

It is three fold:

- 1) For Saul. v. 22.
- 2) For God. v. 23.
- 3) For himself. v. 24.

Word for "tribulation" is used of travail of a woman.

**c. His frustration. 24:1-4.**

With grave indelibility, David communes with his own bitter soul. He sees no future for himself, but death. He feels he will come to his end prematurely.

**Note** David all but forgot that he had been appointed king of Israel and this by God. Until this was accomplished, he was utterly invincible. If only he had believed God!

**Conclusion**

The Christian life can be one of victory and triumph. But the gauge between faith and failure is a narrow one. Paul noted that he had learned to be content in whatever state (Phil. 4:11). He had learned to accept, fulfill, respect, and believe in God's appointment. True peace and personal harmony are never experienced until this is realized. But you can't come to this sort of settled feeling unless you know God, possess Christ as your Saviour, and put your whole weight upon His Word. Will you do THIS today!

**THE BOOK OF FIRST SAMUEL**

**"Faith and Failure"**

**1 Samuel 26-27:4**

**Introduction**

1. Failure is a close companion to faith. They often are expressed in alternating sequences. It is the end of this which really counts!

2. David's life and his engagements with Saul illustrate so much of the Christian experience. The current chapter affirms again that failure lurks at the very corners of faith. To see this and read it is to fortify the trusting soul with information leading to spiritual growth.

3. The four major characters of the passage show the short distance between faith and failure. Each one did something in connection with God's appointment and the story is genuinely exciting in this! Study the following appointments carefully:-

**1. ABISHAI--He failed to accept God's appointment.**

**a. His recommendation. v. 8.**

Like the men of David previously (Chap. 24), Abishai feels God has delivered Saul for death now! He recommends one smiting with the sword. Only one will be needed.

**b. His refutation. vv. 9-11.**

David gives three reasons for not accepting the suggestion of Abishai:

- 1) You can't justify action against God's anointed. Guilty is the one who rejects God's appointment.
- 2) You can't deny the judgment of God. God will deal with Saul in one of three ways listed.
- 3) You can't involve David in such a dastardly deed. He would have no part of it.

Note David has reaffirmed his basic contention that when God raises up a man, it is up to God to deal with him in his rebellion. For man to enter into God's province is to call down the judgment of God upon himself.

2. ABNER--He failed to fulfill God's appointment.

a. His position v. 5.

Abner was the highest ranking military personnel on guard with Saul. With Saul and his company entrenched behind their wagons and facilities, Abner was in charge of protection.

b. His condition, v. 12.

Three verbs tell the tale of woe for Abner: he didn't see; he didn't know; he didn't awake! The deep sleep God had brought was the same as mentioned elsewhere in the Word (Gen. 2:21; 15:12). In both of these instances, God did something unilaterally to show His power!

c. His condemnation, vv. 13-16

In a series of verbal exchanges, all of which probably are not recorded, David rebuked Abner for his failure to watch and protect the king, his master.

Note God assigns all of His own with specific responsibilities. No child of God is giftless in the Body of Christ! The warning of Ezekiel should ring loud and clear in every born again ear (See Ezekiel 3).

3. SAUL--He failed to respect God's appointment.

a. His question, v. 17.

One oscillates in feelings for Saul. In utter disregard for God's declared purpose for David, he pursues him relentlessly. Yet, his pathetic "my son, David" beggars emotions. The verb

"knew" is actually the one for "recognize."

b. His admission, v. 21.

Saul admitted his utter futile situation in four statements:

- 1) I have sinned.
- 2) I will no more do harm.
- 3) I have played the fool.
- 4) I have erred exceedingly.

c. His persuasion, v. 25.

Saul had previously recognized that God's purpose for David would win out (24:20), but this knowledge did not stay with him long! Again, however, he is stirred within to express God's future for David. In two emphatic utterances, he notes:

- 1) David will do great.
- 2) David will prevail.

These verbs are both doubled in this verse to give the sense of definitive perfection in the idea expressed. Hence, Saul expresses no sense of doubt about the ultimate role of David!

Note If only Saul could have respected what God had decided. His whole life would have been different. We need to take what God does literally!

4. DAVID--He failed to believe God's appointment.

a. His proposition, vv. 19, 20.

David longed for a truce in the whole mad run for his life. If it were God Who propelled Saul against David, then let's offer sacrifice to God and be done with it! If it were man who did this, let him be cursed. They only did their meanness to drive David to serve the false gods! He concludes that it is meaningless to pursue him.

b. His suggestion, vv. 22-24