

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 9

Saul's Death/David Crowned King

Saul's Death/David Crowned King

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students that God's promises always come to pass. It does not matter if that word is one of blessing or rebuke, God's Word is always true.

Key Verses

1 Samuel 31; 2 Samuel 2:1-11—Main Teaching Passages

Memory Verse - Psalm 33:4

"For the word of the Lord is right,
And all His work is done in truth."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Romans 2:4.

Ask the class to think about a textbook that they might have for school. Ask them to imagine what would happen if all of the textbooks got changed to books that had all the wrong answers.

Now ask them how we can know that God's Word is true.

Ask the students if it is important that God's Word is true or not. Does it make a difference if there are some lies in the Bible?

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

God's Word had come to Saul. The Lord had told him that in the upcoming battle, the Israelites would be defeated and Saul and his sons would be killed. In 1 Samuel 31 we read that, just as God foretold, Saul and his sons were surrounded by the Philistines, and they were killed. Saul, not wanting the Philistines to torture him, fell on his sword, ending his own life. Saul and his sons were with God, exactly as God had said (1 Sam 28:19). Upon hearing Saul and Jonathan's death, David wept bitterly and mourned over their deaths.

God had promised something to David as well. In 1 Samuel 16, David was anointed by Samuel to be the next king. The Lord had chosen David to be king, even when Saul still sat on the throne. When the people heard that Saul had died, the men of Judah took David up to Hebron and crowned him as king over Israel. God's Word was true for David, just as it had been true for Saul.

There was, however, one small catch. While the tribe of Judah had declared David as the next king, the other 11 tribes who followed Saul, took Saul's last son, Ishbosheth, and crowned him as the new king. This would lead to a period of civil war.

These passages teach us that whether we want them to believe them or not, God's Word is always true, and God always keeps His promises.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

The Bible makes a very interesting claim about itself that is actually of vital importance. The Bible tells us that everything that is found within it is true. This is such a reassuring thing for us to know and understand. How could we trust God if the very words that He gave to us couldn't be trusted? Thankfully we can rest assured that the Word of God is true, because God Himself cannot lie (Titus 1:2), therefore the words that He has given to us must also be true and accurate.

This is of course a two-edged sword. There are lots and lots of things in the Bible that we want to be true. We want God to be loving and forgiving. We need the story of Jesus to be true so that we can have peace with God. But, there are also a lot of things that are difficult in the Bible, and maybe we don't want those things to be true. We might not want to hear that sin is real, that it really does separate us from God, and that we

LOOK (Continued)

are all guilty of sin. We might not want that to be true, but the Scriptures tell us that it is, so now we need to figure out what we are going to do with that information.

The Word of God came to Saul, and he very much did not like what God had to say. God told Saul that because of his sin, his army would lose, and Saul and his sons would die in battle. God made a promise, and he kept that promise.

It doesn't matter if we fight against the Word of God. The people of Israel wanted Ishbosheth as King, but God had promised that to David. It didn't matter how hard they fought, or how desperately they tried to avoid it, God's Word will always win out.

When we read the Bible we need to remember that it is GOOD news. It should bring us comfort and joy. It should help us and encourage us. It should do this because of the message that is contained within; Jesus died for sins according to the Scriptures, and rose again on the third day, conquering death and bringing life to everyone who believes in Him!

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Psalm 33:4.

Discuss with the class the following question: What are some promises in the Scriptures that we can know are true?

Pray: Thank the Lord for His Word which is true and good. Ask Him for a greater knowledge of His Word, and for His strength to live out what His Word tells us.

Parent Question: How can we know that God's Word is true?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Samuel 31 by David Guzik

1 SAMUEL 31 – THE DEATH OF SAUL AND HIS SONS

A. King Saul and his sons die in battle.

1. (1) The battle turns against Israel.

Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa.

a. So the Philistines fought against Israel: The Philistines attacked deep into Israeli territory (1 Samuel 28:4), and Saul's army assembled and prepared for battle at Mount Gilboa (1 Samuel 28:4). Because of his deep rebellion against the Lord, Saul was not ready for battle: When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled (1 Samuel 28:5).

i. Instead of taking his fear to the Lord Saul made things worse by seeking God's voice through a spirit medium. Strangely, God did speak to Saul, but He spoke words of judgment through an unusual appearance of the prophet Samuel. Samuel told Saul that he and his sons would die the next day (1 Samuel 28:19). 1 Samuel 31:1 is the next day.

ii. The Philistines fought against Israel, and David wanted to be part of this group of Philistines (1 Samuel 29:2, 8). It was the Lord's mercy that did not allow David to join these enemies of the Lord.

b. The men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa: Gilboa was the location of the Israeli army camp (1 Samuel 28:4), meaning that the battle turned so badly for Israel that they were in full retreat back to their own camp.

2. (2) The death of Saul's sons.

Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.

a. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons: Tragically, Saul's sons were affected in the judgment of God against their father Saul. The brave and worthy Jonathan died as we might expect him to – loyally fighting for his God, his country, and his father the king unto the very end.

b. Saul's sons: Their death was tragic, yet important in God's plan. In taking the logical heirs to Saul's throne, God cleared the way for David to become the next king of Israel. We know that if Jonathan had survived he would have gladly yielded the throne to David (1 Samuel 18:1-4). But the same could not be said of Saul's other sons. God was also merciful to Jonathan, sparing him the ordeal of having to side with David against his own brothers.

i. "There was also a special providence of God in taking away Jonathan, (who of all Saul's sons seems to have been the fairest for the crown,) for the preventing divisions, which have happened amongst the people concerning the successor; David's way to the crown being by this means made the more clear." (Poole)

ii. As it was, David had to deal with Ishbosheth, the one surviving son of Saul before taking the undisputed throne of Israel (2 Samuel 2:8 through 4:12).

3. (3-6) The tragic end of King Saul.

The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him. So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.

a. The battle became intense against Saul: Saul, struck by many arrows and severely wounded, knew the battle was completely lost. He pleaded with his armorbearer to kill him, and when he would not, Saul killed himself (Saul took a sword and fell on it).

i. In the way most people think of suicide, Saul's death was not suicide. Clarke explains well: "He was to all appearance mortally wounded, when he begged his armourbearer to extinguish the remaining spark of life . . . though this wound accelerated his death, yet it could not be properly the cause of it, as he was mortally wounded before, and did it on the conviction that he could not survive."

b. All his men died together that same day: As sad as anything was in this account, sad is the absence of any kind of sorrow or repentance or crying out to God at all on Saul's part. He was told the previous day that he would die (1 Samuel 28:19), yet he did not seem to prepare his soul to meet God in any way.

i. At the end of his life Saul became so hard in sin that he did not want to repent. Many people put off getting right with God until a later time, assuming they will still want to get right with God then. But that is a dangerous assumption because repentance is a gift from God and if it is here today it should be received today.

ii. "It is a very solemn thought! No career could begin with fairer, brighter prospects than Saul had, and none could close in more absolute midnight of despair; and yet such a fate may befall us, unless we watch, and pray, and walk humbly with our God." (Meyer)

c. When his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead: In 2 Samuel 1:4-10 an Amalekite came to David with the report that Saul had died in battle and that he actually delivered the death-blow to Saul. Does the Amalekite's statement contradict this passage, where it seems Saul killed himself? It may be that Saul fell on his sword, and life still lingered in him, so he asked this Amalekite to finish him off. Or it may be that the Amalekite simply lied and was the first one to come upon Saul's dead body, and that he told David that he killed him because he thought David would be pleased and he would be rewarded.

B. Aftermath of the Philistine's victorious battle.

1. (7) A significant defeat for Israel.

And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

a. They forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them: The victory of the Philistines was so complete that even those on the other side of the Jordan fled in terror before the Philistines. With the Philistine army occupying territory on the other side of the Jordan, they have cut Israel in half, drawing a line from west to east. The rest of the nation was ripe for total conquest by the Philistines.

b. The men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead: This was a great defeat. When the leader (King Saul) was struck, it spread panic among God's people. Jesus knew this same principle would be used against His own disciples: Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'" (Mark 14:27)

i. Saul's sin, hardened rebellion, and eventual ruin affected far more than himself and even his immediate family. It literally endangered the entire nation of Israel.

ii. This shows why leaders have a higher responsibility, because their fall can endanger many more people than the fall of someone who is not a leader. This is why the New Testament openly presents a higher standard for leaders, even saying they should be blameless for just cause before the world and God's people (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6).

2. (8-10) The Philistines disgrace the corpses of King Saul and his sons.

So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people. Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan.

a. To proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people: Saul's tragic death gave opportunity for the enemies of the Lord to disgrace His name. Saul's death was used to glorify pagan gods and to mock the living God.

b. They fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan: This was the ultimate insult against Saul. In that culture, to have your dead body treated this way was considered a fate worse than death itself.

i. You can go to the ruins of Beth Shan today, as the foundations to the city sit high on a hill overlooking the Roman ruins destroyed in an earthquake. It was high on that hill that the Philistines hung the decapitated corpse of King Saul in the ultimate humiliation.

3. (11-13) The men of Jabesh Gilead end the disgrace of Saul and his sons.

Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

a. All the valiant men arose: In a time of disgrace, loss, and tragedy like this, God still had valiant men to do His work. The men of Jabesh Gilead took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from their place of humiliation and gave them a proper burial.

i. Glory to God, He always has His valiant men! When one servant passes the scene, another arises to take his place. If Saul is gone, God raises up a David. If the army of Israel is utterly routed, God still has His valiant men. God's work is bigger than any man or any group of people.

b. The inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead: These valiant men are also recognized for their gratitude. Many years before Saul delivered their city from the Ammonites (1 Samuel 11:1-11), and they repaid the kindness God showed them from the hand of Saul. Upon taking the throne David rightly thanked these valiant men for their kindness to the memory of Saul, Jonathan and Saul's other sons (2 Samuel 2:4-7).

i. When David heard of Saul's death, he did not rejoice. In fact, he mourned and composed a song in honor of Saul and Jonathan (The Song of the Bow, 2 Samuel 1:11-27). In spite of all that Saul did against David, David spoke well of Saul after his death.

ii. Choosing this kind of heart showed David to be a true "Man after God's Own Heart." It showed that the years in the wilderness escaping Saul really were years when God trained him to be a king after God's own heart. Despite his sin, David never followed in the same tragic footsteps as King Saul.

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