

Lesson 1: Descent into Exile

Recap: Theme of Pursuing Crowns

When we talk about pursuing crowns, it is a reflection of our belief that we will be co-heirs with Christ as part of our glorification in the kingdom. The Lord has promised to extend the glory of royalty to us if we endure even as Christ endured. (Romans 8:16-17, 2 Timothy 2:11-12)

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” - Romans 8:16-17

“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.” - 2 Timothy 2:11-12

Notice that living with Him is separate from reigning with Him. The first is the act of faith and identification that gives us salvation and citizenship. The second is an act of endurance through trials over time and is part of the sanctification process. The act of endurance is rewarded with the crown and the right to reign.

There is an endurance test that must be passed to attain the crown.

“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” - James 1:12

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness . . .” - 2 Timothy 4:7-8

“. . . Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” - Revelation 2:10

Crowns can be earned, but they can also be lost in the sanctification process.

“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world . . . Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.” - Revelation 3:10-11

“And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” - 1 Corinthians 9:25-27

This is where doctrine divides:

- If you do not believe that your salvation, once attained, is permanent and guaranteed, then you can interpret these verses to mean you can lose that salvation and citizenry.
- If you believe that salvation is permanent, then being disqualified doesn't mean that you have lost your citizenship. It only means you have lost the right to reign as royalty.

We have been studying the narrative through the lens of pursuing crowns or rewards, and as we observed the different picture comparisons between various characters, we began defining the dynamics involved with pursuing a crown/reward:

- **There are right and wrong kings with whom to align yourself when pursuing a crown.**
- **There are right and wrong crowns/rewards to pursue.**
- **There are right and wrong reasons for pursuing a crown.**
- **There are right and wrong ways to pursue a crown.**

Overview of the Kings: Saul vs. David (9-20)

Saul	First Samuel 9-12	His anointing, his first battle, his coronation
	First Samuel 13	He loses the eternal kingship because of disobedience
	First Samuel 14	He establishes his physical kingdom
	First Samuel 15	He loses the physical kingdom because of his disobedience in sparing King Agag of Amalek
David	First Samuel 16-18	David's anointing, his first battle, his (almost) coronation
	First Samuel 18-20	Growing separation between David and Saul (focus still on Saul)
	First Samuel 21-29	David in exile (focus on David)
David	First Samuel 30	David receives his reward and the kingdom
Saul	First Samuel 31	Saul loses the kingdom, his life, and his honor

How to Study the Text

The New Testament *explains* what the Old Testament *describes*. In Old Testament study, identifying the picture is key.

- Ask who, what, when, where, how, and why.
- Ask what is being modeled for us and what were the consequences.

But just examining one picture is not going to be enough to form a complete understanding. You really need two pictures to compare and contrast.

- Look for a second picture for comparison/contrast
 - Example: *"Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day."* - Genesis 1:3-5
- Look at the order of sequences – the relationship between passages & chapters
- Look for repeated phrases, verses, or scenarios
- Look for literary structures – parallels, chiasms, and inclusions

About the Chart – Chapter Overview

The last two chapters are the resolution of the theme that has been building through First Samuel. Setting those two chapters aside, notice how the contents of the other nine chapters mirror each other across Chapter 25:

1	First Samuel 21	David flees into exile . . . rejected by the Philistines
2	First Samuel 22	Saul kills the priesthood
3	First Samuel 23	David escapes from a trap because he relies on God's instruction
4	First Samuel 24	Saul at David's mercy (David cuts his robe)
5	First Samuel 25	Samuel's Death . . . David, Nabal, and Abigail (<i>longest chapter: 44 verses</i>)
6	First Samuel 26	Saul at David's mercy (David takes his spear and water jug)
7	First Samuel 27	David gets himself into a trap by his own wisdom
8	First Samuel 28	Saul seeks a medium
9	First Samuel 29	David rejected by the Philistines

Resolution

10	First Samuel 30	David presses on to receive his reward and his crown
11	First Samuel 31	Saul dies and loses his kingdom and honor

A Note about the Verses

The **verses** are divided into two types: **Narrator comments** (green) that simply report what is happening, and **dialogue** (all the other colors). I have color-coded the verses with the passages to give you a visual sense of the narrative's rhythm, symmetry, and order. The individual verse elements are color-coded like this:

1) Narrator comments

The narrator comments usually mark the start of a picture section with a description of the who, what, when, and where. David is going to be all over the map, and so the narrative moves from place to place, but often returns to places. When a section *doesn't* begin with a narrator comment, that is something to note. It usually signals something specific to be compared.

Pictures 6, 8, 9, and 12 all begin sequences of David being pursued by Saul, but the action is initiated by something being told to someone. Those four pictures have a common theme.

Very often a picture section will end with a comment on someone's departure (23:29, 24:22, 26:26, 29:11). When picture sections doesn't end in a narrator's comment, it usually indicates that the picture carries over or connects to another picture section. The picture series will end with a narrator's comment.

Also, there are times when the narrator will throw a comment into the middle of a passage, and the comment will seem out of place (dark green 21:7 and 23:6). When a narrator comment seems out of place, it's not. It is there for a reason, usually as a pivot point for two contrasting pictures with a theme to them.

●	Narrator
●	David
●	Saul
●	Intercessors
●	Children of Israel
●	Philistines
●	Wicked people

2) Dialogue verses

The dialogue verses have rhythms to them. They are often sandwiched between narrator elements and provide a comment on the action. A chiasmic structure might revolve around a single dialogue statement or an extensive dialogue might be built in a chiasmic structure. Sometimes the dialogue between people will fall into repetitive sets of twos or threes.

First Samuel 21:1–22:2

1 David Flees to the Tabernacle at Nob

Read First Samuel 21:1-9.

1. What do we know about Ahimelech?
2. What do we know about the Tabernacle at Nob?
3. What explanation does David fabricate?
4. What bread does the priest give David?
5. What do we know about Doeg? (v7)
6. What does Goliath's sword signify to David?
7. How do these actions appear to Doeg?

2 David Flees to the Philistines at Gath

Read First Samuel 21:10-15.

8. Look at the order of information in verse 10. What is driving David's actions?
9. Why would David go to Achish, the king of Gath?

3 David Flees to the Cave of Adullam

Read First Samuel 22:1-2.

10. Where is the cave of Adullam?

11. Who gathers to David here?

12. What do they want from David?

1 2 3 Comparison: Three stages of David's descent into exile

From the heights of Nob where the Tabernacle stands, David descends first into enemy hands and then into a cave in the ground. What seems to be a low point for the anointed king becomes the start of a sort of kingdom. He is not crowned yet, and he will not be crowned until the current king is ousted, and yet he has followers to whom he is already prince, if not king.

This is a lot like the Ark of God's journey in First Samuel 5-6. It, too, left the Tabernacle to fall into Philistine hands before finally being sent back to Israel again. The Ark of God will remain in exile in the mountains of Kirjath Jearim, even as David will remain in exile for the remainder of First Samuel. The Ark's exile will not end until David's exile ends, and he brings it back to the Tabernacle in Jerusalem in Second Samuel 6. So there is an interesting association made between David and the Ark of God.

If Nob's location is on the Mount of Olives, that is significant. The Mount of Olives features heavily in the life of Christ, of whom David is a type.

What are some things that happened on the Mount of Olives in regards to Christ?

- It was a place from which Jesus often taught the people, including His disciples. It was the place where Jesus delivered the Olivet discourse and the explanation of how the kingdom was going to come about. It was not going to be how the people expected.

If the Tabernacle itself was set up at this place, that further reinforces the picture. The Tabernacle, with its coverings of skins and cloth, was the place from which the LORD spoke and instructed His people. Jesus embodied the picture of the Tabernacle, being the Word of God and essence of God hidden within a human skin and clothes. When He set Himself on the Mount of Olives to teach the people, it was like an echo of this picture of the Tabernacle at Nob.

- According to Luke 19, the Mount of Olives is the place where Jesus actually begins His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19). The people hailed him as king, while his enemies sought to kill him. Again, the kingdom wasn't going to come about the way they thought.

The Garden of Gethsemane is located at the foot of the Mount of Olives. It is the place where Jesus sought refuge and guidance from the Father in prayer on the eve of his death, and it was also the place where the enemy betrayed Him. Jesus knew exactly who the enemy would be when the betrayal happens, just as David knew that Doeg would betray him, as we will see in chapter 22.

Only Luke relates a particular instruction that Jesus gives his disciples as they leave the Passover and head for the Garden of Gethsemane. He says:

“And He said to them, ‘When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?’ So they said, ‘Nothing.’ Then He said to them, ‘But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.’” - Luke 22:35-36

Jesus is saying, “This is a turning point, and things are going to be different going forward.” Jesus’ words echo David’s actions in preparing himself with provisions and a sword for flight and fight.

Questions for Reflection

Paul reminds us: *“And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” —1 Corinthians 9:25-27*

We all know what is like to experience moments of crisis in life. David models one way of reacting under those circumstances.

- What was David’s first knee-jerk response?
- What is your first go-to place for help?

David sought help first from the priests at the Tabernacle. For us, this might be like seeking help from the church. David shows up at the church under odd circumstances, and he isn’t acting normally. The church leader is skeptical and questions him.

- David isn’t truthful over why he is really seeking help. Why does David lie to Ahimelech?
- What would he have told Ahimelech if he had told the truth?
- What might be the consequences for telling the truth?
- Was it right for David to lie in this case?

Next, David sought help from the opposition. The Philistines contrast to the priesthood the way the carnal world contrasts to God’s people.

- Why isn’t the unbelieving world a good place for a believer to take refuge?

Finally David seeks refuge in a cave.

- What are the pros and cons of being isolated from people in times of crisis?
- What happened while David was in isolation?

