

DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Pastor's Bible Study 2019

By Dr. Bob Fuller

Episode 5: The Fall of Saul

I Samuel 18:8-31:13

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The Election and giving of the promise is always unconditional. The keeping of the promise is always conditional

-Walter Brueggeman

- I. **DAVID'S RISE** (18:1–7): After David's victory over Goliath, David gains great favor in the eyes of others.
 - a. Jonathan, Saul's son, becomes David's closest and most beloved friend. After David's victory the people sing, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!"
- II. **SAUL'S RAGE** (18:8–19:17): David's popularity makes Saul angry and jealous. He attempts to kill David **five** times—all are unsuccessful.
 - a. *First and second attempts* (18:10–16): Twice Saul hurls a spear at David as he plays his harp.
 - b. *Third attempt* (18:17–30) **David's marriage to Saul's daughter Michal.** (18:17–30): Twice Saul offers one of his daughters in marriage to David if he proves himself by fighting the Philistines. Saul believes this will set a trap for David. He sets the "bride-price" at 100 Philistine "body parts", believing that the Philistines will slay David in Battle.
 - c. *Fourth attempt* (19:1–10) After Jonathan arranges a truce between David and Saul, Saul is again afflicted with a "tormenting spirit" and he tries again to kill David with a spear!(again)
 - d. *Fifth attempt* (19:11–17). Saul sends men to kill David when David leaves his house one morning. David's wife, Michal, tells David of the plot and helps him escape through a window. She places an idol in his bed to fool the men and gain more time for David to escape.
- III. **THE FLIGHT FROM SAUL** (19:18–24). Three times Saul sends men to arrest David, but each time the men are overcome by the Spirit of God and begin to prophesy. Finally, Saul himself goes, and the same thing happens to him!
- IV. **DAVID ON THE RUN**
 - a. **David and the Prince** (20:1–42): David finds Jonathan and tells him of Saul's determination to kill him. Jonathan devises a plan to find out if this is true and warn David.
 - b. **David and the Priest** (21:1–9): David goes to the city of Nob to see Ahimelech the priest. He lies and tells the priest that Saul has sent him on a private mission. The priest provides David with holy bread and offers him Goliath's sword.
 - c. **David and the Philistine!** (21:10–15): David seeks refuge from Saul in the Philistine city of Gath. He fears what the king of Gath might do to him, so he pretends to be insane.
- V. **FROM OUTLAW TO FOLK HERO**
 - i. David leaves Gath and hides in the cave of Adullam (22:1–5). He assembles a personal army of 400 men. The recruits are mostly relatives, fugitives, outcasts,

debtors and malcontents.

- ii. David leaves the cave for Mizpeh in Moab, but then the prophet Gad tells him to return to the land of Judah.
 - b. David in the Forest of Hereth (22:5–23): While David is hiding in the forest of Hereth, Saul steps up pressure to find him. He suspects that Ahimelech and the other priests are helping David, Saul orders their execution. After Saul's men refuse to carry out his orders, Doeg the Edomite kills 85 priests and their families.
 - c. David in the Town of Keilah (23:1–12) At the Lord's command, David attacks and defeats the Philistines, who are stealing grain from the people of Keilah. David learns that the people of Keilah plan to turn him over to King Saul.
 - d. David in the Hill Country of Ziph (23:13–23): Before the people of Keilah can turn David over to King Saul, David and his men leave for the hill country of Ziph. Saul continues his pursuit of David. Jonathan finds David near Horesh and reaffirms their covenant of friendship. He recognizes that David will be the next king of Israel. The men of Ziph volunteer to capture David and turn him over to Saul.
 - e. David in the Desert of Maon (23:24–29): David flees farther into the wilderness to a great rock, but Saul continues to close in on him. Saul receives word that the Philistines are raiding Israel again, so he calls off his pursuit.
- VI. DAVID'S MERCY TOWARD SAUL (24:1-22):**
- a. Saul receives word that the Philistines are raiding Israel again, so he calls off his pursuit. After routing the Philistines, Saul once again continues his relentless hunt for David.
 - b. David's men, hiding in the cave, realize that there is an opportunity to kill Saul, who has entered the cave to relieve himself. David does not kill Saul but cuts off a piece of Saul's robe without the king knowing it.
 - c. After Saul leaves the cave, David calls out to him and bows low before him, showing him the piece of robe he cut off. David uses this to prove that he is not seeking Saul's harm, because he could have killed him if he had wanted to.
 - d. David asks Saul why he continues to chase him. Saul becomes ashamed and acknowledges that David is a better man than he. Saul also acknowledges that God has indeed chosen David to be king over Israel!
- VII. THE DEATH OF SAMUEL (25:1)**
- VIII. DAVID'S MARRIAGE TO ABIGAIL (25:1-44)** David moves to the wilderness of Maon.
- a. **David and Nabal (25:1–13)** David asks a wealthy man named Nabal to repay past kindness toward him by giving David's men some provisions. Nabal denies this request. David becomes angry and plans to punish Nabal. "*Nabal*" means "*Fool*."
 - b. **David and Abigail (25:14–44)**
 - i. Nabal's servants tell his wife, Abigail, about the incident and warn her that David is coming. Abigail prepares a large supply of food and rides out to meet David, pleading with him not to kill her husband. David thanks God for sending Abigail to him and agrees not to harm Nabal.
 - ii. After a night of heavy drinking, Nabal is told by Abigail about the terrible danger he had been in; he suffers a stroke. Ten days later the Lord strikes him and he dies. (25:36–38)
 - iii. Following Nabal's death, David asks Abigail to become his wife, and she accepts. (25:39–44)
- IX. DAVID SPARES SAUL AGAIN (26:1–25):**
- a. David's servant Abishai asks David's permission to kill the sleeping king with his own spear!
 - b. David refuses, saying that Saul is still God's anointed one. But, they take Saul's spear and water jug and then, from a safe distance, David wakes his enemies by shouting insults at Abner (Saul's general) for sleeping on the job!

- c. David asks Saul why he continues to pursue him when David has not harmed him. Saul confesses that he has wronged David and tells him that he will no longer try to harm him.
- X. DAVID'S MANEUVERS (27:1–12).** Fearing that Saul will still try to kill him, David moves from Judah to the land of the Philistines! From there he and his men regularly raid the villages of pagan people living along the road to Egypt. David leads King Achish of the Philistines to believe that he is raiding Israelite villages.
- XI. THE WITCH OF ENDOR (28:1-25):**
- With the Philistines threatening *to* attack the Israelites Saul visits a spirit medium in the city of Endor. Samuel has died, so Saul no longer has anyone to counsel him. When he asks the Lord for answers, he is not given any response. To allay his fears, Saul seeks help from a spirit medium. He disguises himself for the visit.
 - When the medium asks Saul whom he wants to speak with, he tells her to summon the spirit of Samuel. Samuel not only chastens Saul for his past failures, he tells him again that he has lost his kingdom, that his army will be defeated by the Philistines and that he and his sons will be killed.
- XII. DAVID THE MERCENARY FOR THE PHILISTINES? (29:1–11).** David volunteers to join with the Philistines in fighting against Saul's army. Some of the Philistine leaders mistrust David, fearing he will turn against them during battle. So King Achish sends David back to the land of the Philistines. (29:4–11)
- XIII. DAVID'S VENGEANCE (30:1–31)**
- While David and his men are gone, the Amalekites destroy Ziklag and carry off its citizens, including David's two wives. David mobilizes his 600 men and attacks the Amalekites. As David and his men set out, 200 of his men are too tired to continue; only 400 men press on to fight the Amalekites.
 - David's remaining 400 men attack the camp and destroy the Amalekites, recovering all the captives and goods that had been taken. The 400 soldiers who fought object to sharing the plunder with the 200 who stayed behind. David insists that the plunder be shared with those who guard the equipment as well as with those who fight. (30:23–25), as well as with the leaders of Judah.
- XIV. THE PHILISTINES' VICTORY AND THE DEATH OF SAUL (31:1-13):** When the Philistines attack the Israelites His sons are killed on Mount Gilboa, and Saul is critically wounded by the Philistines. He commits suicide (falls on his own sword) to avoid capture and abuse by the enemy. Saul and his sons are killed on the battlefield, just as Samuel foretold. The Philistines cut off Saul's head and fasten his body to the wall of the city of Beth-shan, but the men of Jabesh-gilead recover the bodies of Saul and his sons and give them a decent burial.

EPILOGUE: Saul tried to do what he thought was merciful but ended up disobeying. He tried to learn all he could but he committed sin.

- The story of Saul is a story about a man who is forced to come to terms with the fact that he is no longer King, but who never surrendered to the Lord's anointed.
- Ends his life in despair. The spirit of rebellion controlled him all the days of his life until he ended in self-destruction.
- That is the human life before God. We have to come to terms that we are longer King of our own lives.