

Philistines and Pickles
(1 Samuel 29)

- I. **1SAM 29** finds David still an outcast from his own nation where the government (King Saul) and even the sentiments of the people had turned against him even though he had given Israel great victory over their oppressive occupiers, the Philistines. **1SAM 17:49-54.**
- A. God had made Saul king as a judgment against Israel which rejected God as their king. **1SAM 8:4-9 c/w HOS 13:11.**
1. Saul was headstrong and disobedient so lost favor with God Who cashiered his services as king and would replace him. **1SAM 15:28.**
 2. David would outshine Saul in bravery and leadership qualities so Saul out of envy considered him a threat and sought to eliminate him. **1SAM 18:5-9; 19:1.**
 3. Israel's leaders would similarly seek Christ's destruction. **MAR 15:10-11.**
- B. As famous and popular as David had been in the eyes of the people, there were ungrateful folders and staunch loyalists that despised him as a traitor when he had to run from Saul. **1SAM 23:12-21; 25:10.**
- II. David had for some time been hiding and abiding among the Philistines.
- A. He had earlier tried to appeal to a Philistine king but the poor reception moved him to feign madness. **1SAM 21:10-11.**
- B. He sought refuge again among the Philistines in **1SAM 27:1.**
1. This decision was sketchy since it was inquiry made not of God but of his heart.
 2. Other times, David inquired of the LORD. **1SAM 23:2, 9-12; 30:7-8.**
 3. God had anointed David to be king which implied that he would be king in spite of Saul. **1SAM 16:1, 13.**
 4. No new prophecy had been given to negate **1SAM 22:5.**
 5. This should remind us that reason must yield to revelation, and fear yield to faith. Many of the troubles we find ourselves in are owing to decisions made without regard to God's counsellors. **PRO 15:22 c/w PSA 119:24.**
 6. Consider Abraham and Lot. **GEN 16:1-4; 2PE 2:7-8.**
 7. David did get favorable results (**1SAM 27:4**) but results are not the measure of right thinking. **NUM 20:11-12 c/w PSA 119:128; ROM 4:3.**
- C. God overruled David's sketchy decision to give him favor in the eyes of Achish. **1SAM 27:12; 28:1-2.**
- D. How God brought David through his troubles in spite of imperfect decisions may be a comfort, though, to those whose hearts are, like David's, upright. **PSA 7:10.**
- III. It may be observed that there are times when the faithful are safer among heathen.
- A. Joseph, through trials, fared better in Egypt than among his own brethren. **GEN 45:1-8.**
- B. Elijah was safer in Zidon than in Israel. **1KI 17:9 c/w LUK 4:24-26.**
- C. Jesus as an infant was sent to Egypt. **MAT 2:13.**
- D. Church members ought not to callously forsake assembling with their brethren (**HEB 10:25**) but when there is gross disorder persisting in the church in spite of Scriptural injunctions against it, there comes a time to withdraw. **2TH 3:6.**
1. If the church insists on darkness, the godly dare not fellowship with it. **2CO 6:14-18.**
 2. The righteous withdrawer's fellowship with God remains, as with Elijah.
- IV. In **1SAM 29**, David found himself in a pickle.

- A. Achish the king of Gath had been David's benefactor and even had him be part of the rear guard in a pending battle against Israel. **1SAM 29:1-3.**
- B. For David to join in this battle on the side of Achish would have created a seemingly impossible dilemma.
1. He would have been warring against the covenant nation of which he had been anointed king and might well have been confronting King Saul whom he had already said he would dare not touch. **1SAM 26:23.**
 2. He could abandon Achish in the field of battle and expose him to peril, which would be deceitful and dishonorable: traits which God despised in Saul.
 3. He could betray Achish in battle by fighting with Israel against him but would Israel's armies be with David or against him? Saul was still after him.
 4. How could David get out of this with his life or integrity intact?
- C. God Who turns the hearts of kings (**PRO 21:1**) also works in the hearts of princes, politicians, generals, etc. **1SAM 29:4-11.**
1. God is truly on the side of the godly: His covenant family are the apple of His eye for whom He does great things. **ZEC 2:8 c/w 2TH 1:4-6; REV 12:13-17.**
 2. He truly cares for you, especially when Satan wants you. **1PE 5:6-10.**
- D. Our God commands many, varied and sometimes surprising salvations for His people. **PSA 44:4.**
1. In any pickle, there may be logical conclusions to reduce damage (**2KI 7:3-4**) but be wary of only relying on reason to choose the lesser of two evils.
 2. When the odds are stacked against you, appeal to God. **2CH 20:12.**
 3. God doesn't want you to compromise principle, dishonor Him, etc. and He especially doesn't want you to sin your way out of trouble so He will make a way of escape. **1CO 10:13 c/w 2PE 2:9.**
 4. The first and most important decision you should make when you are in a pickle with no apparent exit is that you will not give in to the temptation to sin. This works in MANY other scenarios!
 5. Sometimes we are found in pickles where either our sour choices or God's pleasure leaves us "...troubled on every side...perplexed..." (**2CO 4:8**), with no seeming way out of what could be for us a snare of temptation.
 6. Cleave to **1CO 10:13; 2PE 2:9** and pray **MAT 6:13** in advance and during trouble.
 7. God's love, care, power and grace fits us to experience all of **2CO 4:8** and retain our integrity before God and men.
- E. "Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come; 'Tis grace has led me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." (John Newton, *Amazing Grace*)