

SAUL II---DAVID I

(I Samuel 20:1---II Samuel 5:25)

Remember the time periods: Beginnings, Noah, Patriarchs, Captivity, Wilderness, Conquest, Judges. NOW, add a new one: United Kingdom.

The stories of Saul and David over-lap considerably. While the angry and moody Saul ruled without God's blessings, the young man David was closely associated with Saul. David was always very loyal and faithful to Saul. He had been in Saul's service since he had been successful in killing Goliath, the giant warrior of the Philistines, as recorded in I Samuel 17, but Saul knew that David had God's blessing and would be a future rival to the royal position of Saul and his family.

Chapter 20 recounts the remarkable friendship between David and Jonathan, Saul's son. Jonathan repeatedly tried to protect David from Saul's anger. But finally David had to flee. Chapters 21-30 relate the details of Saul chasing David, trying to kill him. But God was with David, helping him escape. David kept trying to convince Saul that he was a loyal subject and meant no harm to the king.

Chapter 25 relates an interesting incident between David and a very mean man named Nabal. In the end, Nabal dies and David marries Abigail, Nabal's widow and a very fine woman.

Saul constantly ran into trouble. As he was fighting the Philistines he tried to get a message from God about what to do---but God would not respond to him. At this point we find the extraordinary story of Saul going to a "medium" (a person who could communicate with the dead) referred to as the "Witch of Endor" in order to try to talk to Samuel, who was now dead. The medium was able to contact Samuel who warned Saul that he would not only lose to the Philistines, but that both he and his sons would die the next day. Chapter 31 records the death of Saul and 3 of his sons---including Jonathan.

II Samuel begins with David's sadness over the death of Saul and Jonathan. There followed a division among Israel as one group wanted to make Saul's son, Ishbosheth, king---which they did. But others wanted David to be king. 2 generals, Abner and Joab, led the competing factions. After a time Ishbosheth was murdered and David eventually became king over all Israel.