

I Samuel 29 Handout

Sometimes we get ourselves in awkward, unpleasant situations that can cause all kinds of problems and difficulties. Sometimes, these situations can be so bad that it is hard to even see a way out. The great thing we know about God though, is that there is no circumstance or problem beyond His power to control and work for His good and even ours. We are going to see this message very clearly in today's passage as David finds himself in a predicament of his own making.

Last week, chapter 28 had us pause to show what was going on with Saul. We see Saul seeking out a medium to find help after the Lord's silence with him. He asks the medium to bring up Samuel. Samuel's message to Saul is a sad one. He is told that the Israelite army will be handed over to the Philistines and Saul and his sons will be killed. We see in this account once and for all the outcome of Saul's story.

So going back to chapter 27, we see David has developed a cordial relationship with the Philistines. As long as his secret stays hidden, he will continue to gain favor with the people of Judah while endearing himself to the Philistine king. But this is a very dangerous game. The one thing David cannot afford to happen is about to become a reality: renewed hostilities between the Philistines and Saul's armies. If such a conflict arises, David will be trapped. How will David's dilemma be resolved?

I Samuel 28:1-2

"Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, "Know for certain that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men." David said to Achish, "Very well, you will learn what your servant can do." So Achish said to David, "Then I will assuredly make you my bodyguard for life!"

We see that the Philistines are invading Israel with a massive army. We saw last week how when Saul saw the army before him, he was "afraid and his heart trembled greatly." This is what led him to seek out a medium.

We see that David and his men are enlisted to fight for the Philistines alongside King Achish. David is caught in the middle of a very difficult situation: having to fight against his own people, the Israelites.

Let's see how the story unfolds.

Verse 1-2

What are we told about the Philistines? _____

What about the Israelites? _____

Who are we told are leading the Philistines? _____

How many are with them? _____

Where are David and his men? _____

Verse 3-5

What does the commander of the Philistines have a problem with?

Achish defends them being there. **What does he say he has not found?**

Why does Achish like David so much?

How does the commander react? _____

What do they want Achish to do? _____

What are they afraid of? _____

What do the commanders remind Achish of?

Verse 6-7

How does Achish start the conversation with David?

How does he end verse 6? _____

What does Achish tell David to do? _____

Verse 8

What is David's response to what Achish has told him to do?

Listen to what he says at the end of the verse? "That I cannot go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" Not David's enemies, but Achish's.

Verse 9

How does Achish describe David? Like an angel of God

But Achish bends to the will of the commanders and tells David he must go.

Verses 10-11

Achish tells David to get up early in the morning and leave, so David does.

Where does he return? _____

We are told the Philistines went up to Jezreel

We see God's infinite grace in two ways in this chapter:

1. Intervening Grace
2. Compassionate Grace

Intervening grace:

We see David and his men escape a terrible situation.

If he backed off and said he didn't want to go, what do you think would have happened?

If he went forward and fought, what would he have been doing?

God intervened and solved the unsolvable.

How did God work in this situation?

Application: We need to see that no matter how difficult our circumstances, God can make a way of escape. If we find ourselves in a situation where it seems we have no good solution, we need to trust God to help us find a way out. We know that God is willing and able. Our job is to trust Him.

Compassionate grace:

Many times in life, we face problems that are of our own making. We make choices that put us into difficult circumstances. That's the case here with David. Over a period of time, David lived a life of false loyalty and deception. The sad thing is that many times, when someone turns away from the path of God, they never intended it to go as far as it does. I don't think David intended to have things go so far that he would be put into a situation where he would become an enemy to God and His people. David had really sunk to a low point here.

So, why would God help David?

Application: When we find ourselves in difficult circumstances, God will always give us a way out, if not a way to hold up under it. Even if we completely fail, we can know that God's grace and compassion are always there.

Have you ever been in a place where you had too much of the world in you to be at peace with God and too much of God in you, to be at peace with the world?

What helps us to keep from straddling the fence?