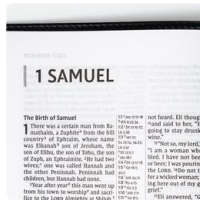


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1 Samuel 29 - 31



1 Samuel - Steve Gregg

In 1 Samuel 29-31, two storylines are followed. David, who remains loyal to Israel, refuses to kill Saul despite the Philistine princes urging him to do so. Meanwhile, Saul, in a desperate attempt to prophesy his future, consults with the medium at Endor, ultimately leading to his death on the battlefield along with his sons. David, who had been living with Achish for four months, returns to find his city raided, and with the help of God, successfully retrieves everything that was taken. Despite not being loyal to David, the Philistines are defeated by Israel, leading to David being accepted as the new king.

Transcript

Last time we were in 1 Samuel, Saul went to talk to the medium at Endor and called up the spirit of Samuel who prophesied that he would die the next day, that Saul would die the next day and his sons with him, and that he was under God's judgment. And Samuel was angry, of course, at him for having even gone to the witch at all. Later on, I believe it's in Chronicles, we're told that the reason that God had Saul killed in battle was because he had consulted the witch at Endor.

But of course there were other reasons why he was rejected. He was rejected because of other occasions of disobedience. But apparently going to the medium was the last straw and the reason that God judged him the next day and he died.

Now, we're not going to read about that until we get to chapter 31. In the meantime, we get back to David. We've had sort of two storylines going here that we have to go back and forth to.

There's Saul and there's David and they're not in the same places. Saul eventually stopped pursuing David because David found a home among the Philistines. And David there has convinced the Philistines that he is a true enemy of Israel and true enemy of Saul.

This, of course, is a ruse. He is neither an enemy of Saul nor of Israel. But it's a believable role to play since Saul clearly, and everyone knew, Saul was hostile toward

David, trying to kill him.

So of course the Philistines would believe that David would feel the same way toward Saul. This was their miscalculation. David did not have the animosity toward Saul that Saul had toward him or that one might expect David to have under those circumstances.

David was still loyal to Israel, obviously, and was not the least bit interested in killing Saul. But there was going to be a battle between the Philistines and Saul's armies. And so the matter arose that David might have to fight on the side of the Philistines against Saul, which would put him in a very difficult situation.

He would have to reveal his true colors to the Philistines by not fighting. But he does keep up the ruse until God actually sovereignly works things out that he doesn't have to go. It says, Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites camped by the fountain which is Jezreel.

And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. Now, apparently, as they were getting ready to go to battle, they had their their lords watched as the armies go by and present themselves and so forth. And they're reviewing their troops and so forth.

And when Achish of Gath brought his troops along, David and his men were with them. And the princes of the Philistines said, What are these Hebrews doing here? And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me these days or these years? And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me. But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him.

So the princes of the Philistines said to him, Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him. And do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these men? So the Philistines felt like David might wish to turn on them in battle in order to reconcile himself with Saul.

That if David killed the Philistines on the battlefield, that he might be reconciled with Saul. Well, David was not really seeking to be reconciled with Saul, but he wasn't seeking to fight him either. And so the Philistines were right to be suspicious of David's loyalties.

Is this not David of whom they sang to one another and danced the same? Saul has slain his thousands and David is ten thousands. That song about Saul and David got around. When David had fled to Gath earlier, when he was first fleeing from Saul, that's what people said.

Isn't this David about whom they sang this song? And, uh, and now these other Philistines from the other cities of the Philistines are aware of the song too, that was sung about him. And of course the song was offensive because the thousands and the

ten thousands in question were thousands and ten thousands of Philistines that David had killed and Saul. So they said, isn't this the man has killed more of us than, than his predecessor did.

Then Achish called David and said to him, surely as the Lord lives, you have been upright and you're going out and you're coming in with me in the army is in good, is good in my sight. To this day, I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless, the Lords do not favor you.

Therefore return now and go in peace that you may not displease the Lords of the Philistines. Then David said to Achish, but what have I done? And to this day, what have you found in your servant? As long as I've been with you that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my Lord, the King. So David feigns that he's indignant about not being permitted to go.

But of course he's probably going, you know, that was a dodge that bullet, you know, that was a very close call, but he acts like he's indignant about not being allowed to go. Of course, he does say that he was going to go and fight against the enemies of his Lord, the King. And that's a bit ambiguous.

Achish was not his Lord, the King. But Achish answered and said to David, I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the princes of the Philistines have said he shall not go up with us to the battle.

Now, therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come with you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart. So David and his men rose early and departed in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines.

And the Philistines went up to Jezreel. Now, we'll not be reading about the Philistines again until chapter 31 when they are actually in battle with Saul. But chapter 31 tells of what happened in Ziklag while David and his men were away.

They had left their families there behind as they went to report for battle. And while they were gone, there had been a raid. The Amalekites had raided and stolen their families and their goods.

And so when they returned from this presentation of themselves to fight and when they were rejected and sent home, they found their camp had been pillaged and all their things had been taken and their families too. And so one could argue that David had, by his taking the side of the Philistines, even faking it, had caused the disaster that came upon the families of his fellow Israelites. And they were angry at him, as we shall see.

Now, it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day that the Amalekites had invaded the south of Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire 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. They didn't have to kill anyone because all the men were gone.

They just got to walk in and burn the city, take stuff and take the women and kids. So fortunately, no one had been killed. And so David and his men came to the city and there it was burned with fire and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive.

Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more power to weep. And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite had been taken captive. Now, of course, the scariest thing about this to the men would be that their wives, I mean, it would be awful in itself, but their children probably made slaves.

Their wives would be made mistresses of these raiders. And so, you know, just the thought of where their wives and children were at this moment must have been just so horrible. They wept until they couldn't weep anymore.

And 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 daughters. So for the first time his 600 men who are so loyal to him wanted to stone him. So they could see that this was the result of his decision to live among the Philistines and think that he was, you know, if they had not been away from their families on this occasion, this wouldn't have happened.

And so David's whole ploy against Achish, which he'd been keeping up for a year and four months, had a bad result for these people. And their sons and their daughters, they cared more about them. They care about David.

So they, of course, they were upset with him, wanted to kill him. But David strengthened himself in the Lord, his God. Now, what does it mean to strengthen yourself in the Lord? Paul said to us in Ephesians six, he says, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

How do you be strong in the Lord? What does it mean to strengthen yourself in the Lord? We don't know that David wrote any Psalm on this occasion, but he did write a Psalm on some occasion that might answer that particular question. I don't know that this was the occasion that he wrote it. In fact, I don't even remember what the Psalm title is, if there is one on this Psalm.

It's Psalm 27. It's just a Psalm of David. It doesn't say when he wrote it.

But this Psalm, I think, gives us some idea of what it means to strengthen yourself in the Lord. David strengthened himself in the Lord, and this will give us some idea of what was

going on in his mind. I think even if he didn't write this Psalm at that time, he certainly here speaks of the Lord as his strength and gives reasons for him being strong in the Lord.

In Psalm 27, it says, the Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? And then look at the last verse, 14.

Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord. Now, this Psalm begins with saying, the Lord is the strength of my life and ends with saying, if you wait on the Lord, he'll strengthen your heart.

We're told that David strengthened himself in the Lord. And I was once contemplating this Psalm in connection with that very statement in 1 Samuel 30, verse 6, where it says David strengthened himself in the Lord. I was wondering, what does that mean? And I came to this Psalm and realized that this seems to answer how David strengthened himself in the Lord.

Just take a look at it. In the beginning, he says, the Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life.

Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and my foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.

Now, here he's talking about his faith in God in the midst of, or his confidence in God. Faith and confidence are really the same. His confidence in God, he said, I'll be confident even if an enemy army comes against me.

Why? Because I've seen God deliver me before. The wicked came up against me before and they stumbled and they fell. So, in other words, verse 2, he talks about historic experience of God delivering him.

And so, he, in verse 3, expresses his confidence that God will deliver him in the future. Now, confidence in God is obviously a major factor of his strengthening himself in the Lord. He had reason to have confidence in God because God had shown himself faithful before.

David expressed the same thing when he went before Goliath. He had never faced a giant before, but he had faced a lion and a bear. And he said, the Lord who delivered the lion and the bear into my hand will deliver the Philistine into my hand.

He had seen God's faithfulness. He had seen God's ability before and he believed he was serving that same God now. So, he could be confident in the face of new challenges because he did not forget God's faithfulness in previous challenges.

And so, the confidence he had in the Lord is the first thing. That was the first element of him strengthening himself in the Lord. You might think that would be the whole thing, but there's more.

Because in verse 4, he says, One thing I desired of the Lord, that will I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion. In the secret place of his tabernacle he shall hide me.

He shall set me high upon a rock. Going on, actually verse 6, And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around. Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in his tabernacle.

Yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. Now, here he's talking, of course, about worship and he's talking about his fellowship with God, his dwelling in the house of the Lord and meditating on God and beholding there the beauty of the Lord and offering his sacrifices. Here, this speaks of not just his confidence in the Lord, but of his communion with the Lord, his contact with the Lord.

He has a personal relationship. He has personal communion and in that place of communion, of course, he would receive strength as he meditates on the Lord and as he worships him in his temple. So, he's got confidence in the Lord and he also has communion with the Lord.

Those two things are part of that which strengthens him in the Lord. In verse 7, it says, Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice. Have mercy also upon me and answer me.

When you said, Seek my face, my heart said to you, Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face far from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger.

You have been my help. Do not leave nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

He will take care of me. So, he's just expressing there his confidence as before. In verse 11, Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path because of my enemies.

Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries. For false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart if I had not believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Now, this is the third thing. I believed I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. That's his hope in God.

Hope and faith are not exactly the same thing. Faith means you have confidence in God himself. Hope is that you're hoping for an outcome that God has promised you.

And, hoping in the Lord, believing that he would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living is what kept him from fainting. He strengthened himself. He would have lost heart unless he had believed there was a hope of something better that God had promised him.

And, he says in verse 14, Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord. This waiting on the Lord is really hoping in the Lord.

In fact, this last verse is just the same, except in one different line as the last verse in Psalm 31. Because the last verse in Psalm 27 says, Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.

The last verse of Psalm 31 says, Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. All you who hope in the Lord. Now, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart is in the end of Psalm 27 and in this verse.

The difference being Psalm 27 says, Wait on the Lord, and Psalm 31 says, Hope in the Lord. Hoping in the Lord and waiting on the Lord are the same thing. The basic idea of waiting on God is that God has made a promise that has not yet been fulfilled.

You're waiting to see it materialize. And, so you have to wait patiently and hope in God for that future thing. David strengthened himself in the Lord.

I believe that means that he trusted in God and he communed with God and he hoped in God. God had made promises to him that had not yet been realized. And, so his hope was still in those realized promises that were unrealized at the time.

His hope was in the realization of them in the future. And, no doubt that is what it means that he strengthened himself in the Lord, his God. He said, The Lord is my strength.

God will strengthen your heart if you wait on the Lord. And, David said to Abiathar in chapter 30 verse 7, He said to the priest, Ahimelech's son, Please bring the ephod here to me. And, Abiathar brought the ephod to David.

This would be the means, of course, by which he would inquire of the Lord. So, David inquired of the Lord saying, Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them? And, he answered, Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all. Now, you might think it's kind of a no-brainer.

Your wives and children have been kidnapped. You've got an army. Of course, you're going to pursue and rescue your family.

Why wouldn't you do that? But, David may have felt at this point that he got into this trouble by not consulting the Lord before acting. He had, as far as we know, not consulted the Lord about whether he should go into Gath. And, he had lived a life of

deception there.

Deceiving his host, who was seemingly a decent guy, trusted him, thought well of him, was willing to give him a chance, even though he'd been an enemy before. Achish seemed to be a friendly and honorable guy to David. And yet, David was living the whole time deceiving the man about his intentions and his loyalties and everything.

And, it was an upshot of that whole ruse that David and his men had been absent from Ziklag at the time the Amalekites came. And, perhaps David's beginning to think, well, you know, I didn't consult the Lord before and this whole thing came about as a result. Obviously, my impulse is to chase these guys and rescue the family, but I better just check with God this time because I've gotten into trouble.

I've got my men into trouble, my family into trouble by not checking with God about things first. And so, he does. You'd think he'd just impulsively chase them.

You'd think all his men would be up on their camels and ready to ride right away. But, he first inquires and the Lord gives him confirmation that if he pursues, he'll recover all of them. So, David went.

He and the 600 men who were with him. And, they came to the Brook Bezor where those stayed who were left behind. But, David pursued.

He and 400 men, for 200 stayed behind who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Bezor. I'm not sure why they were so weary. They had been, of course, at the Philistine camp.

And, then they came back. I don't know whether they marched all night, lost sleep or what, but not all of them were energetic enough to pursue the Amalekites as the others did. So, 200 stayed behind to watch the stuff that they couldn't take with them.

And, 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.

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 or drunk any water for three days and three nights. 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 three days ago because I fell sick. Now, apparently, this man had been abandoned to die out in the desert without food or water by his master. He was a slave, a servant who had been probably taken captive from an Amalekite raid.

And, so, he was left behind as a piece of property worth nothing, an Egyptian slave. But, fasting for three days, apparently, was good for him. His sickness, apparently, had

passed and he recovered.

He hadn't eaten or drunk for three days and that can often clean you out if you got bad stuff in your system and sometimes it can heal you. But, now that he had recovered and they fed him, he was able to serve as a guide to them, as it turns out. He tells them, we made an invasion of the southern area of the Cherethites in the territory which belonged to Judah and of the southern area of Caleb.

And, we burned Ziklag with fire. Then, David said to him, can you take me down to this troop? And, 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. See, the man was a free man now.

He'd been a slave, probably captured in a raid on Egypt at one time. So, he had been taken into captivity as a slave. But, being sick had proven to be his freedom.

His master discarded him. And, now that he's recovered, he's a free man. He doesn't want to go down there and be turned over to his master again.

And so, David agreed with him, apparently. And, when he had brought him down, there they were, spread all over 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. And, David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day.

So, wow. He fought at night and then all day and then to the next evening. Not a man of them escaped except 400 young men who rode on camels and fled.

So, David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away. David rescued his two wives and nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which had been taken from them. David recovered all.

Then David took all the flocks and herds which they had driven before those other livestock and said, this is David's spoil. Now, David came to the 200 men who had been so weary that they could not follow. David, whom they also made to stay at the Brook Besor, could not follow David.

Excuse me. The emphasis was in the wrong place here. So, they went out to meet David, to meet the people who were with him.

And when David came near the people, he greeted them. Then all the wicked and worthless men of those who went with David. So, there are some people on David's side who are so described.

Not all of them were great. Great fighters, maybe, but some of them were bad men of low character. 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. So, the guys who actually fought this battle, who probably were weary also when they reached that Brook, had resentment toward the 200 guys who felt like they were too tired to go on. And David at the time had just allowed them to stay and go on because they were in a hurry to get where they're going.

And now he had to deal with this contention that arose because the ones who fought the battle felt like the guys who stayed behind shouldn't, you know, they copped, they went out, they didn't, they don't get any of the spoils. In fact, they shouldn't even stay with us anymore. They're so angry with him, let them go.

Let them depart from us. 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? 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. And so it was from that day forward, he made a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day. That was, the statute was that those who actually go into the heat of the battle and those who watch the camp and keep it secure and stay with the stuff share equally in the spoils.

Perhaps that's a principle that God observes too because not everybody is called to go out to the mission field. Not everyone's called to be in the ministry of the word, evangelist or teacher or pastor or whatever. Some are called to do that.

And in a sense, they might be thought to be on the front lines engaging the enemy. But but really those who are holding down the fort who are not necessarily called to do those things. They're not less faithful to God than those who are out preaching.

If you're faithful to the thing God has given you to do, it's not your fault that God hasn't given everybody the same thing to do. So, I mean, whatever you do that God gives you to do, you deserve the same reward as the mission that goes out and gets boiled by cannibals, you know, because he's doing what God's called him to do. Everyone is has a different role to play in the warfare and everyone will divide the spoils apparently equally, at least if they've been faithful when it's all over.

And this became an ordinance in Israel to this day to the time that the writer was living. Now, when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoils to the elders of Judah to his friend saying, here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Lord. Now, the men of Judah were his countrymen, tribesmen, fellow tribesmen, although many of the men with him, his fellow warriors were Benjamites and Manassites and others that

were not of his tribe.

He was trying to make peace, especially with his own tribe who had been up to this point fighting with along with Saul. I mean, Israel and Judah were one nation under Saul. And so the people of Judah had been David's enemies too, technically, as long as Saul was running over them.

But Saul was soon going to be dead. I don't know if David realized this or not, but he was starting to sort of build bridges between himself and his countrymen. Easier to do with the people of his own tribe than with people of a different tribe because there were such tribal rivalries typically among the Israelites.

But after Saul died, the men of Judah were the first to come and ask him to be their king. So he actually reigned over Judah for some years before the rest of Israel actually invited David to rule over them. And so he's starting to build those bridges now, taking some of the spoil that he got from the Amalekites and sending them to the leaders of the tribe of Judah to sort of make a peace with them.

He sent to those who were in Bethel, those who were in Ramoth of the south, and those who were in Jatir. Those who were in Aror and those who were in Sifmoth. Those who were in Eshtimoah.

Those who were in Raikal. Those who were in the cities of the Jeremelites. Those who were in the cities of the Kenites.

Those who were in Hormah. Those who were in Korashan. And those who were in Athphak.

These are cities we never read of again. I'm not accustomed to speaking them and reading them correctly. Those who were in Hebron.

And to all those places where David himself and his men were accustomed to rove. So apparently when David had been in the country before he was among the Philistines, and when he was running from Saul, he was mostly in the region of Judah. And so he's kind of sending them a reward, a thank you for having let him be in their area when Saul was pursuing.

Although some of them probably were not loyal to him. And if they were, they weren't allowed to say so. Now this last chapter is very short.

And it is the chapter where we see the end of Saul and his sons. And it's especially tragic because Jonathan, one of his sons, dies with him, whom we have come to be fond of because he is a valiant and humble and a godly man. But when he could have gone with David, instead he stayed with Saul.

And that was the mistake he made, I believe, that ended his life prematurely. If he had gone with David, he would have survived this battle and he probably would have reigned with David. It would have been an interesting team.

He would have reigned under David. He said he would be second to David, is what he had in mind. But that never happened.

So the Philistines fought against Israel and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. That's the battle summarized. They had a fight and the Israelites fell.

They fled and fell slain. So the Philistines beat them. Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons.

And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. Now the battle became intense against Saul. And the archers hit him.

And he was severely wounded by the archers, but not killed. So he had seen his sons go down. He now had arrows hanging out of his body.

He's a big man. He could take a few arrows for a while. He would die eventually, but maybe not quickly enough.

Of course, in the custom of the time, if he was captured wounded, his enemies would make sport of him. And they wouldn't treat him that well. They would probably, before killing him, torture him or dismember him piece by piece or something like that.

Because they've been longstanding enemies. And people were barbarous in those days, especially wars were fought in a barbarian sort of a way. So he was wounded and he was being pursued by the Philistines.

And Saul said to his armor-bearer, draw your sword and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and abuse me. And his armor-bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it.

And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died with him. So we have the death of Saul by suicide. Now, of course, in 2 Samuel 1, we're going to hear another report of his death that doesn't quite agree with this.

I should have probably included in the self-study questions requirement that you solve that discrepancy for me. I think I know how to solve, but I just thought you should maybe do your own work on it too. We find Saul wounded and his armor-bearer is afraid to kill him.

And so Saul kills himself. He falls on his sword and he is dead. The armor-bearer sees that he's dead and kills himself too.

But in the next chapter, remember 1 and 2 Samuel were one book originally. So chapter 1 of 2 Samuel is just chapter 32 of 1 Samuel. We read that David, awaiting news of the battle, receives a messenger, an Amalekite actually, who claims that he killed Saul.

And yet that doesn't agree with what we read here. We'll discuss that when we get to that chapter. So Saul is dead and his armor-bearer is dead.

His sons are dead. So Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men died together the same day. Just like Samuel had predicted when he appeared to Saul in Endor.

And when the men of Israel, who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of 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. So a lot of the cities that had been inhabited by the Israelites, the Philistines took over.

And so the Philistines gained ground in Israel on this occasion. And that's how things stood when David became king. The Philistines occupied more of Israel than they had ever before.

And David then had as his task as king to drive them out. Which, I wonder how Achish responded to that, you know? So it came to pass the next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 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.

That's because they wanted to praise their gods for giving them victory over Yahweh and his people. Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 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.

And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh and fasted seven days. Now these men of Jabesh-Gilead, you remember who they were? They're the ones that Saul had rescued at the beginning of his reign. They're the ones who the Ammonites had come against and said, you can surrender if we are allowed to poke out your right eye.

And they had sent messengers out for help, and Saul had come to their rescue. It was the first act of leadership that Saul ever did after being anointed as king. And so these men did not forget the favor.

Saul had been their rescuer. And so when his body was displayed in this undignified

manner, they rescued the body. It says the valiant men traveled all night to come down there and get it.

So they took a risk, but Jabesh-Gilead was across the river. It was not threatened by the Philistines like Gibeah was. And so they really put themselves in harm's way to go and rescue Saul's dead body, just to give it a dignified end.

Now they didn't give it a normal burial, perhaps because it had been decapitated and so forth. They just felt the best way to deal with it is just to burn the carcass, burn the corpse, and then bury the bones, give the bones a burial. In any case, David later commended these men for showing this kind of courage to show honor to King Saul.

David, you know, you might think would be rejoicing to hear that Saul had died. That really wasn't David's reaction as we find out in the next chapter at the beginning of 2 Samuel. David mourned and wept over Saul, and especially over Jonathan, who had been a good friend.

But he also praised the men of Jabesh-Gilead for having shown kindness to Saul's body. And David made it very clear that he had no hostility towards Saul. And David's reaction to all this is one thing that caused the people of Israel to appreciate David and to accept him as the new king.

They saw that he was not trying to force his way forward. He was not glad to see his rival dead. He definitely had a clean heart about all of this, even though he had been greatly provoked by injustice.

But this brings us to the end of 1 Samuel. So we'll break here, and the next time we meet, we will, in the morning, we'll take 2 Samuel. Thank you.