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## **QT Questions—for 1Samuel**

(Here's a short introduction to the book of 1Samuel from one of my study Bible.)

- The various relationships portrayed in 1Samuel exemplify the startling differences between God's followers and those who ignore Him. Following God means recognizing His place as ultimate King. The narrative of 1-2 Samuel shows that the power of Israel's king comes only from God. Even after Saul takes the throne, he can only rule successfully as long as he respects God's authority. But Saul lets fear take control and loses his way, even though God appointed him. The only thing certain is God.
- Unlike Saul, young David seems to fear only God, and God is with him. The choice of David from among his older, stronger brothers shows God's love of those who love Him. God looks at the heart and is not swayed by outward appearance (1Sam 16:7).

### **1Sam 1 (2/8/23)**

1. In 1:1-18, why did Elkanah had two wives; did God cause Hannah's infertility, can you explain; why would long hair impress God (v. 11); why would Eli assume Hannah was drunk; what do you learn here?
2. In 1:19-28, how could Hannah give birth to a son when before she couldn't; what was the boy's name and the meaning; when did Hannah determine she would offer her son to the Lord's service and how do you think that would look; how is this applicable to you?

\* It is interesting that Hannah's worst days came when it was time to worship God. Her adversary, Peninnah, a fellow wife, meaning Elkanah was a polygamist, would provoke her more during this time more than others. Peninnah would not have appreciated her husband loving the other woman more, and giving her double the portion, despite her inability to give a son to her husband, as she had. In Peninnah's heart, she probably believed that she deserved the greater love than the other woman who couldn't give what she gave. So, the time to go to worship God, became a greater struggle for Hannah, because it meant, she would be targeted in her weakness, which she could not overcome herself. And to make matters worse, the priest Eli mistakenly rebukes her for getting drunk, when she was actually praying fervently to God. All of these would have been reasons enough to not want to worship God. At times, many of us, have good reasons why we don't want to worship God. But, despite all the reasons why we shouldn't come to the worship of our God, there's a greater reason to worship our God, that is, He is sovereign and caring, though it may not always be clearly visible to us. Thankfully for Hannah, her reasons to not want to worship, did not stop her from worshiping her God. She worshiped; she prayed. And in His time, what He closed, He opened. While before He remained silent, He answered now. Our God is not uncaring. We must remember, just because He is silent, does not mean He is absent.

### **1Sam 2 (2/9/23)**

1. In 2:1-26, why does God call Eli's sons scoundrels; what does Eli do when he hears what his sons were doing (how far does he do this); at the end of this passage, where does our God have our eyes turn to and why; how is this applicable to you?

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2. In 2:27-36, what is the prophecy against the house of Eli and why; why does God say that Eli honored his sons more than God, when Eli clearly rebuked his sons; how is this applicable to you?

\* Let me speak on v. 25. Did God prevent Eli's sons from heeding their father's warning? Or since God desired to put Eli's sons to death, was it God who prevented them from heeding God's word? In one word, no. God punished them because they chose rebellion, disobedience, their own way over God's. Here, there's a simultaneous involvement of both God's purpose and the evil choices of Eli's sons. The punishment of Eli's sons was the result of both their own choices and God's sovereign purpose. Our God's sovereignty is so wise and comprehensive, that even when we choose evil, like Eli's sons, or Pharaoh, or Judas, and it is clearly them choosing evil over God's holy ways, and still, those evils do not stop God's sovereign will to be done. So, when we are struggling with our failures, do not think we have foiled God's amazing purpose. Yes, we sinned, so we must sincerely repent. But, no, God's will will be done, despite our failures, despite our sins. God's sovereignty truly is much greater than our actions. That is why, His will will be done.

### **1Sam 3 (2/10/23)**

1. In 3:1-21, for Eli, can you identify the spiritual maladies he was suffering with and why do you think that was; can you identify some of your own spiritual maladies you are suffering with?
2. In 3:10-14, what was God's message for Samuel and why do you think such a heavy load was laid on such a young boy (can you imagine this young boy trying to tell the elderly priest Eli what he heard from God?); when the truth is difficult to tell, do you remember how you dealt with; how should you deal with God's truth, even if it is most difficult to share?
  - (Let me offer one suggestion—whenever it is too difficult, write out a prayer to God asking for His grace in and through the situation.)

\* In v. 19, God's word says, "... He let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground." Did you know, all these years I have misread this verse? I read, Samuel did not let none of God's words fall to the ground. Of course, my version makes total sense, as we must not let any of God's word fall to the ground. We must welcome, embrace, uphold, love and obey all of God's words. Yes, it makes sense, and it is right. Yet, I misread it all these years. So, before anything else, I need to confess of my wrong. I thought Eli was the only one with bad eyesight. No, mine was worse. It is amazing to see, that our God would not let any of Samuel's words fall to the ground. God would not only uphold Samuel, but even his words will have weight and authority because God would see to it to move and inspire those that were needed to move. How amazing to think that the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, would move to make sure all the words of His servant would be upheld. Of course, God would never uphold sin, no matter who says it. But, His ears and hands are so near, that none of His servant's words would fall to the ground. The Maker of the universe sure looks a lot more like a Servant. No wonder to live like a servant should be an amazing privilege and joy for us, because we are imitating, none other than the Servant King here and who is to come.

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**1Sam 4 (2/11/23)**

1. In 4:1-11, what happened at the first battle; to whom did the elders of Israel attribute their defeat, and why, and if so, what should they have done; instead of doing what they should have done, what do they choose to do and what was the result?
2. In 4:12-22, what was Eli fearing for (v. 13) and why was this misguided; how does God's word describe Eli and his death and why in such manner; how does this chapter end and what was right and wrong about the ending; how is this applicable to you?

\* So many things about this chapter has partial truth but it is so wrong. The Philistines get God's plagues on the Egyptians right but it was not in the wilderness. They get God in the midst of His people, but it was not because of the ark of the covenant. The Israelites attribute their defeat as God's doing, but instead of repenting, they use, and misuse, and abuse God's most sacred symbol more like a magic wand to bring for them a victory, rather than humble themselves to honor the holiness of their God. Though they call God their God, they use God more like their slave to try bring about what they wanted. And of course, the ark of the covenant is God's most holy symbol of His presence, and therefore, instead of rightly seeking their holiness in light of who their God is, God's people simply ignore God's law and do whatever they seem fit, as they have no fear to carry it into the battle field, to give them the victory they crave. Despite their unlawfulness, they really expected God to deliver them. They did whatever they wanted, and they expected God to do whatever they wanted Him to do. The way they treated God, was it more like God or more like their slave? Again, God's word is a mirror to our lives and our culture, isn't it?

**1Sam 5 (2/13/23)**

1. In 5:1-5, outwardly and visibly, we are told who captured who (v. 1); yet, in that captivity, what happened, who bowed to whom; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 5:6-12, how did God treat His supposedly captors; what did the Philistines think of God's presence and in what sense was that right; what did it mean that the outcry of the city went up to "heaven" (v. 12); how is this applicable to you?

\* It is amazing to see, how God is so discriminating. With His own people, though they were mis-using and abusing God's symbol of His holy presence, yet He did not strike them, though of course, He did allow the enemies to strike His children in their sin. However, with the enemies, in all the cities God's symbol of His holiness is taken, He acts justly, for the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). Our God does not put up with the sinfulness of His enemies, but with His children, He is patient and long-suffering. His people were no better than the enemies; in fact, we can probably say, His children acted more disgracefully. Yet, the Father does not administer His justice on them, while with the enemies, to every city He goes, He strikes. As surely as God loves all mankind, for He created all human beings after His image, and yet, to those who have been purchased and adopted in His Son, we can see, the heavenly Father clearly shows a greater favor that the other people would never taste. Our Father really loves us and favors us more than the people in the world. May we learn to walk nearer with Him.

**1Sam 6 (2/14/23)**

1. In 6:1-9, why did the Philistines decide to send back the ark of the Lord when they were so happy to capture it; how did they test to see if their afflictions were from the God of Israel; what do you learn from our God here; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 6:10-21, what was the result of their test; what was the result of the cows that were used for the test and what do you think of their end; how do God's people in Beth Shemesh react when God struck them down; how should they have reacted and what should they have not done (Num 4:5, 20); how is this applicable to you?

\* It is very sad that the decisions and behaviors of God's people were not much different than the Philistines. For the non-believers, their excuse is they did not know any better, because they did not have God's word to guide them. But, for God's people, though they were given God's word to be their lamp and guide their decisions, yet, they acted in ignorance or disobedience, either forgetting or not caring or not learning what God's word was for His people to follow and obey. Did you know, to not learn what we must will lead us into sin? When God struck His people for their disobedience, they should have humbled themselves and repented for their sin, for their disobedience, for their ignorance. But, rather than see their sin, they point the blame to God and His holy ways, and do just what the Philistines did, as they decide to send God and His ways away from them. If God did not know how to behave with them, then they would send Him away, is what they did. God was not their King, they were their own kings and queens. Though the days of the Judges ended, but their sinful foolish selfish ways was still lingering and impacting the lives of God's people. Actually, it is not only during the days of Judges that we need to learn that there is a God over us, but every day, today, we must learn, know, and submit to our God, so that we would follow Him, and not our own ways. Let God be true, and every person a liar (Rom 3:4).

**1Sam 7 (2/15/23)**

1. In 7:1-4, what were the people not doing during these twenty years and why do think that was; what were Samuel's instructions to the people and why was that; what was the people's response and why; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 7:5-17, why did the Israelites pour out water before the Lord; what is the meaning of Ebenezer and how did God do that; will you list some of the ways Ebenezer is true and applicable in your life?

\* In v. 10, we see the differences of actions taken. While Samuel was sacrificing to God, the Philistines came to wage war. While the Christian was worshiping God, the enemies came to destroy him. While Samuel had his eyes fixed on God, the enemies brought weapons to harm God's people. Yet, those who came to harm and to destroy, were themselves destroyed without any weapons, simply with God's thunderous voice. Because we know how harmful the weapons of this world can be, we are easily overcome with fear. But, if we could learn from Samuel, that our greatest task and weapon was not in us, but in our wholly and loving trust in our God, then we would experience more often God's thunder around us. How great it would be, if we would learn to heed the instruction of the writer of Hebrews, to have our eyes focused and fixed on the Author and Perfecter of our faith, Christ Jesus.

**1Sam 8 (2/16/23)**

1. In 8:1-9, how are Samuel's sons described and how is his parenting similar to Eli's and why was that; we are given here what not to learn from these great leaders, what is the lesson you should be praying for, not just as a parent but also as a Christian; where should our eyes be focused to and what is the image we want to grow to, and how can you best do that?
2. In 8:10-22, what does God say the king will do to his own people; what does God say the people will ask of God about their king; yet, the people refused to listen to God's warning, why was that; how is this applicable to you?

\* Parenting is really hard. I think Samuel is one of the most wonderful man of God, as was Abraham, Moses and David. Yet, these blessed men of God, each tasted the bitterness of their sons not walking well with our Lord. We say the fruit does not fall far from the tree, but they do here. Parenting is not automatic. The children do not just see the holiness of their fathers and imitate. It seems to me, parenting requires much, much, much prayer and humility and purposeful efforts, as God commanded (Deut 6:4-9). Of course, parents do not need to despair, because though they are weak, we worship the God who turns our weakness into more grace, as evidenced by Abijah's son Asa and Ahaz's son Hezekiah, as couple of examples. So, parents, your task is really hard, so please pray much to the God who turns our weakness into more grace, so that your children will taste God's abundant grace and love the Lord with all of their hearts, souls, minds and strength.

**1Sam 9 (2/17/23)**

1. In 9:1-27, what did Kish want his son to do and how long did Saul spend time to search for it; instead of finding the donkey, who did Saul find and why would this be important; how was Saul described and did that matter; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 9, what were the people waiting for before they ate, why; what did Saul mean in verse 21 and how would that principle be true in your life?

\* God's word rarely mentions the outer beauty or handsomeness of a person. However, here with Saul and later with Absalom, they were described as handsomer than others (1Sam 9:2; 2Sam 14:25). As attractive their physical appearances must have been, neither turned out to be kings who pleased the King of all kings. We know why, as God's word will teach us what pleases our God, and it is not the beauty of our outer appearances but our hearts (1Sam 16:7). The world, the people, and perhaps, we also, love compliments of our outer appearance. Sadly, the voices of the world resonate within us more than we would like. Let's pray that God's eyes will be our much, much greater pleasure than the eyes of the world. May we love and enjoy the beauty of the heart much more than the outer appearance.

**1Sam 10 (2/18/23)**

1. In 10:1-8, what does Samuel pour on Saul's head and what does that mean; what three signs were Saul to receive that day; what was Saul to do at Gilgal?

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2. In 10:9-27, what does the desire for a king mean for the people and why would that be; how is the king chosen and why do you think by such method; why couldn't the people find Saul at first and what do you think was the reason for his action; how is this applicable to you?

\* There are many reasons for silence. Sometimes, we are silent because we are cowards, and refuse to speak up, when we should. Sometimes, we are silent because we are wishy washy, because we would rather see who the winner is, then make our decisions accordingly. Sometimes, we are silent because we don't want to get involved, and we certainly don't want to commit, because we can see, it comes with a cost. But, there are times, silence is for a greater reason. Though able to respond, yet submitting and controlling both the heart and the lips, to remain quiet, so that evil would not be repaid with evil, but overlooking that evil with mercy. Throughout Saul's life, he is petulant, abrasive and jealously selfish, but the last four words to this chapter, "But Saul kept silent" was unlike this usual self, but reflected a wonderful heart of a king of God's people should be like. In a pile of ugly decisions throughout his lifetime, Saul here made a wise and loving decision, displaying a magnanimous heart that usually were not visible in his life. May we learn silence for God's glory and not to merely keep us from harm.

### **1Sam 11 (2/20/23)**

1. In 11:1-11, how did the Ammonites want to disgrace all Israel through Jabesh Gilead; how did the Spirit of God work in Saul's life; what is the Holy Spirit's purpose in the lives of His people (Jn 16:13-14); how is this applicable to you?
2. In 11:12-15, what was the people's reaction for the people who disapproved Saul and how did he respond and why in such a way; what did Samuel lead the people into; how is this applicable to you?

\* In verse 1, when the Ammonites attacked the people in Jabesh Gilead, one of the Israelites cities east of the Jordan, God's word says, "And all the men of Jabesh said to him, 'Make a treaty with us, and we will be subject to you.'" All the people in this city were more than willing to be slaves in their own Promised Land that God has gifted them as their inheritance. They were accepting to be slaves in their own lands. They were willing to be slaves in their own houses. Their present harsh reality made them feel like slaves, though they were princes and princesses of the King of kings. When Peter focused his attention on the wind and the waves, he began to sink. But when his eyes were fixed on Christ, he really did walk on the water. Where do we have our eyes focused, on the harsh reality of life, on the wind and the waves, or despite the howling wind, despite the cold splashes, can we see Him, the Creator of heaven and earth? Do you see Him?

### **1Sam 12 (2/21/23)**

1. In 12:1-18, were there any evidences against Samuel's wrongdoing and why was that; how did the Lord cause the people to believe that their asking for a king was evil and why would God do this; how is this applicable to you?

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2. In 12:19-25, what was the people's response after God's show of power; despite their disagreeable action, what does Samuel say he will continue to do and why; what are Samuel's instructions on vv. 24-25; how is this applicable to you?

\* We have a saying, monkey see, monkey do. From a very early age, Samuel grew up watching and learning from Eli and his sons on how they did ministry. Thankfully, he did not seem to have caught the evil ways of Eli's sons, for his actions were blameless, as the people testify here. As we know, to not do the evil our predecessors (our parents) did, what our bosses do, what others before us and around us do, is rare; it is extremely rare. Let's pray that we will not be swept away by the evil around us. Having said that, I am saddened that even this wonderful godly man, Samuel, did seem to have caught a terrible example from Eli. Just as Eli did not know how to straighten out his wayward going sons, neither did Samuel, for his sons did not follow in their father's footsteps. To see evil and not follow is beautiful, as with Samuel and Eli's sons. To see evil and follow evil is terrible, as Samuel followed Eli. To see good and still follow evil is heartbreaking, as Samuel's sons saw their dad and yet they did not walk in his footsteps. We must be careful what we see and more carefully which footsteps we will follow.

### **1Sam 13 (2/22/23)**

1. In 13:1-15, how large of a difference did the Philistine army had vs. the Israelites; what did Saul do so wrong (he did wait for 7 days as told) in God's eyes; what was God looking for in His servant-king-leader-people; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 13:16-22, how was the supply of weapons for the Israelites and why was that and how could they fight under such circumstance; what do you learn about God through this; how is this applicable to you?

\* I feel terrible for Saul here. Seeing this whole scenario through his eyes, he saw he was greatly outmatched in size of both soldiers and more importantly, on weapons and chariots. The few soldiers he had were scattering out of fear. He really waited for 7 days for Samuel to arrive, but he was no where in sight. In Saul's eyes, he must have been sure that if he waited another minute, the few soldiers that remained would be lost, and there would be no one to fight the war with anymore. He needed to salvage something, to try to keep the few soldiers stay with him. And the best he could do was to seek God's blessing. He wanted God to bless him and his blessed efforts. He wanted God to stand with him, because he was doing God's work. Though everything Saul is doing seems to be about God, it was actually about him and his victory, his success, his accomplishments, all using God's name. The outward appearances were about God in Saul, but his heart was not. Because our God sees the heart, He sees our hearts, He sought a person who sought God's heart above one's own. The battle for whose heart we will fight for, is a difficult and tricky battle to fight. Others will not be able to detect it easily. This battle will be mostly fought between your heart and God's. May our God bless our hearts to seek His heart above ours.

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**1Sam 14 (2/23/23)**

1. In 14:1-23, what was Jonathan and his young aid desiring to do and how would they discern God's will and what do you think about their hearts; what do you learn about God and what do you think is the lesson for you to learn?
2. In 14:24-52, what is the oath Saul vowed and why would he do this and what was the result; why was eating blood wrong; what was Saul willing to do to keep his vow and why was this all wrong; how is this applicable to you?

\* I have couple of thoughts on the fighting. First, in v. 14, we are told of a small space, where two men are fighting against twenty. It feels like one of those Chinese movies, where our hero destroys the bad guys, despite their superior numbers and weapons. The second thought is from v. 21, where the traitors are coming back, and in v. 22, where the cowards are coming out to fight with Israel. In some sense, to come back and fight with Israel would not have been easy—the Israelites would have been disgusted with them, and their own consciences would have been filled with guilt. Yet, despite for the many reasons why they shouldn't, they right the wrong they did, and once again, stood with Israel, and fought against God's enemies. Much more should be said, but I am thankful that despite their utter failures, they were still able to return. I am thinking a little bit of the return of the prodigal son. They don't deserve to be welcomed back, but God's heart is large and gracious like that. He welcomes back sinners. In fact, we are told, that He came to search and find sinners, for Him to welcome back. Welcome back!

**1Sam 15 (2/24/23)**

1. In 15:1-9, why did God want the Amalekites completely destroyed; where else did we see the battle between the Amalekites and the Jews; why was Saul selective in his obedience, that is, why was he unwilling to destroy some, while destroying others; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 15:10-35, why did Saul believed that he truly did God's will; what does God mean when He says, to obey is better than sacrifice; how is this applicable to you?

\* In v. 11, Samuel cried out to the Lord all night. Samuel did not know how to stop his tears and his prayers.... But in the morning, he got up and spoke God's truth to a man, who no longer had listening ears. Though God used him to anoint the first king, now he must go and tell him, that God has rejected him. Truth is a double edge sword. She can exalt, but she can also bring down. How elating and how depressing truth telling can be. But, after the night, when the morning comes, we must get up and obey the Lord, or otherwise, we too will act very much like Saul, selectively obey our God, which is, no obedience in God's truthful eyes.

**1Sam 16 (2/25/23)**

1. In 16:1-13, why did Samuel think Jesse's firstborn son, Eliab, would be God's anointed and what was God's response; in what ways does v. 7 correct and rebuke you and how can we become more pleasing to God's eyes?
2. In 16:14-23, can you explain how an evil spirit from the Lord tormented Saul; why did Saul call David into his service; what do you learn from all these?

\* Here, in 16:10-11, Jesse has 8 sons. In 1Chron 2:13-15, God's word records Jesse has 7 sons, which David is the 7th. So, we clearly see a discrepancy. The simplest explanation given for this is, that by the time of the recording in the chronicles, one of David's brother must have passed away, and only the surviving brothers' names were recorded. I am unable to come up with a better explanation, so I am ok accepting this explanation. I am able to accept it because I do believe in the inerrancy of God's word. The discrepancy surely demonstrates a difference, but to me, that is not a proof of the inconsistency of God's word. It rather proves my lack of complete understanding. The explanation offered may not be to my complete satisfaction, but I am not the judge. In fact, I have no better explanation, so I thankfully choose to accept as explained.

### **1Sam 17 (2/27/23)**

1. In 17:1-40, can you locate the battle field and the land of the two nations; who is Goliath and what was he doing; how did God's people react to Goliath's challenge; how did David react and why; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 17:41-58, can you describe the differences between Goliath and David's march to the battle; what gave David such confidence; what do you learn about your God and how does this impact your life?

\* To me, King Saul allowing this young shepherd boy David to represent the nation is shocking, terrifying and suicidal. David lacked battle experience; he wasn't even fully grown man, because he couldn't even join Israel's army, because he wasn't twenty years yet; he couldn't even fit a coat armor for battle. Nothing about him gave any confidence that this young boy should represent a nation into battle, and even more so, against such an overwhelming enemy. What's most frightening was, as surely as this boy would be defeated, the consequence of this battle would mean, the whole nation would become the enemy's subjects. Everything about this situation and everything about David said that he was not the right person to represent the nation. So, why would King Saul allow someone so unqualified, so lacking, so inexperienced to represent them?...

### **1Sam 18 (2/28/23)**

1. In 19:1-16, what would knit Jonathan's and David's hearts together, please explain; what made Saul angry and why; what made Saul afraid of David; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 19:17-30, what was Saul hoping for with his daughters and David; what made Saul more afraid of David; what should Saul have learned through David's life; what should we learn from both Saul and David?

\* As we well know, we can always learn from each other. Thankfully, we can learn from David, what beautiful blessing there is when the Lord is with us. Even in trials, nothing really is better than God's presence with us. May we seek His presence above all else, even when that comes through difficult events. Sadly, however, we can also learn from Saul many painful lessons, but to me, the saddest lesson is to not repent when we see our sinfulness. The good in David should have been lessons both ways, to imitate the

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good and to repent because we are not doing the good. May our God bless us with a humble heart to desire to do both.

### **1Sam 19 (3/1/23)**

1. In 19:1-17, Saul's heart is troubled—why did he want to kill David, despite David's innocence and goodness to him; how far was he willing to go to get rid of his enemy; have you seen how far you are willing to go in your troubles and if you have, please spend time to reflect and repent before our Lord and if possible, reach out to that person to share your apology?
2. In 19:18-24, why would David go to Ramah and how would that help him; what happened at Naioth and how do you think that would look; what do you think Saul's stripping of his garments mean; how is this applicable to you?

\* It is sad to see Saul's troubled heart. His children, Jonathan and Michal, side with whom their father calls his enemy. Even if you are wrong, you wish your family will stand with you, but Saul's family didn't. The soldiers Saul sent to destroy David, rather join the enemy they were commanded to bring back. And, even he, himself, join the enemy he came to destroy. And what's most clear is, that God is against him, Saul. We humans can be so easily deceived, especially by ourselves. We have a mind that seems to think, it's me against the world. Of course, in martyrdom that heart would be right. But, more often than not, it's not everyone else that's wrong. We must humbly consider to see if we are not in the wrong. But, after we see that we are wrong, we truly need God's humble heart to repent for our sins. It seems that Saul considered everyone else was wrong, and even in that rarest moment when he might see that he was wrong, his heart would not humble to repent before God and others. The lack of repentant heart for our sins is the most troubling heart to have. May our God be gracious to us, and bless us with a repentant heart for our sins.

### **1Sam 20 (3/2/23)**

1. In 20:1-23, what is the oath Jonathan and David commits to; why do you think there was such a strong bond between them; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 20:24-42, how does Jonathan learn of his father's heart towards David; why did Jonathan not want others to know about his alerting David of his father's heart; what do David and Jonathan forced to do in light of Saul's action; how is this applicable to you?

\* In 20:1, we see David asking, pleading and challenging his friend Jonathan for an explanation. At this moment, both seem clueless. Jonathan was unaware of his father sending four teams to capture his friend David in the previous chapter. And David is unaware that Saul's attacks were not because of him, but because the Lord has removed His presence and blessing over Saul. Both were victims, and neither had answers. Life is like that sometimes. There's not much we can do, despite the many things befalling us. In such times, what a blessing it is to have such a good friend. Let's pray that we will have a good friend; moreover, that we would be that good friend to others as well. But, even if no such good friend should be near us, we truly do have a good friend, who will lay down His life for us. Jesus truly is a faithful and good friend,

that no one here can equal. “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are My friends...” (Jn 15:13-14).

### **1Sam 21 (3/3/23)**

1. In 21:1-9, why would Ahimelek the priest tremble seeing David; why would David lie to the priest; what was consecrated bread; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 21:10-15, why did David flee to Gath and why would that stop Saul from pursuing him; did David feel any safer there; when you feel threatened and unsafe, what do you do and how can you find safety?

\* Let me share what I read in my study Bible. Why did David lie to the priest (21:2)? It is not immediately clear why David lied in response to Ahimelek’s question. Two factors may have influenced his decision to deceive Ahimelek: 1) David’s life was on the line, and he may have felt justified in resorting to deception to save his life. The OT records other instances of deception to save lives (i.e., Ex 1:19; Josh 2:5). 2) David may have been trying to protect Ahimelek from any accusation of involvement in David’s escape from Saul. David’s desire to preserve human life (that of another, if not his own) took precedence over telling the truth. It is interesting to note that Jesus later cited the incident of David’s request for bread to illustrate the principle that human need takes priority over ceremonial law (Lk 6:3-4).

### **1Sam 22 (3/4/23)**

1. In 22:1-5, why would David leave Gath; who now joined and followed David and why; why and how could David leave his parents with the king of Moab (were they not enemies?); how is this applicable to you?
2. In 22:6-23, what did the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah had to do with loyalty with Saul; why wouldn’t the king’s officials obey the king’s command; what would Doeg do and how is this related with God’s prophecy (1Sam 2:27-36); how is this applicable to you?

\* It is frightening and shocking what happens here. Saul has no trouble killing God’s anointed servants, because in his head, they helped his enemy. Anyone who did not help him and helped his enemy is an enemy to him, including God. Right and wrong is no longer the issue. The only issue is, are they for him or not, which means, they are against him. He was the king of his life, and he would do what’s best for himself. Like, during the days of Judges, he would not learn that there is a king over His people. I am sure, being the king of the nation, everyone always bowing to him and obeying his commands, would have made it very difficult for him to discern that he too should bow under the reign of the King over all His people. The physical kingship made his head too big to know, he was not the king over his life. The more successful people are in this world, the more difficult it is to bow and submit before the true King over their lives. May we always learn and remember, “But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your ancestors, as it is today” (Deut 8:18).

**1Sam 23 (3/6/23)**

1. In 23:1-6, why did David want to attack the Philistines; what was the sensible advice from his men; what ultimately drove David's decision; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 23:7-29, in v. 7, who does Saul attribute to the capture of David into his hand and why would he think that; in v. 21, whose blessing does Saul give when the people of Ziph offer to hand David over to him and why would he think that again; how close was Saul from capturing David and why couldn't he; how is this applicable to you?

\* This chapter is full of near misses. The people of Keilah whom David and his men delivered were willing to give them up, in order to not be slaughtered by Saul's men. The people of Ziph, whom David had done no wrong, are willing to give them up, all to please their king, Saul. Then, only steps away from capturing, Saul is whisked away, and had to go fight instead the Philistines. As slippery David seemed to be from being found by Saul, Saul's son, Jonathan, however has no trouble finding his friend, and they meet face to face, sadly for the last time. This chapter can be summarized by one sentence from v. 14, "Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands." If God is not giving, then there's no receiving. If God is not blessing, then there's no finding. Saul can search with ten thousands and fail, while Jonathan has no trouble finding his friend. In our own strength, we will not find. But, if we are walking with our God, then He will lead, He will open, He will bless us to find His blessings. PTL!

**1Sam 24 (3/7/23)**

1. In 24:1-7, according to David's men, why did the Lord lead Saul into the cave; as for David, why did he not follow the opinion of everyone around him; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 24:8-22, in v. 13, what does the old saying mean and why wasn't David willing to accept it; what does Saul say how the enemy should be treated and why did David not follow such mentality; if David's life is judged by his decisions, what kind of God did he serve; how is this applicable to you?

\* In v. 7, David is said to have sharply rebuked his men. The men thought this opportunity (Saul's entrance into the cave where they were hiding) was God given, God driven and therefore God blessed. Opportunity was clearly permission for them. But, David does not agree. For him, even more important than this incredible opportunity, that is, his enemy walking right into his lap, was God's heart for His people, especially for God's anointed servant, the king. Sure, the king was not following God's will. Sure, the king was clearly in the wrong. Yet, the king's wrong behavior did not take away God's anointing, as far as David was concerned. For David, God's action was far more important than man's action or the given situation. So, for that sole reason of God's anointing, David was conscience-stricken for having cut the king's robe, and certainly, he would not lay his hand to kill whom God has established as the king. While 600 men thought they should kill their enemy, one man, their leader, David, sees God above all else, and to God first, he will submit, and follow His lead over any other reason. May our leader always see God first. May each of us always see God first and follow Him and His way, even when everyone around us should disagree in God's name.

**1Sam 25 (3/8/23)**

1. In 25:1-22, how does God's word describe Nabal and Abigail and how do you think God would describe you; how did Nabal respond to David's men and why; how do you respond when others ask for some assistance from you, especially when you have no obligation to them?
2. In 25:23-44, why was David heading where Nabal was; what and how did Abigail stop David from committing his intention; what can you learn from Abigail and how can you implement that to be a part of your life?

\* In some ways, the actions of Abigail can be seen as ungodly and unwise. It may be seen as ungodly, because she speaks ill of her husband and goes behind his back to serve another man, David. Both actions are normally terrible. Yet, these seemingly ungodly actions were wise, as they helped to save and preserve her family. Abigail's action of meeting David when he was coming in full rage with his men to slaughter anything and everyone from Nabal would surely be incredibly dangerous, as David would probably be blinded with rage and thirsting for revenge. When people are this angry, usually, there is no reasoning with them, much less, stopping them from pursuing their intention. But, at the risk of her harm, she still went and acted seemingly unwise. But, if she didn't, "not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak" (v. 34). By her risky action, Abigail saved David from committing sin; moreover, she saved her family from being slaughtered. Oh, we need an Abigail around us. And, how great it would be, if we can be that Abigail to the people around us.

**1Sam 26 (3/9/23)**

1. In 26:1-11, what are the Ziphites doing again and why (23:19); how does Saul respond to their words and why; what does Abishai believe God is doing for David and why; what does David say God wants; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 26:12-25, how were David and Abishai able to walk in and out of Saul's camp unnoticed; what similarities and differences do you find here with David and Saul's previous encounter (chap. 24); how is this applicable to you?

\* The end verses for both chapters 26 and 24 are similar, Saul goes home and David goes on his way, but not home. Through 26:19, it's clear, David wants to remain home, to worship and enjoy God's inheritance. But, he who does wrong, gets to return home; while, David who is following God's ways, cannot return home, because the king whom he could have killed is still alive. Sometimes, doing what's right seems to stretch the difficult days longer. There was a short cut, but David would not take it. He understood, opportunity is not permission. Oh, the more I reflect, the more I understand how tough it is to not take the short cut. Would I still want to follow what's right, when it would be more difficult, at least for the foreseeable future, especially when a short cut is presented, and no one would fault me for it, except perhaps by our invisible God? Oh, I pray for humility and wisdom and courage and most of all, love for my Lord, to follow what's right and not use the opportunity as a permission to take my short cut, which will lead me further away from God's truthful way. Let God be true, and every person a liar (Rom 3:4).

**1Sam 27 (3/10/23)**

1. In 27:1-7, what was David thinking; what was David's first experience with Achish (1Sam 21:10-15), so why would David choose to go to Achish again; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 27:8-12, what had become David's deeds and words; why live like that; how is this applicable to you?

\* This chapter begins with David thinking to himself that he will be eventually caught and destroyed by Saul. He didn't want to run anymore. He and his men had their families with them, which made their lives as fugitives much more difficult. What he saw and what he thought came to the same conclusion, let's get out of here because this is not the way they want to live anymore. It made sense; they can avoid the troubles that kept pursuing them. And it actually did. Saul no longer pursued them since David crossed over to the Philistine territory. Though, David no longer had to run from Saul, now he was running to cover up his actions. Instead of trusting God to provide and protect him, David now regularly lies and covers up his actions, so they will not be exposed. By sight, David's life seems more pleasant, for he no longer needs to run for his life. Now, he has the upper hand; he goes hunting with his men. But what about his faith. We do not hear anything about his inquiring of God's leading and direction anymore. We no longer hear about trusting in God's protection and provision. We hear of his strength, but not of God's. There may be a price to pay to live by faith, but the reward is truly greater. The question for us is, do we want the convenience of the life of sight or the blessing of the life of faith? Which is more precious to us?

**1Sam 28 (3/11/23)**

1. In 28:1-14, what three ways could a person inquired of the Lord and why wouldn't the Lord answer Saul in such ways; what did Saul do then and what was wrong with that; isn't Saul doing the right thing by seeking the Lord, why or why not; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 28:15-25, why was Saul seeking Samuel and what kind of heart does that reveal about Saul; why did God want to replace Saul with David (28:18; 1Sam 15:1-11); when would God replace Saul; what do you learn from this chapter and how will you apply it to your life?

\* This chapter begins with Achish calling on David to join him to fight against the Israelites, and David agrees. We know David will not fight against God's people, yet he agrees to go with the Philistine king. If anything, we know, David will find a way to fight against the Philistines and definitely not against the Israelites, yet, he agrees to go. What was David thinking when he agreed, we don't know. How will this be resolved, we don't know yet. But, as soon as we are told that David will go to the battle with Achish, the focus of God's word suddenly turns to Saul and God's repeat message for him. Somehow, David's willingness to fight will intertwine with Saul's demise. David would not have known what God was planning, but God knew what David was going through. That's our God. He knows what we are going through. He knows what dilemma and conundrum and difficulty we are going through. He knows. And He knows how to resolve them better than we ever could. Let's remember, He knows.

**1Sam 29 (3/13/23)**

1. In 29:1-5, what were the Philistines wanting to do with Israel again and what does this say about our lives here on earth; why were the Philistine commanders not willing to take David with them (14:21); what are your thoughts on David's action here?
2. In 29:6-11, in what ways does it help David to be sent back; what are the connections with Jezreel at the start and the end of this chapter; what do you learn from this chapter?

\* In verse 2, we are told that David and his men were marching at the rear with Achish to go to battle against Israel. I was thinking what would the men with David be thinking. Some were probably thinking, "How can we fight against our own people, against God's anointed. Isn't that what David had been teaching us all along?" Others might have thought, "This might finally be the way and the time to get Saul out of the way and anoint David." Still others might have thought, "There's got to be more than what meets the eye here. We could not possibly fight against our own people. David would never do that. So, what was he thinking. How was he going to use this situation to follow God? Not sure, but he's got to have another plan. This could not be it." I am thinking, all of these different thoughts were probably swirling in the minds of the men. Some objecting, others confused and puzzled, and others just trusting their leader to know what he was doing because they were not, and yet, they all followed. I believe they could follow because they experienced throughout their time with David, he sought God's ways even when it made it much more difficult. Even against their objection, they saw how David placed God's will over all of them. Therefore, they trusted David to follow God better than they would. So, in trust, they followed their leader, to follow their God.

**1Sam 30 (3/14/23)**

1. In 30:1-6, why were the men blaming David when it was their choice to join him in the first place; why was David greatly distressed; where did David find his strength and how do you think that would have looked like; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 30:7-31, in what ways did God lead David to pursue the Amalekites; how could David recover everything, not one missing; who and what was the disagreement on the share of the spoils and how was it resolved; how is this applicable to you?

\* In v. 21, I am touched by David's kind heart. When David returned after the fighting, he asked the two hundred men who were left behind, "how they were." These two hundred men were left behind because they were exhausted. However, about this time now, David would be so much more exhausted than they, because he kept going when they couldn't, and he fought for couple of days nonstop, plus he and his men were carrying everything back from where they have fought. But, despite his weariness, it is he who asked these men, who were probably feeling very guilty and depressed for not being able to continue, "how they were." What a man; what a leader; what heart of God in him, to think of others more than himself. This reminds me of the words God gave Paul to write, "... Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own

interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:3-5).

**1Sam 31 (3/15/23)**

1. In 31:1-6, in this battle between God’s people and the Gentiles, who fled and why would that be; who died that day and why was that significant; why was the armor-bearer terrified to do what Saul asked; what do you learn here?
2. In 31:7-13, who began to occupy God’s promised land and why; why would the Philistines fasten Saul’s body on the wall; why would the people of Jabesh Gilead risk their lives to recover Saul and his sons’ bodies; how is this applicable to you?

\* What a sad closure to Saul’s life. In his death, all Israel suffered and fled. Yet, despite such defeat, God inserted the people of Jabesh Gilead in this final chapter, who remembered the good Saul did for them and repaid him with kindness. I am so thankful and blessed that they remembered the kindness they received and were willing to risk their lives to repay that kindness. Indeed, we should remember loooooong the kindness we have received, far more and far longer than the pain or the evil we suffered. Oh, Lord, bless our memories with more kindnesses and less evil and pain. Thank you Lord for always remembering us with Your kindness.