

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Tonight we conclude the book of 1 Samuel.

We are going to see two very important events in these two chapters.

1. David is going to hit rock bottom in chapter 30.

For the last few chapters he has been backsliding.

He is no longer seeking the Lord – he has decided to take it upon himself and place his trust in the world.

He is living with the enemy – and last week we saw the consequence of his 16 month compromise as he was moments away of going into battle against the same people God had anointed him to lead.

Never did David imagine that his compromise would lead him to where he was.

2. The death of Saul. (Ch 31)

Now, Saul has been backsliding for the last 13 chapters – he hit bottom a long time ago.

However, the biggest difference between David and Saul is that one of them is going to repent.

One of them is going to see the error of his ways and return to fellowship with the Lord.

Let's pray...

[1Sa 30:1-31 NKJV] 1 Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, on the **third** day, that the **Amalekites** had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire,

It took David and his men about three days to return back to Ziklag –

Ziklag was home for David and his men and families while he lived among the Philistines.

The question is back from where???

Back from marching around with the Philistine army.

You may remember that it was some of the princes of the Philistines had objected about David joining them as they prepared to battle the Israelites.

They were worried that he was going to turn on them once they started fighting the Israelites.

And they forced King Achish to send David and his men home.

And while David and his men were with the Philistine army – they left their family and belongings defenseless and the Amalekites come in and attack.

I also asked you to underline the **Amalekites**, because they should be familiar to us –

These were the people that God had instructed Saul to wipe out.

But Saul and his men didn't – Saul kept the King of the Amalekites as a prisoner and Samuel is the one who chops him up after rebuking Saul for his disobedience.

These Amalekites were the same people that attacked the Israelites as they came out of Egypt and I made the point when we studied chapter 15 that their method of attacking the Israelites was always going after the weak and defenseless.

They would attack the stragglers among the Children of Israel. They would come in from the rear.

The Amalekites are a type of the flesh – because that is what the flesh does. It attacks the weak, the discouraged, the stragglers in the faith.

2 and had taken captive the women and those who [were] there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried [them] away and went their way.

I asked you to make note that the Amalekites did not kill anyone – why?

Because the scriptures want to make the contrast between the David of chapter 27 – he was raiding cities and taking all the plunder but he was also killing everyone (man and woman)

The Amalekites are demonstrating more mercy than David ever did during the time that he was backsliding.

3 So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. 4 Then David and the people who [were] with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5 And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive.

David and his entire army are overcome with grief.

They have lost everything.

This is what compromise does – many times it leads to hurting those that we love.

At this point in his life, David had nothing more to support him.

No one in Israel could help him.

The Philistines didn't want him.

His family was gone; all he owned was gone.

And we will see that even his men want to turn against him.

6 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.

Why did the people want to stone David –

Because it was his decision to flee to the Philistines – it was his decision to compromise with the enemy.

Instead of fighting alongside the Philistines – they could have protected their family from being taken captives.

I asked you to underline the last portion of verse 6 – very important verse.

Even though David had lost everything, he remembered that the Lord is still faithful – even though he hadn't been faithful.

Turn with me to Luke 15 –

[Luk 15:13-19 NKJV] 13 "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 "But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 "And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him [anything]. 17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 "and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." '

In verse 15 and 16, the prodigal son hits rock bottom.

He has lost his inheritance, he is now working feeding pigs – which is an unclean animal and he is hungry – and no one is there to support him.

So the prodigal son remembers how his father had provided for him and he decides to humbly come before him.

Church, David is the prodigal son.

Sitting there with nothing, he remembers how his Heavenly Father had provided for him and protected him – and he returns to find strength 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]."

David has no way of knowing whether anyone is alive or not.

He no longer has the spies that he could send out to gather intelligence.

So, he proceeds to ask God.

He no longer is depending upon himself – he seeks the Lord in his decisions.

And the Lord tells him to go after the Amalekites and promises him victory.

9 So David went, he and the six hundred men who [were] with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. 10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men; for two hundred stayed [behind], who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor.

David is obedient to the Lord's command and goes after the Amalekites.

However, as soon as he starts – a trial occurs and he loses 1/3 of his men. They were too tired and couldn't continue.

But, it doesn't stop David's pursuit of the Amalekites.

David is still going through trials – but it is not stopping him.

It is a test to see if David is going to return back to his old ways or continue in faith – God told him that he would have victory.

11 Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David; and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water. 12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So when he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. 13 Then David said to him, "To whom do you [belong], and where [are] you from?" And he said, "I [am] a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind, because three days ago I fell sick. 14 "We made an invasion of the southern [area] of the Cherethites, in

the [territory] which [belongs] to Judah, and of the southern [area] of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire." 15 And David said to him, "Can you take me down to this troop?" So he said, "Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to this troop." 16 And when he had brought him down, there they were, spread out over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.

As David is pursuing the Amalekites, he and his men encounter a slave that belonged to them.

And David shows kindness toward this slave and as a result of the kindness, God showed David an unexpected blessing because he promises to show David and his men where the Amalekites are camped.

17 Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. 18 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.

Everything that the enemy took - David took back.

God gave him a complete victory, because David strengthened himself in the LORD his God (1 Samuel 30:6), David inquired of the LORD (1 Samuel 30:8), David did what God told him to do, and David showed unexpected care and kindness to others.

20 Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those [other] livestock, and said, "This [is] David's spoil."

Not only did David recover everything, God gave him more than what He promised.

He received spoil from the battle, he got back more than what was taken from him by the Amalekites.

This was a blessing straight from the grace of God.

21 Now David came to the two hundred men who had been so weary that they could not follow David, whom they also had made to stay at the Brook Besor. So they went out to meet David and to meet the people who [were] with him. And when David came near the people, he greeted them. 22 Then all the wicked and worthless men of those who went with David answered and said, "Because they did not go with us, we will not give them [any] of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man's wife and children, that they may lead [them] away and depart." 23 But David said, "My brethren, you shall not do so with what the LORD has given us, who has preserved us and delivered into our hand the troop that came against us. 24 "For who will heed you in this matter? But as his

part [is] who goes down to the battle, so [shall] his part [be] who stays by the supplies; they shall share alike." 25 So it was, from that day forward; he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

The 400 guys that pursued the Amalekites with David, as they return with the captives and the belongings, they insist that the 200 men who stayed back – they are not entitled to any of the spoil – they can have their family back but that is it.

But David insists that those that stayed back were as important as those that engaged the Amalekites and were therefore entitled to get a share of the reward.

I think that this can be a principle in God's kingdom as well.

Those that serve in ministry – missionaries – we know that they will reap a reward for what they've done.

But also those that supported the missionaries, through prayer, through financial assistance – they will share in the reward as well.

What I am saying is that one doesn't have to be an "up front" person to receive rewards.

We just have to be a faithful servant with whatever God has gifted you with.

26 Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent [some] of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD"-- 27 to [those] who [were] in Bethel, [those] who [were] in Ramoth of the South, [those] who [were] in Jattir, 28 [those] who [were] in Aroer,

[those] who [were] in Siphmoth, [those] who [were] in Eshtemoa, 29 [those] who [were] in Rachal, [those] who [were] in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, [those] who [were] in the cities of the Kenites, 30 [those] who [were] in Hormah, [those] who [were] in Chorashan, [those] who [were] in Athach, 31 [those] who [were] in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to rove.

David is letting these people know that he hasn't deserted Israel.

He has been on the run for some time –

Here he begins to mend some of the relationships – remember, God still has big plans for him.

He isn't keeping all his newly accumulated wealth to himself, he's giving it away.

Now, we come to the end of the sad sorry saga of Saul.

The first king of Israel who hardened his heart against the Lord, turned his back on the Lord and now will be judged by the Lord.

Keep in mind that this is happening at the same time as David is going after the Amalekites.

Last week the witch at Endor had revealed to Saul that he was going to lose in battle and that he and his sons were going to die that day.

[1Sa 31:1-13 NKJV] 1 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.

The Philistines and the Israelites are finally battling each other and the Israelites get slaughtered.

And here at the end of verse two, we see that tragically, Saul's sons were affected in the judgment of God against their father Saul.

Most notably, the brave and worthy Jonathan died as we might expect him to – loyally fighting for his God, his country, and his father the king unto the very end.

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.

Saul knew that the battle was completely lost.

He saw his men fall before his eyes.

He saw his own sons fall before his eyes.

And he knew he was going to die that day – perfect time to repent right?

Instead of repenting, he was worried what about what the Philistines were going to do to him if they captured him.

Maybe he recalled how the Philistines treated Samson when they finally captured him and Saul doesn't want anything to do with it and asks his armor bearer to kill him.

The armor bearer can't stand the thought of killing Saul so Saul attempts to commit suicide.

So the question becomes did Saul kill himself.

Because in 2 Sam 1 – we have a different account.

[2Sa 1:6-10 NKJV] 6 Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance [to be] on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. 7 "Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' 8 "And he said to me, 'Who [are] you?' So I answered him, 'I [am] an Amalekite.' 9 "He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still [remains] in me.' 10 "So I stood over him and killed him,

because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that [was] on his head and the bracelet that [was] on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

Is this a contradiction – not really.

Because it could be that the Amalekite did provide the final blow against Saul

But it could also be that he was lying in order to find favor with David.

7 And when the men of Israel who [were] on the other side of the valley, and [those] who [were] on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

The victory over the Israelites was so one sided – that even the people that lived on the eastern side of the Jordan – when they heard what happened they left fearing that the Philistines would come and take over their city.

8 So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9 And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent [word] throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim [it in] the temple of their idols and among the people. 10 Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan.

This was customary in those days –

To put your war trophies in the temple of your gods.

Remember in the beginning of the book of 1 Samuel that the Philistines did the same thing when they captured the Ark of the Covenant.

Here they do it with Saul's head and armor.

Saul's death was used to glorify pagan gods and to mock the living God.

11 Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 12 all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. 13 Then they took their bones and buried [them] under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

In a time of disgrace, loss, and tragedy like this, God still had valiant men to do His work. The men of Jabesh Gilead took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from their place of humiliation and gave them a proper burial.

Why were they cremated? – Probably so that the Philistines wouldn't dig up their bodies and further humiliate Saul and his sons.

Turn with me to 2 Sam 4

[2Sa 2:4-7 NKJV] 4 Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh Gilead [were the ones] who buried Saul." 5 So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, "You [are] blessed of the LORD, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. 6 "And now may the LORD show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. 7 "Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

I asked you make a note that they were the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead.

Because 40 years earlier, it was Jabesh Gilead that was under attack and it was Saul who had compassion on them and organized an army to defend the inhabitants from its oppressor.

These men simply return the favor.

David repented, Saul chose not to repent.

Was David flawed – yes.

Does he fall again? Yes

But, David had a repentant heart.

May we follow the example of David and learn from the mistakes of Saul.

Amen.

Let's pray...

