**Week Six – February 21-22 – I Samuel 31 and wrap up**

**Introduction**

Six months ago we started I Samuel and tonight we will cover the final chapter as well as some review and reflection. Let’s dive in!

**Read I Samuel 31:1-10**

The final chapter of 1 Samuel ends in such a tragedy. Although this is such an aching point for Israel, there is a sense in which we (and maybe they) had to see this coming. When David and Samuel both spoke to Saul they saw this day approaching. **Read 1 Samuel 26:10, 28:19. Thinking back to all we read about Saul’s kingship, what were some of the aspects that led to the fulfillment of these verses?** (*His unlawful sacrifice, rash vow, jealousy, poor leadership, murder attempts, failure to strike down Amalekites, ordered the death of 85 innocent priests and their families, etc).* It is appointed once for man to die, then comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27) and all that is not done on the foundation of Jesus will be burnt up (1 Cor 3:10-15). **What aspects of your life is God directing your attention to that may get burnt up? How can you shift toward building on the foundation that will survive the testing of fire?**

**What makes Saul’s death so tragic? How is his death consistent with His character?** It must’ve been a miserable death for Saul, already wounded with destruction gradually coming upon him so that he desires to take his own life. His concern may not only be with the pain but with the pride of not bearing the shame of defeat by his enemies. As he lived, so also he died - proud, jealous, self-focused. **Considering the life of Jonathan, what makes Jonathan’s death tragic in its own way compared to Saul?** The faithful servant Jonathan courageously dies in battle along with his brothers. **What may God be trying to make clear through the death of all Saul’s sons?** *(David’s path to the throne will not be contested in any way.)*

The Philistines conquered Israel, driving them out of their cities, plundering their goods, and inhabiting their land. Saul’s sin, rebellion, and lack of leadership affected not only himself but an entire nation. **How should this shape our understanding of gospel-driven leadership and the expectation of leaders in the body as well as the responsibility those underneath the leadership?** (Ezekiel 33:7-9, Hebrews 13:17). **Considering v9, what are some of the greater implications of Israel’s defeat other than the physical devastation?** Shame and mockery has come upon the name of God and victory has been attributed to idols.

Remember what happened to the Philistine idols last time Israel was defeated? **Read 1 Samuel 5:1-4.** 1 Chronicles 10 gives another account describing the Philistine’s response to Saul’s death. **Read 1 Chronicles 10:8-10. What is the irony of putting Saul’s head on Dagon?** Ashtaroth, the idol that Israel had many times gone whoring after now triumphs over them. Satan often entices us to give our devotion to things other than God and when we do so we are eventually harmed and met with its empty unfulfilling reality. **What are the things Satan tries to use to accomplish this in your life? How can you defend against this? What area might the Lord want you to grow your devotion toward Him as you resist Satan’s schemes?**

In chapter 11, the Ammonites sought to besiege Jabesh Gilead and the men of Jabesh reported this to Saul. In a unifying act, the fear of the Lord fell upon the people of Israel and they came out as one man and delivered Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites. **How did the men of Jabesh show their appreciation for the deliverance they received?** These valiant men were willing to risk their lives to give Saul and his sons a proper burial. How much more willing should we be to put ourselves on the line to honor the one who saved our soul from hell?

**Review and Reflect**

Some general questions about our time in I Samuel:

* Do you have any memories about a story or theme in I Samuel that impacted you?
* Are there any parts of David’s story that were new or fresh? Anything that might have made you say, “I never realized that part of the story of David”?
* Are there any specific verses that have become your favorite(s) in I Samuel or have stayed with you after your group studied them?

With that question in mind, here are some of the verses that stood out to the writers of the study. As someone from the family group reads them, let them bring to mind some truths covered in the book and perhaps some may get your attention as verses to memorize:

* 2:2 “There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.”
* 2:35 – “I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his priestly house, and they will minister before my anointed one always.”
* 7:12 – “Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’”
* 8:7-8 - **7**And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. **8**As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.
* 12:22-24 - **22**For the sake of his great name the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own. **23**As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right. **24**But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.
* 14:6 - Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, “Come, let’s go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few.”
* 16:7 - But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”
* 17:26 - David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?”
* 17:37 - The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.”
* 20:12-15 - **12**Then Jonathan said to David, “I swear by the Lord, the God of Israel, that I will surely sound out my father by this time the day after tomorrow! If he is favorably disposed toward you, will I not send you word and let you know? **13**But if my father intends to harm you, may the Lord deal with Jonathan, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away in peace. May the Lord be with you as he has been with my father. **14**But show me unfailing kindness like the Lord’s kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, **15**and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth.”
* 25:23-24 - **23**When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. **24**She fell at his feet and said: “Pardon your servant, my lord, and let me speak to you; hear what your servant has to say.

Spend time praying together about being good stewards about what God has taught you in I Samuel as well as sharing and praying for other requests.