



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

Old Testament Survey

Lesson 18 – The Rise of David and the Downfall of Saul (First Samuel 18-31; First Chronicles 10)

The Tragedy of Saul

After God rejected Saul from the kingship of Israel because of his disobedience, the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul and entered into David, the man God chose to replace Saul. Nevertheless, Saul remained the king, and David remained an obedient servant of Saul. But from this time on, everything Saul attempted failed, whereas everything David attempted was blessed with success. As a result, Saul became jealous of David, his jealousy hardened into hatred, and in his hatred he became obsessed with putting David to death.

The Rise of David

David was blessed with success because God was with him. On twelve separate occasions Saul plotted to kill David, but God protected David every time. David was given two opportunities to kill Saul, but he did not want to harm the LORD's anointed king. In faith David waited for God to give him the kingdom He had promised to him.

Finally, Saul realized that God was with David and not with him. God's last word to Saul was this: **"The LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy... For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David"** (1 Samuel 28:16-17). Shortly after this, Saul killed himself after a losing battle against the Philistines, and David was gradually accepted as the king God had appointed for Israel.

In many ways David was a type or preview of David's greater Son, **JESUS**.

David's Friends and Allies

David knew he was to be king, but he waited for God's time. During the time that David was fleeing from Saul, he gathered around himself a loyal band of followers. Many of these persons later became prominent in David's kingdom:

Jonathan, Saul's son, David's best friend, who did not live with him but remained loyal to him

The sons of Zeruiah, David's sister: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel

Abiathar, the priest, a descendant of Eli, who was the only priest who survived when Saul commanded Doeg to kill all of the priests because of their suspected disloyalty

David's wives:

- Ahinoam, the mother of his oldest son, Amnon
- Abigail, Nabal's widow, the mother of Chileab (also called Daniel)
- Maachah from Geshur, the mother of Absalom and Tamar
- Michal, Saul's daughter, whom Saul gave in marriage to another, but whom David later restored to his household. At first Michal loved David; later she despised him.

Jonathan believed that God would give the kingdom to David rather than to himself, and yet he loved David with all his heart. Jonathan believed that the LORD would cut off all of David's enemies.

David's three nephews, especially Abishai, were eager to have David kill Saul when he had the chance, but David trusted that God would give him the kingdom without this act of treason. David's wife Abigail in particular shared David's trust that the LORD would give him the kingdom.

David also gathered other brave men and women who lived a dangerous life with him – they were always running away from Saul. The places to which David and his followers fled were many, including Najoth near Ramah; Nob, the home of the priests; Gath in Philistine country; the cave of Adullam; the land of Moab; the forest of Hereth; Keilah; the wilderness of Ziph; the wilderness of Maon; En Gedi; the wilderness of Paran; the hill of Hachilah; Gath again; then Ziklag.

Read First Samuel chapters 18-31 with the notes below. If you have any questions, ask them.

1 Samuel 18 – Saul's Jealousy of David and Three Attempts to Take David's Life

Jonathan, Saul's son, loves David, but Saul becomes jealous of him (vv. 1-9).

The 1st attempt: Saul casts his spear at David (vv. 10-11).

The 2nd attempt: Saul makes David a captain so that the Philistines will kill him (vv. 12-19).

The 3rd attempt: Saul sets 100 slain Philistines as Michal's dowry; David kills 200 and marries Michal (vv. 20-30).

1 Samuel 19 – Four More Attempts to Kill David

The 4th attempt: Saul asks Jonathan and his men to kill David, but Jonathan refuses (vv. 1-7).

The 5th attempt: Saul again casts his spear at David (vv. 8-10).

The 6th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David but is deceived by Michal's dummy (vv. 11-17).

The 7th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David in Ramah but without success (vv. 18-24).

1 Samuel 20 – The Deep Love of David and Jonathan

David and Jonathan make a covenant of perpetual friendship (vv. 1-23).

Jonathan: **"You shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever"** (v. ____)

The 8th attempt: Saul hurls a spear at Jonathan and thus shows that he still hates David (vv. 24-34).

Jonathan and David say farewell (vv. 35-42).

1 Samuel 21 – David in Nob and Gath

David flees to Nob, the city of the priests, and eats the showbread, but Doeg sees him (vv. 1-9).

David flees to King Achish in Gath where David pretends to be insane (vv. 10-15).

1 Samuel 22 – David's Continued Flights and the Slaughter of the Priests of Nob

David flees to Adullam, Moab, and Hareth; the prophet Gad tells him to go to Judah from Moab (vv. 1-5).

Doeg tells Saul how the priests helped David; Doeg then kills the priests (vv. 6-19).

The priest Abiathar escapes and joins David's band of followers (vv. 20-23).

1 Samuel 23 – Saul's Continued Persecution of David

The 9th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David in Keilah, but David escapes (vv. 1-13).

Jonathan visits David for the last time (vv. 14-18).

Jonathan: **"You shall be king over Israel... Even my father Saul knows that"** (v. ____)

The 10th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David but must leave him to fight the Philistines (vv. 19-29).

1 Samuel 24 – David's First Sparing of Saul's Life

The 11th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David in Engedi (vv. 1-3).

David spares Saul's life, and Saul seems to recognize David's innocence (vv. 4-22).

1 Samuel 25 – Abigail Prevents David from Foolishly Destroying Nabil's House

Abigail: **"When the LORD...has appointed you ruler over Israel, this will be no grief to you...that you have shed blood without cause"** (vv. _____)

1 Samuel 26 – David's Second Sparing of Saul's Life

The 12th attempt: Saul seeks to kill David in Ziph (vv. 1-4).

David and Abishai take Saul's spear and jar of water and rebuke Abner (vv. 5-16).

Saul again seems to repent of his evil intentions (vv. 17-25).

David: **"I would not stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed"** (v. ____)

Saul: **"You shall both do great things and also still prevail"** (v. ____)

1 Samuel 27 – David Finds a Home in Ziklag among the Philistines

1 Samuel 28 – Saul Consults the Witch of En Dor; Samuel prophesies Saul's Death

The Philistines, together with David, gather together against Saul (vv. 1-6).

Saul learns through the witch of En Dor the result of the battle (vv. 7-25).

Note: This spiritist seemed very surprised to see the dead Samuel.

1 Samuel 29 – The Philistines Do Not Permit David to Fight on Their Side against Israel

1 Samuel 30 – David's Battle with the Amalekites

The Amalekites take Ziklag and most of David's possessions (vv. 1-6).

David wins a victory over the Amalekites and divides the spoils (vv. 7-31).

1 Samuel 31 – The Defeat of Israel and the Death of Saul and Jonathan (See also 1 Chronicles 10.)

Saul commits suicide and three of his sons are killed by the Philistines (vv. 1-6).

The men of Jabesh Gilead bury Saul and his sons (vv. 7-13).

Questions

1. Why was Saul rejected by God as the first king of Israel?
2. Why did Saul try to put David to death?
3. In what ways did Jonathan disagree with his father Saul?
4. What was the relationship between Jonathan and David?
5. What kept David from killing Saul when he had the chance?
6. How did Abigail show her faith in God's promises to David?
7. How did Michal, David's wife, help her husband?
8. What does God think about the practice of contacting the dead?
9. What indication is there that Saul died as an unbeliever?