



## **“REASONS TO REJOICE”**

*“Your Words were found, and I ate them,  
and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” Jeremiah 15:16*

### ***I and II SAMUEL Lesson 13***

*In our lesson last week, David had fled to the Philistine’s camp, pretending to be on their side. He was probably tired of running from Saul and taking care of all the men who were following him. He seemed frustrated, depressed, and dejected. He was a man who had lost his hope and forgot the promises of God (27:1). By taking matters into his own hands, David put himself, his family, and his army at risk. There are always consequences to stepping out of God’s will. In our lesson this week, we will read about the consequences of David’s actions. I pray that the Holy Spirit would teach us many lessons for our own lives through David’s mistakes. It’s exciting to see that even though we sin, when we call out to the Lord, He is ready to forgive. Pay close attention to what David does when he finds himself between a rock and a hard place.*

#### **First Day**

- 1. Today I would like you to read I Samuel 29-31 in one sitting, if possible. This will bring us to the end of I Samuel, and it’s helpful to ingest the entire story at one time. After you finish the chapters, go back, and for each chapter, answer the following questions:*
  - a. Who are the main characters?*
  - b. What are the facts?*
  - c. What is the main thought or point of the chapter?*
  - d. What application do you see for your own life?*

#### **Chapter 29:**

**Chapter 30:**

**Chapter 31:**

2. *In chapter 29:1-11, by pretending to be on the side of the Philistines, what dilemma did David now find himself in?*
  
3. *Why didn't the leaders of the Philistines trust David to fight with them? What did they know about David?*
  
4. *Do you think their logic made sense?*
  
5. *Did King Achish agree with their decision? Why or why not?*
  
6. *How did David respond, according to 29:8?*

*This is a very interesting story. David knew that if he fought against Israel, he would be fighting against God's chosen people, against Jonathan, his beloved friend, and against Saul, God's anointed. His plan had put him*

*in a very awkward position, yet he reacted almost hurt that Achish would send him away. It seems like his pride may have gotten a little bent out of shape. But God intervened and used the prince's suspicions to get him out of the situation.*

7. *Why do you think God intervened?*
  
8. *Has God ever intervened on your behalf and kept you from doing something you would regret forever? Can you share it with your group?*

*Let's end here for today. David thought he had a perfect plan, didn't he? King Achish would protect him from Saul if he pledged his allegiance to him. In verse 8 he even called Achish "my lord the king." Even though David blew it, in our next chapter we see what David does to rectify the situation. What do you do when you realize you've made a mistake and sinned against the Lord?*

***Memory Verse of the Week:*** *"Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, for in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You." Psalm 143:8*

### **Second Day**

***Practice your memory verse. Are you listening for His lovingkindness in the mornings?***

1. *Read over I Samuel 30:1-31 again. Why did David go to Ziklag? (See I Samuel 27:6)*
  
2. *What did David and his men find when they got there?*
  
3. *What had specifically been stolen from David?*

4. *How did the men respond?*
5. *David was distressed! What did he do?*
6. *Contrast David's response with that of Saul's, in 28:6-7.*
7. *What does it mean to "strengthen yourself in the Lord"?*
8. *What do you do when you are distressed, or facing a hopeless situation? (Do you react in the flesh, or "inquire of the Lord"?)*

*F.B. Meyer vividly pictures this moment of truth in David's life: "In that dread hour, with the charred embers smoking at his feet; with the cold hand of anxiety for his wives' fate tugging at his heart; with the sense of duplicity and deceit which he had been practicing, and which had alienated him from God, on his conscience; with this threat of stoning in his ears, his heart suddenly sprang back into its old resting-place in the bosom of God."*

*Charles Swindoll wrote: "Out of the miry pit of his own making, David stepped into the refreshing pool of God's mercy and cleansed himself of all pride. He learned his lesson. No more stepping ahead of the Lord."*

9. *Have you ever learned that lesson the hard way? What happened?*

*Through affliction, loss, and sorrow, God spoke to the heart of David. This overwhelming trouble drove him back to the One who would never forsake him. "How ready the backsliding child of God should be to welcome chastisement if God can bring him to repentance by this means." (Irving Jensen)*

**10.** *Do you feel like you've reached your limits of endurance? What should you do?*

*Look at your memory verse again. David got to the place where he knew he needed to ask the Lord for guidance, and listen to His answer. He wanted to "know" the direction that God wanted him to walk. David was learning to seek the Lord, wait on His answer, and then walk accordingly.*

**11.** *Are you seeking the Lord in the morning? Do you daily ask Him for guidance, honestly wanting to know His will for your day, and your life? Are you "lifting your soul to Him"? Reflect on your devotion time with the Lord. Are there any changes that need to be made?*

*See you tomorrow, ladies! Let's rejoice that God even wants to speak to us! He loves us and desires to spend every minute of every day with you and me. Certainly that's a **"Reason to Rejoice!"***

### **Third Day**

***Practice your memory verse. Did you lift your soul to Him today?***

**1.** *Read I Samuel 30 again. When David inquired of the Lord, what did God tell him to do?*

**2.** *Who did God use to lead David to the Amalekites? Why was he there?*

**3.** *On what condition would he help David find the Amalekites?*

4. *How were the Amalekites celebrating their victory?*
5. *What disagreement was starting to brew in verse 22? Who started it? What were their motives?*
6. *How did David handle it? Explain his philosophy.*
7. *What did his statement say about his sense of justice?*
8. *David's law stated that those who stayed with the supplies would be treated equally with those who fought in the battle. It always takes support people to back those who are on the front lines. How does this philosophy apply to just about every area of life?*
9. *Are you on the front lines? Do you value and appreciate those in the background who allow you to do your job? Are you a support person, usually in the background? Do you value your position, knowing that God wants to use you, as well as those in front? Think about these things. How does it all relate back to 1 Corinthians 12:12-31?*
10. *Why do you think David sent spoils to the elders of the cities mentioned?*

11. *What do you think God was teaching David through the Ziklag experience?*

12. *What do you learn about David's character in this chapter? What did you learn through David's example?*

*Tomorrow we will read about the tragic death of Saul and his sons. I pray that we will continue to run to the shelter of His wings when we are in distress. Don't be like Saul, so desperate that you begin to grasp at the wind. Saul still could have repented, but didn't. Be like David. **"Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near."** (Isaiah 55:6)*

#### **Fourth Day**

***Practice your verse. Why not put it on the frig for a reminder!***

1. *Read I Samuel 31:1-13. Why do you think God was allowing Israel to lose this battle?*

2. *Read I Chronicles 10. What additional insights do you get from this account?*

3. *According to I Chronicles 10:13-14, what was the real cause of Saul's death?*

4. *What tragedy did Saul witness before he died? (vs 2)*
5. *Read the genealogy of Saul in 1 Chronicles 9:39. Which son didn't die?*
6. *Describe Saul's death. Discuss various reasons that Saul may have wanted his armorbearer to kill him. (Do you think what happened to Samson in Judges 16 had anything to do with it?)*
7. *Did Saul call out to the Lord for mercy or forgiveness at the time of his death?*
8. *Did the armorbearer do what he was told? Why or why not?*
9. *What did the Philistines do when they found the bodies of Saul and his sons? Why did they do this?*
10. *Who came and rescued the bodies? Why? (Read I Samuel 11:1-11)*

*This was a sweet victory for the Philistines. This victory would bring them wealth and power, as well as show the Israelites that their gods were supreme. (Or so they thought!) They wanted to show off the bodies like trophies, cutting off Saul's head like David had done to Goliath. To put Saul's armor in the Philistine temple gave credit to the heathen goddess for the victory. Burning was not the usual method of burial for the Hebrews, but maybe the men of Jabesh Gilead wanted to save any dignity that Saul had left, disguising the mutilation of his body.*



*Saul had won the hearts of the nation 40 years earlier by rescuing the people of Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites. Alfred Edersheim said this: "That had been the morning of Saul's life, bright and promising as none other, and now it was night; and the headless bodies of Saul and his sons, deserted by all, swung in the wind on the walls of Bethshan, amid the hoarse music of vultures and jackals."*

*What a terrible end to a life. Suicide is never the answer. The Bible records three other people who took their own lives: Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17:23), Zimri (1 Kings 16:18), and Judas (Matthew 27:5). Each case is tragic. Scripture never condones or glorifies suicide for any reason.*

- 11. Saul ruined his life. Where did he go wrong?*
  
- 12. God had given Saul some advantages and opportunities, yet he chose the wrong path. What advantages and opportunities has God given you? How can you make sure you use them for His glory?*
  
- 13. "Every man dies but not every man lives if he doesn't live for the Lord." (Kay Arthur) Explain this statement. How does it relate to Saul?*
  
- 14. What's the biggest lesson you learned from this chapter?*

*Tomorrow we will review a few more lessons from this chapter. For now, ask the Lord to apply the things He's showing you through His Word.*

**Fifth Day**

*Write your verse from memory. How does it speak to your heart?*

1. *What do you think Saul was blinded by?*
  
2. *How did Saul's sins affect his family? The nation of Israel? David?*
  
3. *What can happen when we put our own ambition ahead of the Lord's will? (Have you ever done this?)*
  
4. *Contrast these last two chapters.*
  
5. *Hudson Taylor said that when we make a decision for ourselves, apart from seeking God's will, we dethrone altogether our Lord and Master, no matter how trivial the matter is. Search your heart now. Have you placed God as the absolute Lord of your life? Is He enthroned, or dethroned, today?*

6. *Saul took his own life for various possible reasons. What does God's Word say about life in these verses?*

a. *Genesis 2:7, John 1:3*

b. *1 Samuel 2:6, Psalm 31:15a*

c. *Exodus 20:13*

7. *Many people today choose to end their lives. What are some possible reasons that the suicide rate is so high?*

8. *Is there someone you know that has, or is, contemplating suicide? Ask the Lord how you can come alongside them to encourage them.*

*The Life Application Bible calls Saul's death a "death of an ideal. Israel could no longer believe that having a king like the other nations would solve all their troubles. The real problem was not the form of government, but the sinful king. Saul tried to please God by spurts of religiosity, but real spirituality takes a lifetime of consistent obedience. Heroic spiritual lives are built by stacking days of obedience one on top of the other. Like a brick, each obedient act is small in itself, but in time the acts will pile up, and a huge wall of strong character will be built – a great defense against temptation. We should strive for consistent obedience each day."*

9. *How tall is your "wall of obedience"? Are you striving to obey the Lord, even in the smallest acts? Why is a "tall wall" a great defense against temptation?*

10. *How does David's experiences give you hope in a situation you may be in?*

11. *Why do you think God allowed everything that happened?*
12. *Take a minute to reflect back on the book of I Samuel. How would you briefly sum it up?*
13. *What was your favorite story or chapter?*
14. *Has studying the book of I Samuel affected your life? How?*

*The curtain now closes on the life of Saul, but it begins a whole new scene for David. II Samuel will give us some highlights of David's reign as king, as well as teaching us some more important, spiritual truths. I pray that studying His Word is changing your lives! It is mine! And that's a huge **"Reason to Rejoice!"***

***"Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."***

***Isaiah 55:6-7***