

What would it be like to be a fugitive? Movies have been made on the subject. Imagine being personally hunted by the head of your country plus 3000 of his best soldiers. Then add to that your need to keep safe not only yourself, but the friends and loved ones who are with you.

Then add to the problem, certain nasty people who find out who you are & want to turn you in, even though you are innocent. Is this an episode of the *A-Team*, or *The Fugitive*? No, it's David, as we find him at the beginning of **1 Sam. 26**.

26:1—The Ziphites disappoint David once again (cf. 23:19-20) as they betray him to Saul.

The Wilderness of Ziph



En-Gedi (on the Dead Sea)



<https://www.israel-in-photos.com/ein-gedi.html>

[En-Gedi is the largest oasis in Israel. It has a stream & waterfalls.]

26:2-7—David and Abishai come upon Saul sleeping. (Abishai is David’s nephew.) Saul surrounded by 3,000 soldiers—a lot for David and Abishai to tiptoe past without waking! Doesn’t seem smart! We learn later in the chapter that God had caused a deep sleep to fall on the soldiers. He was looking out for David even if he wasn’t being wise at this point.

26:8-11—Abishai’s bad advice—God has given you an open door. Walk through it and kill your enemy. Sounds very logical. Unfortunately, we often use that kind of logic in making decisions, but it was not the will of God. Abishai says he could kill Saul with one blow, but David insists that they not attack the Lord’s anointed; instead, leave Saul in God’s hands.

26:12-16—David took Saul’s water jug and his spear; then traveled a safe distance away to where he could call to Saul and company. David starts by teasing or taunting Abner. Remember that David had been Saul’s bodyguard; he lets Abner know that he isn’t doing his job.

26:17, 21, 25—Saul’s responses. v.17—“Is this your voice, my son David” (David, whom Saul has been seeking to kill!) Note how David continues to show respect in his reply to Saul. **v.18—**He asks why Saul is hunting him. What evil has he done? He tries to reason with Saul, who is pretty much past reason at this point. **v.19—**Has God stirred you up, or is it your men who have turned you against me? Let me give an offering and let our relationship be restored. **v.20—**A very solemn appeal. David feels that he’s not safe anywhere in Israel. He’s going to be hunted continually. **v.21—Saul’s next response: “I have sinned.”** (Sounds like a wonderful statement of repentance.) **“Return, my son David, for I will not harm you again.”** (But we’ve heard Saul make such empty promises before.) **v.25—Saul’s third response: “Blessed are you, my son David; you will both accomplish much and surely prevail.”**

3 LESSONS FROM CH. 26:

1. Show respect for those in authority “Touch not the Lord’s anointed” (26:11).

We live in a rebellious society. Rebellion to almost anyone in authority is catching!

Does this apply to church leaders—in the sense that there’s nothing that we can do to stop bad behavior on their part? **No**—for two reasons:

(1) All NT believers are anointed, so the prohibition would apply to all of us (1 John 2:20).

(2) When it comes to leadership, there is some protection. See 1 Tim. 5:17-19. Elders are the rulers in the NT church. “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses” (1 Tim. 5:19). Don’t gossip about them or damage their reputations, but if you have a *real* charge, it has to be from two or three witnesses. If the charge is shown to be true, “rebuke [them] in the presence of all” so that others may fear (1 Tim. 5:20). You don’t deal with their sins secretly. So, do you protect a leader? Yes, up to a certain point, but if they sin openly, if they are no longer qualified for office, they are to be dealt with. This situation is NOT comparable to the OT prohibition to “touch not the Lord’s anointed.”

2. Watch out for the danger of peer pressure—especially from friends and relatives. Here we have Abishai, the nephew of David, encouraging him to kill Saul. Ex 23:2—“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (KJV). Even if everybody else is doing it, if it’s wrong, it’s wrong.

3. Recognize the danger of being a double-minded person. When I look at Saul in ch. 26, I don’t think he was lying to David when he said, “Return, my son,” and indicated that he wouldn’t harm David again. Saul was double-minded: attracted on the one hand to the things of the Lord, but also pulled strongly in the opposite direction—toward a sinful, worldly lifestyle—flipping constantly back and forth between the two. They seem to love God and follow him part of the time, and then they’re right back in the world. The classic verse that deal with that subject is James 1:8—“A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways” (KJV). In my experience, it’s the bad side that wins.

Those without Jesus as Savior have no power to resist the pull of sin. We're warned about it in **Eph. 4:14**—"we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men." Basically, we are to grow up. Women tend to be particularly prone to that wavering back and forth (double-mindedness) as I gather from **2 Tim 3:6-7**, which talks about ". . . weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Now let's go on to Ch. 27.

27:1-3—David's fear, lack of faith. 27:1—This is a weak moment for David. Obviously, he's not exercising faith because he should remember that God has promised that he will be king. Therefore, he will not perish at the hand of Saul, but I'm not inclined to be really hard on David. Imagine living the way that he's been living—depressed, constantly hunted like an animal by a king and 3,000 men. He's under a great deal of stress at this point and trying to come up with a remedy to protect himself and his followers. **27:2**—He opts to cross over into Gath, the Philistine city, to seek out Achish again.

27:4—Saul was already hunting David again. He stopped when he heard that David had gone to Gath. What happened to his promise not to harm David again? Well, this leads to another lesson that has to do with the fact that David is not stupid.

LESSON 4 (from ch. 27)

4. Forgiveness is Free; Trust is Earned.

David shows wisdom. He had a warm, forgiving attitude to Saul in ch 26, but he doesn't trust him—with good reason!

- In modern Christian circles, when somebody has wronged you, does the relationship go back to what it was before the offense occurred? Not necessarily.
- Suppose you had a Christian friend who was also your accountant, and she cheated you (took some of your money). Then sometime later, she came to you and confessed. You should say, "I forgive you. We can still have Christian fellowship. You're welcome to come to church with me, to come to my home and eat a meal with me." But would you make her your accountant again? I wouldn't. Forgiveness puts the relationship back to ground zero, but trust is earned, and she hasn't earned that trust.
- Suppose you knew a young man who had been convicted as a child molester. He went to jail and served his time. He was genuinely sorry. He came back, and because he had repented, he was welcomed into the church. Is that legitimate? Yes. Do you put him in charge of your nursery? Not unless you're an idiot! Forgiveness is free, but trust is earned, and he has not earned that trust!—And neither had Saul!

27:6—Achish gave the city of Ziklag to David. It was almost directly west of En-ge-di and about 25 miles from Gath; in the territory of Judah, but hadn't yet been conquered. (See the maps that we've sent you via email with these notes.) David wanted to be in Ziklag so that he wasn't under the eye of Achish. He didn't want the king to know what he was doing. Again we see David's hasty decision based on fear puts him in trouble.

27:8-9—The area south of David contained pockets of nomadic groups that raided others. David raided them and left none alive to tell what he'd done, for he told Achish that he was raiding the enemies of the Philistines (the Israelites) when he was really raiding the enemies of the Israelites. Was what David did sinful? We don't know David's motivation for these attacks, but he was obeying the Lord in wiping these people out.

- **Deut 7:1-4**—When the Lord brings you into the land . . . utterly destroy, etc. God was using Israel to punish these nations (who were depraved beyond belief). God had also said that if they left these pagans alive, they would suck them into their pagan religious practices.
- Geshurites—Israel given their land in Josh. 13:1-2.
- Girzites, Amalekites—Ex. 17:15-16; Deut. 25:17-19—God said to destroy them.
- The land David was raiding had never been occupied by Israel, but it should have been. It was part of the promised land.

27:10-12—David actually lied to Achish and fooled him.

28:1-2—David’s plan backfires. He’s expected to go with Achish to fight the Israelites. Even worse, he’s made Achish’s bodyguard, so he’ll be right next to the king, where he can keep an eye on him.

28:3—**scene shifts**—doesn’t return to David until chapter 29 (cliff hanger)—Back to the story of Saul. Philistines are attacking. What’s Saul going to do?

28:4—**MAP**—Shunem, Gilboa, etc. [See maps we’ve emailed to you—Battle of Mt. Gilboa.] Here comes Saul’s encounter with the witch (medium) of Endor. He was so determined to reach her that he had to cross enemy lines. He was terrified—Philistines *way* outnumbered the Israelites, and they were in an area where the Philistines could use their chariots to good advantage.

28:5-6—How did Saul inquire of the Lord? We know from v.3 that Samuel is dead; Saul would normally have gone first to Samuel. Verse 3 also tells us of a right thing that Saul had done (removing mediums and spiritists). Saul didn’t inquire by ordinary, direct prayer—because **1 Chron 10:14** says Saul “did not inquire of the LORD.” Instead, he depended on mechanical means, that didn’t involve him directly to discern the Lord’s will—kind of like asking your friends to pray for you, but not praying directly to God yourself. Saul depended on things like dreams (which didn’t come), **urim (new ephod?)** that didn’t work, and the prophets, who weren’t speaking to Saul. Remember that **Abiathar** had the original ephod and had taken it with him to David’s camp after the massacre at Nob.

28:7-11—Saul in desperation asks his servants to find a medium. Interesting that they know where one is! Saul asks her to call up Samuel from the dead.

28:12—The woman’s reaction is interesting. What happens is not her usual experience. This is a miracle, and as part of it, she perceives that she’s dealing with Saul.

28:13-14—Saul didn’t see what the woman saw. Interesting that he could communicate with Samuel, but he wasn’t (at least at first) able to see him. Her perception was that a divine being was rising from the earth. He was wrapped in a **ROBE**—sleeveless robe—same word used of Samuel’s robe in **15:27**, when Saul seized the edge of Samuel’s robe & tore it. Something about the woman’s description caused Saul to **know** that the being was Samuel.

28:15—It’s really Samuel, not a spirit being masquerading as him.

28:16—Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has departed from you and has become your adversary?”—Chilling words!

28:17-19—It's as if God says, "OK. You want a message? Have I got a message for you, and you're not going to want to hear it!"

28:19—"tomorrow you and your sons will be with me"—Do these words mean that Saul is a believer? Not necessarily. Samuel's message is that Saul and sons will die.

28:20-25—The Aftermath—Saul's response of extreme shock; the woman's fear for her own life; her ministering to Saul with food—fascinating that she butchered and cooked the calf; it must have been a long night.

LESSONS 5 & 6—from Ch. 28

5. Never Resort to the Occult

Lev. 19:31; 20:6

mediums, spiritists, witchcraft, wizards

Deut 18:10-14

necromancy, sorcery,

Gal. 5:19-20

interpreting omens

Isaiah 47:10-13

astrology

Warning against children's books such as the Harry Potter series that cause people to see the occult positively. Beware of Satan as an angel of light.

6. "Seek the Lord while He may be found."

"Call upon Him while He is near"—**Isaiah 55:6**

Hosea 5:4, 6 "Their deeds will not allow them to return to God. . . . They will go . . . to seek the Lord, but they will not find Him. He has withdrawn from them."

2 Cor 6:2 "Behold, NOW is the acceptable time; NOW is the day of salvation."