

7 The King is Dead...

Have you ever faced a time in your life where absolutely everything seemed to be going wrong? How did you try and cope?



Observation

Skim read 1 Samuel 28-31

1. Who is the main character in each chapter?

Chapter 28 _____

Chapter 29 _____

Chapter 30 _____

Chapter 31 _____

Groupwork

Break up into four groups, with one chapter each. Appoint someone in each group to play the role of the key character from the chapter. Use the questions below to conduct interviews of the character from your chapter. Remember, you don't have to act and you don't have to speculate. Just try and give an answer based on what is written in the text.

Group 1 - Chapter 28

Questions for Saul

What is making you afraid?

What do you do to try and find comfort?

You don't seem to like mediums - you've put them all out of your kingdom. So why do you go and talk to one?

Is your visit to the medium successful? What do you find out?

Group 2 - Chapter 29 (Two characters)

Questions for Achish

What do you think of David and what are your plans for him?

What do your fellow commanders think of David and what do they force you to do?

Questions for David

What would have been difficult about joining the Philistine army?

You sound upset at being sent home. Are you serious? Why?

Group 3 - Chapter 30

Questions for David

What do you find when you get home to Ziklag and how does it effect you?

How do you work out what to do next?

What help does God give you in your mission?

How successful is your mission?

Why do you think all your men should enjoy the loot?

Group 4 - Chapter 31 (Three Characters)

Questions for Saul

How does your battle with the Philistines go?

Questions for the Philistines

What do you do to Saul and his sons and why?

Question for the men of Jabesh Gilead

What do you do for Saul and why do you risk your life in this way (hint: 1 Samuel 11)

Interpretation

1. The writer stops in the middle of his account about Saul and the Philistines to give a big account of David and his adventures. Why do you think he does this?
2. In what ways do these chapters highlight Saul's abandonment by God?
3. In what ways do these chapters highlight God's gracious care for David?
4. The Philistines have a great victory in these chapters. What things help us to see that they are not in control of the situation?

Saul is a tragic figure in these chapters. He has isolated himself from God and his word (remember he had all the priests killed in 1 Samuel 22). He's isolated himself from the one person who could have saved the day - even the Philistine commanders know it would be death to them if David took part in the battle. Finally Saul dies a gruesome, painful death, not even able to rely on his armour bearer.

By contrast, David, whose story is deliberately sandwiched in the middle of the Saul tragedy, is protected and guided by God in every step he takes. It's not that he has no problems. But God talks to him through the priest, God helps him through the Egyptian slave, and God enables him to win a great victory which brings blessing to all his people.

Application

5. Look up the following verses in the New Testament and note the ways that Jesus Christ is like King David, and the ways he is better than King David

| Passage | Like King David | Better Than King David |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Ephesians 4:7-13 | | |
| Matthew 2:13-18 | | |
| Hebrews 1:1-4 | | |

6. Have you ever felt like God had nothing to say to you? In what way are you sure to be better off than Saul?

Prayer

Thank God that in Jesus We have a King like David who always brings the right guidance.

7. Share something you have learnt from 1 Samuel during this series.