

1 SAMUEL, PART 2 (WHO ARE YOU MOST LIKE – SAUL OR DAVID?)
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SERIES: 1 Samuel, Part 2 (Who Are You Most Like – Saul or David?)
TITLE: Program 33 – Look Up!

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

Have you ever failed a test? Worse, have you ever flunked a course? I mean that is bad. I mean you have wasted the money you invested, the books that you bought, the time that you spent; it's all for absolutely nothing. You flunked. Do you realize that life is a test and that God's the Professor and that He does not want you to flunk? He does not want you to fail. Rather He wants you to graduate with honors. That's what He has in mind; hang in there.

PART ONE

Life is a school; it's there to prepare you and me for an awesome awesome eternity. And what I find when I read the Word of God is I find that God continually tests people. You get to Hezekiah and these men from Babylon come to visit him because of some great event that has happened, and God says He did that and He allowed them come because He was testing

Hezekiah. And Hezekiah was a man of God. You read David in Psalm 11 talking about God testing man, and so what you and I need to understand is that God is a Professor that does not want to fail you. He's not out to flunk you, rather He wants to pass you and He wants to pass you with honors. And that's why it says **"Study to show [your] self approved unto God..." (2 Timothy 2:15a KJV)** Approve means you're put to the test and you have found that you have passed the test with flying colors. **"Study to show [your] self approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, [handling accurately]..."** cutting straight is what the Greek word means, **"...the Word of truth."** (2 Timothy 2:15 KJV) Well that's what we're going to do today, we're going to handle the Word of God accurately. That's what this program is all about. This program is all about Beloved, you learning how to discover truth for yourself. We're looking for people who are looking for truth, because we have the Book, the Book of truth. We have the One who said that **"[He is] the way, the truth and the life; [and] no one comes to the Father but [by Him]."** (John 14:6b) And His name is Jesus Christ. And as we study the life of David you can know this, that in 2 Samuel you come to that wonderful promise of the Davidic covenant, the promise that God gives David that there will be One who will sit on his throne, on David's throne and live forever. And the One that's going to sit on his throne and live forever is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is coming back, and when He comes back it is graduation day. He is coming and His reward is with Him to give to everyone according to his deeds. Well I left us in 1 Samuel, chapter 30 and I want us to go back to 1 Samuel, chapter 30, and then we're going to jump over for just a minute to Psalm 11, because I want to show you about this test. But let's see the test that God puts David through. Now listen, David is in a test in the wilderness. Now remember we're on this mini-series within Samuel looking at the divine presence that goes with us through the wilderness of life so that we can come out as more than a conqueror and we can be everything that God wants us to be. Well in

1 Samuel, chapter 30, remember in chapter 29 Achish, one of the lords of the Philistines that David has been serving under has sent David back because the lords of the Philistines don't want David going to battle on their side against David's people, because they feel that if they did that David would fight for Israel. And really they were right. Now Achish did not know that. Achish believed that David was loyal to him. But he sent him back to Ziklag. It took David and his mighty men three days to get back to Ziklag. When they got there they were absolutely horrified because their city had been burned with fire. There were no men; there were no women; there were no children there. Their livestock was gone, and they were just absolutely horrified. They didn't know what had happened, but the Amalekites had come and had raided Ziklag where David and his mighty men lived. Now watch what it says in verse 3 of 1 Samuel 30: **"When David and his men came to the city, [and] behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive. Then David and the people who were with him lifted [up] their voices and they wept until there was no strength in them to weep."**(1Samuel 30:3-4) Now if you got the study guide, if you went to preceptsforlife.com and you downloaded the study guide and you're studying along with us and you're learning how to study your Bible, how to discover truth for yourself so that you know that you know that you know, you know that one of the things I told you to do is mark the word weep. Whenever I come to cry or weep in the Bible, or tears I want to mark it, and so I mark it with a blue teardrop. And so it says, **"...they wept until there was no strength in them to weep."**(30:4b) In other words, they finally ran out of tears and were finally, absolutely exhausted. Now God is telling us this to show us the depth of their despair, the pain of their heart and of their soul. Here they were going off to fight with Achish and in all probability to turn around and defend Israel. And now they have come back three days on the road, on the horses to find out that everything's gone. It says, **"Now David's two wives had**

been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow [wife] of Nabal the Carmelite.”(30:5) Now remember I have told you just in case; I know that we say Abigail. But that’s not the way the Jews say it, and I’m not sure I have it right, but I want to be as close to them as I can. And it says, **“Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him....,”**(30:6a) His mighty men of valor are so broken, they are so hurt, they’re so wounded that they’re talking about stoning him. I mean everything is absolutely the pits. It is the depths. It says, **“...for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and daughters....”** Now watch. **“...But David strengthened himself in the Lord....”**(30:6b) David is in a test, and God is watching to see how he’s going to respond, because listen, for every test you pass, the smarter you are, the stronger you are, the more stable you are, and the more endurance and perseverance and hangeth thou in there, you have in any situation because you have strengthened your spiritual muscles. Now these mighty men of valor that had joined David had come along at a very special time in David’s life. Now he had mighty men of valor, but it was like precept upon precept, it was man of valor upon man of valor upon man of valor, because what happened was David kept attracting these men because of who he was, because of his leadership, because of his godliness and because God kept using him as a magnet to build this mighty army. Because you know what? The wilderness time is almost over. It’s almost over. David doesn’t know it. David doesn’t know it, but God knows it. And yet God, right up until the end is perfecting this man, right up until the end He is growing him up, He is graduating him. He is going to let him come through with honors. And so while the other men in their sudden despair and their sudden loss want to pick up those stones and hurl those stones at them, David stops. He doesn’t hurl back. He doesn’t get mad back. He doesn’t say, “Well you’re the ones that decided to join me and I can’t help it. And I just had to go there, and you followed me.” He doesn’t do that. You have to admire him because there have been times

in the midst of a trial and a test when I just wanted to blame everyone that I could around me, accuse everyone, say if only, and God drew me up short. I mean He's drawn me up short. Why? Because our tendency is to lash out instead of look up. See, we're not to lash out in the midst of a trial, or in a test. It's an exam; you don't want to fail it. And you're going to fail it if you lash out instead of looking up. Now it says, **"...But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God."**(30:6b) It's David's God. David had a personal relationship with God. Beloved, do you have a personal relationship with God? If you don't have a personal relationship with God then I can tell you that every test God is giving you, because He wants to bring you flat on your knees and He wants to bring you to a personal relationship with Him. He wants to be your God. He wants you to be his people. He wants to take His laws and write them on your heart. He wants to make you part of His forever family, bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, part of the forever family of God so that you live with Him forever and ever. Well, he strengthens himself in the Lord. Let's stop for a minute and I want us to go to Psalm 11, because Psalm 11 is a psalm of David. And listen to what it says, **"In the Lord I take refuge...;" "In the Lord I take refuge...;"**(Psalm 11:1a) See, where do you go? David strengthened himself in the Lord. **"In the Lord I take refuge; How can you say to my soul, 'Flee as a bird to your mountain; For, behold, the wicked bend the bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string to shoot in darkness at the upright [of] heart. If the foundations [be] destroyed, What [will] the righteous do?'"** It says, **"The Lord is in His holy temple...;"**(Psalm 11:1-4a) See, David remembered where God was, that David was in his holy temple, that God was sitting on the throne and that God's sovereignty ruled over all. It says, **"...the Lord's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The Lord tests the righteous and the wicked, And the one who loves violence His soul hates."** Fire and brimstone, **"Upon the wicked He will rain snares; Fire and brimstone**

and burning wind will be the portion of their cup. For the Lord is righteous, He love righteousness; [and] the upright will behold His face.”(Psalm 11:4b-7) David’s in this terrible test, in this terrible hard exam, and what does he do? He strengthens himself in the Lord. Instead of lashing out David looks up. What are you doing? We’ll talk about it when I come back.

PART TWO

Have you ever cheated on an exam? Have you ever looked at another person’s paper because you wanted the answer instead of looking to God? Do you realize that nobody else may have seen you cheat, but God did? And God doesn’t want you to cheat. And God is saying to you, “When I take you through your test, don’t cheat. Don’t look at someone else. Don’t see how they did it. I want you to look to Me.” And that’s what David did. Look at 1 Samuel, chapter 30. It says, here these men are, his mighty men; they are so hurt, so crushed about their sons and daughters that they are ready to stone David. **“...But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.”(1Samuel 30:6b)** Now watch what he does. And by the way, what we’re about to see is something that we’ve seen has been a habit in David’s life. It says **“Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, ‘Please bring me the ephod...,’”(30:7a)** Now remember the ephod was that linen garment that held the breast piece, that had that sack that held the Urim and the Thummim, the the stones, the lights and that. So this is the way they inquired of God. And on that breast piece were the stones from the different tribes of Israel. Okay and so he said, **“...‘Please bring me the ephod.’ So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. [And] David inquired of the Lord...,”(30:7b-8a)** David didn’t cheat. David didn’t turn anyway, but he looked up. He didn’t lash out. He didn’t cheat; he looked up. **“David inquired of the Lord.”** O Beloved, learn on every test, when someone comes to you and you’re tempted to walk in pride, know this:

it's a test. Look up, inquire of God and say, "God, I want to pass this test. Tell me how to pass this test." You're in a trial, some tragedy has happened. It is horrible; it is horrific. I have friends right now that are dieing. And it is a painful painful death for one of them. It is horrible. It is horrific. And yet that dear man is looking up to the Lord. He is inquiring of God; he wants to go and be with the Lord so bad, but he's willing to suffer for as long as the Lord says suffer. So **"David inquired of the Lord, saying, 'Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?' And He, [God] said to him, 'Pursue, for you [shall] surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue all.'"**(30:8) Oh God, whew, thank you God, thank you. It is so wonderful to inquire of God and have God say to you, ["It's going to be all right. You pursue them. You're going to overtake them and you know what; you're going to rescue them all."] (30:8b Paraphrased) What's missing? His two wives, his children. What's missing of those mighty mighty men? Their sons and their daughters and their wives are missing, and here is this blessed word from God. Now look, David could have inquired of someone else. And that's what I'm calling cheating. He could have inquired of someone else. He could have asked someone else, "What's the answer to this?" but David didn't. He didn't look about; he looked up, he looked up. So many times in a trial we're tempted to look about, to see what this person thinks, what that person thinks, what's the answer, what would you do. Now I know that in many counselors there's wisdom. (Paraphrased, Proverbs 11:14) But listen, you don't go to your counselors until you look up, because a lot of people are not getting counseling according to the Book. They're getting man's wisdom and they're saying, "Walk out of this marriage. Leave this person. Do this; give up. Quit loving them. Don't forgive them." You know you're not getting godly counsel. So you always, instead of looking about at somebody else's paper, somebody else's opinion, somebody else's answer, look up for God's answer. **"So David went...and the six hundred men who were with him...."**(1Samuel 30:9a) Now I want us to stop and pause

on that six hundred men because remember we've been talking about David's mighty men of valor. And I want you to go to 1 Chronicles, chapter 12, same chapter. We've looked at verses 1 to 7 and then we've looked at verse 19. Now I want us to look at verse 20. **"As he went to Ziklag..."(1Chronicles 12:20a)** now remember these men from Manasseh want to defect with him and go with him into battle with the Philistines as they go against the Israelites. But of course they're sent home. And they're sent home because the lords of the Philistines rightly don't trust David. But now it says, **"As he went to Ziklag..."** and this is on the way down to Ziklag, three days on the way back down, **"...there defected to him from Manasseh..."(12:20a-b)** and it names all these men. And it says in verse 21, **"They helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor, and were captains [of] the army."(12:21)** I want you to stop and I want you to see something because it says that David is going and six hundred men are going with him. But I want you to see God's sovereignty. And I want you to see how God wants to approve you, how God wants you to pass the test, how God wants to excel, how God wants to give you honors. So watch. Here are these men now, and those men have gone to David, and they say, "We want to go with you up to fight this battle." The Philistines say, "Go home." So they go home and they disappear you know, out of sight. But then, when they see David turn around and leave the lords of the Philistines and start back to Ziklag, which is three days away, they come and they join them. Now listen; this is God. This is God, because God knows that David has to go against this band of raiders. At this point he doesn't even know who they are. He doesn't even know where they went. But he is inquiring of God, he's saying, ["Shall I go up?" And God says, "Yes, go up." "Shall I pursue them?" "Yes, you're going to pursue them and you're going to recover everything. And I've already got you covered. I've already got you covered. I brought those extra men in, those extra men in from Manasseh, and they're going to go with you and you're

going to have a successful raid.”] (1Samuel 30:8 Paraphrased) You see, what God does Beloved, is God is always previous. And if you’re going to go through a test God’s going to make sure that no test or no trial or no temptation is more than you can bear. But He will provide a way of escape that you may endure it. He’ll provide a way of escape. (Paraphrased, 1 Corinthians 10:13) The way of escape is not necessarily of running away, but it is a way of victory. It is a way of achievement. It is a way of glory. It’s a way of graduation with honors. **“So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and they came to the brook Besor, where...[they] remained.”(1Samuel 30:9)** Well I want to go back to 1 Chronicles, chapter 12. And it says, (verse 21-22) “[For day by day] **They helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor, and were captains [of armies].”(1Chronicles 12:21)** He sent him leaders. And it says, **“For day by day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army like the army of God.”(12:22)** What is God doing? Mmmm, it is so good. He is getting ready to take David out of the wilderness, but David doesn’t know it. He is getting ready to change everything. And God in His previousness is getting this mighty men of valor ready to go with him. O Beloved, I want you to know that God does test you, that His eyelids test the hearts of men. He tests the wicked and He tests the righteous. But when He tests the righteous, He tests the righteous so that they might pass the test, and so that they might pass it with honors. And so what He does is He gives you what you need ahead of time. You don’t know what He’s doing. David didn’t realize what He was doing when he was on his way to Ziklag. He didn’t know when he got there what would happen. But David was ready because God was previous. Look up; look up Beloved. In the test, look up.