

Lament for a Fallen King: 2 Samuel 1's Lesson in Integrity
Scriptures for Today: 2 Samuel 1:1–16

2 Samuel 1:1-16 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; **2** It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. **3** And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. **4** And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. **5** And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? **6** And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. **7** And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. **8** And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. **9** He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. **10** So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord. **11** Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: **12** And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. **13** And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. **14** And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed? **15** And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. **16** And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed.

Introduction

We are preaching through the entire Bible book by book. It's very important to thoroughly study God's word. We will preach the whole counsel of God.

The story of the Bible up to this point has been God creating, calling, and leading His people. In **Genesis**, God created the world, man fell into sin, but God made a covenant with Abraham to give him descendants and a land. (The promise that through him all nations would be blessed...)

In **Exodus through Deuteronomy**, God delivered Israel from Egypt, gave them His Law, and led them through the wilderness to the edge of the Promised Land.

In **Joshua**, Israel conquered Canaan and divided the inheritance, but in **Judges** the nation fell into cycles of sin and rebellion because “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” During that time, the book of **Ruth** shows God working behind the scenes to preserve the family line that would bring forth David.

In **1 Samuel**, the people demanded a king, Saul was anointed and failed, and David, the shepherd boy who killed Goliath, was chosen as the man after God’s heart. Saul’s disobedience led to his downfall, and by the end of the book Saul and his son Jonathan have fallen in battle.

The Book of 2 Samuel records the reign of David and shows both the triumphs and the tragedies of his leadership. It opens with Saul’s death and David’s rise to the throne, uniting the kingdom and establishing Jerusalem as the capital. Under David, Israel experienced military victories, covenant promises from God, and the central place of worship being prepared in Jerusalem. Yet the book also records David’s sins — his adultery with Bathsheba, the arranged death of Uriah, and the devastating consequences within his own family. Through it all, 2 Samuel reveals God’s faithfulness: He raises up David, disciplines him when he sins, and keeps His covenant that one of David’s descendants would sit on the throne forever — a promise that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Son of David.

Outline of 1 Samuel 31 and 2 Samuel 1

1 Samuel 31 – The Death of Saul

- 1–6. Saul and Jonathan slain on Mount Gilboa.
- 7–10. Philistines display Saul’s body.
- 11–13. Men of Jabesh-Gilead recover and bury Saul.

2 Samuel 1 – David’s Response

- 1–10. The Amalekite reports Saul’s death and brings the crown.
- 11–12. David and his men mourn for Saul and Jonathan.
- 13–16. David executes the Amalekite for striking down the Lord’s anointed.

2 Samuel 2 – David Made King

- 1–7. David anointed king over Judah.
- 8–32. Division between the house of Saul and the house of David.

Focus on 2 Samuel 1:1–16

The book of 2 Samuel opens with tragedy and lament. Saul, Israel’s first king — once mighty in battle — is dead. Jonathan, David’s beloved friend, has also fallen. Now the crown is about to pass to David.

But before David takes the throne, God gives us a revealing look into his heart. David does not celebrate the death of his enemy. He mourns. He grieves for Saul, even though Saul had hunted him. He grieves for Jonathan, his closest friend.

This passage is a lesson in integrity, humility, and the seriousness of sin and falsehood. It's a reminder that God's justice cannot be escaped.

It is also a sobering warning. Saul was once a man of great promise — chosen by God, anointed to lead, feared by his enemies. Yet disobedience led to downfall. Pride silenced his voice. By the time David hears of Saul's death, the once-mighty king is silent in the grave. His life was cut short because of disobedience.

The tragedy here is that Saul started strong, but sin ended his work for God. As Christians, we can start out strong, we can start out on the right path. But when sin and disobedience creeps in, you start to compromise.

And that compromise leads to more sin, and that sin will silence your witness and testimony for Jesus Christ, and it will eventually lead to your early departure just like Saul. As we read through this passage, I want you to keep these things in mind and we will look at the application in our own lives.

Exposition of 2 Samuel 1:1–16

Verses 1–10: The Amalekite's Story

2 Samuel 1:1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;

Just days earlier, in 1 Samuel 30, the Amalekites had raided Ziklag, carrying away the women and children. David sought the Lord, pursued, and defeated them, recovering everything. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau. (Jacob and Esau)

The Descendants of Jacob (Twelve tribes of Israel) The Descendants of Esau (Edomites)

Esau had a son named Eliphaz, and Eliphaz had a son named Amalek. Amalek is the father of the Amalekites.

The Amalekites were enemies of Israel and was the first nation to fight them when they came out of Egypt. (The story of Moses holding the rod of God in the air. Exodus 17)

God declared He would have war with Amalek from generation to generation. They appear repeatedly in Israel's history as adversaries, and it was Saul's failure to obey God's command to destroy them in 1 Samuel 15 that marked the beginning of his downfall.

While David was defeating the Amalekites, Saul and his sons had went up against the Philistines and were killed.

2 Samuel 1:2-3 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. **3** And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

Three days later, a man arrives from Saul's camp. He has ripped clothes and dirt on his head which are outward signs of mourning. He bows before David, showing respect. When asked where he came from, he says he escaped from Israel's camp. His appearance and words set the stage for the news he is about to deliver.

2 Samuel 1:4-5 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. **5** And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

The man reports the outcome of the battle: Israel has fled, many are dead, and Saul and Jonathan are among the fallen. So David presses him for evidence: "*How knowest thou?*" he wants to know how this man can be certain about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan.

2 Samuel 1:6-10 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. **7** And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here *am* I. **8** And he said unto me, Who *art* thou? And I answered him, I *am* an Amalekite. **9** He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. **10** So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

Here the Amalekite gives his account: that he found Saul mortally wounded, and at Saul's own request struck the final blow, then took the crown and bracelet to bring to David.

This might cause a little confusion, because the record in **1 Samuel 31** tells us Saul fell on his own sword and died, and that his armor-bearer followed him in death.

1 Samuel 31:4-5 Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. **5** And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

This Amalekite came with a different story than what was recorded previously. How do we reconcile the two? Either...

1. The Amalekite was present and delivered the final blow after Saul's attempted suicide.
2. Or, the Amalekite did not actually kill Saul, but came up with the story to gain David's favor and was seeking a reward.

So remember that Saul hated David greatly because of envy. David was constantly on the run from King Saul. This man, who was most likely a looter, thought that he was going to be honored by David if he was the one who brought the news that Saul was dead.

We can confirm this because in 2 Samuel 4, David recounts this same event.

Immediately after Saul's death, Saul's son Ishbosheth began reigning over Israel, but the house of Judah followed David. Two men killed Ishbosheth and brought his head to David.

2 Samuel 4:8-11 And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed. **9** And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, **10** When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: **11** How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

In your own life you can choose to walk in integrity, honesty, and truthfulness. Or you can be like the Amalekite who thought he would gain from telling his version of the story. Dishonesty and lies will only bring you trouble and destruction.

Proverbs 18:7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

This is exactly what happened in this situation.

Verses 11–12: David's Mourning

2 Samuel 1:11-12 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that *were* with him: **12** And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

After hearing the Amalekite's report, David's first reaction is not joy or triumph, but grief.

Imagine if your worst enemy was chasing you for years and years. Someone that gave you unbelievable trouble, heartache, and pain. And all of a sudden that person is gone. Most people are going to say, "Thank God". They are going to rejoice and probably mock and scoff at the enemy that has been destroyed. What does David do?

He rents his clothes out of great sorrow and grief. His men follow his example. They weep and fast until evening — not just for Jonathan, who David loved greatly, but also for Saul, the one who had hunted him for years, and for the people of Israel who had fallen in battle.

David had amazing humility and respect for God's order.

Even though Saul had been his enemy, David still recognized him as God's anointed king. Instead of rejoicing at Saul's death, David honored him in grief.

Often times as Christians, we can fall into the trap of taking pleasure in the death of the wicked. We are all guilty of it. There are even Christians who take pleasure in and pray for the death of other believers. That's an evil thing to do.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

God himself does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked. So why do we? David is a great example to follow in this situation.

There are roughly 150,000+ people that die every single day. That's over 54 million every year. The majority of those people will die and go to hell. Do you think God takes pleasure in that? Absolutely not.

That's why it's our job to get out there and preach the gospel to as many of them as we can before it's too late.

Verses 13–16: David's Judgment

2 Samuel 1:13-16 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence *art* thou? And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. 14 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?

David now questions the Amalekite further. The man admits he is "the son of a stranger, an Amalekite." That admission is important. Saul's great failure in 1 Samuel 15 was when he

disobeyed God and did not utterly destroy the Amalekites. Now, at the end of Saul's life, an Amalekite appears again — reminding us of that disobedience that led to his death.

15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. 16 And David said unto him, Thy blood *be* upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed.

Whether or not this man truly killed Saul (based on scriptures we can see his motive was only to gain reward and was most likely lying.)

David holds him accountable to that testimony. To David, this was unthinkable — to lay a hand on the one God had anointed as king.

David's judgement was righteous. "Thy blood *be* upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed."

David had reverence for God's Authority:

He consistently refused to harm Saul, even when he had multiple chances. Here he shows the same principle — the office of king was sacred because it was appointed by God.

There are many pastors today that think they are God's anointed. They think themselves to be kings. They want to be above the people. Hey, you need to understand, you're not God's anointed one. You are a meek and lowly shepherd whose job is to serve the people.

There is one true Anointed one, that's Jesus Christ. Christ literally means anointed one. Yet pastors will continue to elevate themselves and demand that people respect them as God's anointed.

Humble yourself before God does it for you.

So David had great humility and integrity. He was about to be king, but he would not ascend to the throne through deceit or bloodshed. He trusted God to give it in His time and His way.

Doctrinal Truths in 2 Samuel 1:1–16

1. The Doctrine of consequences for sin.

Saul's disobedience didn't just affect him — it brought Jonathan, Israel's army, and the whole nation into loss. The Bible shows repeatedly that sin has ripple effects. Adam's sin brought death to all mankind (Romans 5:12). Achan's hidden sin in Joshua 7 caused defeat for Israel. No one sins in isolation; disobedience always leaves collateral damage.

Some people think that the sin in their life is not hurting anyone else so it's okay. You need to understand the sin in your life is affecting everyone around you.

The choices that you make have a direct impact on your family, your friends, your brothers and sisters in Christ. Your choices will ripple through many generations. Make the right choices. Choose obedience to the Lord.

2. The Doctrine of Grieving Over the Fallen.

David wept for Saul, Jonathan, and Israel. He didn't rejoice in their destruction, even though Saul had been his enemy. This reflects God's own heart — *"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."* The doctrine here is that believers should respond to the fall of others not with pride or mockery, but with grief and compassion, remembering that apart from grace we could fall just the same.

Proverbs 24:17-18 Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: **18** Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

3. The Doctrine of Integrity Tested by Opportunity

David had the opportunity to seize the throne multiple times, but he refused. Instead, he upheld truth and waited on God's timing. Scripture shows that true integrity is proven when shortcuts are available — There's always a way that seems easier and more appealing. Joseph refused Potiphar's wife, Daniel purposed not to defile himself, and Jesus resisted Satan's offer of the kingdoms of the world. Integrity tested is integrity proven.

In your life, those opportunities will come, and your integrity will be tested. You can choose to stand firm on the foundation of God's Word. Or you can compromise and give in to your flesh. You have to make that choice every day.

Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

Practical Applications for 2 Samuel 1:1–16

Start Strong – End Strong

Saul started as a man of promise — tall, chosen, anointed — yet sin and compromise silenced him. Many believers start zealous but let sin wear them down until their voice for God is gone. Don't let that happen in your life. Let's put all the things away that are pulling us to the right and to the left, and let's focus in on serving the Lord with everything we got. Life is too short. Don't waste it laying up treasures on earth.

Respond to Enemies with Grace

David didn't gloat when Saul fell. He mourned. He grieved. That is a Christlike spirit. When someone wrongs you, it is natural to rejoice if they stumble — but God calls us higher. Pray for them. Mourn for their downfall. Show mercy, as Christ showed mercy to you.

Choose Integrity, Because Others Depend on It.

Every decision you make carries influence. Saul's disobedience cost him his crown and led Israel into defeat and ultimately his death. David's integrity preserved the line that would bring forth Jesus Christ in the flesh. As a believer, your obedience or compromise doesn't just affect you — it ripples through your family, your church, and even future generations.

Understand the power that you wield. Jesus commands us to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Are you going to obey His command, or will you sit back and watch millions of people die and go to hell.

Maybe there are some of you here that don't know what the gospel is. Gospel means good news or glad tidings. In order to preach the good news to every creature, you have to know the good news.

The Gospel Connection in 2 Samuel 1:1–16

Saul was a king that was anointed by God. David was a king that was anointed by God. But both Saul and David were imperfect men that made many mistakes in their lives.

But all along, God was pointing to the **true and greater Anointed One — Jesus Christ.**

Where Saul failed through disobedience, and David failed later through sin, **Jesus never failed.** He perfectly obeyed His Father, kept His integrity through every test, and willingly laid down His life not for His own sins (he had none) but for ours.

Conclusion

David's integrity in this passage points us forward to the greater King, Jesus Christ. He is the true Anointed One who never failed, who bore our sin on the cross, and who rose to give us life. Where Saul's sin brought death, Christ's obedience brings life. And where Saul was silenced, Christ now speaks for His people at the right hand of God.

So take the warning of Saul's life seriously. Don't let compromise rob you of your testimony. Don't let sin silence your voice. Instead, live with daily integrity, walk in obedience. Let's go out and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let's Pray