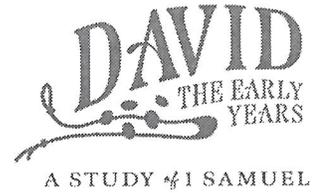


1 SAMUEL 31

April 27-28, 2022



1. The history of Israel left off with the Philistines gathered to fight against Israel, and Saul desperately seeking support from a medium. Look back at this last encounter with the deceased prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 28:15-19. According to Samuel, what will be the outcome of this battle, and what was the cause?
2. Chapter 31 begins exactly where the events of chapter 28 ended. Read 1 Samuel 31:1-6 and list the numerous tragedies.

Look back at Samuel's earlier prophecies and note how they have proven true in these last events.

1 Samuel 12:14-15

1 Samuel 13:13-14

1 Samuel 15:26-28

3. Read 1 Samuel 31:7. When the inhabitants of Northern Israel learned of the defeat, what were the consequences?
4. Try to imagine the entire scene on this tumultuous day. What words describe their situation?

What emotions do you think people are feeling?

What fearful circumstances are you facing today, and what specific steps can you take to practice the instructions in 1 Samuel 12:24?

5. Read 1 Samuel 31:8-10 and 1 Chronicles 10:10. How is Saul's body and honor humiliated by the enemy?

What acts also suggest that God's name and reputation were dishonored?

6. List some of the spiritual leadership failures that are publicly broadcast today and how this affects God's honor and reputation.

What other harm results from these leadership failures?

7. Jabesh-gilead was the place of Saul's first military victory as king, and the people remained grateful and loyal to his memory. Read 1 Samuel 31:11-13. What word is used to describe these men?

What words would you use to describe them?

What do they accomplish?

8. Read 1 Chronicles 10:13 and summarize Saul's life and leadership in your own words.

How does this influence you when considering any leadership responsibility you have?

9. 1 Samuel shows Saul taking one disobedient step after another, moving himself further and further from God. Ultimately, God responds with justice. Read the following verses and record steps Saul could have taken to step back toward God.

Isaiah 1:18-20

Joel 2:12-13

God's justice is prominent in 1 Samuel 31, but what other aspects of His character do you see in these verses?

10. God's plans for Israel will not be thwarted permanently but will continue through King David. How have you experienced God ultimately working out good purposes from past failures or losses?

11. The Lord looks at the heart is one of the main ideas of 1 Samuel. Take some prayerful time to search your heart, asking God to reveal any ways you are currently rebelling or resisting. Confess this and ask for forgiveness.

What specific habits can you build into your life to help keep your heart wholly committed to God?

12. Reflecting on all we have studied in 1 Samuel, what have you learned about David, the man after God's own heart, that inspires, encourages, or challenges you?

13. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

Consequences of a Divided Heart

1 Samuel 31

1 Samuel 16:7b For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.

Heart – the source of affections, devotions, and commitments from which our choices are made

Destruction of the Dynasty

31:1-7

Death: Fleeing from the Jezreel Valley, Israel was defeated and Saul's three sons were killed.

Despair: Saul, mortally wounded, chose to take his own life.

Defeat: The Philistines occupied the northern portion of Israel as Israelites became war refugees.

Saul's refusal to repent and obey sealed his own condemnation.

Respond to grace with _____, which opens your heart to God's presence.

Dishonor

31:8-10

Disgrace: The bodies of Saul and his sons lie unprotected on the battlefield.

Abuse: The Philistines strip and decapitate the bodies and display them on the city wall.

Mockery: God is mocked as war prizes are displayed in the temples of false gods.

Prioritizing his own honor, Saul _____ the commands, institutions, and people of God.

Respond to grace by seeking the honor of God, which opens your heart to God's will.

Grief and Mourning

31:11-13

Danger: Valiant men of Jabesh-Gilead risk their lives to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons.

Burial: The bodies are partially cremated and then buried with honor in Jabesh-Gilead.

Fasting: The last consequence of Saul's leadership is a nation fasting in grief.

Saul died for his breach of faith, regularly closing his heart to God, and all Israel suffered.

Respond to grace by _____ your heart, which opens your heart to God's transforming work.

Divinely wrought character change is God's goal for His people. It starts in the heart.

**Search me O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! Psalm 139:23-24**

David – The Early Years – 1 Samuel 31

April 27-28, 2022

1 SAMUEL 12:24-25 “Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king.”

1 SAMUEL 28:16-19 And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and become your enemy? The LORD has done to you as he spoke by me, for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. Moreover, the LORD will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The LORD will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines.”

2 SAMUEL 1:19 “Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen!”

ISAIAH 30:18 Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

ACTS 13:21-23 “Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.’ Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.”

1 CHRONICLES 10:13 So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance.