

## The Course of Your Life

Has your life turned out the way you imagined?

First Samuel 28–29

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Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Christian Lake – No suggestions

### Prelude:

#### I. How many of you when you were in your teens,

- A. imagined that your life would be as it is?
- B. I do not believe there is anything about my life
  - 1. that has turned out the way I imagined as a teenager.
  - 2. Life is as unpredictable as the news one year from today.

#### II. David grew up as a shepherd, but

- A. someone else was in charge of his life, and
- B. took him to places he never would have imagined that he would go.

### Persuasion:

#### I. First Samuel 28.1–2 – Was David ready to fight Israel?

**28.1 Now it happened in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war, to fight with Israel. And Achish said to David, “You assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle, you and your men.” 2 So David said to Achish, “Surely you know what your servant can do.” And Achish said to David, “Therefore I will make you one of my chief guardians forever.”**

#### II. First Samuel 28.3 – Saul had put away mediums

**3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land.**

#### III. First Samuel 28.4–7 – What fear led Saul to do

**4 Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled**

greatly. 6 And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets. 7 Then Saul said to his servants, “Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor.”

#### IV. First Samuel 28.8–10 – Saul sought a seance

8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, “Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you.” 9 Then the woman said to him, “Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?” 10 And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, “As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.”

#### V. First Samuel 28.11–14 – The medium brings up Samuel

11 Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” And he said, “Bring up Samuel for me.” 12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, “Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!” 13 And the king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What did you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth.” 14 So he said to her, “What is his form?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle.” And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down.

#### VI. First Samuel 28.15–19 – Saul’s desperation

15 Now Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” And Saul answered, “I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do.” 16 Then Samuel said: “So why do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy? 17 And the Lord has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. 18 Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you this day. 19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the

army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.”

### VII. First Samuel 28.20–25 – The power of fear

20 Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night. 21 And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled, and said to him, “Look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice, and I have put my life in my hands and heeded the words which you spoke to me. 22 Now therefore, please, heed also the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way.” 23 But he refused and said, “I will not eat.” So his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and sat on the bed. 24 Now the woman had a fatted calf in the house, and she hastened to kill it. And she took flour and kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread from it. 25 So she brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

### VIII. First Samuel 29.1–5 – The Philistines do not want an Israelite hero

29.1 Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. 2 And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. 3 Then the princes of the Philistines said, “What are these Hebrews doing here?” And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, “Is this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or these years? And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me.” 4 But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of the Philistines said to him, “Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these men? 5 Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying:

“Saul has slain his thousands,  
And David his ten thousands’?”

### IX. First Samuel 29.6–10 – No one wants David

**6** Then Achish called David and said to him, “Surely, as the Lord lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my sight. For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. **7** Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.” **8** So David said to Achish, “But what have I done? And to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” **9** Then Achish answered and said to David, “I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not go up with us to the battle.’ **10** Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master’s servants who have come with you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart.”

## **X. First Samuel 29.11 – David returns to the land of the Philistines**

**11** So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

### **I. First Samuel 28.1–2 – What Are Your Dreams?**

- A. David must have known that this day would come,
  - 1. that the perpetual enemy of Israel, the Philistines,
  - 2. would one day fight Israel.
- B. Was this his dream as a teenager in the fields with his sheep?
  - 1. Achish wanted David and his men with him.
  - 2. David seemed willing,
    - a) reminding Achish of his capabilities,
    - b) having killed Goliath and
      - (1) having fought battles in the 16 months
      - (2) David had been with the Philistines.
- C. King Achish of the Philistines then makes a huge offer to David:
  - 1. David can be one of the the chief guardians, bodyguards, of King Achish!
  - 2. Sadly King Achish recognized in David what King Saul refused to see.

- a) Achish saw the nature of David,
  - (1) his attitude,
  - (2) his humility,
  - (3) his devotion,
  - (4) his loyalty, and
  - (5) his fighting skills.
- b) However, Saul saw in all those things a threat
  - (1) to his throne, and
  - (2) to his personal glory.

D. Yet, would David go so far as to align himself against Israel?

## II. First Samuel 28.3 – Do Not Consult Mediums

- A. For a moment the writer takes us back to Samuel and his death.
  - 1. All Israel lamented for him because he was a great man.
  - 2. He was the last of the judges and the first of the prophets.
    - a) Samuel anointed Saul as the first heaven-sanctioned king of Israel, and
    - b) Saul relied upon Samuel, at least initially.
- B. Then the writer mentioned what Saul had done to the mediums and spiritists.
  - 1. He cast them out of the land.
  - 2. The Law told Israel to get rid of mediums and spiritists,

**27 “A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them” (Leviticus 20.27).**

- a) So that was something good that Saul had done, but
- b) the reason the writer mentions Samuel and then mediums,
  - (1) is that Saul is about to go back on this good work.
  - (2) Don’t undo what good you have done.

### **III. First Samuel 28.4–7 – Do Not Let Fear Run Your Life**

- A. Saul could see the superiority of the Philistines over Israel.
  - 1. Saul only saw with the eye of the flesh and
  - 2. not with the eye of faith.
- B. The narrator shows that Saul tried fruitlessly to communicate with the Lord.
  - 1. Saul tried seeking the Lord through
    - a) dreams,
    - b) Urim, and
    - c) prophets, but
    - d) the Lord remained silent.
  - 2. Why did the Lord not answer Saul?
    - a) Saul would not listen to the Lord.
    - b) Saul only saw the Lord as his servant.
    - c) Saul thought the Lord was merely his best option.
- C. Therefore, when contacting the Lord did not work,
  - 1. he went to his second best option.
  - 2. He believed mediums could actually talk with the dead, and
    - a) that the dead knew more about life
    - b) than the living know.
- D. Did Saul imagine his life like this as a teenager?

### **IV. First Samuel 28.8–10 – If You Have to Lie, Something Is Wrong**

- A. Since Saul had removed the mediums,
  - 1. he needed to disguise himself,
  - 2. otherwise, a medium would not perform for him.
- B. Amazingly, he swore to her by the Lord
  - 1. that she would not be punished.

2. She knew that Saul placed himself under an oath.

C. It is interesting that he said, “As the Lord lives.”

1. Did he truly mean what he said?

2. Did he just say it for her benefit?

3. Did he just use the Lord’s name or religion whenever it pleased him?

#### **V. First Samuel 28.11–14 – Do Not Honor Man More Than God**

A. Now we know why the writer mentioned Samuel.

1. Samuel had left this world of trouble and

2. gone to a place of peace and rest.

B. However, when Samuel does appear,

1. the woman was shocked.

2. Everything she did before was fake.

a) The Lord allowed this to happen, because

b) He wanted to give Saul one final message, but

(1) the Lord would do it through the man in whom Saul trusted.

(2) Saul trusted Samuel more than he trusted the Lord.

C. Look at Saul’s honoring of Samuel,

1. putting his face to the ground and bowing down.

2. Did he do that for the Lord?

#### **VI. First Samuel 28.15–19 – Disobedience Has Serious Consequences**

A. Saul agitated Samuel.

B. Saul explained why he did it,

1. that he was deeply distressed, but

2. God had departed from him and would not answer him.

a) Saul feared war with the Philistines

b) more than he was bothered that God did not answer him.

C. Samuel told Saul that the Lord was only doing what He said He would do.

1. Samuel told Saul why the Lord had abandoned him.
2. And Samuel revealed what would happen the next day.
  - a) Why do we think someone can tell us
  - b) that things will not happen the way the Lord has said they will happen?

### **VII. First Samuel 28.20–25 – Prioritize!**

A. Fear of defeat, of losing his life, and the loss of his sons, paralyzed him.

B. The medium offered him food.

1. He refused to eat it.
2. Well, after she and his two men talked to him more, he decided to eat.

C. Saul, what are you thinking?

1. You know that tomorrow you are going to die.
2. You and your sons are going to die in battle, because
  - a) of your sin.
  - b) Saul, what do you think you should do about it?
    - (1) Is this a time to eat?
    - (2) Saul, you need to repent and confess your sin, immediately!

### **VIII. First Samuel 29.1–5 – The Lord Shall Lead You**

A. The Philistines got ready to fight the Israelites, but

1. the princes of the Philistines did not want David among them.
2. Achish defended David.
  - a) However, without the backing of the princes,
  - b) Achish would not be able to fight the children of Israel.

B. The princes explained that this would have been a great opportunity

1. for David to reconcile himself with Saul, for
2. if David turned against the Philistines while among them,

- a) he would have inflicted much damage, and
  - b) Israel would win, making Saul happy.
- C. This may have been the Lord's way of preventing David
- 1. from fighting Israel and
  - 2. from unknowingly killing Saul.

### **IX. First Samuel 29.6–10 – When No One Wants You**

- A. Saul and some in Israel did not want David.
- B. The princes of the Philistines did not want David.
- 1. What do you do when the good guys do not want you and
  - 2. the bad guys do not want you?
    - a) First, King Achish rejected David.
    - b) Then King Achish accepted David as a bodyguard.
    - c) Finally, King Achish told David to leave.
- C. That is human nature.
- 1. One moment people praised Jesus,
  - 2. the next moment they demanded His crucifixion.
    - a) No wonder John gave this insight into the thinking of Jesus,

**23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. 24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, 25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man (John 2.23–25).**

- b) Ultimately only One proves reliable regardless of everything.
  - (1) That does not mean we cannot have friends.
  - (2) Nor does that mean we cannot trust others, because
    - (a) we have to for survival;
    - (b) just be sure that you know only the Lord never fails us.

## **X. First Samuel 29.11 – Wait for the Lord**

- A. David turns from fighting Israel, but
- B. still returns to the land of the Philistines.
  - 1. What shall happen from here?
  - 2. David knew that the Lord was in control.
- C. The Lord would do things with David that he never imagined as a teenager.

### **Exhortation:**

#### **I. Look at your life and see**

- A. that Someone must be orchestrating things behind the scenes, because
- B. there is Someone orchestrating your life.

#### **II. It is the Son of David, Jesus of Nazareth.**

- A. He wants you to see
- B. that He knows what is right and best for your life.
  - 1. Likewise, He knows what is right and best for your eternity.
  - 2. To whom shall you turn when your time arrives?
    - a) You know that no one else can help you at that time.
    - b) Only He can help you then, and
      - (1) only He can help you now.
      - (2) What is your decision?