**The Struggle of Self-Sufficiency**

**1st Samuel 27 & 28**

Last Chapter David spared Saul a second time, and once again Saul momentarily repented of his evil heart toward David and blessed him. The two went their separate ways, but neither went before the Lord to seek him for their lives. Both sought provision, protection, and counsel from other sources.

David enlisted himself and his men into the army of the Philistines, and Saul sought counsel, not from the prophets or the priests, but from the “Witch of Endor”.

David knew in his heart that his true calling was to be Godly King of Israel. God had gifted him with many extraordinary skills; writing Psalms, Playing music; leading in worship and governing wisely. Yet instead of pursuing this things in this vulnerable period of his life, he focused his time and attention on making money in the best way he knew how, killing things.

He did this because he chose fear over faith, security over seeking God, and because of that found himself temporarily becoming nothing more than a mercenary for hire and bodyguard to the enemy king Achish the Philistine, *not* the royal anointed Man of God and Greatest King of Israel that he was destined to become.

He compromised his calling in these chapters, and forfeited one of his most cherished aspiration as a result – building the temple.

**Samuel 27 “**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.”

**2**So David and the six hundred men with him left and went over to Achish son of Maok king of Gath. **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. **4**When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

**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?”

**6**So on that day Achish gave him Ziklag, and it has belonged to the kings of Judah ever since. **7**David lived in Philistine territory a year and four months.

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

**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.”

{Two Wives?}

**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. **12**Achish trusted David and said to himself, “He has become *so obnoxious to his people*, the Israelites, that he will be my servant for life.”

**Chapter 28**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.”

**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*.”

David was only trying to make a living, provide for his family and give his men work and keep them together. This occupation. Was far beneath that of a soon-to-be-king. It was a compromise at best.

He did not seek the Lord, nor did he ask Abiathar the priest to inquire of the Lord for them until Chapter 30 when his entire village, including his house and the houses of his men were burned to the ground by the Amalekites, and all their wives and children were taken as captives.

This is just one of the consequences David suffered by pursuing his own way instead of seeking God. The other was that he forfeited something that was his life-long passion.

David’s decision to use his gifts and talents for bloodshed, rather than pursuing the things of God, cost him the one true dream that he had for Jerusalem. *Building the temple*.

God would not allow his to be the one to build the temple. God considered him disqualified for this work because of bloodshed David participated in, in the many wars he fought. Instead he gave that privilege to David’s son Solomon who built it years after David had died.

**1st Chron 22:7-8“**David said to Solomon: “My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the Name of the Lord my God. **8**But this word of the Lord came to me: ‘You have shed much blood and have fought many wars. You are *not* to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight.”

Our actions have consequences. Even when we are forgiven for things we’ve done wrong, we still reap what we sow. The things we do and don’t do will have a direct effect on the rewards or consequences we experience even years afterward.

David chose to not trust God during this time, but put his faith in man. He resigned himself to use his time and talents on just making a living doing something that was not God’s best for him, but temporarily paid the bills. As a result he suffered stress, wasted time (a year & a half) and sadly forfeited one of his most cherished dreams.

### How can we learn from this?

### Do we trust God and His purposes and provision, or are we trusting ourselves and our own self-sufficiency.

### *Trust is Faith*, the *opposite of fear.*

### WHAT ABOUT SAUL?

### Saul’s heart had become so hardened, and his spiritual eyes so blind, that he could not hear the Lord and did not seek him whole-heartedly. Instead of humbling himself and waiting on the Lord, offering the proper sacrifices and seeking His face. He too, took things into his own hands and decided to call upon the witch of Endor, to try to seek counsel from Samuel beyond the grave.

**1st Samuel 28:3“**Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own town of Ramah. Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land.

**4**The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all Israel and set up camp at Gilboa. **5**When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. **6**He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. **7**Saul then said to his attendants, “Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.”

“There is one in Endor,” they said.

**8**So Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothes, and at night he and two men went to the woman. “Consult a spirit for me,” he said, “and bring up for me the one I name.”**9**But the woman said to him, “Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?”**10**Saul swore to her by the Lord, “As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this.”

**11**Then the woman asked, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” “Bring up Samuel,” he said.

**12**When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!”**13**The king said to her, “Don’t be afraid. What do you see?” The woman said, “I see a ghostly figurecoming up out of the earth.”

**14**“What does he look like?” he asked. “An old man wearing a robe is coming up,” she said. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

**15**Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?”“I am in great distress,” Saul said. “The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do.”

**16**Samuel said, “Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has departed from you and become your enemy? **17**The Lord has done what he predicted through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors—to David. **18**Because you did not obey the Lord or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this to you today. **19**The Lord will deliver both Israel and you into the hands of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.”

*[IMPORTANT – This scripture, in no way condones the use of Psychics, Spiritual Advisors or Fortune Tellers to find answers. Their source is NOT God or a deceased Saint or Prophet, they are seeking answers from the Devil. If you seek answers from them, you are basically asking a deceived person to go to the great deceiver to help you find answers for your life. ]*

We do not know how God gave Samuel the ability to speak from the grave with a prophetic message. This is the only time in the Bible that this type of thing takes place. The message was prophetic and accurate but not what Saul wanted to hear.

* Lord has departed from you and become your enemy
* The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands
* The Lord will deliver both Israel and *you* into the hands of the Philistines
* Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me

Basically it will be your worst nightmare, and you and your sons will die tomorrow.

**20**Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel’s words. His strength was gone, for he had eaten nothing all that day and all that night.

**21**When the woman came to Saul and saw that he was greatly shaken, she said, “Look, your servant has obeyed you. I took my life in my hands and did what you told me to do. **22**Now please listen to your servant and let me give you some food so you may eat and have the strength to go on your way.”

**23**He refused and said, “I will not eat.”

But his men joined the woman in urging him, and he listened to them. He got up from the ground and sat on the couch.

**24**The woman had a fattened calf at the house, which she butchered at once. She took some flour, kneaded it and baked bread without yeast. **25**Then she set it before Saul and his men, and they ate. That same night they got up and left.

Saul’s sin of Self-Sufficiency started early in in his life and lead to many grave mistakes, with serious consequences. God had not forgotten the sin of rebellion that Saul displayed when he did not carry out the Lord’s command regarding the Amalekites.

Back in 1st Samuel 15, Saul chose to keep the Amalekite king Agag alive and took the plunder from the battle rather than destroy everything as God had commanded. When Samuel confronted him, Saul said, *“I did obey the Lord. . . . I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal”* (1 Samuel 15:20–21).

Saul was not being truthful. His intent was to disregard the command of the Lord and follow his own desires, not God’s.

Samuel answered in

**1st Samuel 15:22** *“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices / as much as in obeying the Lord?”, “To obey is better than sacrifice.”*

Saul did not obey the Lord in what turned out to be a very important test.

His next test was also very important,

In 1st Samuel 13, Saul and his army were waiting for Samuel to arrive to offer a sacrifice before going to war. Samuel had not yet come, and the soldiers were preparing to flee rather than fight the Philistines. Growing impatient, Saul chose to offer a sacrifice on his own.  
  
Just as Saul finished the sacrifice, Samuel arrived and said, “You have done a foolish thing. . . . You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you” (1st Samuel 13:13). Why was offering a sacrifice foolish? Because Saul had disobeyed a direct command from the prophet Samuel given in 1 Samuel 10:8: *“Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do.”*

Saul waited barely seven days and when he did not see Samuel, he decided to do it on his own, his own way, once again showing his heart if self-sufficiency, self-reliance and disregard for the command of God.

Once again, the consequences were great. It was at that time that Samuel gave Saul this prophecy;

**1st Samuel 13:13**“You have done a foolish thing,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. **14**But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.”

Self-reliance and Self-sufficiency are forms of rebellion. When God tells you to do one thing and you do another, it shows a lack of faith/trust in God and a disregard for His commands.

It is rooted in Pride, and is very similar to the “First Sin” (Adam and Eve).

Adam and Eve

**Gen 3:2-5“**The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3**but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

**4**“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. **5**“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

God told them “trust me and obey my word and I will take care of you.”

The Devil said “Don’t trust God, eat of the tree and you can be like God and trust yourself.”

Their sin was that they disobeyed the Lord so that they could be “like God”, free to do everything their own way, trusting in themselves and not in Him.

In the case of David and Saul (and also Adam and Eve), IF they had trusted God, and waited on Him to speak and provide for them, these sins would not have taken place and perhaps the dire consequences for these sins may have been avoided.

The Bible is very clear in what we are to do;

# **Proverbs 3:5-6** “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

What happens when we DON’T trust in the Lord with all of our heart, and we DO lean on our own understanding?

We wind up like David and Saul. We suffer the consequences of relying on our own Self-sufficiency and disobeying God.

It is the opposite of Trust, and *the opposite of Faith.*

It can be hard when, like David we don’t know how God will provide, how we will make a living, pay our bills and feed our families. We are sometimes, like David tempted to find provision outside of God’s kingdom rather than wait on Him.

It can be hard when Like Saul, we grow impatient when we don’t clearly hear the voice of the Lord when we feel we need it, and are not sure what to do and where to turn. It can be tempting to look outside of the Word of God for answers, even if it means turning to the world or even spiritists for answers.

It is so important to TRUST God and WAIT on God.

If we trust Him, we will wait and Him.

We will call on Him and He will answer us.

***Habakkuk***, an Old Testament minor prophet in Judah just before the Babylonian invasion.

He is an example of someone crying out to God, and not hearing from the Lord right away. He sees things deteriorating around him spiritually and even materially. Yet he shows us how to trust God and wait on Him.

* + **Habakkuk 1:2** “How long, Lord, must I call for help,  
        but you do not listen?”

When you call upon the Lord for help, it may seem like He does not listen, but rest assured that He does. Remember His ways are not our ways, and His timing is not our timing.

* + **Habakkuk 2:3** “For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, *wait for it*; Because it will surely come,”

The vision, revelation, and answers your are looking for will be given in the appointed time. “Though it tarries, *wait for it*; Because it will surely come.”

* + **Habakkuk3:17**Though the fig tree does not bud, and there are no grapes on the vines,  
    though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, **18**yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

Though;

* the fig tree does not bud
* there are no grapes on the vines,
* though the olive crop fails
* the fields produce no food,
* though there are no sheep in the pen
* and no cattle in the stalls

Basically this means when things are really bad; with your job, with your finances, with your food supply or anything else… We still need to trust God (not ourselves) and rejoice in Him.

Even when it’s difficult to Trust God, rely on Him and rejoice in the Lord, it’s the best thing we can do. Not trusting God, and relying on ourselves will make things much worse.

Remember His promise;

# **Proverbs 3:5-6** “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

***Let’s all learn to fully Trust God,***

***and let HIM direct our lives, don’t try to do it ourselves.***