



1 Samuel 25-26

Tape #7088
I Samuel 25-26
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to the twenty fifth chapter of I Samuel, that we might continue our trek through the word of God. The period of history of David's life that we are presently entering into is not so glorious. We're gonna see some of David's weaknesses, we're gonna see some of David's failures. The bible is quite blunt. It doesn't paint man as perfect. The men after God's heart, men that are used of God, men that are called of God, as we are discovering today, are not perfect, but many times are far from perfect.

I don't know why that surprises us, because none of us are perfect either. But yet somehow we build an aura around those men that God uses, and we somehow think that God only uses perfect men. But that is not the case. God uses people just like us, to do His work. Rather than being disappointed when we see the flaws, and the failures in those men that God has used, to me it's an encouragement.

As I read of David's failure, I think, "Wow if God could use David like that when he failed, maybe God can use me!", because I'm perfectly conscious of my own failures. There are times when I am tested of God, and I miserably fail. As David, there are times when I seek to take things into my own hands. "Treat me like that? Alright, I'll get even with him!" Now that isn't a spiritual kind of an attitude. It's wrong! But yet, I feel it. David felt it.

David was insulted by Nabal, and he said to his men, "Get your swords on! We're gonna go down, and we're gonna wipe him out!" Taking things into his own hands. Not committing the judgment to God. Yet God used David, and yet God loved David, and even called him a man after His own heart. Means that God can use you, and God loves you, and you could be a person after God's own heart too. Even though you have failed. We've all failed. As we read in the Psalm this morning, "God looked to see if there was someone who hadn't failed", and He said, "Nope, there's none righteous, no. Not one!" We've all failed! "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

But that doesn't disqualify you from God's loving you, and God's using you. So when we fail, God deals with us, God chides us, He corrects us, and He brings us back on the path. Thank God so many times, as we have tonight, God will stop us before we have a chance to fulfill our own fleshly desires for vengeance. God steps in the way and He stops us from carrying out our evil intentions. Thank God for that. David, when God stepped in and intervened, had enough sense to stop, and to say, "Okay, I take back what I said. I won't do it". Let's look at it. Chapter twenty five.

First of all this first verse is dealing with the death of Samuel, this last of the judges, the first of the prophets. A marvelous man, dedicated to God from birth, in fact, dedicated to God before his inception. His mother prayed before he was ever conceived, "Lord just give me a son, I'll give him back to you all the days of his life". So, he belonged to God from before he was ever conceived. God had His hand upon Samuel, and he stands in the annals of scriptures as one of the giants of the scriptures. A man faithful to God in the midst of an apostate priesthood under Eli. A man who remained faithful to God in the midst of an apostate people, Israel. A man who pleaded for the people and who declared, "God forbid that I should cease to pray for you". A man of prayer, a man mightily used of God, and now we come to the end of his career, and it's always sad to see the giants pass.

And Samuel died; and all of the Israelites were gathered together, and they lamented him, and they buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran (25:1).

So the death of this great man of God, Samuel, and David's flight to Paran, which is in the area of Eliot, down towards Sinai. He really was moving far out of the reach of Saul. However he came back.

And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel (25:2);

Now this is not mount Carmel, this is a little village of Carmel, which is about ten and a half miles southwest of Hebron. So it would be between Hebron, and Arad. Some of you have been to Hebron, and

Arad, and this place of Carmel was between the two.

and the man was very great, [That is, he was wealthy.] he had three thousand sheep, he had a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel (25:2).

Now the shearing of the sheep was always a time of festivities, and it was sort of in celebration of your blessings, of what God had done. Thus it traditionally was a time of giving gifts. Sharing the abundance. It was sort of a time of thanksgiving, where you look for those that are less fortunate, and you sort of share some of the abundance of God's blessings, to help feed them, and take care of them. Thus was the time of shearing.

the name of the man was Nabal (25:3);

Now whether or not he got that name at birth is questionable, because the name means foolish, or folly. I don't know what kind of a parent would tack that kind of a name on his kid when he was born. You know, "Call him folly", unless they were thinking of the way he was conceived or something. I don't know, but anyhow, it's an unlikely nomenclature to tag onto a kid. So it probably was something that, maybe a nickname that he developed through the years, as his character began to be manifested.

the name of his wife was Abigail: she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb (25:3).

That would make him actually of the tribe of Judah. The house of Caleb, you remember Caleb went down and took the area of Hebron, and possessed it for his family.

Now David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep. So David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name: And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace [Or Shalom] both to thee, and shalom unto your house, and shalom unto all that you have. ["Peace, peace, peace."] And now I have heard that you have your shearers: and now your shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing unto them, all the while that they were in Carmel. So ask your young men, and they will show you. Wherefore let the young men find favour in your eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to your hand unto your servants, and unto your son David (25:4-8).

So David sends ten of his young men to receive a gift from Nabal. During the time of the shearing, as we said, was a time of giving gifts, and so David sent his young men. Now at this point, he had around six hundred men with him. That could be a problem as far as feeding them. Six hundred men can eat a lot of food, so it takes a lot of supplies. So David is sending to Nabal, at this time of the giving of gifts, to help him out, to give the men some supplies for his men. Reminding him that David's men were there in the wilderness, where his sheep were being kept.

But David being from a shepherd's background, respected the sheep herders, and had no doubt ordered his men not to rustle any of the sheep that were there. Just you know, they protected them from the nomadic tribes, from the Bedouins and all. They became sort of a wall around them, because David's men actually protected them from others. So he said, "Check with your men, they'll verify that not a sheep of them, of their flocks were missing, while we were there among them, and around them". "Now it's sort of like a pay off for the protection that we provided. Send us some food."

When David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, then they stopped. And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? who is the son of Jesse? there are many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, who I don't even know where they come from (25:9-11)?

So Nabal, of course did know David. His reputation was quite great, and he knew that David was fleeing from Saul. But he saw David as sort of a runaway slave. "Who is David that I should help him? Who is this son of Jesse?", you know, "I've provided for myself, and not for anybody else".

So David's young men turned their way, and they went again, and came and told David all of those sayings. And David said to his men, Get your swords on men; And every man put on his sword, and David put on his swords: and they went up after David about four hundred men; two hundred of the men stayed by the stuff (25:12-13).

So they, they had their possessions. Two hundred guys stayed to guard the possessions, four hundred guys put on their swords to follow David. David is planning to do Nabal in!

But one of the young men [That is Nabal's young shepherd boys] told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master; and he railed on them. But the men were very good to us, we were not hurt, and neither did we miss anything, as long as we were among them, when we were in the fields: They were like a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while that we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and consider what you'll have to do; because evil is determined against our master, and against all of his household: for he is such a son of the devil, that a man cannot speak to him. ["I mean he is just a son of Belial", which is a son of Satan, "you can't even talk to that man, you know, he's just a cruel, crude man, Nabal."] Then Abigail made haste, and she took two hundred loaves of bread, two bottles of wine, five sheep that were ready dressed, five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, [They would press the, the figs into, the dried figs into blocks or cakes of figs.] and she laid them on the donkeys. And she said to her servants, Go on before me; behold, I am coming after you. But she did not tell her husband Nabal. And it was so, as she rode on the donkey, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them (25:14-20).

So they met in the glen, down in a valley. There she came down the hill to meet David, in this glen, where he was with his men.

Now David had sworn, Surely in vain I have kept all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained to him: and he has requited me evil for good. So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave anyone of his whole household alive. And when Abigail saw David, she hurried, and lighted off of the donkey, and fell before David on her face, and she bowed herself to the ground, And she fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let your handmaid, I pray thee, speak in your audience, and hear the words of your handmaid (25:21-24).

Now, the interesting thing is, she's taken responsibility. "It's my fault. It's not really that crude husband I have. It's my fault. I didn't know that your young men came. I'm the one that should've been responsible for hospitality, and so forth, I didn't know they came. I found out later. So, you know put the blame on me."

Don't let my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, [Her opinion of her husband is the same, I mean, "he's a devil".] even Nabal: [Or, even foolish] for as his name is, so is he; because foolish is his name, [I mean his name was very fitting for his character.] the folly is with him: but your handmaid did not see the young men of my lord, who you sent. Now therefore my lord, as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, seeing the Lord has withheld from you from coming to shed the blood, and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now let your enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. [Let them be foolish.] And now this blessing which your handmaid has brought unto my lord, let it even be given to the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of your handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fights the battles of the Lord, and evil has not been found in thee all thy days (25:25-28).

This is really uncharacteristic of David to take vengeance for himself, it is David's normal tact to commit things unto God. Especially in the case of Saul. "If God wants to handle him, let God handle him, I'm not gonna touch him!"

But even though we are people of faith, and even though we have great confidence and trust in God, there are times when a person weakens, or can weaken. This was a time of David's weakness. He's caught up, he's been insulted by this churlish man, by this son of Belial. His young men have been evil entreated. The guy has spoken disdainfully concerning David. So David says, "Okay, I'm gonna wipe him out, and all that he has. Come on guys, get your swords! We're gonna go, and we're gonna...", and David is now taking things in his own hands.

It's a failure on David's part. This is a lapse of David's confidence in God that, "God'll take care of it, I don't have to defend myself. God is my defense". As we go through the Psalms, notice how so many times David speaks of God as his defense. "God is my rock, He is my high fortress, He is my high tower. In Him will I trust." Yet here is a case where this man who trusted so completely in God in so many other places,

and in so many other experiences, has this lapse or failure of trust in God, he's gonna take things into his own hands.

Whenever you are about to take things into your own hands, you're on the verge of making a tragic mistake. How much better to commit our ways unto the Lord, trust always in Him, and let Him bring things to pass, rather than to take things into my own hands, and try to act on my own, for my own defense.

So Abigail, beautiful woman, I mean she was not only of beautiful countenance, man this gal is sharp! She comes to David and just is the picture of graciousness, and wisdom. What wisdom comes forth from her mouth! She knows that she's married to a, you know, a churlish son of Belial. Yet she is out to defend her husband. Her words to David are very well put, very well spoken. She calls David, "my lord". She acknowledges that the kingdom is gonna belong to David. "David we know that the kingdom is gonna be yours. But when you come into the kingdom David, when you get into the place of prominence and all, you don't want this to be a blemish on your record. Your record's been clean! You don't want this as a blemish on your record, that you would feel, 'Oh that was...'"

A lot of times we take rash actions. We move in the moment of, of anger, and we do things that later on, we're extremely sorry for. She said, "David you don't want this kind of a thing on your record. You don't want the blemish on your record. You know, you're mad, I know you're mad. You have a right to be mad! That husband of mine, he's a mess. You know, can't handle him, and he's just a mess, but David, don't let this blemish your record. That when you do come into the kingdom, and you are in control, that you'll say, 'Oh my that was terrible', and you would have a guilty conscience over this".

So, "I pray thee, forgive the trespass of your handmaid". In other words, she's again taking the blame. "I was, I just didn't see them. I didn't know they came." "For the Lord will surely make my lord", that is David, "a sure house". "He's gonna put you on the throne." "Because my lord fights the battles of the Lord." "Now you fight the battles of the Lord, but don't fight the battles of David." You see that? That's a big difference! Out to defend the Lord is one thing, but out to defend yourself is another. Better to let the Lord be your defense. She speaks of Saul, she says...

Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek your soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God (25:29);

Beautiful, beautiful phrase. "Your soul will be bound in the bundle of life. He's not gonna get you." "There's a guy out pursuing you, trying to kill you, but your soul is bound in the bundle of life unto the Lord." This bundle of life is an interesting phrase, and it is used of, of uh, the bundle of love, the bundle of joy, and it just talks about, just a bagful of life, or a bagful of joy, or a bagful of, of love. A person who is bound in the bundle of love. It's just you know, beautiful, picturesque speech, and so, "Here, your life. God has you in a knapsack, a bundle of life, with the Lord, close to Him, near Him in the bundle of life. Though someone is seeking your death".

and the souls of your enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling (25:29).

Now David of course was pretty handy with a sling, knew all about a sling, and this gal's using now the sling, as an analogy. "And so God is gonna do your enemies. He's gonna fling them out like a rock is flung out of a sling!"

And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done this to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you, and he will have appointed you the ruler over Israel. ["When you come to this position of the sitting on the throne."] That this shall not be a grief to you, ["That you'll not have a bad conscience over this."] nor an offense of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord has avenged himself (25:29-30);

And that's the whole thing, David was on a mission to avenge himself. "He's spoken against me! I'm gonna teach him a lesson!" "No David, don't avenge yourself. Don't let that be on your conscience that you went out and destroyed this guy just because you know, he said nasty things about you."

but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember your handmaid (25:30).

"When, you know, when you're there and all, and, and, you, you think, 'Ah, I didn't do it', just remember me." You know.

And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent you to meet me: Blessed is the

advice, and blessed are you, which kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and avenging myself with my own hand (25:32-33).

David saw, “Hey, I just about blew it. I, I really was on the verge of making a tragic mistake”. And, he thanked her for coming out, and stopping him. Abigail must stand as one of those great women of the old testament. Special, special person. Gracious indeed.

For [the very deed, for] in very deed, [For, you know, it’s for sure!] as the Lord lives, which has kept me back from hurting you, except you had hurried and come to meet me, surely there would have been no one left in your household. So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and he said to her, Go in peace to your house; see, I have hearkened to your voice, I’ve accepted you. And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he had held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal’s heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk: wherefore she didn’t tell him anything, less or more, until the morning light (25:34-36).

I mean, she got home and he had been partying with his friends, and he was you know, just out of it, he was soused. So, she let him sleep it off, didn’t bother to tell him what she had done, until morning. “In the morning Abigail came to Nabal and, or...

But then it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, [Sobered up] his wife had told him these things, [When she said, “I went down to David and said these things”.] his heart died within, [He had a heart attack.] he became as a stone. [Just became comatose.] He was in a comatose state for ten days, and then he died (25:37-38).

So angry was he at what she had done, just so enraged that his heart couldn’t handle it. Just snapped, just had a heart attack, and just was in a comatose state for ten days, and died.

So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Lord, [Ha, ha, ha!] who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and kept his servant from evil (25:37):

“The Lord took care of it. Blessed be the Lord, He took care of it! He defended me, and He kept me from avenging myself.”

for he has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, invited her to come and be his wife. And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spoke unto her, saying, David sent us to you, to invite you to come and be his wife. And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let your handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord (25:39-41).

So again, such a gracious woman. Here are David’s servants, “Let me wash your feet. You’re the servants of my lord.”

And Abigail hurried, and arose, and rode on the donkey, with five damsels that were her maidens; and she went after the messengers of David, and she became David’s wife. David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were also both of them his wives. For Saul had given Michal his daughter, David’s wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which was of Gallim (25:42-44).

So Saul, when David was on the lamb, took David’s wife Michal, and let her marry another guy. So David probably heard what Saul had done, and so he took both Abigail, and Ahinoam, as his wives.

Chapter 26

Now the Ziphites [These guys that were always finking on David] came to Saul in Gibeah, they said, David is hiding himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon? Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David stayed in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul had come after him into the wilderness (26:1-3).

Now before David fled. But this time David is staying there in the wilderness.

And David sent out spies, and he understood that Saul was indeed come. [He had heard rumors, “Saul is coming”, so he sent out his fellows to spy, and they came back and they said, “Yep Saul’s on his way”.] So David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched his camp: and David beheld the place where Saul was lying down, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of Saul’s host: and Saul were laying in the

trench, and the people were pitched all around them. [So his army was around him, and he was there, lying in a trench in the center, with Abner his body guard, his chief general.] Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, the brother to Joab, [I practiced on it before I came, you wouldn't believe it would you? Ha, ha!] and he said, Who will go down with me to Saul in his camp (26:4-6)?

Now David is a very daring character! Here's Saul down there, surrounded by three thousand men, and, and you know, David sees them set up his, his sleeping back, rolled all out, and saw him lying in the trench. So he said, "Hey who wants to go down there with me?", you know.

Abishai said, [Hey] I'll go with you [man!] (26:6).

He, he just is kind of a, you know he's a fearless kind of a character in time. He has his other times.

So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear was stuck in the ground at his bolster: [Actually, right next to his head, in the Hebrew.] but Abner and the people were lying all around him. Then Abishai said to David, God has delivered your enemy into your hand today: let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not have to hit him the second time (26:7-8).

"Man, let me, let me do it David. I'll take his spear, and I'll just, you know, right through. One shot man is all I need!"

David said to Abishai, Do not destroy him: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? ["I mean you can't do that man, this guy has been anointed by God!"] David furthermore said, As the Lord lives, the Lord will smite him; [One of two ways.] his day shall come to die; [He'll die of old age] or he will descend into a battle, and perish (26:9-10).

"I mean God'll take care of him. I'm not gonna lay my hand..." Now here, here you see, David has sort of a complete turn around for good. With Nabal, he was going to avenge himself, he was on his way. "Guy's insulted me you know. I'm gonna take care of him." Now David is willing to commit to the Lord. Here's Saul, who is out to kill David, chasing him all over the country, and David says, "No I'm not gonna touch him, I don't need to touch him. The Lord will take care of him. His time will come to die, or he's gonna perish in battle, but that's the Lord's business. I'm going to leave him in the Lord's hands, and let the Lord handle this."

That's always wise. "Commit your ways unto the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass." You don't have to take things into your own hands. Whenever I begin to take things into my own hands, is when I really mess things up, and I can make a royal mess of things. Oh how important to just learn to, "Ah, leave it with the Lord! The Lord's my defense, He'll take care of it".

"If the Lord wants to take care of Saul, He'll take care of Saul. You know, his time is gonna come. I'm not gonna be the instrument. I'm not gonna do it. I'm gonna let the Lord take care of it." So it's a real turn around for David, from the previous chapter.

So the Lord forbid [David said] that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed: but, I pray thee, rip off his spear that is there by his head, and the cruse of water, and let's get out of here. So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they got away, and no man saw it, or knew it, neither did they wake up: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them (26:11-12).

Now surely you know, when you're all set up like that, and you're there to, you know, you would have guards that were supposed to be on duty, be awake and all, to protect Saul. But they'd all fallen asleep, a deep sleep from the Lord had come upon them.

So David went over to the other side, and he stood on the top of a hill afar off; a great space being between them (26:13).

I don't know what it is, but over in that country, sound travels a long way. There's something about the atmosphere, or, or something, I don't know. But I do know, when you're standing on the Herodian, you can hear the conversation of children, you can hear them as they're playing and all, two miles away. It's amazing the way sound travels over there, in that atmosphere, or whatever. Just, I don't know, maybe the rocks? But the sound travels tremendously. So David got a good distance away on the hill. It was probably still dark.

And David started crying out loud, [He started yelling you know.] cried to the people, and to Abner,

saying, *Don't you answer me Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who are you that cries to the king? David said to Abner, Are you not a valiant man? who is like to you in Israel? why then have you not kept the lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king my lord. And this thing is not good that you have done. As the Lord liveth, you ought to be put to death, because you have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed (6:14-16).*

“Abner you're supposed to be his bodyguard, and someone came in to get your king, and you didn't protect him. Man! You fell asleep on duty that's, that's death! You ought to be put to death Abner.”

Because, look for the king's spear? where is it? where is his cruse of water. [Sure enough the spear was gone, and the cruse of water was gone.] Saul knew David's voice, and he said, Is this thy voice, my son David? [Ha, ha, ha!] and David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. Why does my lord pursue after his servant? what have I done? what evil is in my hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord has stirred you up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, then cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Get out of the land, Go to the land of other gods (26:16-19).

“Who is it that stirred you up against me Saul? If the Lord did, then let me offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Let me get right with the Lord. If its men that are stirring you up, then let them be cursed, because they've caused me and forced me to flee. I can't live in my own country. They're forcing me to be driven out into other lands.”

Interesting, when Absalom later on, had revolted against David, and was coming with a army from Hebron, to take the throne by force from David. David fled from Jerusalem, going over the mount of Olives, this guy Shimei, who hated David, was throwing dirt in the air, throwing rocks at David, and cursing David. Abishai, this same guy said, “David let me go up, and I'll kill that kid”, I mean, “I'll kill that man. I, look, let me go, I'll kill him David”, David said, “No. Maybe God has put on his heart to curse me. You know, maybe, maybe God said, ‘Go curse David’, so leave him alone. Let him curse, let him throw his rocks, maybe it's of God.”

Now David is saying to Saul, “Hey if it's of the Lord, then let me offer a sacrifice, let me get right with God. But if men have done this, then let them be cursed”.

Now therefore, don't let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one does hunt a partridge in the mountains (26:20).

“You're, you're seeking after me, and you're seeking after nothing. Like I was seeking after a flea.”

or like I was a wild bird, a partridge. Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in your eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and erred exceedingly (26:20-21).

Saul was caught by surprise. He was awakened out of a sound sleep, a deep sleep, the scripture says, from the Lord. Awakened, and hearing the voice of David. Being awakened out of a sound sleep, his mouth started moving before his brain was in gear. In other words, he was not guarding now, himself. In an unguarded moment, he spoke what he knew to be the truth about himself. Looking back over his life, he, he had to confess, “I've been a fool. I've sinned. I've been a fool. I have erred exceedingly”.

Every man knows the truth about himself, though it may be buried deep down inside. We know the folly of our past. We know that we have done foolish things. We try to hide it. We try to appear to others like we're cool. We, you know, always make the right decisions, that we're real sharp, and you know, we try to put of this air of confidence, and coolness. But deep inside, we know the truth, that we've made a lot of mistakes. Saul, caught by surprise, confessed the truth. “I've played the fool.”

As you look back at his life, that is surely accurate autobiography. Here was a man who had every opportunity in the world of being a great man. He was big, he was good looking, he came from a good home, he was humble, God called him to be a king. God anointed him, and filled him with His Spirit, and God surrounded him with godly men. Every opportunity to go down in history as one of the great men of Israel. But he played the fool, he played the fool because he tried to hide from the call of God. Because he entered into the area of the priesthood where he had no right being, offering the sacrifice. Because his heart became lifted up with pride. Because he failed to submit his life totally to God, and he rebelled against the order of

God, and when caught by the prophet, sought to excuse himself saying, “I brought the sheep and the oxen back to sacrifice unto God, because they were so good”. “I’ve played the fool.”

David answered and said, Behold the king’s spear! Send one of your young men over here to [get it, to] fetch it (26:22).

So one of the young men of Saul had to run over to the other side of the mountain, to get Saul’s spear. And, he said...

The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered you into my hand today, but I would not stretch forth my hand against the Lord’s anointed. And, behold, as your life was much set by this day in my eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, [“Even as I’ve shown mercy to you, may God show mercy to me.”] and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. [So again David is saying, “Let the Lord be my defense, let the Lord deliver me, even as I have been gracious to you, let God be gracious to me”.] Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also you will prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place (26:23-25).

Saul went back to Gibeah, but David, in a lapse of faith, went to Gath. In the next chapter we find again the tragic failure of the king. Again, a lapse of faith. Again, not trusting in God to fulfill His promise, and His word to put him on the throne, David again takes things in his own hands. He feels his only place of refuge and safety is just to get out of the country, to go to the land of the Philistines, “Surely Saul will not pursue me in the land of the Philistines”.

David’s flight to Gath is a backward flight, as far as his spiritual life is concerned. It’s a period of backsliding for David, and it led to other failures. One step back often leads to other failures. Going into the camp of the enemy, often brings us into other great failures. So, David’s mistake of seeking refuge in the camp of the enemy. We find David sinning, and committing some pretty bad things, as we move into the next chapter. Deceit, and lies, and so forth, because it follows his going into the enemy camp.

You know, there are places where you, as a child of God, have no business going. If you do go into these places, then you are just really exposing yourself to further denials of the Lord. We’ll look at this next week, as we continue our study through the Bible. David’s lapse of faith, and his fleeing to the land of the Philistines.

May God plant His word deep in our hearts tonight, and may He help us to learn these important lessons of commitment of all of our ways unto him. Lest we, as David, be guilty of seeking to defend ourselves, avenging ourselves. But may we, as David, heed the warnings of God, and when God puts the red flag up, help us to stop, and have enough sense not to carry out our intentions. But to listen to the voice of God, and be obedient. Thus, may God be with you today, and this week, as you walk with Him, may you experience the anointing of His Spirit upon your life. May you be filled with the Spirit, and may you see the hand of God working in, and around your life, in a special way. May you be blessed of the Lord, as you trust in Him, and walk in faith. In Jesus’ name.