

1 Samuel 27–28

Big Idea: When God does not seem to give the answer we want, fear invents an alternate plan; faith returns to what God has already said.

Central Question: When we are discouraged, unsure, or waiting—will we respond in trust or in fear?

Today we meet two men who also run in fear: David in chapter 27 and Saul in chapter 28.

I. David: Fear Creates an Alternate Plan (27:1–28:2)

A. Discouragement distorted David's thinking (27:1)

- David “thought to himself”: “One of these days I will be destroyed by Saul.”
- God, Samuel, and Abigail had all affirmed David's future—but the long wilderness years wore him down.
- He never appears to pour out his heart to God; he lets fear preach to him.
- **Application:** Monitor self-talk. Compare feelings with Scripture and seek godly counsel. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”

B. Temporary relief became spiritual compromise (27:2–7)

- David returned to Gath—the same place where fear had previously driven him to act insane.
- He crossed more than a geographical line; he moved away from trusting God.
- Saul stopped pursuing him, but immediate relief was not the same as God's will.

C. Compromise produced deception and entanglement (27:8–28:2)

- David raided neighboring peoples, left no witnesses, and lied to Achish about his targets.
- One compromise required another: fear → flight → violence → deception.

- Achish trusted David and ordered him to fight Israel. David now faced an impossible choice: betray Achish or attack his own people.
- **Truth:** A self-made solution may solve an immediate problem while creating a far greater one. “There is a way that seems right... but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

D. Gospel reflection

- Before condemning David, recognize our own lies, cover-ups, and attempts to control outcomes.
- The answer is not a better disguise—it is honesty and repentance. “There is none righteous, not even one” (Romans 3).

II. Saul: Rebellion Seeks an Alternate Voice (28:3–25)

A. Saul faced a crisis without spiritual direction (vv. 3–6)

- Samuel was dead; the Philistines gathered at Shunem; Saul's heart filled with terror.
- The Lord did not answer through dreams, Urim, or prophets.
- This was not because God had never spoken. Saul had repeatedly rejected God's clear commands—including God's choice of David.
- **Warning:** It is dangerous to ask God for new guidance while refusing the truth He has already given.

B. Saul sought forbidden guidance (vv. 7–14)

- Although he had expelled mediums, Saul disguised himself and consulted the medium at Endor.
- He swore by the Lord's name while asking her to violate the Lord's command—an image of complete spiritual confusion.
- God's law forbade divination, sorcery, witchcraft, mediums, and consulting the dead (Deuteronomy 18:10–12).
- **Application:** Any attempt to control or discover the future apart from faith in God leads away from Him. God is our guide.

C. Samuel repeated the word Saul had rejected (vv. 15–19)

- God permitted Samuel to appear; the medium did not command him.
- Samuel gave no new strategy. He repeated the judgment already announced: the kingdom would be given to David.
- Saul wanted reassurance, not repentance. He wanted life to be okay without submitting to God.
- The sobering message: the next day Saul and his sons would die, and Israel would fall to the Philistines.

D. Fear without repentance ends in resignation (vv. 20–25)

- Saul collapsed in fear, ate the meal prepared by the medium, and left in the night.
- He was grieved, shaken, and sorry—but the text gives no indication that he repented.
- He received a final meal—the fattened calf of a condemned man—yet refused to come home to the Father.

III. Two Men, One Question

- **David:** God seemed slow, so he trusted his own understanding and ran to Gath.
- **Saul:** God seemed silent, so he sought a forbidden voice at Endor.
- **Both:** Fear offered an alternate plan that brought compromise, confusion, and death.
- **Us:** When pressure rises, do we rehearse fear—or remember what God has said?

IV. Response: Run to the Father

A. Reject the lie that doing it your way is safest

- Immediate relief is not always obedience. Do not settle where God never led you.
- Bring discouraged thoughts into the light of Scripture, prayer, and Christian community.

B. Respond to God’s revealed Word today

- Do not keep demanding a new sign while ignoring a clear command.
- Repentance is more than regret. It turns from self-rule and bows to the Lord.

C. Receive the better “fattened calf”

- Saul’s meal anticipated death; in Luke 15, the fattened calf celebrated a lost child coming home.
- God has already sent Someone from beyond our world: Jesus Christ came, spoke, died, and rose to save us.
- Do not place hope in the occult, wealth, substances, or self-made plans. Put your hope in the Lord Almighty—that is life.

Invitation: Stop running from God. Come to your senses, bow to the Father, confess your sin, and call on Jesus to save you.

Prayer team available.

Closing Prayer: Lord, protect our minds from distraction and unbelief. Teach us to trust what You have said, obey what You have shown, and run to You rather than away from You. Unite every church that proclaims Jesus as Lord. Amen.