

# THE UNITED KINGDOM

Saul, David & Solomon

Lesson 4  
October 30

Saul & David  
Under Stress  
1 Samuel 25-31

Now Samuel died. (1 Sam 25:1)

In this lesson, we'll see both King Saul and young David under stress. How do they handle it? What can we learn as a result? Interestingly, both stressful situations are tied to the death of Samuel. Let's start with David under stress.

And there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was discerning and beautiful, but the man was harsh and badly behaved; he was a Calebite. David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. So David sent ten young men. And David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal and greet him in my name. And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have. I hear that you have shearers. Now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing all the time they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.'" (25:2-8)

When Nabal hears the request, he insults David and refuses to share. And how did David respond?

And David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword!" And every man of them strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage. (25:13)

It takes wise Abigail to restrain David from impulsively killing Nabal (25:14-35). But David's tough times don't stop there. In 1 Samuel 26, he's back to running for his life from Saul. Once again he has the opportunity to take Saul's life, but refuses to "put out" his hand "against the LORD's anointed" (26:8-10).

In 1 Samuel 28, we find King Saul under stress. Samuel had died and Saul had put the mediums and the necromancers out of the land, but the Philistines are gathering against him and Saul is greatly afraid. When he asks his servants to seek out a woman who was a medium, he is told that there is one in Endor. So Saul disguised himself, came to her by night, and requested that she "bring up" Samuel. Incredibly, it happens! Saul is reminded of the reason the LORD had turned from him and torn the kingdom out of his hand, but Samuel also delivers haunting news:

"Moreover, the LORD will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The LORD will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines." (28:19)

And that's how the book of 1 Samuel eventually ends, with Saul and his sons dying in battle with the Philistines. What can we learn? Let's discuss...

## For Class & Family Discussion:

- In **1 Samuel 25**, we saw David under stress. Notice what he said in **25:21-22**, but notice also how Abigail reasons with him in **25:30-31**. In **25:32-35**, David begins to think a little more clearly and humbly. What can we learn from this time of David under stress?
- In **1 Samuel 26**, David is running again for his life from King Saul. When Saul is sleeping and David has the opportunity to end the whole painful experience, what do you think he means in **26:10-11**? What does it continue to reveal about his heart?
- In **1 Samuel 28**, we read about mediums and necromancers. Who were these people? What had the LORD said about them in **Leviticus 19:31** and **Deuteronomy 18:9-12**? What can we learn from this time of Saul under stress?
- Let's read **1 Samuel 28:8-14** together. What do you think of the woman crying out with a loud voice when she saw Samuel and immediately knowing that she had been deceived?
- In your own words, what is Samuel communicating to Saul in **28:19**?
- In **1 Samuel 30**, we find David in yet another stressful situation as the Amalekites have raided, burned with fire, and taken captive all the women and children. When David and his men came to the mess, the people spoke of stoning him, "because all the people were bitter in soul" (**30:6**). But notice what David did when he "was greatly distressed"—he "strengthened himself in the LORD his God" (**30:6**). What do you think that means? Are there any ways we can do the same today?
- How did Saul lose his life in **1 Samuel 31**?
- It's only been a brief overview of *1 Samuel*, but looking back, what do you think we should see and even apply from this part of Israel's history?