

## Plan and Purpose Bible Lesson #III-32—I Sam. 21-II Sam. 2

In our last lesson, Jonathan, King Saul's son, had come to the realization that even though Saul told him that he would not harm David, he was actually set on killing David. Being such a good friend of David's, he had warned him to flee from the presence of Saul. We pick up our story at this point. David fled to Nob where Ahimelech the priest was. He convinced Ahimelech that he was on a secret mission for the king and that he had men with him that he had sent to a certain place. He was hungry and asked Ahimelech for bread, but the only bread that Ahimelech had was the shewbread that was set before the LORD each day. David, though straying for the truth a little, convinced Ahimelech to let him have that bread and also the sword of Goliath that had been brought there and left in the care of the priest. We're told that there was an Edomite there named Doeg that witnessed what happened. David then fled to Gath, but then became afraid of the king of Gath. To get away from the king before harm could come to him, he pretended to be a mad man.

Escaping Gath, he fled to Adullam, where when his family heard of it, joined him. Here he began to gather men to him. Chapt. 22:2 says, **"And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."** He then went into Moab and asked the king of Moab if David's mother and father could stay there in the land of Moab and permission was granted. I think we can assume that because Saul was out to kill David, David's family was in continual danger as well, so David sought safety for them in Moab. A prophet told David not to stay in Moab so David left and went to Hareth. When Saul got word that David was alive and had a number of men with him, it disturbed him concerning the men that were with him. He wasn't sure whether he could trust them or not. He accused them of conspiring against him by not telling him of the agreement between David and Jonathan and as to what all had happened with David. At this point, Doeg, the Edomite stood up and told Saul what he had witnessed when David came to Ahimelech. Saul then sent for Ahimelech and all his family and when they were come, he accused Ahimelech of hiding the truth from him. Of course, Ahimelech did not know what happened. Of all the people in the king's court, he considered David to be the most reliable and told Saul this. But Saul determined that Ahimelech and his family should all die. He commanded his soldiers to kill them, but the soldiers refused to do so. So Saul turned to Doeg who did as Saul had commanded and killed 85 men and then went back to Nob and destroyed all that was in it including men, women and children along with the animals with the exception of one of Ahimelech's sons, Abiathar. He escaped and went to David and told him what had happened. (Read I Sam. 22:22-23) We'll later see that Abiathar was high priest all during David's reign.

David apparently had a pretty good intelligence network going for him. First we learn that he was told that the Philistines were fighting against the walled city of Keilah. He asked God if he should go fight against the Philistines and God told him to go, but his soldiers refused to go. So he asked God again and God told him that He would deliver the Philistines into his hands. This time the soldiers agreed to go and they went and delivered the city from the Philistines. When Saul heard it, he was sure that he had David trapped within the city and went to take him. However, David learned of his coming and asked God to verify his coming to him. God told him Saul was coming. He then asked God if the people of Keilah would give him over to Saul and God told him they would. So David took his men and

escaped. When Saul learned that David had escaped, he called off the destruction of Keilah that he had set out to do in his effort to kill David.

David and his men had escaped into the area of the Ziphites who then went to Saul and told him where David was. Saul and his men pursued after David, but David was able to keep a step ahead of Saul until he went to the wilderness of Maon. Saul finally caught up to him and had him and his men surrounded when word came that the Philistines had invaded the land. He had to give up getting David and go fight with the Philistines. Later, after following the Philistines, Saul renewed his effort to find and kill David. At this point David is in the wilderness of Engedi. It was here at Engedi that what is a funny story to me occurred. (Read I Sam. 24:2-15) When David had finished speaking, Saul humbled himself and told David that David had been more righteous than he. He told David that he knew that David would be king and that the kingdom of Israel would be established in his hand and he asked David to swear that he would not cut off Saul's seed after him. David swore to this and Saul went home, but David and his men stayed in hold where they were.

In chapter 25, verse 1, we're told, **"And Samuel died: and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."**

Then follows an interesting story of how David got one of his wives. David and his men were being somewhat the Robin Hood of their day. While they were encamped in the area of Paran, they protected from man and beast the property of a man who was a harsh overbearing man, though he apparently did not ask them to do so. (Read I Sam. 25:2-42)

Apparently while David was fleeing from Saul, Saul took his daughter, Michal, whom he had given to David for a wife, and gave her to another man. We're told that in addition to Abigail, David also married a woman by the name of Ahinoam of Jezreel.

Later, the Ziphites again came to Saul and told him that David was hiding himself and his men in the hill of Hachilah. Even though Saul had repented from chasing David, when he learned this he again took up the chase. (Read I Sam. 26:5-25)

To avoid fleeing from Saul all the time, David took his men and their households and went down to Gath again and the king of Gath gave him the town of Ziklag in which to live. They lived there a year and four months. While there, David and his men went up and invaded the Geshurites and the Amalekites that were located toward the land of Egypt. He made sure that every man, woman and child was killed and that none escaped to tell what happened. When he returned to Ziklag, the king of Gath wanted to know where he had gone. David told him that they had gone into the south of Judah and fought against the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites. King Achish believed David, thinking that David had made the Israelites to abhor him.

It came to pass that the Philistines again gathered their armies together to invade Israel once again. King Achish told David that he wanted them to go to battle with them and David appeared to have agreed to go.

Meantime, when Saul heard that the Philistines were getting ready to invade Israel again, he was afraid and enquired of the LORD as to what he should do, but God would not answer him. Prior to this Saul had put all those who had familiar spirits or were wizards out of the land. However, when God refused to answer him, he sought out someone who had a familiar spirit. (Read I Sam. 28:7-25)

When the princes of the Philistines learned that David and his men were included in their armies, they objected and forced king Achish to send them home to Ziklag. (Read I Sam. 29:9-11)

However, when David and his men returned to Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had invaded Ziklag and had taken all of the women and children that David and his men had left behind captive and had burned the city. David enquired of the LORD as to what he should do and God told him to pursue after them and that they would overtake them and recover all that had been taken. (Read I Sam. 30:9-26)

The Philistines had continued on in their quest to invade Israel. (Read I Sam. 31)

There is still some more to the story of Saul that we need to see in II Samuel. When David and his men returned to Ziklag, they had been there about two days when a man came from the camp of the Israelites and told David about the battle and told him that Saul and three of his sons were dead. When David asked him how he knew that Saul was dead, (Read II Sam. 1:6-10) This caused David to mourn greatly and he and his men wept and fasted until evening for Saul and Jonathan and for the house of Israel that had been defeated that day. (Read II Sam. 1:13-16)

Verse 17 reads, **“And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son.”** Verse 18 in the King James reads, **“(Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)”** Apparently the King James translator did not understand this verse and inserted the term “use of” into the verse which should not have been done. The title of this lamentation or elegy is “The Bow”. The NASB translates it correctly, **“and he told them to teach the sons of Judah the song of the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.”** I am not sure yet what is written in the book of Jasher, whether there were elements of this elegy, or if it had to do with the fact that the tribe of Benjamin, of which Saul and Jonathan were a part, were known for their use of the bow and this is recorded in Jasher. Later in II Chron. we’re told that there was a group of Benjamites who could use the bow both right handed and left handed with great accuracy. Saul was mortally wounded by an arrow. At any rate, the rest of the chapter is this lamentation or elegy. (Read II Sam. 1:19-27)

Once Saul was dead, David enquired of God whether he should go up to Judah or not. God told him to go to Hebron which he did. The men of Judah came to him in Hebron and anointed him king of Judah.

Because the men of Jabesh-gilead had gone among the Philistines and taken the bodies of Saul and his sons back and buried them in Jabesh, David sent messengers to them and thanked them for their kindness to Saul’s family. Jabesh was a city of the Gadites. It was the people of Jabesh that Saul’s first military experience, after becoming king, rescued from the Ammonites. Apparently, this was their repayment for his rescue. We met the people of Jabesh earlier in history when the rest of Israel was fighting the Benjamites and killed all of the women and all but 600 men. The men of Jabesh did not join in the battle. When the men of Israel realized that they were about to put the tribe of Benjamin into extinction, in an effort to find wives for the 600 Benjamites that were left, because the men of Jabesh had not helped fight in the battle, the Israelites went up and killed all of the men, women and children of Jabesh with the exception of 400 virgins that they brought and gave to the men of Benjamin for wives.

Abner, who was Saul’s chief general, believed that a descendant of Saul should be the next king of Israel, so he took Ishbosheth, one of Saul’s sons and made him king over Israel. Ishbosheth reigned over Israel for two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

Abner and his army met Joab, David’s chief general, and his army in battle over who was the rightful king. Abner lost the battle losing some 360 men while Joab only lost 19. As Abner retreated

from the battle, a brother of Joab, Asahel, pursued him. Abner tried first to get him to get proper armour and fight, but Asahel refused and continued to pursue Abner. Abner tried once again to get him to stop the pursuit and stop and fight. Abner apparently wanted it to be a fair fight as he was armed and Asahel was not. Finally, Abner smote him with the hinder end of his spear and he died there. Joab and his other brother, Abishai continued to pursue Abner and his army until Abner finally turned and called to Joab and basically asked that they stop the bloodshed as there was no real purpose in what they were doing. Joab agreed and they both went their opposite directions. However, we will see that the battle for who was to be king of all Israel continued for some time as we pick up our story in chapter 3 next lesson. JRL