

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 1

SECOND SAMUEL

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Samuel was a prophet of God and a king-maker. He anointed Saul, the first king of Israel – Saul was later rejected of God because of his disobedience. Then Samuel was instructed by God to anoint David. In First Samuel, we were given an account of the rise and fall of the house of Saul. The book ended with a sad account of the deaths of Saul and his three sons, one of whom was David's bosom and best friend, Jonathan.

The focus of First Samuel was on the end of the period of Judges and the beginning of the monarchy. The focus of Second Samuel was on the reign of David (1017 – 985 BC). It opened with David being anointed publicly in Hebron as the first king of Judah, and it closed with him being old and stricken in years, coming to the end of his days on earth as the second king of Israel.

David's ascension to the throne after the death of Saul was accompanied by initial struggles with the remaining son of king Saul and Saul's general, Abner. It was not until chapter 7 of 2 Samuel that David became king over all Israel.

This lesson recorded David's reaction to the news of Saul's death and described his forgiving heart and how he eulogized the death of the Lord's anointed and his best friend Jonathan.

COMMENTARY

**David's Response to the Death
of Saul—1:10**

David had returned from defeating the Amalekites who had earlier raided Ziklag and captured his family and the families of his men (while they had gone to join forces with the Philistines against Israel). There was great rejoicing.

Two days after their triumphant return, a man appeared at David's camp in Ziklag. His clothes were torn and there was dust on his head – outward signs of grief. When he met David, he bowed in obeisance as a mark of respect and acknowledgment of his lordship.

In answer to David's question, the man said that he had come from the Philistine-Israeli conflict on Mount Gilboa which was 96 kilometres away. The journey must have taken him at least three to four days on foot. When enquired about the conflict, he replied that many of them (the children of Israel) were dead including Saul and Jonathan. When pressed for proofs of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, the man related that he had seen Saul leaning on his spear with the Philistines' chariots and horsemen advancing on him. Saul had asked him who he was and he had answered that he was an Amalekite. According to him, Saul then asked him to kill him. He complied because he was sure that

Saul could not have survived his wounds. He then took Saul's crown (a golden cup which was tied round his forehead) and arm band, which he presented to David.

The man's account was different from that in 1 Samuel 31:3-5. According to the first account, Saul was standing with his armour-bearer beside him. As he was the king, it was unlikely that he would be alone in the heat of the battle. Saul had asked his armour-bearer to kill him. The armour bearer refused because he was the LORD's anointed. Saul could not have asked an Amalekite to kill him for he had expressed to his armour-bearer that he did not want to be slain by the Philistines. It was written that Saul died by his own hand – he fell onto his sword. Thus, the account of the Amalekite was a lie. He must have taken Saul's crown and arm band before the Philistines came to strip the belongings of the dead.

The Amalekite behaved like most people today. Since David's mortal enemy was king Saul who had hunted him for many years like a fugitive, he believed that David must have wanted him dead. Other kings would definitely want their enemy dead and perhaps even reward the one who had killed him.

Lying was an acceptable way to obtain money and personal wealth. This was the sin of the serpent in the Garden of Eden when it tempted Eve. It is perhaps one the most common sins committed by man today. The Bible warns that liars will be burned in the Lake of Fire for all eternity. Revelation 21:8 says, *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the*

abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Death of a Liar—1:12-16

David and his men grieved over the death of Saul and Jonathan and the defeat of the people of the LORD. David rent his clothes, mourned, wept and fasted until the evening. His men did likewise. The Amalekite must have been confused by David's reaction. Instead of rejoicing like what most men would do at news that Saul who had relentlessly sought his destruction was dead, he mourned. David was no ordinary man. He was a man after God's own heart. His own heart might say, “be happy at the death of Saul” but his godly heart said, “weep for the Lord's anointed is dead”. David did not see Saul as his enemy but as the Lord's anointed. That made a world of difference.

David regained his composure and asked the man more questions. The man answered that he was the son of a “stranger” (a resident alien of Israel), an Amalekite. In other words, he had lived in Israel for some years. He knew that David would be the next ruler because it was widely known among the people. David asked: “How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?” (1:14). The Amalekite was not prepared for this. David called one of his young warriors to execute the Amalekite.

David did not know that the Amalekite was a liar. He accepted the man's word as the truth and he

ordered his execution because he had slain the LORD's anointed. David had restrained himself on two occasions when presented with the opportunity to kill Saul. To kill the LORD's anointed is to go against the LORD Himself.

If the Amalekite had told the truth, he would not have been executed by David (since he did not kill Saul). He came up with the story in order to ingratiate himself. He trudged 96 kilometres from Mount Gilboa to Ziklag hoping to gain some reward from the next king of Israel. Instead he received his own death sentence. His lies killed him! Lying will have the same effect on all men, no exception!

David's Lament—1:17-27

It is common to mourn the demise of a friend or a loved one, but highly unusual to do so for an enemy. David did just that. He lamented over Saul and over Jonathan. David composed a song and entitled it "The Bow" (1:18b). He instructed that the song be taught to all the children of Judah. It was written in the book of Jasher, a collection of odes in praise of certain heroes among the people of God, interwoven with mention of their achievements. This book was first mentioned in Joshua 10:13.¹

In the first part (1:19-21), David paid tribute to the mighty warriors of Israel. He called them "the beauty [glory] of Israel" and "the mighty". He did not want this

¹And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hastened not to go down about a whole day.

news to be broadcasted in Gath and Askelon, cities of the Philistines, lest they rejoice. He pronounced a curse upon Mount Gilboa, the site of the battle, where many of the Israeli soldiers had fallen—let there be no dew nor rain.

In the next part (1:22-25), he recalled memories of Saul and Jonathan. He praised Jonathan for his skill in the use of the bow, and Saul in the use of the sword. Saul and Jonathan were united when they were alive and remained so even in death. Indeed, Jonathan remained faithful and loyal to his father, Saul, all his life. David summoned the daughters of Israel to mourn and weep for Saul who had clothed them with goodly apparel.

In the third part (1:26), he expressed his distress at the death of Jonathan whom he addressed as brother. He acknowledged the "wonderful" love that Jonathan had for him. David concluded by repeating the refrain—"How are the mighty fallen."

David's speech here is a pattern for the writing of a Christian eulogy. Saul did so many evil things against an innocent man like David but not one word was mentioned against him. David highlighted Saul's accomplishments. Truth was told with no compromise. Writing a eulogy is not flattery -- that would be lying and doing a great injustice to the memory of the dead. A eulogy is speaking the truth about a dead person with a sincere heart. David was truly a man after God's own heart as testified by the words that he uttered in deep sorrow for

Saul, his king and the Lord's anointed.

PRACTICAL VALUE

It is true that honesty is the best policy. If the Amalekite had not lied, he would not have been executed. He thought that David would be pleased with him and would reward him. He did not expect David's response. His death was justified as David said (1:16b): "Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed."

There are people like the Amalekite who make up stories to please others for their own selfish gains. Lying is a serious sin. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and were struck dead instantly (Acts 5:1-11).

David's mourning and weeping for Saul and Jonathan teach us to mourn and weep for the sins of all men including that of unbelievers and our enemies. There is no joy in seeing someone fall or die even if that person has done us great harm and injustice. This is what all Christians must observe for we are all men after God's own heart. David's actions are recorded for our benefit so that we may all be like him just as he is like Christ.

AMEN

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: 2 Samuel 1:1-12; Psalm 51:5-7; 90:7-8.

Tuesday: 2 Samuel 1:13-27; Matthew 5:3-12.

Wednesday: 2 Samuel 1:1-27;

Thursday: 2 Samuel 2:1-27;

Friday: 2 Samuel: 2:1-27;

Analysis:

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 1:1-12	
2 Samuel 1:13-27	

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the reason Christians lie?

2. Would you tell a lie to gain something? Have you ever told a lie to gain something?

3. Morally and biblically, was it right for David to execute the Amalekite who confessed to killing Saul?

4. Was David's reaction to the news of Saul's death hypocritical?

5. What can we learn from David's eulogy of his mortal enemy?
