

“Lessons from the Life of David” – Pastor Jim Ruddy

Study # 8 – Truth or Consequences

1 Samuel 21 & 22

I. THE PRETENSE OF DAVID’S DISPOSITION

A. HIS FALSEHOOD AT NOB 1 Sam. 21:1-9

1. Ahimelech’s Discernment v1-2

- Ahimelech, who suspects that something is amiss when David arrives at his door, is taken in by David’s lies.
- Ahimelech, the “high priest,” was perhaps in the process of resigning his role to his son, Abiathar (Mk. 2:26).
- The Tabernacle (Ex. 33:7-10), which had been residing at Shilo (1 Sam. 1:3) was apparently moved to Nob at the capturing of the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam. 4).
- Once the Ark was recovered, it remained at Kiriath-Jearim until David moved it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6).
- Ahimelech and his priestly family (i.e. those that wore “*a linen ephod*” 1 Sam. 22:18), served the LORD at Nob.

2. David’s Nourishment v3-6

- At his request, David is given “*the shewbread*,” (Ex. 25:30), (Lit.) “the bread of the presence,” which was replaced before the LORD each Sabbath (Lev. 24:5-9).
- This event is referred to by Jesus (Mt. 12:3-4; Mk. 2:26), in his defense of the disciples’ actions on the Sabbath.

3. Doeg’s Placement v7

- Doeg, Saul’s chief herdsman, had been “*detained before the LORD*,” a strong reference to the sovereignty of God.
- “*be sure your sin will find you out.*” Num. 32:23

4. David’s Armament v8,9

- Whereas he had earlier rejected Saul’s armor, (1 Sam. 17:38-39) David is now relying on the flesh and accepts Goliath’s sword.

B. HIS FEAR AT GATH 1 Sam. 21:10-15

- David flees to the Philistines at Gath, and feigns himself mad in Goliath’s hometown. Another sign of his self-reliance.

C. HIS FAITH AT ADULLUM 1 Sam. 22:1-2

- Finally, David escapes to Adullum where he recaptures his faith and re-centers his life in God. From this point on, it is never mentioned again, that David feared fled, or ran from Saul.
- A great troop of men, who were in debt, distress or discontent, joined themselves to David; some who would later become part of David’s “*mighty men.*” cf. 2 Sam. 23:8-39

D. HIS FAMILY AT MOAB 1 Sam. 22:3-5

- David secures refuge for his parents, and then returns to Judah at the word of the Prophet Gad, “*David’s seer*” (2 Sam. 24:11-19).

II. THE VIOLENCE OF SAUL'S INQUISITION

A. SAUL'S DESPERATION 1 Sam. 22:6-8

- Saul boasts himself as a great king, and then accuses his men of a lack of concern for him as their ruler, and for their possible part in what he views as a conspiracy against him led by Jonathan.

B. DOEG'S ALLEGATION 1 Sam. 22:9-10

- Doeg, an Edomite, gives Saul an exaggerated report of the assistance David received from Ahimelech, implying the priest is guilty of treason. cf. 1 Sam. 21:1-9
- The Edomites were descendants of Esau, and maintained a seething hatred for the Jews. cf. Num. 20:14-20; Ps. 37:1,7

C. SAUL'S ACCUSATION 1 Sam. 22:11-13

- Saul combines the charges which Doeg leveled with his own fear of conspiracy to accuse the priest and his family of being in league with David, his enemy.

D. AHIMELECH'S SUPPLICATION 1 Sam. 22:14-15

- Ahimelech defends David's reputation, insisting that he never "*inquired of the LORD*" for David, and declares that he knows nothing of David's "crimes" against Saul.

E. SAUL'S DETERMINATION 1 Sam. 22:16-17

- Believing the priest to be a liar, Saul orders his guards to slay Ahimelech and his family, perpetrating upon the priests, what he refused to do to the Amalekites. cf. 1 Sam. 15:9
- "*But the servants of the king would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the LORD.*"

F. DOEG'S ANNIHILATION 1 Sam. 22:18-19

- An Edomite, Doeg has no qualms about killing the priests, and extends his slaughter to the entire town. cf. Matt. 2:16-18
- Ahimelech, was the son of Ahitub, son of Phinehas, son of Eli.
- Doeg's actions fulfill the prophecy given in 1 Sam. 2:31-32.

III. THE PENITENCE OF DAVID'S CONFESSION

A. ABIATHAR'S DISCOURSE 1 Sam. 22:20-21

- Unknown to Saul, Abiathar escapes to David and informs him of the massacre Saul had ordered at Nob.

B. DAVID'S REMORSE 1 Sam. 22:22-23

- David recalls the suspicions he had concerning Doeg, and accepts responsibility for the slaughter of the priests.
- David pens Psalm 52 at this time, referring to Doeg's actions.
- David - the king-elect, and Abiathar - the priest elect, join forces and become fugitives together from a renegade Saul.
- cf. 1 Sam. 23:6-11; 30:7,8; 2 Sam. 15:24-36; 20:25