

I Samuel Lesson 29

I Samuel Chapter 29

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Memory verses for this week: *Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith..*

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about David and his men being in the midst of the Philistines as they prepare to make war with Israel. King Achish was certain that David would turn on his own people. When Saul saw the troops, he tried to find some answers from the Lord but could not reach God in any manner. He finally stoops to going to the city of En-Dor and having a witch call up Samuel to get some answers. Through Samuel, God makes it known that they not only would lose the battle to the Philistines, but David and his sons would die in the battle.

I. David is Providentially Saved from Fighting Israel

1 Sam 29:1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

1 Sam 29:2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rearward with Achish.

Verse 1 tells us that the Philistines gathered their armies to Aphek while Israel moved their army down the mountain to Jezreel. Much of the enemy invasion was in the valley of Jezreel because of the bountiful crops that Israel raised in the fruitful valley. The Philistines came in show of force passing by in the hundreds and thousands. In the rear guard was David and his men with King Achish.

1 Sam 29:3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?

When the Philistine princes look behind them and find David and his men, they question the wisdom of having them there. They know that this is the man who had been the servant to Saul the king, and all that they need is to have a group ambushing them from the rear as they prepare to battle Israel. King Achish immediately defends David and his men, and says that David had been with him many days and he had found him very loyal through all this time. Achish did not deny that David had been the servant to Saul.

II. The Displeasure of the Princes

1 Sam 29:4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?

The princes honestly showed wisdom in becoming very wroth. They ask Achish to send David back to Ziklag since it would be very easy for David to reconcile himself to Saul by killing them. They flat out did not want him in the battle at all. And it would have been very interesting if the battle had begun to see if that was not what David and his men would have done.

1 Sam 29:5 Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

1 Sam 29:6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.

The princes had not forgotten the song that the women sang about David having killed his ten thousands and Saul just his thousands.

1 Sam 18:7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

1 Sam 18:8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

1 Sam 18:9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

That song that the women sang caused Saul to be very jealous of David and may have started the bitter hatred that he developed in time to destroy David. Saul from this day forward was jealous and very displeased with David. One thing we can be certain about. People notice what you do and who you are, even a child is known by his works and deeds.

Prov 20:7 The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

Prov 20:8 A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

Prov 20:9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

Prov 20:10 Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.

Prov 20:11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

They were not hasty to forget what David had done in the past and felt sure he was capable of doing now as he ever had been. Achish calls David one of his most loyal and faithful servants in all his deeds there in Philistia. While King Achish expressed his confidence in David, the princes of the Philistines wanted no part of David in the battle. So Achish tells David this, and tells him to take his men and depart for home. This was the only way that David could please the Philistines. And this was true for King Achish also.

Matthew Henry said in his commentary that sometimes even Kings can not do as they desire.

If the reasons Achish had to trust David were stronger than the reasons which the princes offered why they should distrust him (as I do not see that, in policy, they were, for the princes were certainly in the right), yet Achish was but one of five, though the chief, and the only one that had the title of king; accordingly, in a council of war held on this occasion, he was over-voted, and obliged to dismiss David, though he was extremely fond of him. Kings cannot always do as they would, nor have such as they would about them.

- I. The discharge Achish gives him is very honourable, and not a final discharge, but only from the present service. 1. He signifies the great pleasure and satisfaction he had taken in him and in his conversation: Thou art good in my sight as an angel of God, v. 9. Wise and good men will gain respect, wherever they go, from all that know how to make a right estimate of persons and things, though of different professions in religion.
- II. What Achish says of David, God, by the prophet, says of the house of David (Zec. 12:8), that it shall be as the angel of the Lord. But the former is a court-compliment; the latter is a divine promise. 2. He gives him a testimonial of his good behaviour, v. 6. It is very full and in obliging terms: "Thou hast been upright, and thy whole conduct has been good in my sight, and I have not found evil in thee." Saul would not have given him such a testimonial, though he had done far more service to him than Achish. God's people should behave themselves always so inoffensively as if possible to get the good word of all they have dealings with; and it is a debt we owe to those who have acquitted themselves well to give them the praise of it. 3. He lays all the blame of his dismissal upon the princes, who would by no means suffer him to continue in the camp. "The king loves thee entirely, and would venture his life in thy hand; but the lords favour thee not, and we must not disoblige them, nor can we oppose them; therefore return and go in peace."

III. David Protests to Achish

1 Sam 29:7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

1 Sam 29:8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

David protests to Achish that he is being treated unfairly. Achish tells him in verse 9 that he has total confidence in David and thinks of him being as good as an angel. However it was not he that did not want him in the battle, but the princes of the Philistines. They did not want him in the battle, and I think they showed wisdom in this.

1 Sam 29:9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

1 Sam 29:10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

King Achish instructs David to arise early the next morning and to return to the land of the Philistines. David does not continue to argue, but does as King Achish requests.

1 Sam 29:11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

David and his men return to Ziklag as the Philistines move on to encounter Israel in the valley of Jezreel. We are not told what David's true feelings were in this manner. He may have been relieved to not have to go down and aid Israel in the defeat of the Philistines. Perhaps he was so bitter that he truly intended to take on Saul's army, but that would not line up with his earlier words concerning Saul being the anointed of the Lord and how David would not raise his hand against him.

He might have been compelled to fight on the side of the Philistines which would have been the outcome of his failure to maintain his faith in the Lord rather than going down and living with the arch enemies of Israel. But by God's providence, he is spared the battle. David could not claim any credit for himself in this matter as the Lord delivered him from his predicament.

J. Vernon McGee said this area of Jezreel will be another place of battle one day.

Jezreel is in the north. If you have a good map, you ought to take a look at the geography at this point. It will make clearer a great deal of what is happening. Jezreel is near the Valley of Esdraelon. In fact, I would say it is part of it. It is here that the Scriptures tell us the last great War of Armageddon will be fought. It is being used as a wonderful fertile valley today. As the Philistines go on up to Jezreel, David and his men start back home to Ziklag. It will not be a joyful homecoming, as we shall see.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.