

1 Samuel 27, 29 – 30

DAVID IN THE FAR COUNTRY

A LESSON IN INFLUENCE

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

1 Corinthians 15:33

Introduction:

1. Chapters 24 and 26 showed David’s great faith by his refusal to harm Saul.
2. Chapter 25 demonstrated his weakness by his desire to kill Nabal’s household.
3. Chapter 27 details a dark period in the life of David.
4. By fleeing into enemy territory, David began to become more and more like the Philistines and less like a follower of God.

- I. Dwelling among the Enemy (27:1-4)
 - A. David understood that no matter what Saul said, he could not be trusted.
 - B. However, David has become overwhelmed with discouragement.
 - C. Thus, he decided to flee into the land of the Philistines.
 1. Notice that David did not seek God’s guidance on this matter.
 2. Remember that David had attempted this previously with unrighteous consequences (21:10-15).
 - D. David was traveling with a large company – 600 men, plus their families.
 1. This may have been part of the motivation to flee Israel.
 2. David now had to care for two wives and the families of his 600 men.

- II. Compromising with the Enemy (27:5-7)
 - A. David humbly asked Achish for a town where his company might dwell.
 - B. Achish gave David the town of Ziklag, on the border of the tribes of Simeon and Judah.
 - C. Thus, David lived among the Philistines for 1 year and 4 months.

- III. Imitating the Enemy (27:8-12)
 - A. While dwelling in Philistia, David continued to attack the enemies of God’s people (cf. Joshua 13:13; 16:10).
 - B. However, David’s motivation was not simply to drive out the inhabitants of the land (cf. vs. 11).
 - C. Furthermore, David lied to Achish about the people he was fighting.
 - D. Thus, Achish saw David acting more and more like the enemy of Israel.

- IV. Fighting for the Enemy (28:1-2)
 - A. Finally, when the Philistines were gathering for battle with the Israelites, Achish requested David to fight on the side of the Philistines.
 - B. David did not deny this request, but answered with subtlety to deceive Achish again.
 - C. Thus, Achish chose David and his men to serve as his royal bodyguards.

DAVID'S SEPARATION FROM THE PHILISTINES

Introduction:

1. In chapter 27, we learned that David had fled into the land of the Philistines and had taken up residence in the town of Ziklag.
2. We also learned that David practiced deception by telling Achish, the Philistine leader, that he had been fighting against the people of Judah.
3. As a result, Achish put great trust in David and wanted his men to be his personal bodyguard.
4. In chapter 29, the Philistines are preparing to attack Israel – and David finds himself caught in the middle, trying to please both sides.

- I. David Rejected by the Philistines (29:1-11)
 - A. As the troops of the Philistines arranged themselves for battle, David and his men were the rear guard of Achish.
 - B. When the princes of the Philistines realized the presence of David's forces, they questioned the wisdom of Achish.
 1. Achish quickly rose to the defense of David.
 2. He claimed to have found no fault in David all the time he had been among the Philistines.
 3. Yet, the princes were angry and did not share the same trust of David.
 4. They remembered that David had won many battles against the Philistines.
 5. They also remembered that he had fought on the side of Saul.
 - C. Thus, they demanded that David be sent back to Ziklag, away from the battle.
 - D. Achish relented and instructed David to return home.
 1. Again, the king assured David that he had complete trust in him.
 2. He called David "upright" and said that he had found no evil in him.
 3. Keep in mind that David had been dishonest with Achish and had not been fighting against the people of Israel.
 - E. David's response is interesting and obviously politically motivated.
 - F. In the morning, David and his men left to return to Ziklag.
 - G. David had been given a way out of what could have been a very dangerous situation – both physically and spiritually.
 1. Would David have gone to battle against his own people?
 2. Would he have turned against the Philistines?
 3. This is the danger of compromising with the enemy, even in an attempt to do good.
- II. The Destruction of Ziklag (30:1-6)
 - A. On the third day after leaving the Philistine army, David and his men arrived at Ziklag and found it burnt to the ground.
 - B. While they had been away, the Amalekites had attacked and taken all the women and children captive.
 1. These were the same people that Saul was told to destroy (15:1-9).
 2. His disobedience allowed them to seek revenge against David and the people of God.
 - C. Overcome with grief, David's men wept until they were emotionally drained.
 - D. Some of them determined that David was to blame and called for him to be stoned.

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- E. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.
 - 1. The word encouraged means, “to strengthen, to be strong and courageous, to be secure; to seize, to take hold of.”
 - 2. Thus, David “strengthened himself in Jehovah his God” (ASV).
 - 3. Psalm 31:23-24; 33:18-22; 39:7; 42:5; 43:5; 71:4-5; 119:81; 146:5
 - 4. David has learned dependence upon the Lord.

- III. The Lord’s Instructions (30:7-8)
 - A. Because David was dependent upon God, he called for the priest to enquire of God’s will.
 - 1. This is a contrast to the attitude of Saul.
 - 2. This is a contrast to the actions of Saul.
 - B. David asked if he should pursue the Amalekites.
 - 1. Imagine what great faith it took even to stop and ask God’s will.
 - 2. David did not respond in anger or rage, but with trust in the Lord.
 - C. God responded that David should pursue them and that he would be victorious over them (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

- IV. The Defeat of the Amalekites (30:9-20)
 - A. David and his men began their pursuit of their enemy, though 200 stayed behind because of their exhaustion.
 - B. As they journeyed, they found an Egyptian who was a slave of the Amalekites.
 - C. He had been left to die in the wilderness, but was rescued by David.
 - D. He informed David of how to find the camp of the Amalekites.
 - E. Upon arriving, David found them celebrating their victory over Ziklag.
 - F. Thus, David attacked and killed all of the Amalekites, except for 400 men who escaped on camels.
 - G. Everything that had been taken by them was recovered – nothing was lost.

- V. The Sharing of the Spoils (30:21-31)
 - A. As they returned to Ziklag, some did not want to share the spoils of the battle with the others.
 - B. David reminded them that the battle and the spoils belonged to the Lord and they were to be equally parted among the people.
 - C. Furthermore, David sent some of the spoils to the cities of Judah that had helped shelter and protect him during his time in exile.
 - D. These events and actions served to prepare David to serve as king and to prepare the people to accept his rule over them.
 - E. After returning to Ziklag, David had to wait only three days before word came from the battle with the Philistines.
 - F. Saul was dead, and David’s time of exile was ended.