

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic.,
3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS
LESSON 19B
FIRST SAMUEL
CHAPTER 29**

INTRODUCTION

When we are faced with a dilemma, the best thing to do is to ask for God's guidance. David had forgotten that. He went into enemy territory because his own home, Israel, had become "enemy territory" and he had run out of places to hide.

To make the Philistines accept him, he had to pretend to fight against Israel, when he had actually been attacking the enemies of Israel. But his ploy worked and he managed to convince his "friend" Achish, the Philistine king, to give him a city to live and to hide in. David had it quite good for a while. His family was with him. By this time he had already married seven times. His first wife, Michal (Saul's daughter), had been given to another man. She was not with him. This was done to insult David and to tell the whole of Israel that king Saul had rejected him as his successor. His eighth wife would be Bathsheba.

Now the Philistines had amassed a huge army to attack king Saul and Israel. David was caught between a rock and a hard place. If he joined the Philistines, he would be forced to attack Israel or reveal his hand by not fighting against his own people. If he went for the

second alternative, his life and that of his people would be in jeopardy as the Philistines would want to kill all of them.

If he sided with the Philistines and actually attacked Israel, his kingship would go up in smoke. How could the next king of Israel side with the enemy and attack his own people?

This chapter reveals the power of the Almighty God in controlling not only the lives of His own people, Israel, and his chosen one, David, but also His enemies. There is none who can thwart the sovereign plan of God.

COMMENTARY

**God's Deliverance of David
-- (29:1-5)**

The Philistines were preparing to go to war against Israel. They gathered in Aphek, the most northern Philistine city which was an important and strategic stronghold. The Israelites were camped at Jezreel from where they would be deployed to the foot of Mount Gilboa to battle against the Philistines (28:4). The Philistine armies marched orderly in array passing through their five cities. Five Philistine lords formed the head of the column of soldiers. Achish was at the rear of the column with David and his men.

The Philistines were in the hundreds and thousands. The army was very large. It was going to be a do or die battle. Israel must be destroyed once and for all or the Philistines would die trying. They noticed David was part of this huge army.

The Philistines questioned Achish about David, his “friend.” This was Achish’s reply *“Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?”* (29:3) Imagine an enemy of God testifying of your good conduct? See the power of God in the whole matter. David was in hot soup and he did not know what to do. God did everything in delivering his servant because His plans for him were not accomplished yet.

Unless and until these plans were accomplished, David would be protected by the LORD. The LORD’s anointed would not be harmed or killed. It was true that David used trickery to protect himself from Achish. David was so successful in his trickery that Achish testified of his faithfulness toward him these past few years.

The other Philistine kings were unhappy with Achish. They challenged Achish’s wisdom in bringing David along to attack Israel, David’s nation. They were angry with Achish and replied, *“Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary (Satan) to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? Should it not be with the heads of these men?”* (29:4) The arguments of these kings were valid. They did not trust David.

What if, in the heat of the battle while they were focused on fighting Israel, David attacked them from the rear? He could reconcile with king Saul his master by helping to fight

against the Philistines. That would be one of the best ways of getting back into the good graces of king Saul.

Their argument was not based upon ignorance as the next verse revealed. They said, *“Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?”* (29:5) David’s reputation preceded him even into the camp of the Philistines. David’s courage and great victories were remembered by his enemies. These thousands that David was reputed to have killed were mostly Philistines. This was perhaps an indirect way of reminding Achish that David had killed many of their fellowmen in the past. They demanded that David be sent back.

A Deliverance from on High —29:6-11

Achish had no choice but to submit to the demands of his fellow kings. He diplomatically requested David to return to his camp with his men saying that the other Philistine kings “favour thee not”. It was interesting to note that Achish invoked the name of the LORD in his request to David. *“Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.”* (29:6) The fault did not lie with David for he had been a very good “friend.” Achish testified to David that your conduct had been exemplary. He found absolutely no fault with him. But the decision was not up to Achish alone. His other fellow kings

did not trust him. Achish did not know that this was David's lifeline. He was so happy to have an excuse to get out of this most difficult situation. But he could not let Achish know that he was happy to get out of this battle.

David answered that he did not deserve to be sent off and that he should be allowed to "fight against the enemies of my lord the king". *"David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" (29:8)* David's plea to Achish of his innocence was a show. He had to pretend that he was "forced" to leave and wanted to fight with Achish against Israel.

The release came from the words of Achish. *"And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart."* (29:9-10)

David was once again delivered from a dilemma by God's intervention. Could he really join hands with the Philistines and fight against his own people? If he were to turn against the Philistines, he would probably be killed. David must have cracked his head to find a way out of the difficult situation. God came to his rescue. In accordance to Achish's suggestion, David returned to Ziklag early the next day.

David was the happiest man in the Philistine territory to be delivered so easily from an impossible dilemma. What is impossible with man is nothing with God. In one stroke, the hearts of the kings were in God's control and David was sent home safe and sound.

PRACTICAL VALUE

In time of great distress, do not use your own wisdom. Trust the LORD to make a way of escape for you. Proverbs 3:5-8, *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."* A New Testament verse that speaks of the same promise of help from God is 1 Corinthians 10:13, *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

When things look darkest, God's light of deliverance and help will shine the brightest. It is a light that a Christian will remember for life. The anger, abuse and wrath of sinful men will be turned around by God for His own glory. The Christian has to remain faithful and trust in the LORD no matter what the outcome may be. God is always in control. God has promised His children in Psalms 76:10 that *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* AMEN

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: 1 Samuel 29:1-11.

Tuesday: 1 Samuel 29: 1-11.

Wednesday: 1 Samuel 29:1-11.

Thursday: 1 Samuel 29:1-11.

Friday: 1 Samuel 29:1-11; 1Corinthians 10:13; 2 Timothy 4-17-18.

Analysis

Text	Practical Value
1 Samuel 29:1-5	
1 Samuel 29:6-11	

Discussion Questions

1. Did David practise situational ethics when he lied to protect himself? Explain the term situational ethics.

2. Share with your group how you were caught in a difficult situation. Did God deliver you or did you deliver yourself?

3. Can we employ what David did in the office or school? If you declare war on your colleagues, can you use this tactic to get by?

4. Based upon the usage of the word adversary (Satan) by the Philistine kings to describe David, how do you understand the meaning of the word Satan?

5. What effect would the rejection by the Philistine kings have on David and his men?

6. Describe one spiritual lesson gleaned from this chapter that is especially meaningful to you.
