of faith is despised as a madman.”

Strange confession, the confession of one who had allowed circumstances to come between his soul and God. When we slip off the narrow path of faith, we are liable to run into the wildest extremes. And nothing can more forceably exhibit the contrast between one looking at God and one looking at circumstances than David in the valley of Elah and David scribbling on the doors of the Philistine king. The contrast is full of solemn instruction and warning.

v. 2 So David and the six hundred men with him left and went over to Achish son of Maach king of Gath.

This time David didn't just flee by himself and go down, but he took his whole army of 600 men and their families with him.

He is going down to Achish, king of Gath, the home of Goliath. It is 25 miles to the northwest from Ziph where he is presently located.

It would have been much happier for David to have remained in a position which left him exposed to Saul while at the same time he enjoyed the protection of the God of Israel, than to seek safety from the arm of the King of Gath. However, when the pressure of trial is upon us, the thought of relief is sweet; and we are in danger of seeking relief in our own way. The enemy always has a by-road open to the man of faith. He had an Egypt for Abraham and a Ziklag for David.

Have you ever faced a serious conflict in your life that led you to make a decision that eventually left you in a worse state than before? At first your decision seemed to be the right thing to do. Maybe you felt it was the only thing to do, even though down deep you knew what you were doing was contrary to God's will.

This was what David's experience was, and in the process he learned some painful lessons.

David was tired and he was rejected, and he was responsible for a big group of men. He had no home to call his own. He had been betrayed by friends. He couldn't trust Saul. He was forced to travel constantly, looking for place to hide from his enemies.

He began to experience deep feelings of isolation and rejection from God. From our vantage point, we know that God had never forsaken him, but David had lost his perspective. He felt sorry for himself. Self-pity began to dominate his total being. After all, he had turned the other cheek. He had gone the extra mile. He had been loyal and faithful. Why weren't things going better?

David's feelings are certainly understandable but his emotional state of self-pity led him to take actions that were definitely out of God's will. He took matters into his own hands again and ran to the enemy without consulting God. He depended on human reasoning. By now Achish would know that he had broken with Saul, and Saul would be afraid to come and get him in Gath. He was confused about several things at this point:

First of all, he concluded that Saul was going to eventually kill him. This was in direct contradiction to what God had promised, but in the midst of his depression and feelings of rejection, David either forgot God's word or lost faith in what God had said. Like us, he probably couldn't even remember the promise or the many times God had supernaturally protected him from Saul's evil intentions.

Secondly, to conclude that there would be nothing better for him than to escape into the land of the Philistines was definitely in opposition to the will of God. Many times the Lord had warned Israel never to develop deep relationships with pagan people. God knew that the Israelites would adopt their lifestyle and be influenced by their value system and eventually worship their false gods. Here David was subjecting his family and his friends, and their families, to a pagan and degenerate environment.

Notice the little word ‘me’ in verse 1. David was first and foremost thinking of himself, of his own anxieties, of his own problems, of his own fears; and in the midst of this emotional misery, selfishness dominated his being. His family and friends were secondary.

Also, this is so dishonoring to the Lord. David, in effect, was saying, I am afraid the Lord has undertaken something more than he can accomplish. I know that he had kept me so far but the situation’s getting too tough for him. Sooner or later, Saul is going to get hold of me. After all, it is stupid to attempt the impossible. I have waited for the Lord long enough, and I’m getting tired of waiting. It is time I took things into my own hands and used my own wits to get out of this situation.

Quite a price to pay! Here is a principle to notice: at first sight it seems that it pays to give in to the devil. Saul quit chasing him. David felt accepted. The people found a home.

But this was false security. Drugs and alcohol give escape from pain and troubles but it is only temporary.

Okay, David went to Gath. And this time Achish welcomed him. David probably went to Achish and said something like this: “King Achish, I spent many years serving Saul. I was his faithful armorbearer. I won many of his battles. I even slew your giant Goliath. You remember that sir? I was just a young boy, but, sir, Saul has never appreciated my loyalty. In fact, as you know, he has tried to take my life many times. I have never been disloyal to King Saul, sir. I even had two very recent opportunities to kill him. One was in a cave. He was asleep. I could have killed him with one blow, but I didn’t. I spared his life. I consider him the Lord’s anointed. Another opportunity came one night when Saul was sound asleep in the center of his camp. He was looking for me, trying to kill me. I slipped into the midst of the camp and stood beside him. There he was sound asleep. Again one blow would have killed him. But I didn’t—I only took his spear and water bottle and left. Later I called to him, trying to demonstrate that I was not trying to take his life. Though Saul confessed his own hatred toward me and promised me he would not hurt me, I could never trust him again. I had only experienced repeated rejection from him. If it please you, sir, please provide me with a place of safety, and I’ll serve you rather than Saul. You can trust me.”

If the king believed David at all, he would certainly be impressed. This would appeal to his ego. What more could a king want in order to give him an inside track in discovering the secret of Israel's many victories over the Philistines. Achish no doubt realized too that Israel's God was with David. It is only logical that a pagan king who would worship any god would embrace another one in order to reach his goals. Also, they have a common enemy in Saul.

v. 3 David and his men settled in Gath with Achish. Each man had his family with him, and David had his two wives: Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, the widow of Nabal.

It was one thing to have David and his men in Gath, but quite another to have the wives and children.

v. 4 When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

The word 'fled' is never found in relationship to the will of God. Once again, David is fleeing in fear and heading for failure in departing from the will of God.

David is right about one thing, and that is, when Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

Alan Redpath points out, "Notice a very interesting thing. At first sight, it seems that it pays to give in to the devil. 'And it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, and he sought no more again for him.' The battle was off; the pressure is released; the enemy withdraws, and for the moment what might seem to be peace but in fact is only stupor descends upon the soul. The peace which is the outcome of taking drugs is one thing; the peace which is the outcome of overcoming in the battle is another. Give in to the devil and I promise you without any possible doubt the enjoyment of peace immediately. If you want that kind of stupifying drug, you can have it. Only move as David moved into enemy-occupied territory, and Satan will get off your back. There will be three cheers in hell, and you'll have a lovely sense of freedom for a time."

v. 5 Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be assigned to me in one of the country towns, that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?”

David now comes before Achish and makes a request that a place might be assigned for him to live so he would not have to stay in the city of Gath.

David’s relationship with Achish developed one step at a time. The king’s first act of kindness was to allow David and his men and their families to live in the royal city. Then David asked a rather large favor. Notice David’s pact with Achish. His appeal was based on unworthiness to live in the same city with the king. His approach worked and the king gave him Ziklag. I wonder if David was realizing the influence of the pagans on his own group of people and wanted to get them out of the royal city.

v. 6 So on that day Achish gave him Ziklag, and it has belonged to the kings of Judah ever since.

Ziklag was about 18 miles southeast from Gath.

v. 7 David lived in Philistine territory a year and four months.

The city if Ziklag had once belonged to the tribe of Simeon. Joshua gave it to them, but they were careless and did not drive out the enemy as they should. Simeon tried to coexist with the enemy and it did not work, and eventually Ziklag fell back into the hands of the Philistines.

This is why we are sometimes defeated in our Christian lives. We try to live peacefully with that which is sinful but it can’t be done.

Okay, everything was coming up roses for David right now. Very positive benefits resulted from his going to the land of the enemy. He was free from Saul’s attempts on his life, he was accepted by the king, and he was given a neat place to live.

1 Chron. 12:22

“For day by day, men came to David to help him until there was a great army like the army of God.”

When the soldiers of Saul’s army heard that David had been given Ziklag, many deserted and joined him. His army of 600 turned into thousands. You can imagine how this bolstered David’s self-image and reassured him that he had indeed made the right decision.

But all these benefits were temporary and gave him a false security. As always, when a man of God walks out of the will of God, trouble lies ahead. It may come suddenly or gradually, but it does come.

Mackintosh points out, “David is here made to feel the bitter result of his having sought to Achish for help in the day of his need. He had taken up his position among the uncircumcized and must therefore be made a partaker of their wretchedness. Had he remained among the mountains of Judah, he would have escaped all the sorrow. His God would have been a wall of fire around about him. But he fled to Ziklag to escape Saul. And then as it were at the very moment when Saul was falling on Mount Gilboa, David was weeping over the ruins of Ziklag. Surely when David beheld the smoldering ashes of Ziklag and felt himself deprived of his wives, children and all, he had a practical lesson as to the evil and sorrow of taking anything from the world. We can hardly picture to ourselves a condition more painful than that in which David found himself on his return to Ziklag. Thus was David sunk to the very lowest ebb in every point of view. All creatures streams were dried up, and not only so but the enemy might effectually ply his fiery darts at such a moment. He had never met such an overwhelming array of circumstances before. Happy he who could rise from the very deepest depths of human misery up to God and his never-failing resources. Faith knows God to be fully equal to all human need, human weakness, human failure, human sin. God is above all, beyond all, beneath all, and the heart that apprehends him is lifted above all the trials and difficulties of the way. There is no condition in which the Christian can find himself in which he may not count upon God. Is he crushed beneath the pressure of trial from external circumstances? Let him bring God’s omnipotent power to bear upon these things. Is the heart oppressed by the burden of personal infirmity? Let him draw upon the exhaustless springs of divine compassion and mercy. Is the soul filled with horror by the sense of sin and guilt? Let him have recourse to the boundless grace of God, in the infinitely precious blood of Christ. Any word whatever be the burden, the trial, the sorrow, or the need, God is more than equal to all. And it is the province of faith to use him.”

Hosea 6:1-3

“Come let us return to the Lord. It is he who has torn us. He will heal us. He has wounded; he will bind us up. In just a couple of days, or three at the most, he will set us on our feet again, to live in his kindness. O that we might know the Lord. Let us press on to know him, and he will respond to us as surely as the coming of dawn or the rain of early spring.”

v. 8 Now David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites and the Amalekites. (From ancient times these people had lived in the land extending to Shur and Egypt.)

The Amalekites were about 30-35 miles south of Ziklag, and perhaps these other two groups were somewhere in this area. There are some Geshurites way up in the north, but that would have been 115 mile trip from Ziklag, straight through the center of the land. I don't think that is where David would want to go on this occasion.

v. 9 Whenever David attacked an area, he did not leave a man or woman alive, but took sheep and cattle, donkeys and camels, and clothes. Then he returned to Achish.

v. 10 When Achish asked, "Where did you go raiding today?" David would say, "Against the Negev of Judah" or "Against the Negev of Jerahmeel" or "Against the Negev of the Kenites."

v. 11 He did not leave a man or woman alive to be brought to Gath, for he thought, "They might inform on us and say, 'This is what David did,' " And such was his practice as long as he lived in Philistine territory.

David's people needed food, so he and his men invaded these three different tribes, most of whom were herdsmen. Though these people were enemies of Israel, they had not provoked this battle. God gave no specific order for this particular attack as he had in years gone by. Neither did he give David permission to take any of their herds, their flocks and their clothing.

This led to another problem. These people were friendly with the Philistines. What would Achish say when he heard? David had two alternatives:

1. He could acknowledge what he had done and seek forgiveness from the king.

or

2. He could keep Achish from finding out the real facts.

He chose the latter, and in order to keep Achish from hearing about it, David took the life of every individual in the land, including women and children, an act that would later haunt him. Dead men tell no tales.

But this wrong action led to still another problem. He could hide the fact of who he attacked, but he couldn't hide the booty that he and his men brought back.

When Achish asked who he had raided, David told a big, fat lie. He said his attack was against Israel. Achish believed him. O what a tangled web we weave, when we practice to deceive! The plot is getting thick for David.

On the surface he is gaining prestige in the eyes of the Philistine king, but in the eyes of God he was sinking deeper and deeper into sin and walking farther and farther out of the will of God.

Winter asks the question, “Why did David use this deception? David was beginning to weaken in his honest purposes. He had left Israel against the commandments of God. He found himself in a position where he had to convince Achish that he was loyal to him. Had he only trusted in the Lord, he would have been forced to come to the place where he lived by deception.

Theodore Epp points out, “He had a weakness for telling lies when doubts came into his heart. This was one of his besetting sins. He had lied to Jonathan, and through Jonathan to Saul. He had lied to Ahimelech, and that had brought death to 85 priests. David was aware of this tendency and in [Psalm 199:29](#) uttered this prayer: ‘Remove from me the way of lying.’ Indeed, it was only God who could deliver him from this recurring sin.”

Redpath points out, “It is a tragedy in the life of a child of God when he yields to the pressure of Satan and God leaves him on his own. He is reduced to scheming and planning; and when he is driven into a tight corner, he can only escape by deceit. Suddenly, the man who had given in to depression realizes that he has purchased his deliverance from the pressures of the devil at too great a price. He has obtained release from tension for a moment, but he has exchanged the smile of God for the grin of the enemy. He has exchanged the protection of Jesus Christ for flimsy walls of defeat, as David exchanged trust in the promises of God for the walls of Ziklag which soon were going to be burned by fire, and over which David would weep scalding bitter tears of repentance. O the harm that is done by a man who gives in to the enemy.”

v. 12 Achish trusted David and said to himself, “He had become so odious to his people, the Israelites, that he will be my servant forever.”

Achish has trusted David and believed the stories which he has told. So he has the assumption that David is a real enemy to the people of Israel. And as a result of this, he will now be the servant of Achish forever.

chap. 28:1

“In those days, the Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel. Achish said to David, “You must understand that you and your men will accompany me in the army.”

Because of David’s lies, Achish now asks David to join him in battle against the Israelites and be the king’s personal bodyguard. What was he to do? He could certainly not fight against his own people, but what were his alternatives now? To reveal himself would mean suicide for himself and all his people.

His only choice was to pretend excitement about the battle and hope that God would intervene—the God he had been ignoring and whose laws he had been violating.

God did intervene, and we will go into that when we get to chapter 29.

v. 2 David said, “Then you will see for yourself what your servant can do.” Achish replied, “Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.”

God permitted David to get into these difficulties even though it was not necessary for David to have gone in this direction. God being sovereign, could have stopped David, but it was necessary, apparently, for David to learn some hard lessons.

The Lord is always gracious to those who are of a broken heart. The thing to watch is not to get a hard heart. Then God has to allow correction before he can work once more to fulfill his will in our lives. We can learn from David’s mistakes. God is so honest and explicit in the Old Testament about his most respected heroes because he wants us to learn from their mistakes.

We need to beware of the effects of self-pity, especially when its source is rejection. It can lead to decisions that are self-centered and disastrous.

Beware of losing perspective on God’s plan for your life. Try to think long range. Everyone is going to have periods of darkness and confusion in their lives. Some of these God allows to test us. Sometimes it comes because we are in a sinful, unperfect world, but regardless, God wants us to wait out the storm. His grace is sufficient and his power is made perfect in weakness.

Don't interpret blessings in your life as necessarily a sign of God's approval of your behavior. Some Christians make this mistake and justify making decisions that contradict God's revealed will.

When you have an unhappy relationship, emotional relief comes when the cause of that stress is eliminated. This was true of David. He felt better when he was out from under Saul's persecution. This did not mean that he was in the will of God.

And in regard to material blessings, just remember Matt. 5:45 says that 'God causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.'

David was blessed, and I am sure he thought that God must approve.

Don't take advantage of God's grace. Romans 8:39 does say that 'Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God,' but Hebrews 12 tells us that 'God will discipline us.' Sometime he just allows us to suffer the natural consequences of our own sin.

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: David was in the will of God in chapt. 26, and out if the will if God in chap. 27.

LESSON #2: We are never to take vengeance into our own hands.

LESSON #3: God has obligated himself TO PROTECT and TO PROVIDE for us in every circumstance.

LESSON #4: After every great ACTION, comes a moment of REACTION.

LESSON #5: Satan attacks David in the mind.

LESSON #6: David got his eyes off the Lord and on the circumstances.

LESSON #7: Things seem to go so well temporarily out of the will of God.

The Psalm we want to meditate upon tonight in conclusion is Psalm 40:1-3

“I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay; and he set my feet upon a rock, making my footsteps firm. And he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and will trust in the Lord.”