

## **Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 16, 1 Sam. 29-31 – Death of Saul and His Sons Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 16, 1 Sam. 29-31 – Death of Saul and His Sons, Biblicalearning.org, BeL**

This lecture by Dr. Robert Chisholm analyzes 1 Samuel 29-31, focusing on David's precarious situation among the Philistines and his subsequent escape from a difficult predicament. The narrative highlights God's providence in guiding David, contrasting his faith with the lack of faith and subsequent demise of King Saul. Chapter 31 details Saul's death in battle and the respectful actions of the men of Jabesh-Gilead in recovering and burying his body. The lecture uses narrative typology to draw parallels between Saul's fall and previous biblical events. Finally, it emphasizes the themes of faith, divine communication, and the contrasting fates of David and Saul.

**2. 11 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Chisholm, Session 16 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → 1 Samuel).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, , Session 16, 1 Sam. 29-31 – Death of Saul and His Sons

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Robert Chisholm's lecture on 1 Samuel 29-31:

#### **Briefing Document: 1 Samuel 29-31**

**Overview:** This session of Dr. Chisholm's lectures focuses on the events in 1 Samuel chapters 29 through 31. He highlights the intertwined stories of David and Saul, noting the narrative's dramatic tension and the thematic parallels between events. The core ideas revolve around God's providence, David's deception and deliverance, and the tragic end of Saul's reign.

#### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

##### **1. Narrative Structure and Dramatic Tension:**

- The author strategically alternates between the narratives of David and Saul to create tension.
- Chapter 29 serves as a chronological flashback, detailing events that occurred before Saul's visit to the medium in Endor (chapter 28).
- This flashback delays the report of David's expulsion from the Philistine army, heightening suspense as the reader wonders if David will face Saul in battle or be responsible for his death, especially after the prophecy Samuel gives in chapter 28.
- The placement of the material is for dramatic effect, to make the reader wonder: "Could David and Jonathan actually come face to face in battle? Worse yet, could he somehow be responsible for Saul's death after all of this effort to avoid raising up his hand against the anointed of the Lord?"

##### **1. The Ominous Gathering at Aphek:**

- The Philistine army's gathering at Aphek is a significant parallel to the tragic defeat of Israel in 1 Samuel 4.
- Dr. Chisholm notes that the only other time in 1 and 2 Samuel that the Philistine troops gathered in Aphek was in 1 Samuel 4:1, just prior to Israel's tragic defeat and the capture of the ark.

- He draws a thematic link: "In the upcoming battle...the rejected king Saul and his sons would die," parallel to Eli's death after the ark was captured. This is an example of "narrative typology," where one event foreshadows another.

#### 1. **David's Deception and Deliverance:**

- David is depicted as a conman, deceiving Achish into believing he is loyal to the Philistines.
- Quote: "David's deception has worked well. We know that David has not disowned his people. He's been doing the work of the Lord, killing Amalekites. But Achish has been tricked."
- The Philistine commanders distrust David, which ultimately results in him being sent away. This is seen as God's providence at work.
- Quote: "...despite all his deception and his maneuvering, needs the Lord's providence to get him out of this, and once again, it's Philistines who are going to be used to the Philistine commanders other than Achish that the Lord is going to use to get David out of a difficult situation."
- David's motives in protesting his dismissal are unclear; perhaps he wants to maintain appearances, or maybe he wants to betray the Philistines in battle.
- Quote: "Maybe he's decided to do exactly what the Philistine rulers suspect he will. Maybe he'd like to get out there and turn on the Philistines and be able to fight for Israel. But at any rate, we don't know."
- His ambiguous language, possibly referring to Saul as his "lord" even while serving Achish, further highlights his deception.

#### 1. **Defense of David and the "Fake News" Narrative:**

- The author refutes the idea that David was a traitor who sided with the Philistines.
- Quote: "The fake news is that David actually went over to the Philistine side... He is a traitor, and he should not be king of Israel."
- David was forced to leave the Philistine army before the battle against Israel.
- Quote: "He was forced to leave because the Philistines knew who he was and they didn't trust him, and he left, and he never raised a hand against Israel in battle."

- David's actions while serving Achish involved attacking Israel's enemies, like the Amalekites, not Israel itself.

### 1. **The Amalekite Raid on Ziklag (Chapter 30):**

- The Amalekites attack Ziklag, capturing the families of David and his men.
- David and his men are initially distraught, and his men turn on David, but David finds strength in the Lord and seeks his guidance.
- The contrast between Saul and David is highlighted: Saul couldn't receive communication from the Lord, but the Lord speaks to David.
- Quote: "The Lord was not communicating to Saul. But he communicates with David consistently throughout this story. So, in the defense of David, David is the one to whom the Lord communicates his will."
- God uses the Egyptian servant to lead David to the Amalekites, which results in a complete victory for David.
- Quote: "...God's providence is at work. They found an Egyptian in a field...and David said, can you lead us to that raiding party?"
- David is merciful in sharing the plunder with everyone, establishing a new rule for Israel.
- Quote: "David made this a statute and ordinance for Israel from that day to this, that everyone shares in the spoils of victory, even those who watch the baggage or are forced to stay behind."
- David distributes the spoil to the elders of Judah, anticipating his return home.

### 1. **Lessons from David's Experience:**

- When chosen servants are in precarious situations, God can deliver them through his providence.
- Quote: "When his chosen servants find themselves in a precarious position...the Lord is able to deliver them by his providence and renew their faith through his guidance and protection."
- God's servants should trust in him, as David had left because he walked by sight, not faith. The events in chapter 30 bring David back on track with his faith in God.

### 1. The Death of Saul and His Sons (Chapter 31):

- The narrative shifts back to Saul, who is defeated by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa.
- Quote: "the Philistines fought against Israel, and the Israelites fled before them, and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa."
- Saul is wounded and asks his armor-bearer to kill him, but the armor-bearer refuses. Saul takes his own life.
- Saul's death is compared to that of Abimelech in Judges 9, both men taking their own lives after being wounded. Dr. Chisholm emphasizes that this comparison shows how poorly viewed Saul is in the narrative.
- Quote: "And so, the fact that Saul is like Abimelech does not, that doesn't bode well for Saul and his memory and his reputation. He is a bad guy in the story, as it were, and he dies like another bad guy died earlier in the account."
- The Philistines humiliate Saul's body and place it on the wall at Beit Shan.
- Quote: "...they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and fastened his body to the wall at Beit Shan. So, Saul is humiliated."
- The men of Jabesh-Gilead, who were previously rescued by Saul, risk their lives to retrieve and properly bury Saul's body.
- Quote: "And so they want to honor Saul, and they're willing to risk their lives to do it, and to their credit, they go and they rescue Saul's and the bodies of Saul and his sons and dispose of them in a proper manner."

### 1. Transition to 2 Samuel:

- The next session will focus on the aftermath of Saul's death and David's response, particularly David's grief for Saul and Jonathan.

### Conclusion:

The lecture highlights the complex events of 1 Samuel 29-31, emphasizing themes of divine providence, the deceptive nature of appearances, and the contrasting fates of David and Saul. David, despite his flaws and deceptions, is portrayed as a man favored by God, while Saul's tragic end solidifies his image as a rejected king. The narrative creates tension and uses thematic parallels to emphasize the larger points of the text.

## 4. Study Guide: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, , Session 16, 1 Sam. 29-31 – Death of Saul and His Sons

### 1 Samuel 29-31 Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What was the central conflict or issue that David faced in 1 Samuel 29, and how was it resolved?
2. Explain the significance of the Philistine commanders' distrust of David in chapter 29.
3. How does the author portray David's deception when speaking with Achish?
4. What happens to David and his men when they return to Ziklag, and how do they respond?
5. How does the Lord's communication with David contrast with his lack of communication with Saul?
6. What was the crucial factor that led to David's success in recovering their families and possessions from the Amalekites?
7. What decision does David make regarding the division of spoils after the victory, and what principle does it establish?
8. Describe Saul's death on Mount Gilboa, and why he chose to die in that way.
9. What is the parallel drawn between Saul's death and Abimelech's death in the book of Judges, and why is this significant?
10. How did the people of Jabesh-Gilead demonstrate their loyalty to Saul, and why were they motivated to do so?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. David was ordered to fight with the Philistines against Israel, a major moral and political dilemma. This was resolved by the Philistine commanders' distrust of David, causing them to order him to return home.
2. The Philistine commanders' distrust was crucial because it prevented David from having to fight against his own people, thereby protecting him from an impossible

situation. They distrusted him due to his past fame and fear of him turning against them in battle.

3. The author portrays David's deception as a series of ambiguous statements, particularly regarding who he considers to be his lord and king, exploiting Achish's assumption while possibly referring to Saul or even to the Philistine army as his enemy.
4. They returned to find Ziklag destroyed by the Amalekites and their families taken captive. Initially, they wept aloud and blamed David.
5. The Lord communicates with David through inquiries via the ephod, demonstrating divine favor. Conversely, the Lord does not communicate with Saul, even through the typical channels, reinforcing his rejection.
6. The Lord guides David, and by capturing an Amalekite slave who leads them to the raiding party, David and his men were able to launch a successful surprise attack.
7. David decrees that everyone, including those who stayed behind, should share in the spoils of war, establishing a principle of fairness and preventing discord among his men.
8. After being critically wounded, Saul asks his armor-bearer to kill him, but when he refuses, Saul falls on his own sword to avoid capture and humiliation by the Philistines.
9. The parallel drawn between Saul and Abimelech is that both were mass murderers who were killed in battle, implying that Saul's fate was similar to another wicked ruler, reflecting negatively on Saul's legacy.
10. The people of Jabesh-Gilead demonstrated their loyalty to Saul by rescuing and properly burying his body, motivated by Saul's past deliverance of their city from the Ammonites.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the ways in which the author uses dramatic tension and narrative structure in 1 Samuel 29-31 to shape the reader's understanding of David and Saul. Consider the placement of events, the use of foreshadowing, and the overall impact on the story's meaning.
2. Compare and contrast the leadership of Saul and David, focusing on how each man responds to adversity and how their relationship with God influences their actions. Use specific examples from 1 Samuel 29-31 to support your claims.
3. Discuss the role of divine providence in 1 Samuel 29-30. How does the narrative demonstrate God's intervention and guidance in David's life, and what is the significance of these divine acts within the context of the broader story of 1 and 2 Samuel?
4. Explore the theme of deception in the account of David's time among the Philistines. How does David use deception, and what are its moral implications for both David and the narrative as a whole?
5. Evaluate the significance of the deaths of Saul and his sons at the end of 1 Samuel. How does this event resolve the immediate tension of 1 Samuel and prepare the reader for the events in 2 Samuel?



## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Aphek:** A city in the Philistine territory where the Philistine army gathered before their conflict with Israel.
- **Mount Gilboa:** The location of the battle where Saul and his sons were killed by the Philistines.
- **Ziklag:** The city assigned to David and his men by Achish, which was raided by the Amalekites.
- **Amalekites:** A nomadic tribe that David had been fighting, who also raided Ziklag, resulting in the capture of David's family.
- **Achish:** The Philistine king of Gath who initially trusted David and allowed him to live in his territory and serve in his army.
- **Shunem:** The place where the Philistine army assembled, which was north of where David was located with Achish at Aphek.
- **Ephod:** A sacred garment worn by priests. In this context, it was used by Abiathar for inquiring of the Lord.
- **Abiathar:** The lone surviving priest from Nob, who had been with David and served as his priest.
- **Besor Valley:** The place where a portion of David's men, who were too exhausted to continue, stayed back.
- **Jabesh-Gilead:** The city whose people honored Saul by rescuing and properly burying his body.
- **Ashtoreths:** A goddess of the Philistines, in whose temple Saul's armor was placed.
- **Beit Shan:** The city where the Philistines fastened Saul's body after his death.
- **Narrative Typology:** A literary technique where one event foreshadows or parallels another, creating thematic connections.
- **Providence:** The protective care of God; God's ability to intervene directly and guide events.
- **Urim and Thummim:** Sacred lots used to discern God's will. Saul could not receive the guidance of these lots, demonstrating that God had rejected him.

## 5. FAQs on Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, , Session 16, 1 Sam. 29-31 – Death of Saul and His Sons, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### FAQ: 1 Samuel 29-31

- 1. Why is the narrative in 1 Samuel 29-31 structured with David's and Saul's stories interwoven?** The author strategically alternates between David and Saul's experiences to heighten dramatic tension. By delaying the report of David's expulsion from the Philistine army until after Saul's encounter with the medium at Endor, the author creates suspense. This juxtaposition raises questions about whether David will have to fight against Saul, or if David might even be responsible for Saul's death, despite his efforts to avoid harming the anointed king of Israel. It also allows for thematic parallels between the rejected King Saul and the rejected Priest Eli in the story.
- 2. What was David's precarious situation with the Philistines, and how did he escape?** David, living among the Philistines under Achish of Gath, was in a difficult position. Achish, believing David to be loyal, wanted him to join the Philistines in battle against Israel. However, other Philistine commanders didn't trust David, remembering his past victories against the Philistines. Providentially, the other Philistine rulers' skepticism of David led them to demand that he be sent away before the battle. This skepticism, which was possibly correct, was God's way of delivering David from a truly dangerous situation.
- 3. How does David's interaction with Achish illustrate deception and ambiguity?** David's interactions with Achish demonstrate his deceptive maneuvering. He allows Achish to believe he is loyal, while subtly maintaining his allegiance to Israel. When Achish is forced by his commanders to send David away, David protests in a way that is ambiguous, and can even be interpreted as a desire to fight against the Philistines for the sake of his own lord and king, Saul. This ambiguity allows David to maintain the appearance of deception until the very end, despite the fact that he doesn't want to. This highlights David's cunning and also suggests his loyalty may still be to Saul and Israel.

4. **What is the significance of the Amalekite raid on Ziklag?** The Amalekite raid on Ziklag is a critical turning point for David. The Amalekites burn Ziklag and take captive the wives and children of David and his men, leading to great distress and a threat of stoning him from his own followers. This forces David to seek guidance from the Lord through Abiathar. David's response to this crisis demonstrates that when he has wavered from faith, and is in a difficult situation of his own making, the Lord is still able to deliver him, and restore him to a path of faith. It highlights that, even in dire circumstances, turning to God can lead to restoration.
5. **How does God communicate with David in contrast to Saul?** A key point in this narrative is the contrast in communication between God and David versus God and Saul. The Lord consistently communicates his will to David, even when David was not acting in faith and was using deception. This is in contrast to Saul, whom the Lord refused to communicate with, even going so far as to not answer him through dreams, prophets, or urim and thummim. This reinforces the idea that David is the chosen king of Israel while Saul has been rejected.
6. **How is God's providence shown in the events surrounding David and the Amalekites?** God's providence is evident in the events following the Amalekite raid. God leads David and his men to an abandoned Egyptian slave who was part of the Amalekite raiding party. The slave then leads David and his men to the Amalekite camp where they win an overwhelming victory, recover their families, and amass great plunder. The capture of the Egyptian slave and subsequent victory is evidence of God's providential care and guidance over David's affairs. God even empowers David and his remaining men when they are exhausted from the pursuit.
7. **What is the importance of David's decision regarding the distribution of plunder after the battle?** David's decision to share the spoils of war with those who were too exhausted to fight, establishes a significant precedent for the nation of Israel. He does this despite the objections of some of his men who believed only the fighters should share in the victory. It illustrates David's generosity and theological understanding that the victory was granted by the Lord. This sets a standard for fairness and unity within the nation, and is a sign that David's faith is restored.

**8. How is Saul's death depicted and what parallels are drawn to his character?**

Saul's death is depicted as a tragic end. Wounded in battle, he requests his armor-bearer to kill him, but when that is refused, he takes his own life. His death, along with those of his sons and his armor bearer, serves as a final act of defeat and humiliation. This death is linked to the character of Abimelech, a previous tyrant who met a similar end, to show that Saul was, like Abimelech, a bad guy in the story, and that his death was a consequence of his own actions and character.