**1 Sa 1 / Mt 6**

**Main theme: Do not dispute hypocritically, plead according to God’s will, and fulfill our vow to God.**

**- Make a vow/ make an appeal (know what pray for/do not worry)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 1:10-11, Mt 6:33

The two books of Samuel included the life of Samuel and the entire history about Saul and David. God raised Samuel as a prophet at his era to end the chaotic status caused by period of Judges’ ruling, and the hypocritical and detestable services brought by the house of Eli so as to turn all Israelites back to God and to prepare the advent of David’s Kingdom. The main theme of the two chapters discussed on making a vow and making an appeal. On one side it concerned Hannah’s barren womb. She was irritated by Peninnah and became her adversary. Thus she was forced to come before God to make a vow for a son and was granted by God. On the other side it concerned three kinds of hypocritical devoutness. This teaches us that we should abandon hypocrisy and pray according to God’s will and also not to worry about any earthly affairs. We ought to consider God’s mind just like Hannah who paid the price to pray spiritually to labor for the rise up of Samuel.

**A. Do not dispute, do not play false, forced to come before God and plead according to the will**

Make a vow (1Sa 1:1-17) - Pray (Mt 6:1-18)

1.【Shallow worship】1-5 Elkanah was a descendant of Korah of the Levite tribe. (1 Ch 6:22-27) Although every year the whole family went up to Shiloh to worship God, they were only outwardly devout. He even violated God’s command and sinned against God by taking two wives. One was named Hannah who was barren and Peninnah had children. But he was partial and loved Hannah. He gave her a double portion of the meat from the sacrifice and thus created disharmony, selfishness, partiality and disputes in the family.

※【Hypocritical good actions】1-4 Jesus taught His disciples when they were to give in charity, not to be hypocritical or do it intentionally before others to gain their honor. We ought to do good secretly and God will see what is done in secret and reward us. The house of Elkanah had differing weights and only paid attention on superficial worship without honest good acts. God saw them. How could He reward him?

2.【Suffering compels people to come before God 】5-8 Peninnah saw Hannah was barren but she still gained the affection of the husband. So she was jealous and became her rival and provoked her in order to irritate her. Thus Hannah wept and would not eat. Her husband comforted her again and again but he still could not release the suffering of Hannah because it was God who closed her womb so as to compel her to come before God to be favored through the suffering and refinement.

※【Go into your room and pray】5-8 The hypocrites loved to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. The Lord taught the disciples they ought to go into their room, close the door and pray to the Father who was unseen. Hannah suffered severely and was compelled to come before God into the room and pray. The Father, who saw what was done in secret would answer and reward.

3.【Pour one’s heart before God】9-17 Hannah wept bitterly. She pleaded and prayed that God would forgive her iniquities and let her forgive her adversary. Then her soul was relieved and not irritated. She also bore God’s mind to request Him for a son. She vowed to set him apart to be holy for God all his life. She disregarded the misunderstanding of the elderly Eli who thought she was drunk. She only poured her heart before God and prayed unceasingly.

※【Pray in accordance with God’s will】9-18 The Lord taught the disciples to pray according to God’s will just like Hannah vowed to offer for a son to replace the hypocritical and detestable priest of the house of Eli. This was because she cared for the temple of God and she had in mind the will and the kingdom of God. She was filled with the mind of God and forgave the others’ iniquity unconditionally. (Mt 18:21-35) Thus God saved her from every evil. She was not accused and poured to God in prayer. She was not afraid of the improper accusation of Eli. She only requested God’s will be accomplished.

**B. Give thanks by fulfilling the promise; entrust by faith and seek first God’s kingdom**

Fulfill a vow (1Sa1:18-28) – Do not worry (Mt 6:19-34)

1.【Plead and be granted and God remembers】18-20 When Hannah finished praying, she entrusted her faith and went back to eat and was no longer downcast. God remembered Hannah and answered her prayer. She conceived and gave birth to a son and named him Samuel (God has heard).

※【Seek for earthly fortune will fail】19-23 Do not store up for yourselves treasures for pursuing the worldly treasures will fail. We ought to be like Hannah to request for a son in God’s will and sacrifice for Him. The worldly treasures will be devoured by moth or be stolen by thieves. It may also rust. The mind of Hannah was bright. She did not pray for worldly treasures but that a prophet of the era might be raised to lead all people to know God and keep His Word. (Lk 12:33-34) Her request did not fail but was granted by God!

2.【Give thanks, fulfill the promise and entrust to God】21-28 Hannah’s life was abundant and she became a spiritual mother. She nursed the baby till the boy was weaned. Then she took him to Shiloh to see God so he would forever live in God’s house. Hannah gave thanks to God and fulfilled her vow. For his whole life he would be given over to the Lord. She led the boy to Eli and witnessed God. By faith she also sacrificed and entrusted the boy to God. Thus she gave thanks and worshiped God.

※【Seek first God’s kingdom and do not worry】24-34 No one can serve both God and money (wealth) or worry what to eat, what to drink or what to wear like the foreigners. Even the birds and the flowers of the field are cared by God, what about us? Hannah took the child to Eli in the house of God. She did not worry because she trusted in God and she fully entrusted her son to God. Therefore we ought to seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to us as well. Hannah sacrificed his son for God’s kingdom. God rewarded her with more children! (1 Sa 2:21) This teaches us not to worry for tomorrow. We ought to be like Hannah to give thanks, entrust and worship God!

**Ps 17/ Rev 11:6 Main theme: Be careful to keep one’s heart, tongue and behavior to gain power and save all people**

**- Prudence / Power**

The two witnesses are full of spiritual power.

(1)【Keep the Lord’s words and be perfect before God】1-5 After God’s probing, examination and refinement, keep the Lord’s word so our heart, mouth and actions are mature before God and stand firm in the truth.

(2)【God will display his wonderful love】6-15 The prayer of the righteous has great effect. The Lord will keep them as the apple of their eye. The Lord will save me and His children from the inner and outer enemies who will take our lives. God will show His power. (Esther prayed to save herself and to save her tribe.) We further pray God will save us from the short-lived blessings of this world. We will not be satisfied with wealth and children. We only pray to see the Lord’s face, to preach to the ends of the world to save all people so we may all gain the eternal blessing to satisfy the Lord’s heart.

**Central point of the wheels: Through refinement keep the Lord’s Word, plead according to the will and gain the power**

Dear Lord, may You let me imitate Hannah, to raise up a large number of workers of this era through prayer and lead men to come to You.

**1 Sa 2 / Mt 7**

**Main theme: Blessed is he who seeks humbly and obeys the Word; those who despise the Lord and tolerate evil will be ruined**

**- Do evil/ Walk the Way (praise /listen and act)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 2:8-10, Mt 7:24-25

A discussion on doing evil and walking the Way – on one side it concerned Hannah was granted a son and she dedicated her son to God with thanksgiving. She kept no record of wrong and did not judge others easily. She kept the Lord’s Word and praised God. On the other side it concerned the two sons of Eli who did all wicked things. Eli was like a bad tree bearing bad fruits. Hence, a man of God prophesied his two sons would perish together. They listened but did not act. They did not take the warning which was a foundation built on sand and ended miserably. Hannah, however, was like a good tree which produced good fruit. She was able to see young Samuel grew up before God gradually and was favored to glorify God.

1. **Do not judge, do not do evil, praise God, ask and be given**

Praise (1Sa 2:1-21) - Judge (Mt 7:1-14)

1.【Praise God】1-10 After Hannah was favored, her heart was full of praises to God and her mouth was filled with extolment. She delighted and triumphed in the deliverance of God. She acknowledged God was her Rock and the only God who exalted the lowly and the barren bore many children. She even prophesied in the spirit God would guard the saints, shatter the enemies, give strength to His king and exalt the horn of His anointed.

※【Judge others】1-5 The Lord taught us not to be self-righteous or judge other lest we would be judged for our acts would be measured by God. We ought to first remove the plank in our eyes and then we may take the speck away from the brother’s eye. Hannah was favored before God. She was able to forgive Peninnah from the heart and did not mind about her personal gain or loss. She did not judge others. Her heart rejoiced in the Lord and sang the most beautiful song.

2.【Seek to fatten and benefit oneself 】11-15 The two sons of Eli were priests. They were blindly covetous. They benefited themselves and fattened themselves. They grabbed the meat of the sacrifice. They engaged in illicit sexual relations and committed adultery. Whatever they did was evil. They sinned seriously before God, while little Samuel served the Lord before Eli.

※【Ask for the promised Holy Spirit】6-12 The Lord promised us that if we ask and it will be given to us; and seek and we will find. He also promised to bestow the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. We ought to ask for the good gifts promised by God better than anything in the world. If we ask according to God’s will, it will be granted. We also have to cherish what is sacred and do not give it to the dogs that turn to tear us to pieces. We ought to empty ourselves from evil and reject the secular but thirst for the Holy Spirit to fill us. All the Law and the Prophets hang on to love God and men. Therefore we ought to treat others with love. The two sons of Eli did not ask for the Holy Spirit. They did not have love but only sought to fatten and benefit themselves. They were insatiably greedy and blinded by covetousness. They despised the sacred things.

3.【Sin greatly】16-17 The two sons of Eli sinned seriously. They were bold in evil. They controlled from behind and ordered the servants to seize the sacrifice shamelessly. They greatly disdained God’s sacrifice and disgraced God’s name.

※【Walk on the path toward destruction】 13-14 The two sons of Eli were presumptuously wanton. They ran a wide path and a destructive road. They harmed others and harmed themselves. They are our lesson. We ought to run to a narrow gate and a narrow path that leads to eternity. Do not run towards a destructive broad gate or a wide path. Since childhood, Samuel left his parents and ran a suffering narrow path. But he pursued holiness, godliness and the Word of love. He did not get contaminated by the evil of the house of Eli. Thus he humbled to take lesson. His life was abundant and was favored before God. He progressed unceasingly.

**B. Take warning, listen and act to avoid being abandoned**

To warn (1Sa 2:18-36) – To watch out (Mt 7:15-29)

1.【A bad tree bears bad fruits】18-30 Eli was old and heard the serious evil of his sons. But he was not angry and did not discipline them strictly. He honored his sons more than God. He was not moved by the warning of the man of God. He scorned the sacrifice like a tree that bore bad fruit. Those who despise God will be disdained. Little Samuel served the Lord before Eli. His mother continued to pay the price for him. Each year she would make a little robe for him. This integrated the mother’s hope and price for him. Little Samuel wore a linen ephod and ministered in a holy manner. Samuel grew in stature and in favor with God and with men. This was the choice fruit of Hannah the good tree. (?? V26, Lk 2:52)

※【Watch out for false prophets】15-23 Watch out for false prophets. They come in sheep’s clothing but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Eli produced bad fruit and would be cut off. Hannah bore good fruit and would be remembered forever. Therefore, not everyone who calls ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven. Only he who does the will of the Father who is in heaven like Hannah and Samuel might enter. The two sons of Eli did evil. Though they were priests, they violated God’s will. They were wayward. So God would not acknowledge them.

2.【Two kinds of priests】31-36 The house of Eli was full of evil. Thus God punished them and cut short their strength. All the people of his family were cut off. The two sons both died on the same day. God raised a faithful priest for Himself to act according to His desire and that was Samuel. He was strengthened forever.

※【Two kinds of foundations】24-29 Whoever hears the Lord and acts is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. It will not fall despite the rain comes and the streams rise; just like the grown up Samuel who became a faithful priest after God’s heart. How blessed it is to listen and act according to the Lord’s words. The house of Eli listened but did not practice just like a house built on sand. It fell completely within a day and became our warning.

**Ps 18/ Rev 11:7 Main theme: Cry out to escape from the enemy, obey the Word till the end to receive great bliss.**

**- Till the end / Great bliss**

The two witnesses have given their testimony. Even though they may be killed, the light and momentary troubles will achieve for them the glory that far outweighs them all.

(1)【Cry out and trust in the Lord to triumph over】1-18 By the power of the Lord we are saved from our inner and outer enemies.

(2)【Obey the Word by the Lord】19-28 Be a blameless man before God and keep ourselves from sin.

(3)【Destroy the enemy by the Lord】29-45 Destroy the enemies and the power of evil by the Lord and lead all people to God.

(4)【Give thanks and praise the Lord】46-49 Everything is due to the salvation of God. Therefore we ought to give thanks and glorify. God. May the Lord be exalted.

(5)【Ought to imitate David】50 Whoever imitate David to overcome to observe and proclaim the Word till the end by the Lord will be blessed greatly with God’s great love. Or if they are like the two witnesses who martyred for the Lord, they will gain the better resurrection. (2 Co 4:16-18)

**Central point of the wheels: Listen and act the Way, call on and praise**

Dear Lord, I am so blessed by your great salvation. I am willing to walk your Way by You, to unite with you, to bear good fruits and glorify your name!

**1 Sa 3 / Mt 8**

**Main theme: Be like a child, listen attentively and proclaim widely, believe and ask greatly**

**- Listen / Ask (proclaim / follow)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 3:10, Mt 8:17

A discussion on listening and asking –on one side it concerned young Samuel had the first revelation from God. He was humble and watchful. He listened attentively to God’s voice. Afterwards God set him as a prophet to lead the entire house of Israel to know God. On the other side it concerned that whoever came before God with humility and trust to call on Him would be healed. This teaches us that we should be like a child to come before God to listen on one hand and to ask on the other hand. Then we will be favored to be healed and revealed. Simultaneously Jesus trained his disciples how to follow him in the mid of storms.

**A. Listen watchfully and ask with faith**

Calling (1Sa 3:1-9) - Healing (Mt 8:1-17)

1.【Young Samuel is blessed】1-4 Eli lived in the temple but was drowsy in the spirit. All he knew was sleeping. The word of the Lord was rare. There were not many visions for God had not found a spokesman of His will. But young Samuel ministered humbly and watchfully. The lamp of God had not yet gone out. God found little Samuel to be the spokesman of His will. So God called him. But he did not know it was God’s calling.

※【To be blessed before God】1-13 Many followed the Lord. Only those who came humbly to ask for help would be cured and purified. A man with leprosy came and knelt before the Lord and asked to be cleansed. When the merciful hand of the Lord touched him, he was cleansed. Old Eli had leprosy in the spirit, thus God’s will had not been able to get through. By love and faith a centurion asked the Lord to say the word for his paralyzed servant. His servant was healed. The Lord commended his great faith. This prophesied the foreigners would return to the Lord and sit in the heavenly kingdom. But the people of the nation were driven out in the dark. The house of Eli rejected God’s grace and was forsaken. They entered the everlasting darkness.

2.【God calls out repeatedly and waits】5-9 God called repeatedly to Samuel. But he only ran to Eli. However, God still waited for him. God called again on the third time. Then Eli realized it was God calling the boy. He taught him how to reply to God’s calling and to listen to Him.

※【The Lord blindly bears the burden to heal】14-17 Jesus came to Peter’s house and healed his mother-in-law. Then she got up and began to wait on the Lord. In the evening, many who were demon-possessed were brought to Him. The Lord drove out the spirits with a word and healed them. “He took up men’s infirmities and carried our diseases.” This was like God’s repeated calling to young Samuel. Again He carried and waited for him. This shows God’s love. He waits to show mercy on men!

**B. Proclaim God’s revelation boldly, deny everything to follow God**

Proclaim to all (1Sa 3:10-21) – Refuse the grace (Mt 8:18-34)

1.【Listen to the Lord attentively】10-14 God called Samuel for the fourth time and he then replied and listened humbly. He was instructed by God of the result of the wickedness of the house of Eli. God would send judgment on them forever in order to warn to all the Israelites.

※【Follow the Lord】18-22 Jesus replied to those who wanted to follow Him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.” A teacher of the law followed verbally. He used the reason to bury his father so he could not follow. Eli only cared for affection and followed the world with his sons. Their result was tragic. Samuel listened attentively to God’s words and was willing to follow. He was blessed. Only by returning to be a boy, then we will be willing to follow the Lord and be blessed.

2.【Do not be afraid of the threat and obey the will to proclaim】15-18 Samuel lay down until morning. He opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, until Eli called him and threatened him not to hide anything. Then he was strengthened by God and told him everything. But Eli was not touched. He did not take any warning and was not aware to be shocked. He continued to be perfunctory and allowed God’s words to be fulfilled.

※【Do not be afraid of the storm and cry out to the Lord】23-27 The disciples followed the Lord and got into the boat. Suddenly a furious storm came and the waves roared. But Jesus was sleeping. When the disciples saw the environment, they were afraid and almost drowned. They cried out to the Lord for deliverance. Jesus rebuked them for their little faith. He also rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. Faced with the threat of Eli which was like the great winds and the waves, the heart of Samuel rolled. He was inevitable to be frightened. Finally he was calmed by God and proclaimed God’s vision boldly.

3.【Proclaim the revelation to save the people】19-21Samuel grew up and God was with him. He revealed to him and attested him as a prophet. None of his words fell to the ground. He proclaimed God’s vision throughout the land of Israel.

※【Rebuke the evil spirits to save the souls】28-34 Jesus crossed the sea to Gadarenes and faced two demon-possessed men to save them. The Lord ordered the demons to come out from the two men and go into the pigs. As a result, all the pigs rushed into the lake and were drowned. The whole town pleaded with the Lord to leave their region. They valued the worldly wealth and rejected the Lord of live. But the Israelites listened to the prophet and accepted God’s words. They were freed from the control of sin. There was the sign of God’s presence in the work and effect of Jesus and Samuel’s salvation.

**Ps 19/ Rev 11:8 Main theme: To die in the Lord’s death, keep the Lord’s Word watchfully and be rewarded greatly.**

**- Keep watchfully /Great reward**

To die with the Lord on the cross and to die completely to evil and the world, then we may obey the Word, glorify God and benefit men.

(1)【Ought to glorify God and benefit people】1-6 All creations declare and proclaim God’s glory and the work of His hands. We ought to serve day and night to proclaim and glorify Him. If we cannot proclaim verbally, we can proclaim by our acts and even to all the ends of the world. God will open the door for those who keep His order and love Him (Re 3:7-8), so they may shine all around the earth like the sun.

(2)【Keep the Lord’s words carefully and be blameless】7-14 Let us purify ourselves by the blood and through the Word and be redeemed to be blameless, so our thoughts and words may be accepted by the Lord and die completely to the world and to ourselves. Then we may become a precious instrument fit for God’s use so that all people will be blessed.

**Central point of the wheels: Listen and ask and be blessed, keep and proclaim the Word**

Dear Lord, I would like to listen attentively to your voice, and to be healed completely by You and proclaim your salvation to the end of the world!

**1 Sa 4/ Mt 9**

**Main theme: Do not be self-deceiving, do not despair, and plead from the Almighty God by faith.**

**- Do not be self-deceiving /seek the fundamentals**

Golden verses: 1Sa 4:20-21, Mt 9:36-38

A discussion on do not be self-deceiving and seeking the fundamentals – on one side it concerned how self-deceiving the Israelites were. After they were defeated, they did not examine their wrong humbly. They thought that by bringing in the Ark, they would turn defeat to victory. As a result, they suffered a crashing defeat and the Ark was also captured. On the other side it concerned that Jesus had the authority of forgiveness and healing. Everyone would be healed if they come before the Lord. This teaches us that we ought to seek for the fundamentals, do not be self-deceiving and keep the Lord’s Word in the heart, and then we may overcome our inner and outer enemies.

**A. Do not be self-deceiving and seek the fundamentals**

Self-deceiving (1Sa 4:1-11) – Self-righteousness (Mt 9:1-19)

1.【Self-deceiving】1-4 The Israelites were defeated by the Philistines in the battle. The elders did not examine their evil before God, but they discussed to bring the ark of the covenant of God. They thought the ark could save them from the hands of the enemy. (Num 10:35) The house of Eli was full of evil and provoked God’s anger. If we do not remove the Achan inside us, or are unwilling to repent to obey the Word from the heart but depended on the ark on the outside, the result is God is not with us. We are just being self-deceptive.

※【Self-righteousness】1-8 There were some men who by faith and love got through many obstacles and brought a paralytic and dropped him from the roof before Jesus. (Mk 2:1-2) Jesus saw their faith. He forgave the sins of the paralytic and healed him. A few teachers of the law entertained evil thoughts and argued to themselves. They were self-righteous. They did not know the Lord had the authority to forgive. The Israelites were defeated in the battle. They did not examine or confess their sins. They did not search for the origin and were foolishly self-deceptive. The ark could not save them.

2.【Disgraced and suffer a crashing defeat】5-11 When God’s ark was brought to the camp, the people shouted that the ground shook. They thought God would contend for them and they would surely win. The Philistines heard God’s ark was in the camp. They became afraid and encouraged one another to fight bravely. But the Israelites did not tremble before the ark. They deceived themselves. As a result they were tragically defeated. They were slaughtered and fell. The ark was captured and Eli’s two sons died together.

※【To be healed by God】9-19 The Lord is the living ark full of power and shakes the heart of men! Matthew the tax collector was called by God’s love. His heart was shaken and he immediately left everything to follow the Lord. But the heart of the people had not been shaken. The sins of the house of Eli were not removed. Thus they could not see God’s help. Instead they were defeated in disgrace and resulted to become the slave of the enemy. The Pharisees argued that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. They did not understand salvation was prepared for the sinners, that the sick would be healed. They did not seek for the inward change just like an old wineskin and old life. They were unwilling to repent and the ending would be the same as Eli’s two sons.

**B. Plead by faith and be favored greatly, do not despair and seek for revival**

Despair (1Sa 4:12-22) – Revival (Mt 9:20-38)

1.【Worry and fall dead】12-18 Eli sat on his chair by the side of the road and feared for the ark. He heard the bad news that the whole town cried, his sons were dead and the ark was captured. Then he fell backward off his chair. His neck was broken and he died. This fulfilled the prophecy of the man of God.

※【Believe and see God’s glory】20-34 In suffering and despair a woman who had been subject to bleeding came by faith to touch the clothes of the Lord and was healed immediately. By faith she was favored with deliverance. Jesus arrived at the ruler’s house and saw his daughter was dead. But Jesus has the power of resurrection! He put the crowd outside. Then He took the girl by the hand and she rose up. The house of Eli failed God’s grace and was full of breaches just like having bodily discharge and was not healed. In the critical moment Eli did not pray or trust in God. He only feared in vainly for the ark. As a result he fell and died. He could not see God’s glory of resurrection.

2.【Be negative and desperate】19-22 The daughter-in-law of Eli was just at the time of delivery. She heard God’s ark was captured and her father-in-law and husband were dead. She went into labor. As she was dying, she named the boy Ichabod (the glory has departed from Israel). She thought the ark was captured and God’s glory had departed from Israel. She was troubled and negative. She died in despair. In fact God’s glory did not depart from Israel, but only from the wicked house of Eli.

※【Pray eagerly for revival】35-38 Jesus went through all the towns and villages and saw many harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. He had compassion on them and wanted the disciples to plead the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. On one side was negative and despair. On the other side was positive to ask for workers and revival. This was like the rise up of Samuel to replace the hypocritical ministry of the house of Eli which brought revival to the house of Israel. Only by faithful prayer we may see the coming of revival.

**Ps 20/ Rev 11:9 Main theme: Suffer for the Word, but when the time comes, the Lord will save and exalt**

**- Salvation / Humiliation**

Blessed is he who is in distress for righteousness. When the time comes, he will see God’s glory.

(1)【Call out to God in distress】1-3 Do not blame in distress. If we humble and seek to trust in God, we will be granted, exalted and delivered and strengthened by God. He will accept our offerings and make all our plans succeed.

(2)【Obey the Word and do good by the Lord】4-8 Do not trust in chariots and in horses. Keep the Word only by the Lord like David who overcame evil with good. He observed the Word and loved his enemies. God would grant all his requests. He would shout for joy in his victory. The enemies fell but he was exalted.

(3)【Call on to God for others】9 Let us experience the grace of God and may others be favored together.

**Central point of the wheels: Plead for favor by faith and triumph over suffering.**

Dear Lord, you have forgiven my sins. I will forever rely on the cross and triumph over, and be sent by You to reap the harvest.

**1 Sa 5/ Mt 10**

**Main theme: Risk one’s life to follow and preach the Word, God’s hand manifests His mighty power**

**-The Ark/ The power (filled with the Word / to be sent out)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 5:4, Mt 10:39

A discussion on the Ark and the power – on one side it concerned the Israelites were defeated by the Philistines and their Ark was captured to the land of Philistia. But wherever the Ark was brought, it manifested God’s righteousness and power. Thus the enemy suffered disasters continuously. On the other side it concerned the disciples were given the authority to drive out the demons and heal the sick before they were sent to preach the Word to be a witness of suffering. This teaches us that we ought to keep the Lord’s Word firmly and trust in the Holy Spirit to bring people to repent and manifest God’s glory.

**A. To be filled with the Word and sent out, full of power though being captured**

The Ark (1Sa 5:1-5) – The disciples (Mt 10:1-20)

1.【False god falls before the Ark】1-3 The Philistines disdained the God of the Israelites. They carried the ark into Dagon’s temple. They did not know the Almighty God was majestic and awesome. God’s ark represented God. Inside the ark were two tablets of the Testimony. Where there is the Word, there is God full of authority! Early the next day Dagon fell with his face on the ground before the ark of God. The Philistines were not willing to fail and still put him back in his place.

※【Authority is given to drive out evil spirits and to heal the sick】1-4 Before Jesus sent the twelve disciples to go out to preach, He gave them authority to heal the sick and to drive out the evil spirits just like the tablets of Testimony in the ark. The Word of the Lord is living and active with great authority so all the false gods and devil will fall and let men return to Christ.

2.【God’s Ark manifests mighty power】4-5 The ark represented God and His Word. Where there is the Word, there is God. On the next morning, Dagon was found fallen again before the ark with his head and hands broken off and only his body remained. The enemy was utterly defeated. Only the Most High God gained the glory!

※【To be sent and filled with the Word】5-20 Before the disciples were sent out, they had to pay attention to the Lord’s instructions. They were filled with the Lord’s Word like the ark manifesting God’s glory. They sought for the lost sheep and preached wherever they went. They brought peace to men so they might gain salvation freely. The ark was carried to the temple of the foreign god but it still manifested its majesty. The disciples were sent like sheep among wolves. Only if we will trust in the Holy Spirit, speak wisely and be armed with a suffering attitude, we will overcome to manifest God’s power and majesty.

**B. Suffer to preach the Word, God’s hands attack the enemies and there is no tranquility**

Be abandoned (1Sa 5:6-12) – To suffer (Mt 10:21-42)

1.【Abandoned by others】6-10 Wherever the ark was, God’s hand was heavy upon the enemy and brought devastation upon them. They were afflicted with tumors. Then they sent men to carry the ark to other places. Though the ark was rejected by men, it manifested God’s majesty everywhere. The Philistines were afraid of the disaster, but they were not afraid of God and still would not repent.

※【Stand firm to the end】21-23 To be a disciple of the Lord, we will not only be hated by men because of Him, but we may even be put to death by our children or our parents, just like the ark was rejected in silence and be carried from this city to that city. But he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

2.【God’s hands attack】9-10 The ark was captured but it still manifested God’s authority. God’s hand struck heavily on the enemy. Wherever it was, He afflicted the people, both young and old, with an outbreak of tumors. They were in great panic and unbearable pain.

※【God’s hands protect】24-33 A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. We ought to imitate the example of the Lord’s suffering attitude. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. God’s hands have great power. On one side He attacked the enemy and on the other side He protected those who belonged to Him. Even our hair has been counted. Only if we will acknowledge the Lord before men, He will acknowledge us before the Father. The Philistines did not acknowledge and fear God. Thus no matter young and old, they were in panic and had tumors.

3.【Suffer from sins】11-12 The Philistines suffered due to their sin. They were in great terror before the ark. They rejected God and were severely punished. The rulers discussed to bring back the ark because God’s hand struck them heavily. Some died due to panic. Those who did not die were afflicted with tumors. The whole city cried out and had no peace!

※【Suffer for the Lord】34-42 Do not suppose that the Lord came to bring peace to the earth. A man’s enemies are the members of his own household. (Mic 7:6) Those who obey the will of the Father will be persecuted. They will be against one another, the parents against the children, and between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. If we do not love the Lord above our family, we are not worthy of the Lord. Anyone who received a prophet, a righteous man and a little one will be rewarded. The Philistines rejected God’s grace and disdained the ark received their bitter retribution. Blessed are we, if we suffer for doing good. But we must not be beaten due to evil (1 Pe 2:15-20) like the Philistines.

**Ps 21/ Rev 11:10 Main theme: Worldly pleasure will ultimately turn to bitterness, believe in the Lord and have eternal blessings.**

**- Secular pleasure/true happiness**

The earthly joy of evil will become misery instantly.

(1)【Believe in the Lord and have eternal blessings】1-6 How great is God’s power towards those who believe in Him. They will gain the everlasting rich blessings and experience the perfect salvation. They will receive the eternal blessings of Abraham promised by God: through his offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. (Gen 22:17-18) They will also be close to stand before the Lord.

(2)【Destroy all the enemies by God】7-13 Let us consume and destroy every inner and outer enemies by the Lord and all their posterity. Then we may destroy the enemies’ plan and exalt the Lord forever as the Most High and Most Holy to lead all people to gain the joy of salvation together.

**Central point of the wheels: Be filled with the Word and have the power, preach salvation and enjoy everlasting blessings.**

Dear Lord, may You let your Word, your love and the Holy Spirit fill in me, so I may be sent to preach the Word and save men.

**1 Sa 6/ Mt 11**

**Main theme: Strive to follow the will, trust in the Lord to enter His rest, God’s glory manifests.**

**-Guilt offering / Repentance (sacrifice completely/deny everything)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 6:12-14, Mt 11:28

A discussion on guilt offering and repentance – on one side it concerned that because the Philistines were afraid of the power of the Ark, they were forced to send it back together with the guilt offering. On the other side it concerned the witnesses of Jesus’s preaching. He made the sick be healed, the dead were raised, and the sinners repented and saved. John the Baptist was like the two cows that strove forward. He bore the yoke faithfully and finally sacrificed himself. He was our example. All those who are weary and burdened, come before the Lord, imitate His gentleness and humility and accept the Ark in our hearts will enjoy rest forever.

**A. Suffer to preach the Word and manifest God’s glory, bear the yoke and go forward**

Take the yoke (1Sa 6:1-14) – Advance forcefully (Mt 11:1-19)

1.【The power of the Ark】1-6 The ark of God was captured in the Philistine territory for seven months. God manifested His power and the whole land of Philistia was in trouble to compel them to humble. They discussed to bring back the ark with a guilt offering without being stubborn. Perhaps this might be freed from disasters.

※【The authority of Jesus】1-6 Jesus preached the Word with full authority like the ark in the land of Philistia filled with witnesses. He made the blind received sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cured, the deaf heard, the dead were raised and the poor were blessed. Jesus replied to those sent by John to report these to him to prove He was the coming Christ. Due to the power of the ark, the Philistines could not but offered the guilt offering and gave glory to the God of the Israelites. John waited till the end because of the witnesses of the Lord. He was blessed and did not fall due to the Lord.

2.【Take the yoke and go forward】7-12 The Philistines used two cows that had calved and hitched the cows to the new cart to bring back the ark and the guilt offering. The rulers of the Philistines followed them. The two cows left behind their love ones and took the yoke and went straight up the road without turning to the right or to the left to the border of Beth Shemesh.

※【Suffer to preach the Word】7-11 John was put to jail for the truth. Jesus commended him loyal without compromising. He was not a reed swayed by the wind. Nor was he dressed in fine clothes in kings’ palaces. But he lived in the desert and suffered to preach the Word. He carried the yoke till the end.

3.【Deny oneself faithfully and sacrifice】13-14 The people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting their wheat. They looked up and were happy to see the ark of God! The two cows that had calved forsook their love ones and were faithful to bear the yoke to accomplish the assignment. They were finally sacrificed and offered as burnt offering. God’s workers ought to be willing to sacrifice and deny themselves to offer and be faithful till death.

※【Advance forcefully into the kingdom of heaven】12-19 John sacrificed himself for the truth. He was the Elijah who was to come. He had the suffering spirit and power. Jesus encouraged the disciples to be diligent to enter the kingdom of heaven and the narrow gate (Lk 13:24) to follow the Lord faithfully till the end like the two cows that carried the yoke and finally sacrificed their lives to satisfy God’s heart. We ought to worry what the Lord worries and delight in what the Lord delights; be completely for the Lord, whether to eat or drink. The Lord’s heart is my heart! Imitate the Lord to deny ourselves to love men and be the friends of the tax collectors and sinners. The people of Beth Shemesh rejoiced when they saw the ark. But wisdom is proved right by her actions.

**B. Do not treat God disrespectfully, take the yoke humbly and gently, rest before the Lord**

Be disrespectful (1Sa 6:15-21) – Be humble and gentle (Mt 11:20-30)

1.【Offer the guilt offering to God】15-18 The Levites took the ark and the guilt offering of the Philistines and placed them on the large rock. They offered burnt offering and sacrificed to God and were accepted. The five rulers of Philistia offered gold tumors and gold rats as a guilt offering acknowledging their ugliness and corrupt origin. They humbled to the punishment and were freed from disasters with peace.

※【Unrepentant】20-24 Jesus performed many miracles in the cities of Galilee. He sighed woe to the people because they were unrepentant. How could they bear when the day of judgment came? The Philistines had yet offered their guilt offering to God to avoid the disasters. But the chosen people were hard-hearted and not willing to repent. Their sins were greater than Sodom!

2.【Despise God and bring His wrath】19-21 The people of Beth Shemesh belittled God because they looked into the ark and were punished. (Num 4:19-20) Thus they mourned and did not dare to stand in the presence of God. They did not dare to receive the ark and requested the people of Kiriath Jearim to take up the ark.

※【Take the Lord’s yoke and enjoy rest 】25-30 The Lord is gentle and humble in heart. He knew the Father’s good intention. As the chosen people were hard-hearted, salvation came to the foreigners. Thus the Lord thanked the Father that He had revealed these things to little children and hid them from the wise and learned. The people of Beth Shemesh belittled God and thought themselves smart enough to look into the ark of God and were punished. Thereafter they were afraid and had little faith. Thus they could not rest. Therefore, come to the Lord, all who are weary and burdened, take His yoke and learn from Him and you will enjoy rest. We ought to receive the Word in our heart to enjoy the true rest like the people of Kiriath Jearim received the ark.

**Ps 22/ Rev 11:11 Main theme: Bear the suffering of the cross, obey the will to the end and see the glory of resurrection.**

**- Pray humbly/stand on one’s feet**

When the time comes, God will exhibit the power of resurrection and who dares not to fear Him.

(1)【Pray day and night with faith 】1-21 Do not fix your eyes on anything when trouble is near. Do not be moved by men’s words but trust in God wholeheartedly, pray fervently day and night and know by faith that the Lord has granted. He will save me to overcome the suffering of the cross.

(2)【Preach God’s mighty power and grace of resurrection 】22-31 Experience the Lord hear my cry in distress and when the time comes, His power of resurrection will be manifested. Therefore we ought to exhort men to seek Him humbly and never be discouraged. May all people worship my God.

**Central point of the wheels: Deny and sacrifice completely, take the yoke to the end and enjoy God’s glory together.**

Dear Lord, I am willing to take your yoke, learn from You, suffer to preach, be faithful till death and enjoy the rest with You.

**1 Sa 7/ Mt 12**

**Main theme: God’s beloved servant denies himself to save men and propagate salvation**

**-Faithful servant/Beloved servant (remove evil/overcome the enemy)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 7:12, Mt 12:20-21

A discussion on a faithful servant and a beloved servant – on one side it concerned God’s faithful servant Samuel served as a prophet and a judge. He was faithful to God’s assignment all his life. He led the people to remove other gods but to serve God alone. Further, he overcame the Philistines through prayers and by the help of God. On the other hand it concerned God’s beloved servant Jesus who was humble, hidden and laid down Himself to save people. (Isa 42:1-4) With the words of the Scriptures, He overcame the hypocrisy and the frame-up of the Pharisees. Jesus is greater than the temple, Jonah and Solomon. Only Jesus is our high priest, a prophet, and our King. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Rev 19:10) We should surrender ourselves to Him forever and serve Him wholeheartedly.

**A. Eradicate evil and serve the Lord, pray to overcome the enemy, laid down Himself to save people.**

Triumph over the enemy (1Sa 7:1-11) – Rescue the people (Mt 12:1-32)

1.【Receive the Ark】1 The people of Kiriath Jearim took the ark to Abinadab’s house and consecrated his son to guard it. They held firm to the truth and the whole family was blessed. Who is willing to receive the glorious king and the Word of God to his heart? “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” (Jn 1:12)

※【Rebuke Jesus】1-8 The Pharisees were unwilling to receive the Lord and His Word to their hearts. When they saw the disciples picked some heads of grain and ate on the Sabbath, they rebuked Jesus that His disciples did something unlawful. Jesus quoted the Scriptures that the Lord desired mercy, not sacrifice for the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. The Pharisees were full of hypocrisy and did not have the Word in their heart (Jn 5:38), thus they took the innocent as sinful.

2.【Get rid of other gods and serve the Lord alone】2-4 Samuel led the people to get rid of all foreign gods and returned to the Lord wholeheartedly to serve Him only. They pursued righteousness which God delighted. The whole house of Israel inclined (origin text is mournful and sought after) to the Lord.

※【Get rid of Jesus with malice】9-14 The Pharisee attended to trifles to the neglect of essentials. They paid attention to rituals but did not understand the Son of Man was the Lord of the Sabbath. They purposely looked for a reason to accuse Jesus and asked if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. Jesus disregarded their objection and did good as usual on the Sabbath. He cured a man with a shriveled hand. When they saw Jesus healed the sick, they went out and plotted how they might kill the Lord. On one side was removing other gods and to serve the Lord alone. On the other side was harboring malice to get rid of the Lord. Both Jesus and Samuel were faithful to keep the Word. They did good bravely. They led men be favored physically and spiritually, to be cured and serve the Lord alone.

3.【Deny yourself to sacrifice】5-11 The prophet assembled all Israel at Mizpah to judge them. He led them to fast and confessed. The Philistines came up to attack them. The people were afraid and pleaded the prophet not to stop interceding. The prophet was willing to pay the price. He offered himself up as a whole burnt offering like a suckling lamb. Through prayer they saw God thundered and routed the enemy. So the enemy was defeated.

※【Lay down Himself to save men】15-32 Jesus was the faithful servant of God. He humbled and hid Himself. He denied Himself to save men and was delighted by God. A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out. The Lord cured a demon-possessed who was blind and mute. But the Pharisees said He was only by Beelzebub. The Lord drove out the devil by the Holy Spirit. He tied up the strong man and robbed his house. The Holy Spirit came to grant salvation. Therefore, anyone who spoke against the Holy Spirit would never be forgiven. The prophet prayed full of power and Jesus drove out the devil full of authority. Both of them were willing to sacrifice themselves like offering up a whole burnt offering. They loved the people and saved the people.

**B. Purify the inner filth, rescued by God, obey the will to serve the Lord**

With the help of God (1Sa 7:12-17) – Eradicate evil (Mt 12:33-50)

1.【Recover the lost land with the help of God】12-14 Israel overcame due to God’s help. They set up a stone to remember and named it Ebenezer (stone of the help). They experienced ‘thus far has the Lord helped us’. Samuel continued as a judge so the enemy did not invade the territory again. Further he restored the lost towns from the enemy.

※【Do not repent will be condemned】33-45 The Pharisees were brood of vipers like a bad tree producing bad fruit. Jesus pointed out their hearts were filled with evil, so their mouths spoke the same. It was hard for them to escape from the future judgment. In a wicked and adulterous generation, Jesus only gave them the miracle of Jonah. This predicted Christ’s miracle of the cross. God could save the people from the external enemies. Similarly He can save us from the enemy of the sinful nature through the cross of Christ to experience the God of Ebenezer and the miracle of Jonah. The Lord is greater than Solomon and greater than Jonah. If we do not repent, we will be accountable!

2.【Serve the Lord faithfully】15-17 Samuel continued as judge over Israel all the days of his life. Each year he went on a circuit throughout the land to judge the Israelites. Then he went back to his home to judge the people. He built an altar to the Lord and led men to call on God and serve Him.

※【Serve the Lord by obeying His will 】46-50 While Jesus was teaching the people, His mother and brothers stood outside to seek Him. But He only had the mind to obey God’s will without caring for the affection. He only bore the mind of God and pointed at the disciples saying, ‘For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.’ The prophet went on a circuit and judged the people in his home town just like the Lord working unceasingly who only bore the mind of the Father’s matter. He served the Lord faithfully and obeyed His will. He exhibited God’s mind of the heavenly kingdom and the great love of God!

**Ps 23/ Rev 11:12 Main theme: Hear God’s voice persistently; dwell in the Lord forever and the cup of blessing overflows**

**- Blessing overflows / The voice from heaven**

The two prophets heard the voice from heaven completely till the end. They martyred for the Lord. So when the time comes, they will ascend to heaven and gain the more beautiful resurrection for their deeds will follow them.

(1)【Good shepherds listen to God attentively】1-5 The Lord is the good Shepherd who laid down His life for the flock. We ought to trust and listen completely to the voice of the Heavenly Father and His beloved Son. (The Bible is the heavenly sound) Then we shall not be in want with rest to run the righteous path. Though we may go through darkness, we have the comfort and protection from the Lord. Then the enemies will be put to shame and those who listen completely to the Lord will have their cups overflow. They are like Joseph and Paul etc. All people and all generations will be favored because of them.

(2)【Dwell in the Lord forever】6 Not only to have overflow cups, but to have overflowing blessings forever. Then, we must listen to the Lord’s words completely till the end. Do not be like Josiah and Solomon who were like a fly in the ointment. They are our warning.

**Central point of the wheels: Eradicate evil and triumph over the enemy, deny yourself to save men and dwell in the Lord forever.**

Dear Lord, I will trust in You to eliminate all other idols, to love you wholeheartedly, to serve You, to dwell in You and to deny myself to save men.

**1 Sa 8/ Mt 13**

**Main theme: Follow the secular way to establish a king result in bitterness; believe and obey the Lord’s Word will be greatly blessed**

**-Ask for a king / Listen and walk the Way**

Golden verses: 1Sa 8:7-8, Mt 13:23

A discussion on asking for a king and listening and walking the Way – on one side it concerned the Israelites imitated all other nations and asked for a king which was rejecting God as their king. On the other side it concerned that after the people had refused the heavenly kingdom, Jesus started to explain about the mystery of the kingdom of heaven in parables, so the Gentiles who listened, believed and kept the Word would be blessed to enter into the kingdom of heaven. This teaches us that we should listen and walk the Way, honor the Lord as King and thirst for the coming of God’s kingdom.

1. **Do not ask for a king, listen and walk the Way**

Ask for a king (1Sa 8:1-9) – Walk the Way (Mt 13:1-23)

1.【Did not seek God’s will】1-3 When Samuel grew old, he did not advance to seek God's will. He appointed his sons as judges. His sons did not learn from him. They did not walk God's way. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

※【Well understand God’s will 】1-3,11 Jesus knew well of God's will. Since the chosen people rejected salvation and abandoned their king, Jesus no longer spoke to them about the lesson of the heavenly kingdom. Instead He used parables. The mystery of the heavenly kingdom would be made known to the disciples but not to the people so that only those who listened and walked the Lord's Way would be favored. Samuel did not seek God's will and set his sons as judges. They were unwilling to listen and walk His Way. They blindly did evil and brought very bad influence on the people.

2.【Follow all the other nations to ask for a king】4-6 The elders of Israel gathered together and went to Samuel. They made an excuse that his sons did not walk God's Way, so they wanted to appoint a king to lead them like all the other nations. They requested to appoint a king because they did not want God to their king. Samuel was displeased with this and so was God!

※【Calloused heart and grown with thorns】4-23 The seeds that were scattered along the path referred to those who listened to the Word but did not understand. They were taken away by the evil one. Those that fell on rocky places were well received. But as the soil was thin and they did not take root, their life withered. Those that fell among the thorns were choked by the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth, making them unfruitful. The elders came to appoint a king. The old self wanted to be the king like a calloused heart grown with thorns. They imitated the customs of the foreign nations. They listened but did not walk the Lord's Way.

3.【Reject God as their king】7-9 God's people abandoned God and did not want God to be their king. Since the time they came out of Egypt, they always rebelled against God and served other gods. God let them alone. But He told the prophet to listen to them and warn them solemnly beforehand.

※【Listen and walk the Lord’s Way】4-23 The seeds that fell on the good soil were those who kept the Lord's Word. Their life took root in honesty and goodness in their heart. They yielded a hundred times. Those who fear God and listen to His Word are humble to let God be their king! The Israelites did not keep the Lord's Word. They sinned purposely. They were deceived by evil and forsook God to be their king and were finally in trouble.

**B. Take warning, and give up everything to attain the kingdom of heaven**

Take warning (1Sa 8:10-22) – Reject the Lord (Mt 13:24-58)

1.【Ask for a king and be restricted】10-22 The prophet warned the people who wanted to appoint a king. Their king (represented the flesh, the old self and the world) would seize the tithe which was supposed to be offered to God. He would control over them and made them slaves and suffer. By that time, when they cried out for relief, God would not answer them. But the people refused to listen. They insisted to appoint a king to rule over them and lead them to fight their battles rather than letting the Most High God to lead them.

※【Will shine in the Father’s kingdom】24-58 Then Jesus told them the parable of the weeds. We ought to be alert for the enemy would sow the weeds among the wheat. By the end of time to harvest, they would be burnt. Only the wheat would be brought into the barn. The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed. It is planted in the field. Its beginnings will seem humble, but will prosper in future. On one side they requested to appoint a king and would be ruled over to be a slave. On the other side if they exalt God as the king, they would not be a slave in His kingdom. They would shine like the sun and rise in its strength. (Jdg 5:31) Therefore we ought to deny everything to gain the heavenly kingdom. The people did not take any warning after hearing. They rejected God to be their king. The people of the hometown of Jesus also abandoned the Lord. They only saw by the eyes and had an unbelieving heart. Thus they finally lost the grace of God!

**Ps 24/ Rev 11:13 Main theme: The earth quaked and the city collapsed, do not turn to falsehood and prepare to meet the Lord**

**- The earth quaked /Ascend the hill**

(1)【The earth quaked violently】1-2 God created the earth and the world. May the whole earth fear and obey His Word and gain the everlasting blessings. But men are rebellious and profane God. Therefore the earth quaked and the cities fell so men may realize to do good.

(2)【Ought to consecrate and seek the Lord】3-6 We ought to confess and repent and bear cleans hands and a pure heart. Then we may ascend to the top of the spiritual mountain to see the Lord and seek Him. We will be blessed and vindicated. Do not be the wife of Lot who was at the bottom of the mountain. She was disastrous and disgraced.

(3)【Lead the people to meet the second advent of the Lord】7-10 Let us lead all people to be alert to wait for the second coming of the Lord. We trust in the Lord to overcome all inner and outer adversaries. By the Lord Almighty we may accomplish the assignments of His work so when He comes, we will be caught up to reign with Him. **Central point of the wheels: Consecrate in the mid of difficulties, listen and walk the Way, and the Lord be the King**

Dear Lord, may you make my heart as a good soil, keep the Word and bear fruits, honor You as the King and receive your glorious kingdom.

**1 Sa 9/ Mt 14**

**Main theme: Seek the Lord humbly and God will grant us immeasurably more than we ask; follow the sinful nature brings destruction**

**-Seek the Lord / Trust in the Lord**

Golden verses: 1Sa 9:6, Mt 14:32-33

A discussion on seeking the Lord and trusting in the Lord – on one side it concerned Saul was chosen by God. Before he was anointed, he was favored as he could not find the lost donkey. He finally humbled to seek the man of God. On the other side it concerned Herod allowed his lustful desires to reign and refused to humble himself to accept the rebuke. Ultimately he killed John, the Baptist. Lord Jesus laid down and broke himself to feed thousands of people, that they might be delivered and healed. This teaches us that we should seek the Lord humbly, trust in Him, and God will do immeasurably more than we ask.

**A. Do not follow the sinful nature, seek the Lord and be satisfied**

Seek the Lord (1Sa 9:1-14) – Go against the Lord (Mt 14:1-21)

1.【Seek the man of God】1-10 Though Saul was a mighty man of power and handsome, whose head was taller than any of the others, he could not find the donkeys his father had lost. They passed through the land of Ephraim and Benjamin and still could not find them. Instead, the father was worried about them. Later on Saul could not but humbled himself and listened to the reminder of his servant to seek the man of God for the way to take.

※【Kill the prophet 】1-12 King Herod was also a man whose head was taller than any of the others. He did as he liked and married Herodias the wife of his brother. Thus he was rebuked by John the Baptist who was then put into jail. On Herod's birthday, Herodias' daughter danced at the feast and was prompted by her mother to ask for the head of John as her reward. Herod was reigned by his sinful lust and finally killed the prophet. While Saul humbled to listen as he could not find the donkeys and was favored by seeking the man of God. Herod clearly knew John was a righteous man and a saint. He heard his words but rejected God's grace. The servant of Saul knew the man of God and he led Saul to him to be favored.

2.【Help people enthusiastically】11-14 Saul and his servant went to the town and met some godly girls who came out to draw water. They showed them the way enthusiastically to meet the man of God. Then they went up and Samuel came toward them.

※【Feed the people】13-21 The crowds followed the Lord to the desert longing to hear His lessons. The Lord had compassion on them and cured their sickness. As evening approached, the disciples requested the Lord to disperse the crowds. They did not bear the heart of the Lord. They were selfish and cared only for themselves. They did not mind of their fatigue and hunger. But the few girls were eager and cared for others. The Lord broke Himself like five loaves and two fish so thousands were fed. Samuel also brought his people to offer and enjoyed the offering together. Saul went to meet the son of God and he was favored to remember the lamb of the Passover so he might offer himself to break up himself and lead the whole nation to be favored.

**B. Trust humbly regardless of everything, hear God and touch God.**

Be humble (1Sa 9:15-27) – Trust (Mt 14:22-36)

1.【Humbled and be selected】15-21 Before Saul came, God had instructed Samuel to anoint him as the king of Israel to save his people from the hands of the Philistines. This was because He looked upon His people and heard their cry. That day the son of God ate with Saul and resolved what was in his heart. He told Saul the donkeys were found and he would be the king of Israel. Saul humbled and acknowledged he was the least among all and unworthy. But he was favored.

※【Trust and be saved】22-33 Jesus dismissed the crowds and hurried the disciples to get into the boat, while He himself went up a mountain to pray. Samuel retreated before God and saw something. He knew ahead that Saul would come to see him. The disciples on the boat were buffeted by the waves. When they saw the Lord walking on the lake, they were terrified. By faith Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water. But he was also afraid due to the strong wind and began to sink. He immediately cried out to the Lord and was saved by trust. Saul could not find the donkeys and the waves roared in him. Only those who humble before God will be calmed and resolved. Jesus trained the disciples to trust in God in times of storms and know that He was the son of God. Samuel also trained Saul to seek and know God in mishap.

2.【Pay heed to keep the Word】22-27 The prophet led Saul to sit at the head and enjoyed the meat so he might experience God's salvation and unite with Him to receive the great mission to walk in God's will all his life. The prophet passed the word of God to him so he might be attentive to keep the Word and shepherd the flock.

※【Touch the Lord by faith】34-36 When Jesus had crossed the lake, the people sent word to bring all the sick before the Lord. They begged Him to let the sick just touch the edge of His cloak (His promise). All who touched Him were healed. (Num 15:37-41) Saul ought to listen to the Word so he might be favored before he could be the king to bring the people be favored. Due to faith the people met the Lord and touched Him. They were favored and healed.

**Ps 25/ Rev 11:14 Main theme: Woes after woes on earth; seek and obey the Word gain inheritance**

**- Unfailing love / Woe**

There is suffering on earth. There is peace only by believing, obeying and dwelling in the Lord.

(1)【Plead for triumph and not be shamed】1-3 Inquire of, look up and trust in God, and then we may overcome all inner and outer enemies without being ashamed.

(2)【Plead to understand and obey the Word】4-5 Only by overcoming and keeping the Word, then we may dwell in the Lord and not be distressed by the sins of the world.

(3)【Fix the eyes on the Lord’s mercy and love】6-14 Be humble to look to the Lord's compassion so all my iniquity be forgiven and also be able to understand and keep the demands of His covenant.

(4)【Pour out your heart to the Lord at all times】15-19 Always inquire of Him because my enemies are many. May He save me from their traps and snare.

(5)【Plead the Lord to protect and redeem all people】20-22 The Lord works wonders for those who take refuge in Him. May He redeem all His children from all their troubles.

**Central point of the wheels: Seek the Word humbly, deny oneself to save men, trust in God and be blessed**

Dear Lord, may You make me seek humbly all my life, to have an abundant life, to break myself, to save other’s souls and finish your work.

**1 Sa 10/ Mt 15**

**Main theme: Focus not on tradition, consecrate by the Word, plead humbly and be blessed**

**-Request humbly / Consecrate (become a new creation/eradiate hypocrisy)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 10:22, Mt 15:8-9

A discussion on requesting humbly and consecration – on one side it concerned Saul was anointed and renewed to become a new creation. On the other side it concerned the Lord rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, self-deception and duplicity. They were just like blind men leading the way. This teaches us that we should remove the inner filth and hypocrisy, be humble to obey the Word to consecrate and to deny ourselves to save men.

1. **Do not be hypocritical, remove the inner filth, be anointed by the Holy Spirit to be a new creation**

Be anointed (1Sa 10:1-13) – Be rebuked (Mt 15:1-20)

1.【Renewed by the Holy Spirit】1-8 Samuel poured the anointing oil on the head of Saul so he might be set apart to be holy and be anointed as the king of Israel. He also gave him three signs. The donkeys were found but his father began to worry about him. He would meet three men going up to God who would offer him two loaves of bread so he might devote himself to serve all his life and be abundant in the spirit to deny himself to save men. The Spirit of God would come upon him in power and he would prophesy. He also told him to go to Gilgal first and wait for seven days. The prophet had to go there to sacrifice.

※【Be hypocritical and self-deceiving,】1-9 The Pharisees were hypocritical. They rebuked the disciples for breaking the tradition of the elders. But Jesus rebuked them that they had broken the command of God for the sake of their tradition. They came near to God with their lips but their hearts were far from Him, therefore they went up to God in vain. During the time of Samuel, many prophets were raised. They served in a godly manner. Their lives were abundant and they prophesied when the Spirit of God came upon them. Though Saul prophesied in the Spirit, he had to go through the test to wait for seven days in Gilgal. He had to be renewed continuously and pay attention to God's will before he might worship honestly.

2.【Be given a new heart】9-13 God changed Saul's heart and all the three signs were fulfilled that day so he might experience God's deeds. Every word of the prophet was fulfilled and Saul also joined in prophesying.

※【Remove the inner filth】10-20 Jesus taught the crowd to listen and understand that what went into a man's mouth did not make him 'unclean', but what came out of his mouth made him 'unclean'. Saul had to remove his inner impurity by the words of the Lord and the Holy Spirit, lest he might be uprooted. But when he reigned, he did not purify himself thoroughly to be humble to act according to His words. He was like a blind man leading the road and caused himself and his people to fall into the pit.

**B. Observe the Word humbly, deny oneself to save men**

Obey the Word (1Sa 10:14-27) – Deny oneself (Mt 15:21-39)

1.【Ask about the information】14-16 When the uncle of Saul saw Saul was favored to prophesy, he inquired about where did he and his servant go. He also asked what did Samuel the prophet say to them. But Saul only told him of the found donkeys and not the kingship.

※【Request earnestly for grace】21-24 A Canaanite woman cried continuously to the Lord for her daughter who suffered from demon-possession. Jesus did not answer a word. The disciples heard this were bored and urged Him to send her away. She cared for nothing and kept crying out for grace. The uncle of Saul only inquire about the news but had no intention to cry for grace. Thus he gained nothing. He was no better than a foreign woman who cared for nothing but cried by faith. Finally she was favored.

2.【Ungrateful】17-19 The prophet summoned the people to God at Mizpah and told them to recollect God's grace. How they were brought out of Egypt from the hands of the oppressor. He rebuked them of their ungratefulness. They had rejected their God who saved them as their king but to set a king over them.

※【Seize the grace】21-28 When Jesus saw the woman came and knelt before Him for his help, He deliberately said 'the children's bread cannot be given to dogs!' But the woman said, 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table!' So Jesus commended her for her great faith. Her daughter was healed from that very hour. The foreign woman was unworthy of grace but she grasped the chance to be favored. But God's people were ungrateful and rejected God!

3.【Obey to reign】20-27 All the tribes of Israel came to draw lot before God and Saul was chosen. They looked for him but he had hidden himself among the baggage. They brought him out and shouted at their king. The prophet taught them about the kingship and God's laws were the laws of founding. Saul ought to write for himself on a scroll a copy of the law and read it all the days of his life. He was to fear God and keep His Word. Then he would reign for long. (Deu 17:14-20) God inspired a group of men to follow him, but the troublemakers despised him. He kept silent.

※【Deny oneself to save men 】29-39 The Lord came along the Sea of Galilee. He cured many sick ones. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healed and the blind seeing. They praised God. The Lord had compassion on the people and did not want them to go away in hunger. But the disciples were not willing to break themselves. They had no love and means. The Lord had mercy on them and denied and broke Himself so thousands were fed. Samuel also denied himself to love the people. He taught them earnestly. When Saul first reigned, he humbled to deny himself. But he did not read the book of law to learn how to fear God and keep His Word for the rest of his life. Thus he was unable to persist in God's grace.

**Ps 26/ Rev 11:15 Main theme: Exalt the Lord as King forever, lead a blameless life, and propagate the Lord widely**

**- Exalt the Lord /Be blameless**

When the time comes, the Lord will reign forever. The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord. God’s children ought to do the following for the coming of the kingdom of our Lord:

(1)【Exalt the Lord as King and lead a blameless life】1-3 Make every effort to be mature even in our thoughts and behavior. Be blameless before God and act according to the truth in everything, and then God will vindicate for us.

(2)【Hate evil and love goodness】4-6 Do not sit with those who are hypocritical but serve God with clean hands and a pure heart.

(3)【Proclaim the Lord’s salvation widely】7-12 Purify yourselves and set apart to be holy to be an instrument for noble purposes. Then we may proclaim the Lord's grace extensively. Love the house of God and tremble at the result of the wicked, and then we will be saved by the Lord. He will also show us His mercy and be used mightily by Him.

**Central point of the wheels: Be renewed and be blameless, deny oneself to save men and reign with the Lord together**

Dear Lord, may you cleanse my inner filth, renew me by the Holy Spirit, so I may deny myself to save men and inherit your everlasting kingdom.

**1 Sa 11/ Mt 16**

**Main theme: To know the Lord and do not be apprehensive, guard against the yeast and deny oneself to follow the Lord**

**-Rescue people/ Guard against the yeast (deny oneself/follow the Lord)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 11:13, Mt 16:18-19

A discussion on rescuing people and guarding against the yeast – on one side it concerned the people of Israel were faced with the threats, bully and humiliation of the Ammonite king. They were terrified and wept. Saul came forward and denied himself to rescue the people. He defeated the Ammonites. On the other side it concerned Jesus instructed his disciples how to guard against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. He gave them the authority and the keys of the kingdom of heaven to overcome the power of Hades. This teaches us that we should trust in the Holy Spirit and the Lord’s Word to overcome and guard against the enemies, to deny ourselves to rescue people, and to suffer to follow the Lord till the end.

**A. Trust in the Holy Spirit, be watchful to guard against the enemies and deny oneself to rescue people**

Recognize the enemy (1Sa 11:1-7) – Guard against the enemy (Mt 16:1-12)

1.【The spiritual eyes are blind and request to make a treaty】1-2 The Ammonite king went up and besieged Jabesh Gilead. The people were afraid and compromised to make a treaty with the enemy. The Ammonite king even threatened to gouge out their right eye and disgrace them before making a treaty with them.

※【Discerned in the spirit and overcome the enemy’s scheme】1-4 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus by asking Him to show them a sign. The Lord's eyes were discerned and did not fall into their trap unlike the people of Jabesh Gilead who were threatened and terrified. The Lord pointed out their hypocrisy was like a blind man who only knew how to interpret the weather but could not interpret the signs of the times. In a wicked and adulterous generation, none would be given it except the sign of Jonah. The spiritual eyes of the people were gouged so they were afraid and asked for the mercy of the enemy. But the Lord was not at all compromising toward His enemies. The sign of Jonah was the salvation of the cross and the greatest miracle. This can overcome every enemy, so how can we be terrified and compromising!

2.【Break completely to deal with the enemy together】3-7 The elders of Jabesh requested the enemy to give them seven days. If no one came to rescue them, they would surrender to them. The news spread to Gibeah and the people all wept aloud. Saul was concerned about the distress of the people. The Spirit of God came upon him and he took a pair of oxen and cut them into pieces. He mobilized all the people to sacrifice themselves and face the enemy with one heart.

※【Understand the Lord’s Word and guard against the enemy together】5-12 The Lord warned the disciples to guard against the wrong teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Hypocrisy and unbelief are like yeast that will endanger our life. The disciples were confused and had little faith. They did not understand the Lord's warning and thus could not face and guard against the enemies with the Lord. The terror of the Ammonites was also like the yeast which threatened the elders of Jabesh. They were ready to surrender. Saul saw the people were threatened by the enemy. He was angry and mobilized all the people to face the enemy. But he positioned himself above Samuel. He had the old self in himself that was also like the yeast. Only Jesus was selfless. He was able to guard against the enemies and overcame them.

**B. To know Christ, destroy the enemy and rescue people, suffer to follow the Lord**

Prevail (1Sa 11:8-15) – Authority (Mt 16:13-28)

1.【Saul rescues the people】8-11 Saul mustered his army. The next day he separated his men into three divisions to attack. They slaughtered the enemy, so the Ammonites scattered in defeat. Saul saved the people and had a complete victory.

※【Jesus conquers】13-20 Peter knew the Lord was Christ, the Son of the living God. He was commended by Jesus. Suffering and the fight made the people knew God better! Saul denied himself to save the people and overcame greatly. Christ died on the cross and overcame the devil who held the power of death (Heb 2:14-15) to redeem us from the bondage of sin. He also promised to build the church on the Rock of Christ and overcome the gates of Hades. He would give us the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the spiritual power. The Ammonites represented Satan and the anti-God power. We will overcome by the power of God!

2.【Prioritize God’s will】12-13 Saul came back victoriously. The people shouted with joy and wanted to bring out the troublemakers who despised Saul and put them to death. Saul prohibited the killing because God had rescued Israel. He did not mind about his personal grudges but honor God's will. He gave all the glory to God after the victory.

※【Have in mind the things of man】21-23 Jesus explained to His disciples that He had to go Jerusalem to suffer and be killed. On the third day He would be raised to life. When Peter heard this, he prevented the Lord and said, 'Never, Lord'. But the Lord turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me.' After Saul had destroyed the enemy, he had in mind the will of God. He rejected the people to take revenge on those who belittled him. But Peter considered the mind of men and not of God. He prevented the Lord to go to the cross and became the instrument of Satan for a while.

3.【Establish the kingdom cheerfully】14-15 Samuel went to Gilgal to reaffirm the kingship. All the people gathered in Gilgal before the Lord and confirmed Saul as king. They sacrificed fellowship offerings before God. Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration.

※【Gain the kingdom after suffering】24-28 Jesus taught the disciples to deny themselves to take up the cross and follow Him. For whoever lost his life for Him would find it and whoever waited for the glorious coming of the Lord would gain the everlasting kingdom joyfully. The kingship of Saul was only of the world and temporary. When the Lord comes again, He will reward each person according to what he has done. Therefore we ought to deny ourselves to suffer for the kingdom of God and grab to save the souls and see the Lord abundantly. Otherwise, what good will it be if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul. The Lord promised to show them the glorious kingdom. The Israelites were able to see only a worldly kingdom. Christ will reign forever. Saul reigned and he was attentive for a while. He was finally rejected because he rebelled against the command and rejected God.

**Ps 27/ Rev 11:16 Main theme: Seek and observe the Word, be courageous and believe firmly will see God’s glory.**

**- Seek / Be courageous**

(1)【Dwell in the Lord and do not fear the enemy’s attack】1-6 The elders shepherd the flock and served the Lord faithfully and humbly. They are not afraid of the attacks of the enemy. They just rest before the Lord for He will keep them safe and hide them. He will set them high upon a rock.

(2)【Seek and observe the Word will see God’s glory】7-14 Cry humbly to seek the Lord's face, seek to understand and obey the Word. Be bold to wait and be confident to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

**Central point of the wheels: Seek and serve the Lord, deny oneself to follow the Lord**

Dear Lord, I am willing to dwell in You all my life, to unite with You, to overcome and guard against the enemy and to suffer to follow You until You come.

**1 Sa 12/ Mt 17**

**Main theme: Not by man, nor by self, believe and seek the Lord for He is Almighty**

**-Intercede / Believe and seek (an example/ a witness)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 12:22-24, Mt 17:7-8

A discussion on intercession and believing and seeking – on one side it concerned Samuel instructed the people with a good Way so they might know that they had sinned against God by asking for a king. But he would intercede for them unceasingly. On the other side it concerned Jesus brought three disciples up a high mountain and transfigured before them. This was to let them understand the majestic glory of the kingdom of God so they might exalt the Lord as King and follow Him till the end. This teaches us that we should have faith as small as a mustard seed and plead by faith regardless of the environment and we will see the display of God’s glory.

**A. Go up a high mountain to see the Lord alone, be a witness to glorify God**

Glorify God (1Sa 12:1-11) – See the Lord (Mt 17:1-13)

1.【A fine witness】1-5 Samuel was in his old age. He served the Lord godly in all his life. He loved God and his people. He was holy and righteous without blame. He had a good witness before God and men. He was testified by God and His anointed. His people also witnessed for him.

※【A life of a high mountain】1-8 Jesus brought Peter, James and John up a high mountain and showed them the glory of Christ's kingdom.(2 Pe 1:16-18) While they were praying, Jesus was transfigured to be holy, righteous and radiating. Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus. Peter was just recalling with nostalgia to put up three shelters, a bright cloud enveloped them. They saw no one except Jesus so they might listen only to the voice of the beloved Son of God. Samuel also had the spiritual life of the mountain. He was holy and righteous all his life. He shone in godliness. He had the witness from God and men. The life of Jesus was even the Holy and Righteous One. (Ac 3:14; 7:52) He had Moses, Elijah (representing the law and the prophet) and all the apostles testifying about Him. (Jn 5:39) The work of Samuel was to lead men to serve and listen to God alone all his life.

2.【Discuss about righteousness】6-11 Samuel confronted the people with evidence of God's righteous acts. He recollected the deeds of God through Moses and Aaron who led them out of Egypt. He rebuked them for their ungratefulness and rejecting God to serve other gods. Thus they were put into the hands of the enemies. God sent the judges again and again to save them. How could they be ungrateful!

※【Restore all things】9-13 Jesus told the disciples Elijah had to come first to restore all things. This meant the repenting way proclaimed by John the Baptist so as to lead men to God. He was beheaded for the truth. Similarly Christ was also oppressed by them. We too have to follow the suffering path of the Lord to lead men to Him and bring a revival throughout the land.

**B. Sin greatly by asking for a king, remove a mountain by praying with faith**

Instruction (1Sa 12:12-25) – Intercede (Mt 17:14-27)

1.【Sin greatly by asking for a king】12-18 The prophet rebuked the people for taking the excuse of the Ammonite king's attack to set up a king. In fact, the Lord was their king. The prophet warned the people if they did not listen to God's words and rebel against His commands, He would attack them. The prophet called upon the Lord to send thunder and rain so the people might be shaken to know God's majesty and awe, and to know that they had greatly sinned against God by setting up a king. Thus they were terrified.

※【The Lord sighs over the rebellion and unbelief】14-21 After Jesus had gone down the mountain, a man approached and knelt before Him asking for His mercy to on his son who suffered from seizures. He often fell into the fire or into the water. But the disciples could not cure him. Jesus deeply sighed on the unbelieving and perverse generation. Then He rebuked the demon and the boy was healed. Men ought to have the faith of a mustard seed, then they may move a mountain. The people had their old self as king and did not want God to be their king. This was their unbelief and faithlessness. The prophet prayed God to send thunder and rain and the Lord had the power to rebuke the demon.

2.【Instruct the good Way and intercede unceasingly】19-25 The people acknowledged they had added to all their other sins the evil of asking for a king. They asked the prophet to pray for them. On one side the prophet taught them the good way to fear God and obey His Word without straying away. They ought to serve God with all their heart lest they might be destroyed due to evil. On the other side he bore the love of God and interceded for the people unceasingly.

※【Follow the Lord’s good Way and suffer to follow Him 】22-27 Again the Lord told the disciples the Son of Man would be killed. He taught the disciples to follow the suffering path of the Lord and to observe the good way. Samuel also taught the people the same and interceded for them. Jesus is the Son of the Most High God and the King of the heavenly kingdom who humbled for us to become poor. He ordered to open the mouth of the fish to get a coin to pay His and the disciple's tax. The prophet finally warned them if they continued to be wicked, they and their king would be destroyed altogether. The disciples followed the king of heaven. Though it was a suffering path, it was a path of blessing!

**Ps 28/ Rev 11:17 Main theme: Implore the eternal Almighty God and will gain help and joy**

**- Implore / God’s power**

(1)【Implore watchfully and turn from wickedness】1-5 Be alert to pray, do not be silent but pray unceasingly. (Isa 62:6-7) Do not allow evil to control and entangle me, lest God will drag me away with the wicked and with those who do evil.

(2)【Exalt the Lord as King will be greatly blessed】6-9 God is good to those who call on Him. My heart trusts in Him and I am helped. Pray and I will have the power to shun evil and do good, to exalt the Lord as the king and let all people be blessed.

**Central point of the wheels: Ascend the spiritual mountain, intercede with faith and exalt the Lord as King**

Dear Lord, may You awake us to ascend the spiritual high mountain, to intercede with love, to exalt You as King and rescue all the distressed!

**1 Sa 13/ Mt 18**

**Main theme: Do not act presumptuously, be humble and obedient, and save men with mercy**

**-Cares only for oneself/ Have mercy on men (by one’s desire/consider God’s will).**

Golden verses: 1Sa 13:14, Mt 18:3-4

A discussion on caring only for oneself and having mercy on men – on one side it concerned Saul did not obey God’s order at Gilgal to wait till the end. He offered the sacrifice presumptuously and violated against God. On the other side it concerned the Lord taught his disciples to be humble like a small child and to consider the Father’s mind and have mercy on others. God desires mercy, not sacrifice. To obey is better than sacrifice! Saul cared only for himself and not the people. Nor did he exalt God as holy, thus his kingdom would not endure. God had sought out a man after his own heart and he was the humble and submissive David.

**A. Not by one’s own desire, be humble and submissive, look for the lost sheep**

Disobey (1Sa 13:1-10) – Argue about who is the greatest (Mt 18:1-11)

1.【Rule by the old-self】1-7 After Saul had reigned for two years, he no longer exalted God as king. He acts on his own desire. He chose three thousand men and sent back the rest of the men arbitrarily. But when he saw their situation was unfavorable, he blew the trumpet randomly to gather the people. He was out of tune and did not exalt God as holy. When the people saw the enemy's troop was as numerous as the sand on the seashore, they knew they were critical and hid themselves in caves and among the rocks. Some escaped to east of Jordan. Saul could not but waited at Gilgal. The people followed him in fear.

※【Humble to be little】1-6 The disciples were unwilling to humble to be little. They argued and went to Jesus to ask who was the greatest in the heavenly kingdom. Jesus called a little child and had him stood among them, so the disciples might know whoever humble themselves to be like a child would be the greatest in the heavenly kingdom. Saul was unwilling to humble to be little. He ruled by his old self and would not inquire of God. Nor did he care about the distress of the people. If anyone causes one of these little ones to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. Saul did not have the mind of God and became the stumbling block of the people.

2.【Disobey and offer sacrifice presumptuously】8-10 Saul waited seven days, the time set by the prophet. But he did not see the prophet came, while his men began to scatter. He also saw the Philistines came down to attack. He could not stand the test and was unwilling to wait till the end. He sacrificed the offering without authorization. He was daring and rebelled against God's command. Just as he finished making the offering, the prophet arrived.

※【Obey to withstand evil】7-11 It is not too hard to keep the Lord's command. Just trust in the Holy Spirit and resist against evil to the point of shedding your blood. (Heb 12:4) Do not let your hand or your foot causes you to sin. Be determined to deal with it without giving way for Christ, the Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. (1 Co 5:7) Woe to those who cause people to sin. We ought to be sanctified by grace lest we may cause others to sin. Saul was unwilling to deal with his old self. He did not wait till the end and violated against God. Woe to him because he caused the people to sin.

**B. Do not repent and care only for oneself; consider the Lord’s heart and have mercy on others**

Care only for self (1Sa 13:11-23) – Have mercy on others (Mt 18:12-35)

1.【Not after God’s heart】11-14 Saul sinned but he was irrational before the prophet. He would not acknowledge his sin. The prophet rebuked him for he had rebelled against God's command. He had acted foolishly. Thus his position could not endure. God had sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people. (Ac 13:22) Saul reigned but defied God's command. He was not after God's heart.

※【Consider God’s heart】12-20 We ought to bear the mind of our Father God. He does not want any of the little ones be lost. If one of the sheep is lost, He is willing to leave the ninety-nine and search the lost sheep. Saul did not bear the mind of God when he reigned, nor did he cared for his flock. David kept his sheep since he was young. He was bold to rescue them and in everything he obeyed God's will. (1 Sa 17:34-36) The Lord ordered us to exhort with love to win back our brothers. Saul did not listen to the exhortation of the prophet and was finally rejected. The Lord gave us the power to pray in one heart and it would be done. Saul did not obey God's command and he did not submit to God's authority. Thus he lost the authority and could not stand firm. Therefore we ought to bear God's mind and obey to serve Him like David to be a man after God's heart.

2.【Cares only for oneself】15-23 Saul violated the order in Gilgal and sinned severely. He was not contrite. Then he mustered his troops to fight. On the day of the battle there was not a blacksmith in the whole land of Israel. Only Saul was equipped. He did not care if his people had no weapon. Only he and his son had a sword in the whole army.

※【Without mercy】21-35 The Lord replied Peter to forgive our brothers seventy-seven time and it had to be from the heart. A servant owed his master ten thousand talents and was favored to cancelled his debt. How can we be hard-hearted and grab at our fellow servant who owes us a hundred denarii. Saul did not have compassion on his people, so he was not shown compassion. He was also like a wicked servant. The Lord trained the disciples to have the Lord's mind to have compassion on people, to forgive others and deny oneself to care. We have the spiritual weapon to overcome our enemies if we keep the Lord's Way of love and the good Word.

**Ps 29/ Rev 11:18 Main theme: The time for reward and punishment has come, obey the Word and consecrate, ascribe all the glory to God**

**- Consecration / Reward and punishment**

The Lord’s coming is near and the time for reward and punishment has come. Thus we ought to consider the Lord’s mind to love God and save men.

(1)【Consecrate and glorify God】1-2 If a man cleanses himself from the ignoble, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy and useful to the Master. He will reveal God's glory and strength. But he must ascribe all the glory to the Lord.

(2)【The effect of the voice of the Lord】3-9 How powerful is the Lord's words toward a humble person. It shakes like great thunder. (Just like Paul was able to consider everything as rubbish for the Lord and willing to crush himself for Him) The power is so great like a calf who skips to trample the wicked. The Lord's words shake the desert and level our path. His words cleanse every idea and branch which do not belong the Him. Only by eating up the Lord's words thoroughly, we may lead others to the Lord to pronounce His glory.

(3)【God will give strength and peace】10-11 The path of the cross is a bitter path but it leads to glory. The Lord will give strength and peace.

**Central point of the wheels: Hear humbly and forgive, obey the Word and be rewarded**

Dear Lord, may You make me humble and obedient all my life, to be holy and godly, to be a person after your heart and to look for the lost sheep to satisfy your heart.

**1 Sa 14/ Mt 19**

**Main theme: Do not act wilfully, obey the commands, leave everything to follow the Lord**

**-Act wilfully /Obey the Lord’s will (follow people/follow the Lord)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 14:6, Mt 19:26

A discussion on acting wilfully and obeying the Lord’s will – on one side it concerned Saul fought battles at his own desire without seeking God's will. Thus the people were in trouble. While Jonathan fought by the verification of the environment. He did not honor God by inquiring of Him. On the other side it concerned Jesus knew God’s will deeply. He taught the disciples to keep God’s commands, to love God and love men and to leave everything to follow the Lord and gain reward. This teaches us that we should not pursue the vigor of the task externally but to seek God’s will and deny ourselves to obey it and follow Him closely.

**A. Not by one’s will, seek and obey God’s will, and unite with the Lord**

Seek the will (1Sa 14:1-23) – Understand the will (Mt 19:1-15)

1.【Fight with the enemy passively】1-5 Saul was sitting under a pomegranate tree. There were only six hundred left to follow him. Among them was a priest wearing an ephod. But he did not inquire of God. Thus he was powerless to resist the enemy. He waited passively. He had no idea his son rushed to the battle.

※【Work positively】1-2 Our Lord Jesus obeyed His Father's will and preached positively. He was never passive. He left Galilee and went to Judea. Many people followed Him and He healed and saved them. Saul did not understand God's will and was powerless to fight. He resisted the enemy negatively. Those who followed him became less and less.

2.【Fight by the environment】1-15 Jonathan also did not understand God's will. He rushed to the battle with his armor-bearer by the verification of the environment. He fought bravely. God sent a panic. The ground was shook and men were terrified.

※【Triumph over the enemies by God’s will】3-12 Some Pharisees came to test Jesus asking if it was lawful to divorce a wife and marry another woman. The Lord deeply understood God's will and clarified God's intention at the beginning of creating a male and a female. What God has joined together, let man not separate. Anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery. Moses permitted them to divorce their wives because their hearts were hard. It was not God's will. Other have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. Everyone has his own gift from God. The Lord replied and overcame the Pharisees by God's will. Though Jonathan had great effect after the fight but it was not of God's will. We ought to know deeply the will of God whether to fight or to work and not by the environment or men's idea.

3.【God makes the people victorious】16-23 Saul was about to inquire of God and saw the enemy's army melting away. Then he did not care to inquire and rushed to the battleground to chase away the enemy. He did not exalt God as king. But God made them victorious on that day for the sake of His people.

※【The Lord blesses the children】13-15 Some people brought little children to Jesus for Him to place His hands on them. The disciples did not have the mind of the Lord and prevented them to come before Him. But the Lord let the little children came for the kingdom of heaven belonged to such as these. Jesus gave them the blessing. Similarly., God cared for His people. Thus He made them triumphant. Saul and the disciples did not have the Lord's mind. They were unwilling to become the pattern of little children. They gave trouble to the people and prevented the children to be favored. They could not overcome the inner and outer enemies.

**B. Be remorseful and find out the wrong, deny oneself to love the people, leave everything to follow the Lord.**

Find out the sins (1Sa 14:24-52) – sell out (Mt 19:16-30)

1.【Set up regulations privately and cause bitterness to the people】24-30 When Saul saw the situation was favorable, he set some regulations privately and bound the people under oath. Curse to any man who ate food before he had avenged on the enemies. The people fought in hunger and were distressed. There was honey in the woods but they dared not ate it. Jonathan did not hear of his father had bound the people with the oath. He ate the honey and his eyes brightened. Then he knew his father had made trouble on the people and caused them to suffer.

※【Keep God’s commands and care for the poor】16-21 Jesus replied a young man that to keep God's command to be perfect, he had to sell his possessions and give to the poor. Then he would have treasures in heaven. He also had to follow the Lord. Saul violated God's command and set his regulations privately. The people who followed him suffered bitterly. The young man was unwilling to sell his possessions. He did not obeyed the Lord's command and did not care for the poor.

2.【Do not examine one’s wrong】31-46 The people were exhausted after striking the enemy. They pounced on the plunder together with the blood. Saul did not examine his own sin and turned to charge the people they had broken faith. He also found his son had violated the regulation and had to put him to death. But he was unwilling to acknowledge his own sins. As Jonathan had brought great deliverance to the people , they swore together to save him from death.

※【Not willing to sell】22-26 When the young man heard of Jesus' words, he went away sad because he had great wealth. He was unwilling to sell them and could not be perfect. Saul claimed the people were guilty and his son had to die. But he did not examine his own sins. He did not keep God's command. He was without mercy. He was also unwilling to deny everything to follow the Lord. It is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Saul did not examine his own wrong. He did not repent and it was hard for him to enter the kingdom of God.

3.【Do not leave everything and finally fall 】47-52 Saul had assumed rule over Israel. He recruited warriors and fought bravely with victorious results. But he was unwilling to leave all himself. He was also unwilling to deal with his flesh and old self. Finally he fell.

※【Blessed is he who leaves everything to follow the Lord】27-30 Jesus replied Peter whoever left everything to follow the Lord would receive a hundred times and inherit eternal life.. He would have the authority to sit with the Lord on His glorious throne. Saul was unwilling to leave his worldly property. Not only those who are first will be last, they will be rejected by God forever. Those warriors who followed Saul later on betrayed him and turned to follow David. They were the last but would be first.

**Ps 30/ Rev 11:19 Main theme: Exalt God’s word, plead the Lord for healing, and wailing turn to rejoice.**

**- God’s words / The Ark**

Inside the Ark are the holy words of God. On the doomsday God will use His words to judge all people. Whoever violates and rebels will receive the retribution.

(1)【 We ought to exalt the Lord’s words】1-3 Cry out to the Lord so I may overcome and be healed, lest my soul will go down into the pit. After we have failed and became weak, we ought to exalt the Lord's words above everything.

(2)【 Exhort the people to sing of and praise the Lord’s grace】4-5 The saints ought to give thanks and praise Him for His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime.

(3)【State the witness】6-11 Due to depravation, I nearly go down into the pit. Only by fervent cry for the Lord to have compassion and help, He turned my wailing into dancing.

(4)【Sing and praise the Lord without ceasing】12 Be determined not to forget the Lord's goodness. The more forgiveness, the more the love for the Lord. From now on I will give thanks to the Lord forever.

**Central point of the wheels: Leave everything to follow the Lord, exalt God’s will, and be favored to rejoice.**

Dear Lord, may You make me humble as a child, to obey your will all my life, to leave everything to follow You to the end and rejoice because of You!

**1 Sa 15/ Mt 20**

**Main theme: It is not a matter of more work, but obey God completely, and deny yourself to obey the will**

**-Disobey / Obey (be abandoned / be chosen)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 15:22, Mt 20:26-28

A discussion on disobeying and obeying – on one side it concerned Saul was stiff-necked and rebellious. He was unwilling to obey to annihilate the Amalekites. Further he failed to confess thoroughly and was ultimately rejected by God. On the other side it concerned Jesus used the parable of the vineyard to teach his disciples that it was not a matter of how much you have done, but by grace and obedience. Avoid striving to be the head, but be willing to humble oneself as a child and drink the bitter cup with the Lord. Saul was not willing to deal with or put his flesh and old self to death all his life. He did not obey thoroughly. This is a lesson and warning for us!

**A. Do not stand around doing nothing again, obey by grace, put the flesh to death**

Annihilate the enemy (1Sa 15:1-16) – By grace (Mt 20:1-16)

1.【Ought to obey and annihilate the enemies】1-3 The prophet told Saul to listen to the message of God. God ordered him to attack the Amalekites without sparing them and to destroy totally. The Amalekites were against God. They cut off all who were lagging behind when the people came out of Egypt. They represented the enemy of the flesh and had to be destroyed totally. (Exo 17:8-16; Deu 25:17-19)

※【Ought to do God’s work by grace】1-9 The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner. He hired men to work in the vineyard and agreed to pay everyone a denarius (representing salvation) for the day. Therefore everyone ought to go without doing nothing. The work in the vineyard is not matter on how much work is done but by grace and obedience. When evening came, each had their wages of a denarius. God ordered Saul to attack the Amalekites to see if he was completely obedient to His order. God gives each of us a denarius. The salvation of the cross is good to make us overcome our flesh and old self. (Col 2:15)

2.【Disobey God’s commands】4-16 Apparently Saul listened to attack the enemy, but he spared king Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle without destroying the Amalekites completely. He also set up a monument in his own honor. He turned away from God and had not carried out His instructions. Thus God was grieved that He had made Saul king. The prophet cried out to the Lord all that night and the Holy Spirit was grieved. He deceived the prophet. He complied publicly but opposed privately. He put the blame on the people and thus the prophet ordered him to stop speaking.

※【The first will be last】10-16 God's grace is regardless of succession. Those who went in the vineyard did not acknowledge the grace and listen. They thought they might get more and grumbled against the landowner. They counted their labor and were jealous at others. Thus the first will be last and the last will be first. Saul violated against God's instructions and did not destroy the enemy completely. He sinned and tried to put the blame on others. He honored and exalted himself. He set up a monument for himself. The first will be last.

**B. Do not rebel, do not compete to be the greatest, plead for the eyes to be opened and follow the Lord**

Rejected (1Sa 15:17-35) – To receive mercy (Mt 20:17-34)

1.【Be obstinate and rebellious, and God rejects】17-23 Before Saul was humble and acknowledged himself little. He was anointed as king. Now he was arrogant and proud. He disregarded God's instructions. He pounced on the plunder and did evil in the eyes of God. He also defended himself by sophistry and put the blame on the people. To obey is better than sacrifice. Such rebellion and stubbornness is like the sin of divination and idolatry. Thus the prophet declared to him that he had rejected the word of God, and God had rejected him as king.

※【Grieve the Lord by pursuing fame and wealth】17-28 Jesus told the disciples the Son of Man would be betrayed and condemned to death and die on the cross. On the third day he would be raised to life. Not only were they not considering the Lord's heart, they also competed with each other. They were indignant and jealous. They did not care to drink the bitter cup with the Lord but chased after vanity and wearied the Lord. Saul was stubborn and rebellious and was thus rejected by God.

2.【Extremely care for reputation】24-35 Saul acknowledged his sin on the face and defended deceptively for himself. He was unwilling to lose face and repent. He even urged the prophet to honor him. He was finally rejected and his kingdom was given to David who was better than him. God was grieved that He had made Saul king.

※【Plead eagerly for the eyes to be opened】29-34 Jesus was leaving Jericho and many people followed Him. When two blind men heard was passing by, they shouted to the Lord to have mercy on them. Though they were rebuked by the crowd, they shouted all the louder. Jesus had compassion on them and touched them. They were able to see immediately and they followed Jesus. Saul was not contrite and did not cry out. He only cared for his honor and face. He did not know he was a blind man. He did not cry to God for mercy and was not shown mercy till his death.

**Ps 31/ Rev 12:1 Main theme: Plead watchfully to overcome temptation and persecution and God will show His great goodness and wonderful love**

**- Plead watchfully /Great goodness**

God wishes His children be women in labor to bear fruit.

(1)【Pray to be freed from the enemies’ trap by the Lord】1-8 Be freed from the inner and outer enemies by the Lord. Then we may become a pregnant woman to be clothed with the sun (righteousness), with the moon (God's unfailing love) under her feet and a crown of twelve stars (bearing the mind and honor for God's children).

(2)【Call out to the Lord to be set free from persecution and difficulty】9-22 Love the Lord and obey His Word. Those who work for the Lord will always be in distress, oppression and temptation. But God will guard those who fear Him, trust in Him and cry to Him. He will show His grace and wonderful love to them.

(3)【Exhort all the saints to love the Lord】23-24 Be faithful to trust in the Lord (call out to Him faithfully). By strong and take heart to look up to Him for He will preserve. But he will pay back the proud in full.

**Central point of the wheels: Humble to obey, be firm to plead and trust, to be glorified after suffering.**

Dear Lord, I am willing to imitate You to serve people humbly, to put the flesh to death completely, be obedient forever, to overcome by grace and accomplish your work!

**1 Sa 16/ Mt 21**

**Main theme: Do not emphasize on outward tenderness and obedience, the Lord needs to use him**

**-Anointed / Fit for use**

Golden verses: 1Sa 16:7, Mt 21:5, 42

A discussion on anointing and fitting for use – on one side it concerned Samuel the prophet was ordered to anoint God’s predestined young David to replace Saul as king. On the other side it concerned the disciples were sent to bring a colt for the Lord’s use. God’s Spirit moved David greatly, but departed from Saul who was tormented by an evil spirit. We should consecrate, obey and be used by God to become a temple of prayer and give a share of the crop at harvest time to glorify God.

**A. Do not look at the outward appearance, be humble, meek and consecrate to be used by the Lord**

Low and humble (1Sa 16:1-13) – Meek and modest (Mt 21:1-27)

1.【Be sent to anoint the predestinated king】1-4 God ordered Samuel not to be passive and mourn for Saul but be positive to obey God's will to go to the house of Jesse to anoint a destined king among his sons. God told him to bring a heifer to sacrifice to God and invite the whole family to the sacrifice. God would then show him the one to anoint. The prophet obeyed and went there. When he arrived he told them to consecrate themselves and sit with him.

※【Be sent to bring a colt】1-11 Before the Good Friday Jesus obeyed God's will positively. He sent two disciples to go to the village ahead and bring a colt to Him just like Samuel was commissioned to anoint the destined king who was willing to humble to be rode on. The Lord ordered them to untie the colt and bring it to Him because the Lord needed them. This fulfilled the prophet's words. (Zec 9:9) Jesus rode on the colt and entered Jerusalem. The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted 'Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' The prophet and the disciples obeyed God's will and brought peace and joy to the people of God.

2.【God looks at the heart】5-10 The sons of Jesse consecrated themselves and came to the sacrifice. Samuel saw Eliab was stout in figure and thought he was the one to be anointed. But God did not choose him. Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. The seven sons came one by one but they were not the chosen ones.

※【Purify the temple】12-19 Jesus used His authority to cleanse the 'temple' which seemed to look glorious externally. But it was a 'den of robbers' inside like the chief priests and the teachers of the law were indignant when they saw the wonderful things Jesus did and the children were praising God. Eliab was tall outwardly but he was filled with jealousy. (1 Sa 17:28) He was like the fig tree which looked flourishing but nothing was on it except leaves. it failed the Lord. Only the praise and extolment of the innocent and pure children would satisfy the Lord's heart.

3.【Be selected and anointed】11-13 Samuel was faithful to God's assignment. He had great faith. He would not sit down until the little son of Jesse came. Jesse finally sent someone and had him brought in. Though David was young, he was willing to humble and full of courage. When he shepherded his flock, he always had close fellowship with God and sang praise to Him. Thus he was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. He exhibited God's righteousness and holy glory. Thus the prophet anointed him among his brothers. From that day on the Spirit of God came upon him in power.

※【Come from God】20-27 Jesus replied the disciples to have faith without doubt, then they might say to the mountain to go and throw itself into the sea. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer just like the faith of Samuel to anoint David. The Spirit of God came upon David after he was anointed. Jesus was anointed and full of authority and power. They were from heaven like the baptism of John.

**B. Be with God and triumph over evil spirits; do not give a share of the crop will be a wretched end**

Rebel (1Sa 16:14-23) – Repent (Mt 21:28-46)

1.【Unrepentance brings torments of the evil spirit 】14-17 Saul was stubborn and rebellious. He insisted not to repent. The Spirit of God departed from him and an evil spirit tormented him. His attendants sought out David to play the harp for him and drove out the evil spirit. But he felt better only for a short while.

※【Willing to repent and enter the kingdom of God】28-32 Jesus told a parable. A father asked the first son to work to the vineyard. At first he did not obey the father's order. Later on he changed his mind and went. The little son promised the father to go. But he did not go just like Saul said one thing but meant another. He was unwilling to obey and was not contrite. Thus the evil spirit came upon him. The tax collectors and the prostitutes were willing to repent and they were the first to enter the kingdom of heaven.

2.【A meek and humble warrior conquers the evil spirit】18-23 The good witnesses of little David: (1) He could play the harp well. (2) He was bold and a good warrior. (3) He spoke well. (4) He was a fine-looking man. (5) God was with him. Thus he was brought before Saul to serve him. Saul liked him very much. When the evil spirit came upon Saul, David would play the harp and relieve him. Then the evil spirit left him.

※【Bring the wretches to a wretched end】33-46 The wicked tenant was ungrateful. He rejected to give his harvest. He killed the servants sent by the owner. Finally he even kill the owner's son in order to seize the inheritance. He repay goodness with evil and was destroyed. The owner gave to the one who would give him his share of the crop at harvest time showing God's kingdom was seized from the Israelites and given to the foreigners who bore fruit. Saul was ungrateful like the wicked tenant. He was unwilling to give his harvest and was destroyed by God. His throne was given to David who bore fruit. Thus the Spirit of God left Saul and came upon David greatly.

**Ps 32/ Rev 12:2 Main theme: Confess poignantly, be submissive to obey the will and rejoice in gladness**

**- Confess / In pain**

We are contrite and confess, just like paying the price to labor the pain. When sin is out, God’s unfailing love will surround us.

(1)【Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven】1-4 Whoever does not confess will be withered. God's hand is heavy upon him. Only by confessing our sins and be contrite to stop our evil to bear the fruit of repentance, we will be forgiven.

(2)【Ought to grab the chance while God may be found】5-7 Now is the time of salvation. Seek the Lord's holy words, confess to Him and pray to Him. He will freely pardon and protect us from trouble so we may sing a song of deliverance.

(3)【Ought to take lesson to submit to walk a righteous path】8-9 The Lord will counsel me, so do not be like the horse or the mule which have no understanding and be presumptuous.

(4)【Obey by the Lord and rejoice】10-11 Turn from evil and do good by the Lord and the unfailing love will surround us. Rejoice by the Lord for greater blessings will be ahead.

**Central point of the wheels: Be humble to obey and consecrate, be contrite and bear fruits**

Dear Lord, may You make me be meek and obedient forever, to be your colt ridden by You, be used by You and glorify your name!

**1 Sa 17/ Mt 22**

**Main theme: Attend a spiritual banquet, keep the Lord’s Word, to be with God and overcome the powerful enemies**

**-Rely on God’s name/Triumph over numerous enemies**

Golden verses: 1Sa 17:47, Mt 22:32

A discussion on relying on God’s name and triumphing over numerous enemies – on one side it concerned when Goliath, the Philistine, shouted and defied at the army of Israel, David was angry. He stepped forward and killed the tall and powerful enemy by the name of the Lord Almighty and a smooth stone. Thus the enemy routed. On the other side it concerned Jesus prevailed over the questions of the Pharisees and the Sadducees by the Scriptures. Before we fight for the kingdom of heaven, we have to attend the Lord’s banquet first, be buckled with the truth around the waist, by using the Lord’s Word as weapons to triumph over the power of Satan and attack and subdue men’s heart back to Jesus.

**A. Called to attend the banquet, be courageous to deal with the enemy**

Resentful (1Sa 17:1-30) – Face the enemy (Mt 22:1-22)

1.【Powerless to meet a challenge】1-11 The Philistine troops had pitched camp for war. A champion named Goliath came out of their camp. He was arrogant and ferocious. He defied the ranks of Israel. Saul and the people heard the threats of the enemy were terrified. They were powerless to face the enemy and did not dare to come out.

※【All invited to attend the banquet】1-14 The king of heaven had prepared a wedding banquet for his son. The party for salvation was all ready and invited people to come. Many rejected salvation. The spirit and the flesh were fighting against each other just like the enemy gathered to fight. They tried to destroy the will of God's redemption! One to his field and some to their business. They were unwilling to the banquet. Some even mistreated the servants. The king was enraged and began to destroy those murderers. He ordered to gather the people to fill the wedding hall. The spiritual war was so severe. Many only heard the enemy's voice but could not hear God's calling. They were unwilling to attend the gracious banquet. Saul and his people did not eat the Lord's banquet and did not have His words. Thus they were dismayed and terrified before their enemy. They were powerless to resist. They certainly failed.

2.【Prepare well for the war】12-30 David was sent by his father to go down to the battle field to meet the brothers and see how they were. Incidentally he saw Goliath came to defy. The people were terrified and ran from him in great fear. David was furious when he heard the threat of the enemy. He angrily asked who was this man that he should defy the armies of the living God? But his brother heard him and rebuked him.

※【Fight the enemy courageously】15-22 The Pharisees cleverly questioned Jesus hoping to trap Him like Goliath the champion. But the Lord bravely faced the challenge. He rebuked their hypocrisy. He was full of wisdom and had the power to deal with them. Facing the threat of Goliath, David was also brave without fear. He was vigilant. Though he was rebuked by his brother, he did not care.

**B. Love God, love people and triumph over the powerful enemy**

Fight the enemy (1Sa 17:31-58) – Overcome the enemy (Mt 22:23-46)

1.【Ask for permission to fight for the king 】31-39 David shepherded his flock since his youth. He was brave and good in fighting. He cared for his flock and could kill the lion and the bear to rescue the sheep. Therefore he would not consider himself little and did not care about his brother's disdain and anger. He bravely went to the king to offer to go to the battle. He had great faith and firmly believed how God would save him from the paw of the lion and the bear, He would also save him from the hands of the Philistines. Saul gave him his armor and sword. But he could not use them and took them off.

※【Refute boldly】23-33 The Sadducees did not believe in resurrection. They also came to question Jesus. The Lord quoted the Scriptures and refuted them witnessing the Lord is not the God of the dead but of the living. David was a shepherd since his youth. He always experienced God's power and rescue. Thus he courageously asked permission from the king to go to battle to kill the enemy. He was a warrior from the desert full of faith and courage. He was clothed with the spiritual armor and weapon. Jesus even quoted the Scriptures as weapon to refute the enemy.

2.【Kill Goliath】40-58 David took off the armor of Saul. He took his staff in his hand and a sling. He chose five smooth stones full of love for God and men, faith, courage and wisdom. God was with him. He courageously ran toward Goliath. When Goliath saw the young man, he greatly despised him and cursed. But David trusted in the name of the Almighty God. He rushed to the battlefield and slung a stone which sank into the forehead of Goliath. In an instant, he fell and died. David took the sword of Goliath and cut off his head. Then he brought it to Saul. God put the great enemy of Israel into the hands of David so everyone knew the God of Israel. The failure and success of a battle all depended on God!

※【Overcome all the enemies】34-46 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together to deal with Jesus. One of them, an expert in the law, came to test the Lord. He asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment in the Law. Jesus replied to love God and to love men. All the law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. (Deu 6:5; Lev 19:18) The Lord's reply was like a smooth stone powerful and truck the target of the enemy. From then, no one dared to ask Him any more questions. David killed Goliath by God representing the offspring (Christ) of the woman would crush the head of Satan. (Gen 3:15)David and Christ had the law of God in their heart, therefore they won completely.

**Ps 33/ Rev 12:3 Main theme: Do not be afraid of the power and influence of the enemies, fear God and obey the Word will overcome**

**- Trust in God / Overcome the enemy**

(1)【Consecrate, trust in the Lord and praise】1-3 Consecrate by the blood. Those who are justified and made righteous are not afraid of the ferocity of the enemy. They give thanks and praise by the Lord.

(2)【For God is almighty】4-12 Understand the Almighty God. Only revere and obey the Lord's command and God will treat him faithfully with unfailing love.

(3)【The eyes of the Lord are on his people】13-19 God watches and care for those who fear and put hope in Him. He rescues them from death and disasters.

(4)【Wait and trust in the Lord will rejoice】20-22 Do not be complacent and sit without doing anything. But be in one heart and target at God's promise to wait in fervent prayer, make every effort to enter perfection and wait, and be wholehearted to put hope in Him (not by men and not by oneself). Then God's unfailing love will rest upon us.

**Central point of the wheels: Fear God, obey the Word and trust in God to overcome the enemy**

Dear Lord, may You let me enjoy your banquet, be your fighting warrior, triumph over the power of Satan by the truth and the Holy Spirit!

**1 Sa 18/ Mt 23**

**Main theme: Love the Lord and obey the Word, offer everything and be blessed; woe to the hypocrite**

**-True Love/ Hypocrisy (seek for the fundamentals/seek for the surface)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 18:3-4, Mt 23:12

A discussion on true love and hypocrisy – on one side it concerned Jonathan, the son of Saul, loved David deeply. He offered everything and made an alliance with David. But Saul was jealous of David. He set crafty scheme bent on to harm him. On the other side it concerned Jesus severely rebuked the hypocritical Pharisees and the teachers of law. This teaches us that we ought to cleanse our inner filth and hypocrisy thoroughly, and then we may love the Lord sincerely and love Him above everything.

**A. Do not be envy, do not be hypocritical, offer the true love, and seek for the fundamentals**

Envy (1Sa 18:1-16) – Hypocrite (Mt 23:1-22)

1.【Humble and love David deeply】1-5 David trusted in God and was able to kill the strong enemy of Philistia by one blow. He returned in victory. Jonathan became one in spirit with David. Jonathan was the successor of king Saul, but he humbled to love David as himself and made a covenant with him. He gave him his robe, his tunic, sword, bow and belt to David and offered his true love.

※【Be arrogant and love oneself only】1-12 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were arrogant. They only loved themselves for they did not practice what they preached. They tied up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders. Everything they did was done for men to see. They loved the most important seats and be honored. Jonathan was able to humble from his high position. He loved David deeply because he knew David was God's anointed one. True love reflects in actions and not on the lips. Everything is offered due to love.

2.【To kill out of jealousy】6-16 David killed Goliath and returned triumphantly. The women came out to sing and danced with tambourines 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.' Saul was very angry at hearing this. He was jealous of David. From then on he kept a jealous eye on him. He wanted to kill him wholeheartedly. (Pro 14:30) When the evil spirit came upon him, he prophesied and held his spear to hurl at David. David played the harp on one side and was alert to elude him. Saul hated and feared David. He ordered him to lead the troops so he might be killed.

※【Be hypocritical and self-deceiving】13-22 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees shut the kingdom of heaven. They themselves did not enter, nor would they let others enter. They were blind guides and made them as much a son of hell as they were. On one side was woe to those who were jealous and killing. On the other side was woe to those who were hypocritical and self-deceiving. They were unwilling to beat their body with the Lord's words to pierce through themselves. As a result, they harmed themselves. The Lord's teaching is like a two edged sword which can pierce through our hearts so we may humble to confess our sins and be contrite to be favored.

**B. To set trap to harm others is hard to escape judgment**

Conspiracy (1Sa 18:17-30) – Injure cruelly (Mt 23:23-39)

1.【Conspire to harm others】17-19 Saul's jealousy was unyielding as the grave! Saul promised to give his daughter to marry David only if he would fight the battle of the Lord bravely so he might fall by the hands of the Philistines. But he gave his older daughter to someone which was a conspiracy and a scam.

※【Full of inner filth】23-28 The hypocrite only gives attention to the external sacrifice but do not pursue righteousness, compassion and faithfulness. They avoid the important and dwell on the trivial. They strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. They clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence like a white-washed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones. Saul complied publicly but opposed privately. He was honey-mouthed and dagger-hearted. He spoke well to David but he hid his bitterness and killing to himself. He too was woe to him like the teachers of the law and the Pharisees.

2.【Be tricky】20-30 Saul heard his second daughter loved David. So he sent his attendants to exhort David secretly that he might become the king's son-in-law for the second time only if he wcould get one hundred Philistine foreskins as the betrothal gift to be his snare. But God was with David and he overcame the enemy. He gave Saul double the bride price. When Saul knew his daughter loved David, he became still more afraid of him. He was tricky and self-defeating.

※【Kill the prophet】29-39 The hypocrites decorate the graves of the prophets. They and their forefathers all killed the prophets like Saul used plots to kill David. They were brood of vipers. Their crimes are numerous and deserve their judgment. So how can they escape from the punishment of the grave. Unfortunately, if Jerusalem and Saul did not repent, they would become desolate. David behaved wisely. He was faithful and courageous. He was honored by men. But Jesus' name was praised forever!

**Ps 34/ Rev 12:4 Main theme: Seek the Lord at all times, fear God, obey the Word, and the enemy cannot harm us**

**- Fear God /Be victimized**

How diabolic was the evil one towards God’s children! He used the tail that no one pays attention to sweep down one third of those who were spiritual and could shine like stars. He also wanted to devour the male child whom God would use mightily. How to avoid the harm?

(1)【Seek the Lord humbly and have His presence at all times】1-4 Listen to the Word, ready the Scriptures and call on to God.

(2)【Blessed are those who fear God】5-14 Seek the Lord with a revering heart. Make every effort to be mature that is by not speaking evil words or lies. Seek, fear and shun evil to do good everyday. This is truly blessed for we will lack no good thing. The Lord will encamp around him and delivers him.

(3)【The righteous are protected and the wicked is cut off 】15-22 The righteous repent and cry out to God and He will deliver them from all their troubles. They will be redeemed and not be condemned. The enemy cannot harm them. The wicked did evil and will be condemned. They will be endangered by their enemies.

**Central point of the wheels: Remove hypocrisy, love the Lord deeply, obey the Word by God to avoid being harmed**

Dear Lord, may You remove the impurity and hypocrisy of my heart, to love You as strong as death, pray watchfully at all times and prevent me from being devoured.

**1 Sa 19/ Mt 24**

**Main theme: There is great persecution and temptation, be watchful to escape, hide and preach faithfully**

**-Escape/ Be watchful (hide / guard against)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 19:18, Mt 24:30

A discussion on escaping and being watchful – on one side it concerned Saul pursued to kill David. He represented the dark and evil power of Satan, forcing David to run for his life. On the other side it concerned Jesus predicted on the Mount of Olives that there would be great persecution and temptation before the Lord comes again. This is like Saul’s forcing power toward David, which we ought to be watchful to guard against it and to escape from all kinds of persecution and temptation, so as to be the Lord’s faithful servant ready for His coming.

**A. Be careful and hide, do not to be tempted and suffer to preach**

Hide (1Sa 19:1-7) – Be careful (Mt 24:1-14)

1.【Hide to avoid being killed】1-3 Saul was jealous of David and determined to kill him. But Jonathan was very fond of David. He was watchful for him and warned him to be on guard and go into hiding lest he might be killed.

※【Be careful to avoid being tempted】1-8 The disciples saw the temple was apparently gorgeous. But the Lord predicted it would be thoroughly thrown down like Saul was apparently taller than anyone. He sat on the throne but his heart was like a robber's den. He murdered viciously. If he did not thoroughly repent, he would be destroyed. The Lord reminded the disciples to watch out lest they might be led astray by the false prophets. (Mt 24:11) Before the Lord came, there would be a lot of disasters like fighting, famines, plagues and earthquakes. David was faced with the pursuit of Saul. He had to be careful and alert to hide and escape from him.

2.【Witness boldly】4-7 Jonathan did not care for anything. He boldly spoke well of David before his father for what David did was beneficial to Saul. He had risked his life to destroy the enemy and he rescued the people. Again Jonathan exhorted his father not to kill David innocently. Saul was clear-headed for a while. He heard the exhortation and swore he would not kill David.

※【Suffer to proclaim the Word】9-14 Jesus commanded the disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom extensively as a testimony to all nations. They also had to be prepared to suffer for the name of the Lord. By the end time many would turn away from the faith. They would betray each other. But he who stood firm to the end would be saved. Darkness would reign. Wickedness would increase and the love of most would grow cold. We ought to be like Jonathan who loved David faithfully and be bold to witness for him before his father. Therefore we will not only preach the gospel widely but also be a faithful witness of Christ.

**B. Be watchful and prepared, give food at the proper time, hide and be protected**

A wicked servant (1Sa 19:8-24) – A faithful servant (Mt 24:15-51)

1.【Keep away from evil power】8-17 Saul was out of tune. His nature of jealousy and killing did not change. When the evil spirit came upon him, he tried to pin David to the wall. But David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape. Saul sent men to watch him and to kill him in the morning. Michal, the daughter of Saul helped him to escape in the night. Then Saul sent men to capture David and bring him up in his bed. But there was only an idol in the bed. Saul was very angry for even his daughter deceived him.

※【Guard against great deception】15-31 Jesus warned the elect to escape from the power of anti-Christ in great distress (Dan 9:27), and to watch against the great deception of the false prophets. It was the same when David had to escape from Saul. Evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse. Saul deceived David (1 Sa 18:17-21) and he was deceived by his daughter Michal. (2 Ti 3:13) Therefore be alert to guard and wait for the glorious coming of Christ. God will send His angels to gather them from the four winds to welcome the coming of the kingdom of Christ!

2.【Escape, hide and be rescued】18-24 David fled to Samuel like entering a city of refuge. He told the prophet what had happened. Again Saul sent men to catch David. The men sent by Saul prophesied with the prophets. Finally Saul himself went to catch David. God's spirit came upon him and made him fall. He was disgraced and laid bare. God saved David from harm.

※【Be watchful and prepared】32-51 The prophecy of the reinstatement of the elect had fulfilled proving the Man of God is right at the door. We ought to be watchful to prepare and wait to be caught lest we may be left behind. We ought to be a faithful and wise servant like Samuel and David who were watchful and hidden, to be bold and witness the Word and provide food timely. So we may be commended. Saul was like the wicked servant. He did what he pleased and would be severely punished. On one side was Saul laid bare and was disgraced. On the other side were the wicked servants crying with gnashing teeth. They were also punished by God.

**Ps 35/ Rev 12:5 Main theme: Contend by the authority of the throne and bring all people to the Lord**

**- Fighting / Spread widely**

(1)【Contend by the authority of the throne】1-10 Our inner and outer enemies pursue us day and night to put us to death. We contend by the Almighty Lord before His throne and will overcome.

(2)【Overcome evil with good and God contends for me】11-25 Tell the Lord how the enemies repay me evil for good. God will rise and defend me without allowing them to swallow me up.

(3)【Those who exalt the Lord shout for joy】26-27 God will put the enemies to shame. I am more humble when favored. I exalt the Lord and will be blessed more and more and shout with Joy like Joseph who rejoiced after suffering.

(4)【Speak of and praise all day long】28 Give thanks and repay His kindness unceasingly and lead men to righteousness to glorify God and benefit men.

**Central point of the wheels: Be watchful and escape, contend and overcome, and suffer to proclaim the Word**

Dear Lord, may You let me hide deeply inside you, be watchful and not be tempted, to overcome and triumph by You, and welcome your coming!

**1 Sa 20/ Mt 25**

**Main theme: Be wise and prepared, be alert for the Lord and be diligent to do good**

**- Be watchful/ Be faithful**

Golden verses: 1Sa 20:13, Mt 25:6,13

A discussion on watchfulness and faithfulness – on one side it concerned that during the critical moment when Saul was determined to kill David, Jonathan showed his utter devotion and reaffirmed the covenant with David. He was watchful for David even at the price of being hated and insulted by Saul his father. On the other side it concerned the two parables of Jesus and the prediction of the final judgement. This teaches us that we should be watchful to prepare the oil (to be diligent to pursue, be filled with the Lord’s Word, be filled with the Holy Spirit and to lead an abundant life), so we may be the Lord’s faithful servant, to do good with a loving heart. Then we will sit with Christ in His glorious kingdom and reign with Him. How precious it was for Jonathan to suffer with David and experience the affliction, though he was the son of Saul**.**

1. **Be watchful and prepared**

Be watchful (1Sa 20:1-11) – Prepare oil (Mt 25:1-13)

1.【Be watchful to discern the enemy’s tricks】1-11 David escaped from the pursuit of Saul. He was facing an impasse. He was only one step from death. He went to Jonathan. Though Jonathan loved David deeply, he was not always watchful for David. He did not know the scheme of Satan. He thought whatever his father did would not confide in him. Thus he agreed with David to hide in the field and wait to see his father's intention. If his father decided to kill him, he promised to tell him.

※【Be watchful to prepare oil】1-13 The kingdom of heaven would be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. At midnight there was a cry: 'Here's the bridegroom!' The wise virgins were watchful and prepared their oil. They went in with the bridegroom and the door was shut. The foolish virgins did not get ready for the oil. They slept and were shut from the door. Therefore we have to be watchful for no one knows the date of the Lord's coming. Darkness reigned and David was in a dangerous moment. Jonathan was also spiritually sunk in sleep. He was not aware to be watchful for David. He did not know the nature of Saul to kill David had not changed. The night is deep and the day is near. How can we be complacent and slackening? This teaches us on one side to know the evil plot of Satan to kill God's children. We got to escape from the power of the dark. On the other side, we have to be watchful to prepare the oil and to keep the Lord's words in our heart abundantly to be ready to meet Him.

**B. Love the Lord and deny oneself, be faithful and good**

Deny oneself (1Sa 20:12-31) – Be faithful (Mt 25:14-30)

1.【Make a covenant and ask for favor】12-23 Jonathan loved David deeply as his own life. He made a covenant with him that if he did not send him the word, may the Lord deal with him severely. Jonathan clearly knew David would reign. Thus he requested David to favor him according to God's unfailing love and not to cut off his kindness from his family.

※【Be faithful to repay the kindness】14-23 The kingdom of heaven would be like a man who entrusted his property to his servants. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents and to another one talent. The one who had received five talents and two talents gave thanks and repaid the kindness according to what they received. they gained five more and two more respectively and were commended by the master as good and faithful servant. They both enjoyed the happiness of the master. Jonathan was chivalrous to David. He promised to send the word to David and made a covenant with him. He was able to satisfy David's heart, while David also rewarded him according to his request.

2.【Requite kindness with enmity】24-31 David hid in the field according to their agreement. Jonathan stood around Saul. The next day Saul discovered David's place was empty. He was angry at Jonathan and determined to kill David. Saul was ungrateful. He had forgotten all the kindness of David toward him. He even requited kindness with enmity.

※【Be ungrateful】24-30 The man who had received the one talent did not work diligently according to the grace of the master. He occupied the ground vainly. He hid the talent in the ground and went to see the master empty-handed. He was wicked and lazy. He received the Lord's grace in vain. He did not put the money with the banker, so he might get some interest. As a result, everything was taken away from him to those who already had. Not only Saul failed God's grace, he also was ungrateful to David and requited his kindness with enmity. He was wicked and lazy. How could he give an account?

**C. Suffer willingly and do good with a loving heart**

To share tribulations (1Sa 20:32-42) – To do good (Mt 25:31-46)

1.【Suffer willingly and share the same destination】32-34 Saul was angry and rebuked Jonathan. He hurled his spear at him to kill him. Jonathan and David shared the suffering and worry. He would not care for anything. He boldly witnessed for David. He was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David and did not eat. He knew his father had determined to kill David.

※【Blessed are those who deny themselves and do good】31-40 When the Son of Man comes in His glory, He will judge the righteous and the wicked. If we denied ourselves to do good and did it on the least of the brothers with love, we did for the Lord. Then we would be blessed by the Father to inherit God's kingdom. Jonathan suffered and shared the worry for David. He was nearly pierced by his father. He went through trials and hardship together with David. He would be remembered in David's kingdom.

2.【To send charcoal during snow】35-42 In the morning Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting. He shot the arrow beyond the small boy and called to him, 'Go quickly and do not stop' to signal to David to face the plot of Saul. He had to escape for his life. After the small boy had gone, they kissed each other and wept to say farewell. David was moved by the love of Jonathan, he wept the most.

※【Without mercy】41-46 Jesus pointed out that if the good deeds were not done on the least of the brothers, they were not done for the Lord, just like Saul was without compassion. He was jealous and murderous. He would be cursed to depart from the Lord to the eternal fire of the devil. Jonathan provided timely help to David. Thus David was deeply moved and could not forget all his life.

**Ps 36/ Rev 12:6 Main theme: Do not be self-deceiving, escape from sin, run into God’s embrace and be filled with joy**

**- Find refuge in the Lord / The desert**

(1)【Why do the wicked perish】1-4 Their heart do not fear God. They are boasting, self-complimenting and self-deceiving. Their lips pour malignant words and deception. They commit themselves to a sinful course.

(2)【Ought to know God’s love and find refuge in the shadow of the Lord】5-7 God does not wish the wicked to perish. He wants everyone to be saved and find refuge in the shadow of His wings so their sins may be forgiven to be redeemed. That they may be freed from the curse of the day of judgment to gain eternal life and blessings.

(3)【God’s grace is abundant】8-9 We ought to open our mouths wide to thirst for righteousness. The Lord's Word is the provision of life and the river of delights so we may be transformed by the Word and the Spirit to be a holy and radiant precious instrument.

(4)【To know the Lord, put trust in Him, overcome the enemies and rescue people】10-12 May God's love sustains us so those who know Him will consider His mind to be bold to act, be able to deny themselves to risk death and to overcome the enemy to save men lest they may go down to the grave. (Jer 9:24; 22:16)

**Central point of the wheels: Be watchful and faithful, deny yourself to love the Lord, run away from sins and overcome the enemy**

Dear Lord, I am willing to be your faithful servant, to be watchful to prepare the oil, to do good with a loving heart, and have a share in your glorious kingdom!

**1 Sa 21/ Mt 26**

**Main theme: Keep the holy words firmly, pray watchfully and overcome, glorify God and benefit people**

**-Failure / Victory**

Golden verses: 1Sa 21:9, Mt 26:39, 41

A discussion on failure and victory – on one side it concerned David asked for bread and weapon from the priest in distress. But he lacked the bread of life which was God’s words and the spiritual weapon which was the power of prayer before God. Thus he could not overcome the power of darkness and resulted in fear and pretended to be insane and shame. On the other side it concerned Jesus had God’s words in His heart. He also paid the price to pray at Gethsemane. Thus, when faced with the cross, He was able to overcome till the end to accomplish God’s will and glorified God. (Eph 6:18)

**A. Ask for bread and eat the bread, to be broken to obey the will**

Eat the bread (1Sa 21:1-6) – To break (Mt 26:1-30)

1.【Without the Word and fail in trouble】1-3 In order to escape from the pursuit of Saul, David went to the city of Nob to Ahimelech the priest for bread. The Lord's word is the bread of life. David lacked God's words in his affliction. He was not able to stand firm to obey God's will and thus lied in terror.

※【Obey the Word to break and love the Lord】1-13 The chief priests and the elders plotted to kill Jesus just like Saul wanted to kill David. But Jesus had the Word in His heart. (Ps 40:8) He was not afraid to face the cross. Mary grabbed the chance to break for the Lord. She poured the perfume on the Lord's head and offered all her love to Him. It was because she had been quiet to listen to the Lord's words. She ate the bread of life and knew He would be on the cross. Therefore she bore the mind of the Lord. (Lk 10:39-42) She did a beautiful thing to the Lord. Though she was misunderstand by others, she gained the commendation of the Lord. There was no Word in David's heart, so he could not overcome his hardship and he could not break himself up. Mary did a beautiful thing but he did a wrong thing. The whole tribe of the priest died for him.

2.【Deny yourself and be compassionate to men】4-6 Ahimelech the priest did not have any ordinary bread on hand but only some consecrated bread. But he was full of God's heart and love. He knew David was the anointed king and now was under hardship. To show his compassion on David, he broke the rule and gave the consecrated bread to him. (Mt 12:1-8)

※【Lay down Himself to obey God’s will】14-30 Though Judas was the Lord's disciple, he did not gain the bread of life. All he wanted was money and not the Lord. In order to gain thirty silver coins, he found the chance to betray Jesus. The disciples and the Lord ate the Feast of Unleavened Bread together. The Lord broke the bread for them so they might break themselves to obey the Father's will to follow and imitate the Lord. Ahimelech was under the power of Saul. He did not care for his life. He had compassion on the afflicted David. He really broke himself to obey God's will.

**B. Ask for a knife and use the knife, pray watchfully and overcome**

Ask for a knife (1Sa 21:7-15) – Pray watchfully (Mt 26:31-75)

1.【There is none like this knife】7-9 Again David asked Ahimelech for a weapon. The priest gave the sword which David killed Goliath to him. It was wrapped in a cloth and had been long put in the temple. Then David said, "There is none like it; give it to me." He had used this sword to kill Goliath. (1 Sa 17:51) But now he was coward and failed like a rusted sword and lost the spiritual power!

※【Need to pray watchfully】31-46 At Gethsemane Jesus paid the price to crush in prayer. There is none like it. He wanted the disciples to be watchful and pray so that they would not fall into temptation. The Lord reminded them beforehand. That night, they all fell away because of Him, while Peter disowned the Lord three times. But they still slept and could not be alert with the Lord. Thus they were unable to overcome. The Lord was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. But He was firm to obey God's will. He overcame by prayer and was granted by God. (Heb 5:7) In times of darkness, David needed the spiritual weapon of watchful prayer, then he might overcome like the Lord.

2.【Fear and surrender to the enemy】10 Though David knew there was none sword like it, he did not use it. He was not watchful in prayer and thus had no power to face the enemy. To escape from Saul, David resulted in surrendering to Achish king of Philistia. He did not trust in the power of God but went to take refuge in the enemy. He was perfunctory.

※【Fight with flesh】47-56 The Lord prayed three times and overcame to obey the will. When he was caught, he was calm without retreating. Peter woke up from his sleep and saw the Lord was caught. He reached for his sword to deal with the enemy in the flesh. When David saw the environment, he was afraid and took refuge in the enemy. He failed greatly. Only the Lord triumphed completely. He was willing to drink the bitter cup to obey the Father's will. He satisfied the Father's heart and accomplished God's will.

3.【Pretend to be insane and insult God】11-15 The servants of the Achish king recognized David was the one whom the women sang about in their dances, the Israelite king who had slain tens of thousands. When David heard this, he was very frightened and pretended to be insane. He made marks on the doors and insulted God greatly.

※【Pretend and disown the Lord】57-75 Jesus was judged by the chief priest and the whole assembly tried to find false evidence against Him. But they did not find any. Jesus was bold to witness for the truth. He silently endured the punch and humiliation. Peter followed the Lord at a distance. Finally he pretended and disowned Him three times due to his weakness in the flesh. David pretended to be crazy due to fear. The result was because of lack of watchful prayer. But God's love was still on David and Peter. On one side God forced David to escape to the cave of Adullam to be contrite before God to be favored through the Achish king. On the other side Peter was awakened by the rooster's crow to escape to the Lord to weep and be favored.

**Ps 37/ Rev 12:7 Main theme: Turn from evil and do good by the Lord, and the heavenly army fight for me**

**- Do good / God helps**

How to overcome the enemy? Turn from evil and do good, pray and wait, and God will send angels from heaven to help us

(1)【Do not fret and trust in the Lord to do good】1-10 Because the day of disaster for the wicked is near. We ought to trust in God to do good and delight in Him. Entrust all our things in the Lord through prayers and be still and wait patiently.

(2)【God upholds the righteous】11-50 The wicked plot against the righteous But God will make them harm themselves because God upholds the righteous. Therefore we ought to shun away from evil and make every effort to do good. Give generously all our days and utter wisdom to lead men to righteousness. Be a blameless man before God. Though there may be trouble, God will help and deliver us. The heavenly host will contend for the righteous. The enemies will fall and never get up. Though the evil may flourish up to the sky, they will turn to nothing in a moment.

**Central point of the wheels: Pray watchfully and obey the will, and overcome by God.**

Dear Lord, may You let me eat the bread of life, to pray watchfully, be faithful to you, to overcome and triumph by You.

**1 Sa 22/ Mt 27**

**Main theme: Deny oneself in trouble, obey the will and be rewarded greatly; woe to those who are selfish**

**-Deny oneself / For self (be loyal and courageous /obey the will)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 22:1-2, Mt 27:51-52

A discussion on denying oneself and for self – on one side it concerned David escaped to the cave of Adullam. He was favored and so were those who took shelter in him. Ahimelech the priest was killed by Saul because he denied himself to help David. He sacrificed loyally and courageously. On the other side it concerned the chief priests and the Jews were selfish and cared only for themselves. They forsook and ruined the Lord. Only a few women followed the Lord to the end. This teaches us that we should be willing to deny ourselves to follow the suffering Jesus. Then we will have a share in Christ’s glory in future.

**A. Take refuge in the Lord in distress, put the old self to death and do not forsake the Lord.**

Take refuge in the Lord (1Sa 22:1-10) – Forsake the Lord (Mt 27:1-31)

1.【Take refuge in the Lord in tribulation】1-5 In his failure, David was forced to enter the cave of Adullam which was the path the merciful God opened for him so he might be like entering the city of refuge. Not only he himself was favored, his whole family, all those in debt and the distressed ran to him and were favored. They followed David and became the faithful fighting men who helped him to gain his kingdom. They went through tests and followed till the end.

※【Reject the Lord in distress】1-10 Jesus was the city of refuge for all people, but no one came to take refuge in Him. Instead they rejected the Lord. The chief priests and the elders discussed to put Him to death. Judas betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver coins. Later on he regretted. His result was tragic. He hanged himself. He was the same with Saul who did not repent till his death and was rejected by God and doomed to destruction. The elders dared not put the blood money into the treasury for they were involved in betraying the Lord. Instead they used the money to buy a field to bury the foreigners. The four hundred men who ran to David later on increased to six hundred. They were unworthy foreigners but they followed David and were favored. (2 Sa 15:18)

2.【The old self rules and kills David】6-8 Saul was ruled by his old self. He took advantage of his position to bully others. He openly plotted against David but he rebuked his servants for conspiring against him. He blamed his son for inciting the servants to lie in wait for him. He confused truth and falsehood. How tragic it was!

※【Release Barabbas and kill Jesus】11-25 Jesus was judged before Pilate. But He did not reply anything. He just boldly acknowledged He was the king of the Jews and He was convicted death penalty for this. All the people were incited by the chief priests to release a prisoner instead. They all shouted to crucify Jesus. Saul also strongly desired to kill David. They were all due to jealousy and ruled by their old self. They requested to release Barabbas and crucify the Lord on the cross. This Barabbas represented the old self which was heinous in crime. We ought to put our old self to death and let the Lord rule us!

3.【Conspire and confide to Saul】9-10 Doeg the Edomite was a loyal servant of Saul. He was insidious and diabolic. He peach to Saul how Ahimelech had helped David that day and the whole family was killed.

※【Mock and insult Jesus】26-31 Pilate flogged Jesus and handed Him over to be crucified. The governor's soldiers mocked Jesus and put a scarlet robe on Him. They also put a crown of thorns on his head and spit on Him. What kind of abuse and punishment had the Lord suffered for us! How Saul and Doeg had persecuted David and the priest who had helped him. Similarly Jesus was afflicted by Pilate and his soldiers. They were all the instrument of Satan who harmed God's anointed one severely.

**B. Sacrifice faithfully and bravely, deny yourself to obey the will**

Be faithful and courageous (1Sa 22:11-23) – Endure suffering (Mt 27:32-66)

1.【Witness faithfully and bravely】11-15 Saul sent for Ahimelech the priest and his father's whole family. He angrily rebuked Ahimelech why did he conspire with David against him. Ahimelech was courageous and faithful. He was not afraid to sacrifice. He boldly witnessed David was loyal before Saul. He was the bodyguard of the king. 'Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him?'

※【Obey God’s will firmly】32-44 Jesus carried the heavy cross, bouncing down step by step with difficulty to Golgotha. A man from Cyrene, named Simon passed by accidentally. He was forced to carry the Lord's cross. He had a share in Jesus' affliction just like Ahimelech had a share in David's hardship. Jesus had suffered all sorts of pain, torture and ridicule. Though He could come down from the cross, He did not save Himself. He boldly obeyed the will till the end. Ahimelech was faithful and courageous to witness David. Even at the point of risking his life, he would not save himself.

2.【Sacrifice willingly】16-19 In order to help David, Ahimelech had sacrificed courageously and faithfully. The cruel Doeg personally killed eighty five priests and the men and women of the town and its children and livestock. They all sacrificed for David.

※【Deny His life and shed blood】45-56 The Lord was crucified for us innocently to bear the sins of all mankind. He endured the greatest suffering of being forsaken by the Father. He laid down His life to shed His blood till He gave up His spirit. Ahimelech was willing to suffer for David. He was faithful till death. The women under the cross came from Galilee to follow and serve the Lord till Golgotha. They too had a share in the suffering of Christ on the cross.

3.【A narrow escape】20-23 Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech escaped from the murder of Saul. He fled to David and told him of the tragic event of Saul killing the innocent. David took him home and he lived with David. He was saved by God to escape from death to follow David.

※【God’s will triumphs】51-66 A rich man, Joseph was secretly a disciple of Jesus. Now he would not care for anything and boldly went to Pilate for Jesus' body. He placed His body in his own new tomb. Ahimelech loved David willingly. He was bold to deny himself to sacrifice for David. The chief priests and the Pharisees begged Pilate to guard and secure the tomb, otherwise it might cause a worse deception. But they were unable to prevent Christ to raise from the dead. Saul had killed all the priests of God and thought it was in order. But he could not prevent David to be anointed as king. The will of God will always triumph!

**Ps 38/ Rev 12:8 Main theme: Confess deeply and seek goodness eagerly, the enemy cannot overcome me**

**- Confession / The enemy withdraws**

(1)【Grieve for sins and beg God to cease His wrath】1-10 As I am a folly, I sinned and did evil provoking God to anger. I will mourn for my sin and may God have compassion on me.

(2)【Do not plead men, not by oneself and only trust in the Lord】11-15 All my friends and companions avoid me. My enemies have set their traps to seek my life. But I must be deaf and mute to men but pour out myself to the Lord.

(3)【Confess and pursue what is good】16-22 Do not be afraid that the enemies are strong and many. Only if I will confess my sins and repent, pursue to do good, pray and look up to the Lord, He will answer me. He will come quickly to rescue and help me. The enemies will not overcome me.

**Central point of the wheels: Give up one’s life to obey the will, confess and pursue what is good and the enemy cannot win over us**

Dear Lord, may You let me be inspired by your love, be willing to deny myself to carry the cross and follow You to the end!

**1 Sa 23/ Mt 28**

**Main theme: Seek the Lord and obey His will regardless of the environment and see the power of God**

**-Enquire / Trust (seek the Lord/ proclaim the Lord)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 23:14, Mt 28:18-20

A discussion on enquiring and trusting - on one side it concerned David inquired of God in everything; when he wanted to rescue the people of Keilah and while he was pursued by Saul. He obeyed God’s will and trusted in Him wholeheartedly. Thus he was saved by His mighty power and pulled through. On the other side it concerned Jesus has risen. The women who loved the Lord with a pure heart trusted in the Lord and came to seek Him were revealed by Him. We should inquire of the Lord in everything we do and put trust in His words. Then we will experience His power of resurrection and proclaim the resurrected Jesus to all the people.

**A. Seek the Lord, do not be afraid, obey God’s will and triumph over the enemy greatly**

Enquire (1Sa 23:1-14) – Seek the Lord (Mt 28:1-10)

1.【Inquire of God and overcome the enemy greatly】1-6 David came to know the Philistines were fighting against the people of Keilah. He inquired of God and was granted to save them. In order to bear the weakness of his co-workers, he inquired again and was granted. Then David and his followers inflicted heavy losses on their enemy. David loved God and the people. Even in his affliction, he still cared for the hardship of the people. He denied himself to save the people from their enemy.

※【Seek the Lord and report the message】1-7 A few women who loved the Lord came at dawn to seek the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake. An angel appeared to roll back the stone and said to them, 'Do not be afraid, the Jesus whom you are looking for has risen, just as He said. Go quickly and tell His disciples.' On one side was seek the Lord and was revealed by the angel. On the other side was inquire of God and was answered. It is not in vain to love and seek the Lord.

2.【Be submissive to God’s will and escape from the hands of the enemy】7-14 Saul still sought for David and plotted against him. David prayed for God's will. He knew the people of Keilah would surrender him to Saul. So he brought his six hundred men and left Keilah to the desert strongholds. In his affliction, David trust in God and obeyed His will that was dwelling in God. Though Saul sought after him everyday, God did not give David into his hands.

※【Believe and follow God’s words and be fearless】8-10 The women hurried away from the tomb. As the angel appeared, they were afraid yet filled with joy. Suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. He also told them to tell the news to the disciples. David trusted in the words of God and had peace. Saul was unable to harm him. The women trusted in the Lord's words and were also full of peace and joy. The people of Keilah were saved by David from danger, yet they were ungrateful and wanted to give David to Saul. Such waywardness would not have peace.

**B. Trust in the Lord and see the miracles, proclaim the risen Christ**

Trust in (1Sa 23:15-29) – Proclaim (Mt 28:11-20)

1.【Reaffirmed by trusting in God 】15-18 Everyday Saul sought for the life of David. But his son Jonathan cared for David. He went to Horesh to comfort him and helped him find strength in God.

※【Tell lies for the money】11-13 The guards reported everything to the chief priests. The chief priests and the elders bribed the guards. They deceived the people that His disciples came during the night and stole Jesus away. On one side was trusting in God and was strengthened. On the other side was cheating men with money and could not stand. Unfortunately Jonathan never came out again. He did not follow David till the end. As a result he fell together with his father losing the grace and blessings!

2.【Fawn on the enemy】19-23 The Ziphites tried to please Saul and gave David to his hands. Saul wanted them to find out exactly where did David hide and report to him. He would track him down among all the clansof Judah.

※【Used by the enemy】14-15 The soldiers were greedy and accepted the bribe. They were exploited and did what the chief priests ordered. On one side was the Ziphites tried to please Saul and betrayed David. On the other side was the soldiers pleased the Sanhedrin and announced the invented lies. But this could not hinder God's great power of salvation and the truth of Christ has risen from the dead.

3.【Trust in God and see the miracles】24-29 Saul sought after David and David hurried to get away from him. But Saul and his forces were closing in on him. David was surrounded by the enemy. At this critical moment, a messenger reported to Saul that the Philistines were raiding the land. He could not but turned back to attack the enemy. God worked miracle to save David from the oppression of Saul so he might turn danger to peace.

※【God is with us and He rescues all people】16-20 All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. He sent out the disciples and gave them the authority so all nations would be the Lord's disciples. The disciples would obey the Word and teach men to obey the Word. Then the Lord would be with them. David trusted in God in his affliction. He kept the Lord's Word and experienced God's presence. He and his six hundred followers were saved from danger. All we need is to obey to preach the Word and save men by faith. Do not be afraid of Saul's power of siege. The Lord will rescue us from every evil attack (Ps 124:6-7) and experience God's presence and the power of resurrection.

**Ps 39/ Rev 12:9 Main theme: Do not turn to illusion, plead to escape from all sins and the enemy is hurled to the earth**

**- Consecrate / Be hurled down**

(1)【Discern the plot of the enemy】The enemy has many names. The great dragon is the ancient serpent. It is also named as devil, or Satan who leads the world astray. The ancient serpent tempted Eve in the garden of Eden. It instigated the relationship between God and men and between men so we would rebel against God, and fight and kill each other. We must discern this lest we may be trapped to sin and suffer in shame.

(2)【Watch our ways】1-2 The evil one roamed about the land. We ought to be careful and alert and stand firm in truth by the Lord. Then we will see the enemy is hurled down.

(3)【Acknowledge that everything is but a breath】3-5 If we know our life is fleeting and everything is a mere phantom, then we will not be led astray by the enemy to sin and do evil.

(4)【Save from all the transgressions】6-11 Avoid to be scorned and rebuked. I will be silent to endure the occurrence from you.

(5)【Plead to rejoice again】12-13 Cry out humbly, may the Lord look away from me. Due to my transgression I fall. May I rise up from my failure and weakness, and be renewed to accomplish the task from You.

**Central point of the wheels: Save from all the illusion, seek and proclaim the Lord, and see the glory of resurrection**

Dear Lord, may you let me inquire of your will in all my ways, be strong to obey your Word, to love God and love people, and rescue people to gain eternal life!

**1 Sa 24/ Mk 1**

**Main theme: Obey God’s order, overcome evil with good, and be full of power**

**-Triumph over/ Gain people (love the enemy/rescue the sinners)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 24:4-6, Mk 1:38

A discussion on triumphing over and gaining people – on one side it concerned David was able to uphold God’s way of love at his suffering. He overcame evil with good and dared not harm Saul. He even prevented his followers from harming Saul. On the other side it concerned that after Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, he overcame the temptation of Satan in the desert. Thereafter, He came out to preach the Word and was full of power. This teaches us that we should pursue righteousness and mercy, keep the Way of love and will overcome to rescue others.

**A. Hide deeply in the Lord, be filled with spiritual love, triumph over and gain people**

Be remorseful (1Sa 24:1-7) – Be humble and obedient (Mk 1:1-13)

1.【Hide deeply in the Lord】1-3 After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he still would not give up. He chose three thousand men and continued to seek David to bring him to death. Saul went into the cave to relieve himself. David and his followers were also far back in the cave. David hid deeply in the Lord and was not harmed and defiled because he dwelled in the shelter of the Most High and he took God as his refuge. (Ps 91:1-10)

※【Retreat deeply into the desert】1-8 John the Baptist was the warrior of the heavenly kingdom. He dwelled in the desert and retreated deeply in the Lord far from the secular. He suffered to preach the Word. He was the Lord's pioneer preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. David hid deeply in the cave and was not defiled. They both experienced the presence of God. John was willing to be humble to exalt and proclaim Christ. But Saul was arrogant. He was jealous of David who was after him. He continued to seek him without giving up.

2.【Overcome evil with good】4-7 Those who followed David thought the time had come. They could remove Saul according to God's promise. But David prevented them. The Lord forbid that he should lift his hand against the anointed one. David trusted in God. He kept God's way of love. He overcame evil with good. He cut off a corner of Saul's robe unnoticed. Afterwards he was conscience-stricken. God edified David to repay hatred with love and bear a heart to love his enemy.

※【Conquer over temptation】9-13 Jesus came to Jordan and humbled to accept the baptism of John. How satisfied was God's heart! Thus when Jesus came up out of the water, heaven was torn open and the Spirit descended on Him like a dove. A voice from heaven witnessed the Lord was the beloved Son of God, whom He was well pleased. The Spirit sent him at once out into the desert. He was there for forty days being tempted by Satan. The Lord overcame Satan with the words of the Scriptures. David trusted in God and overcame evil with good and was loved by God. Both Jesus and David overcame the tests of Satan and pleased God!

**B. Be righteous, merciful and humble to gain people, and follow the Lord by denying yourself**

Love the enemy (1Sa 24:8-22) –Rescue people (Mk 1:14-45)

1.【Keep the Lord’s Word and love the enemy】8-11 Then David called out to Saul, "why do you listen when men say 'Davis is bent on harming you?' Today in the cave, some urged me to kill you, but I spared you and cut off the corner of the your robe but did not kill you. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life." David pursued righteousness and compassion. He bored a humble heart and walked with God.

※【Preach the gospel and save the sinners】14-15 Jesus was full of the power of the Holy Spirit. He proclaimed the good news of God everywhere, 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" The Lord loved the sinners and saved the sinners. David loved his enemy and spared Saul revealing God's heart and God's love!

2.【Be humble and die completely, and God vindicates】12-22 David was refined and he deeply knew himself was as low as a dead dog or a flea but was pursued by a king of Israel. Therefore he was able to be kind to Saul and would not touch him with his hand. May God consider his cause and vindicate him.

※【God calls upon the humble and unworthy】16-20 Beside the Sea of Galilee Jesus called four disciples to follow Him so they might be fishers of men. Peter, Andrew, James and John came from low. They earned their living by fishing. Due to the Lord's calling of love, they left everything and followed Him immediately. David was also called by God. For a long time he suffered and followed. He knew himself was lowly and nothing. He denied himself to obey God's will. He gained men by love and waited for God's vindication.

3.【Do not seek the true grace】16-22 When Saul heard the words of David, he was moved. He wept aloud and acknowledged his sins. But he cried without repenting. He knew but he was not contrite. He attended to trifles to the neglect of essentials. He did not seek the true grace and only requested David not to cut off his descendants or wipe out his name.

※【Beg for grace and is blessed】32-45 At sunset, the people brought all the sick and demon-possessed to Jesus and were healed. While it was still dark, Jesus went to a solitary place to pray and communicated with the Father in fellowship. He did not follow men's desire but only obeyed God's will to work. He hid himself after every miracle and strictly advised not to tell men. Saul pursued vanity all his life. He did not seek the essentials. He did not know he was plagued with leprosy. He was not willing to come to God humbly to seek to be cleansed and was not healed till death.

**Ps 40/ Rev 12:10 Main theme: Seek persistently, escape from sins and proclaim widely, grace and power will come**

**- Seek / Grace and power**

(1)【Wait patiently】1-3 Request for grace by faith and wait patiently. The Lord will save me from the pit of sin so I may obey the Lord's words and follow Him wholeheartedly to sing the new song. (Rev 14:1-5)

(2)【Trust in the Lord to obey God and preach the Word】4-10 Do not look to the proud and to those who turn aside to false gods by the Lord. Press forward toward the goal and listen to obey the will to proclaim the Lord's salvation extensively.

(3)【Plead for God’s protection earnestly】11-15 The more we love the Lord and proclaim His salvation, the more we are hated by the enemy who want to seek to take our life. Thus we pray fervently for the Lord's protection, deliverance and help.

(4)【Seek the Lord and He will help】16-17 Those who seek the Lord will rejoice in Him. Only be humble, exalt Him and cry to Him, then He will rescue. His salvation, power, authority and glory will come all at once.

**Central point of the wheels: Love the enemy, rescue people, triumph over, cry for joy and sing a new song together**

Dear Lord, may You let me be filled with your love, to overcome evil with good, be obedient and love the enemy, and bring thousands of sinners to sing a new song!

**1 Sa 25/ Mk 2**

**Main theme: Woe to the folly and the selfish, Bliss to those who plead humbly and sacrifice willingly**

**-Foolish / Self-righteous ( old creation/ new creation)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 25:23-24, Mk 2:17

A discussion on folly and self-righteousness – on one side it concerned Nabal (fool) was surly and mean in his dealings. He was selfish, ungrateful, arrogant and indulgent which represented the utterly corrupt flesh and old self. His wife, however, Abigail (source of delight) was intelligent, humble, teachable, and eager to seek grace, which represented the new life. On the other side it concerned the Lord came to call the sinners. He is the friend of the tax collectors and the sinners. While the teachers of the law and the Pharisees were hypocritical and self-righteous just like Nabal, who would be punished in the end.

**A. Do not be ungrateful and beg for grace humbly**

Be ungrateful (1Sa 25:1-31) – Beg for grace (Mk 2:1-17)

1.【Surly and ungrateful】1-13 A wealthy man named Nabal (stubborn) was surly and mean. Though he had a lot of property, he was stubborn, selfish and did not have God in his heart. (Ps 14:1) There was once in his good harvest and shearing, David sent his servants to greet him, hoping he might give away some to the servants of David who had been tending for him day and night. Nabal was not thankful. He thought himself was the master and turned away from acknowledging David. He was mean and ungrateful and he used malignant words to scorn. The servants turned around and went to tell David. Then David decided to send his men to punish the ungrateful and evil Nabal.

※【Believe and implore will be favored】1-12 At that time, many people gathered to listen to the Lord's Word. Four men carried a paralytic against all odds and lowered the sick from the roof before Jesus. Jesus saw their faith and said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Some teachers of the law were thinking to themselves just like Nabal was stubborn and arrogant. They did not know the Lord had the power to forgive. Jesus knew what they were thinking in their hearts and ordered the paralytic to get up. He then got up immediately and glory was ascribed to the Lord. Nabal was like a paralytic bound by sin. He did not come before the Lord for forgiveness just like the teachers of the law. Though they were knowledgeable and had a lot of property, they did not have peace. Jesus and David were full of love, power and the discernment in the spirit.

2.【Beg for favor humbly】14-31 The servants of Nabal knew David and his servants and how they protected them in the desert. They were kind to them. Thus they were worried that disasters might come because Nabal repaid kindness with evil. Abigail, the wife of Nabal was a wise woman. She listened to the exhortation of the servant. She immediately brought gifts and went to see David. She quickly bowed down before David and accepted the blame humbly. She asked for forgiveness and used wise and persuasive words to keep David from avenging in the flesh personally.

※【The sinners are favored】13-17 Jesus called Levi (Matthew) the tax collector and he got up to follow the Lord. Then Levi held a feast and invited many tax collectors and sinners to eat with Jesus and be favored. But the Pharisees were thinking to themselves of Jesus eating with the sinners and tax collectors. On one side was the sinners were favored when they came before the Lord. On the other side was the wife of Nabal went to David for grace. The Pharisees and Nabal were stubborn men. They did not know the Lord and David. The Lord comes to call the sinners! Who is willing to humble to come before the Lord and be favored?

**B. Put off the old and be renewed, to be the bride of the Lord, exalt the Lord as holy**

Die completely (1Sa 25:32-44) –Be renewed (Mk 2:18-28)

1.【Put the old self to death by God】32-39 The wisdom and judgment of Abigail were praised by David. He accepted the gifts and granted her request. Then she went home in peace. Nabal indulged in his flesh. He held a big feast. He was happy for a moment and got drunk. He was unwilling to humble for grace and was struck by God and died like a stone which represented our sinful nature had nothing good. We have no way to relieve ourselves except by the power of the Holy Spirit to put the body to death, then we may have life and peace. (Ro 8:13)

※【Become a new creation in the Lord】18-22 The disciples of John and the Pharisees questioned the disciples of Jesus why they did not fast. Jesus used a parable to explain the principle why the old and the new could not match. The new piece could not be sewn on an old garment and the new wine could not be poured into old wineskins. Only the new wine into new wineskins. Nabal represented the old self that had to die thoroughly, then the new life of Abigail would grow to be a new creation in the Lord. (2 Co 5:17)

2.【Be a bride of the Lord】40-44 Nabal had died. David praised God for upholding his cause against Nabal for treating him with contempt and keeping David from killing and shedding blood. Nabal's wrongdoing had brought down on his own head. Abigail was wise and beautiful. She was talented and virtuous. Later on David took her as wife. She acknowledged the grace and was thankful. She humbled to obey and married to David. Michal was originally the wife of David, but Saul gave her over to someone. She obeyed her father and forsook David. She became the wife of someone else.

※【Stand against the Lord】23-28 The Pharisees paid attention to the outward appearance. They held to the tradition of the elders. They criticized the disciples for violating the Sabbath for they had picked heads of grain during the Sabbath. They were against the Lord. They did not understand the Son of Man was the Lord of the Sabbath. They did not exalt the Lord as holy, so how could they be united with the Lord? Michal listened to her father and could not be the wife of David. She belonged to someone else. Abigail was ready to serve David. She was married to David and enjoyed the true peace. This teaches us that we ought to unite with the Lord completely and exalt Him as holy forever.

**Ps 41/ Rev 12:11 Main theme: Consecrate by the blood, deny one’s life to witness the Word, overcome the enemy and be blessed**

**- Mercy / Deny one’s life**

Pledge one’s life to obey the Word by the blood of the Lamb will overcome everything and accomplish the mission entrusted to us by the Lord to save men.

(1)【Blessed is he who has regard for the weak】1-3 This is the intention of the Lord. If you deny yourselves to love others, God will deliver you in times of trouble. When you are sick, God will sustain you and you will be blessed.

(2)【Ask the Lord for mercy】4 Look up to the Lord's compassion and healing, be humble to confess our sins and do not be self-righteous.

(3)【Do not listen to the enemy’s words and do not fear the departure of friends】5-12 Do not be afraid that the enemy gathers slander in his heart to imagine the worst for me. They use evil words and whisper together against me. Even my close friend has lifted up his heel against me. But I pray for the Lord's mercy so I may raise up. In my integrity the Lord upholds me.

(4)【Ought to praise God forever】13 Lead the people of God to deny themselves to obey the Word and save men and to gain the rich blessings of God to praise Him.

**Central point of the wheels: Plead humbly and be favored, keep the Lord’s Word till death and overcome to save men.**

Dear Lord, may you let me rely on You only to subdue my old self, be redeemed by You, to be your bride and overcome to triumph!

**1 Sa 26/ Mk 3**

**Main theme: Be strong and loving, do good bravely, and deny yourself to proclaim extensively**

**-Love the enemy / Rescue men (triumph over/exalt in praise)**

Golden verses: 1Sa 26:24, Mk 3:34-35

A discussion on loving the enemy and rescuing men – on one side it concerned David overcame evil with good and repaid hatred with love again when faced with the pursuit and attack of Saul. On the other side it concerned Jesus was strong and did good when faced with the Pharisees’ attack. He overcame by obeying the will. Jesus rescued people without regard for Himself and David’s love for his enemy to spare Saul were the examples we should follow.

**A. Be wise and watchful to face the enemy, be strong and deny oneself to save men**

Love the enemy (1Sa 26:1-12) – Triumph over the enemy (Mk 3:1-19)

1.【Pursue and attack David】1-3 The Ziphites had always been pleasing Saul. Now they came again to tell him where David was hiding. Saul brought his three thousand chosen men and went down to search for David.

※【Look for a reason to accuse Jesus】1-6 The Pharisees saw a man with the shriveled hand before Jesus and tried to look for a reason to accuse Jesus to condemn Him for violating the Sabbath. Saul was the same when searching for David. He used all sorts of means. He got an inch and wanted a foot! Jesus did not care for their objection and continued boldly to do good and save men on the Sabbath. The Pharisees went to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus just like the Ziphites were the accomplice of Saul's evil. They waited for an opportunity to harm David.

2.【Deal with the enemy wisely and courageously】4-12 David stayed in the desert. He sent out scouts and learned Saul had come to pursue him again. He trusted in God and was bold. He went down to the camp of Saul. David still had the mind of God. He dared not lay a hand on God's anointed. Again he prevented Abishai from pinning Saul. David overcame evil with good. He boldly and wisely took away the spear and water jug near Saul's head. No one was aware of it because God put the enemy into a deep sleep.

※【To do good bravely】7-19 The Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the lake. All the people from the surrounding place came before the Lord. He had compassion on them. He did not care for anything and did good boldly. He healed many. David went down to the enemy's camp and checked clearly of the enemy's situation. This was also a courageous action. Later on Jesus went up the mountain to pray and appointed twelve apostles (Lk 6:12-13) and gave them the authority before sending them to preach and save men. David also trained his followers not to act by the flesh but be godly to keep the Word to be warriors who denied themselves and loved the enemy. Saul's spear used to pierce at someone and had to be taken away. The Lord trained the disciples to deal with themselves first, and then they would have the spiritual power.

**B. Triumph over the enemy by love, refute the slanders, and sacrifice one’s life completely**

Triumph over (1Sa 26:13-25) –Obey the will (Mk 3:20-35)

1.【Teach the enemy with God’s love】13-16 David called to Abner some distance away and rebuked him why he did not guard their king and where were the spear and water jug that were near his head. On one side David boldly rebuked the enemy why he failed in his duty. On the other side he exhibited God's love and spared Saul again.

※【Deny oneself completely and refute the slander】20-30 The people gathered again so that Jesus was not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of Him and said He was out of His mind. The Lord denied Himself completely to love and save men. By God's love David taught his enemy and spared him. The teachers of the law said Jesus drove out demons by the prince of demons. But Jesus trusted in the Holy Spirit and was full of power to refute the slander. David's voice overcame Saul and his commander. Satan was divided against itself and certainly could not stand. Saul was full of hatred and murderous, thus his kingdom would also not stand.

2.【Overcome the enemy with love】17-25 David vindicated his innocence, lowliness and insignificance to Saul. He was only a flea and a partridge but was sought by the king. Saul heard the voice of David and saw that he had again spared his life. He was moved again. He acknowledged he had acted like a fool and had erred greatly. David overcame his enemy with love. Thus God would treat him with righteousness and faithfulness.

※【Love extensively and gain men】31-35 How wide and deep was Jesus' love! His mother and brothers came to look for Him. But He still had in mind of God's will. He also pointed out that whoever did God's will was His brother and sister and mother. The Lord did not care for family affection when He preached the Word and saved men. Again David spared his enemy. They both revealed God's unlimited love! David and Jesus firmly obeyed the Father's will to gain men with love and save men. They overcame and triumphed before the enemy.

**Ps 42/ Rev 12:12 Main theme: Do not fear the enemy’s fury, put hope and praise will see God’s glory**

**- Put hope / The enemy’s fury**

There are troubles on earth. Dwell in the Lord and have joy and peace.

(1)【Do not be downcast but put hope in God】1-5 The enemy is angry. His final day is near. So do not be downcast but put our hope in God for I will yet praise Him. We will have joy and peace in the Lord.

(2)【Sing at night and put hope in God】6-11 The enemy oppresses, taunts and scorns. The environment is dark and it is inevitable to be downcast and disturbed. But I will put hope, praise and pray to God. Darkness will turn to brightness. Great distress becomes a force to pray. With fervent prayer, great revival will come. The humiliation of God's children will turn to glory!

**Central point of the wheels: Long for and put hope, love the enemy and save men, triumph over and exalt in praise**

Dear Lord, may you let me know your heart, to obey your will, to grab to save the sinners, to triumph over the enemy with love, and praise your name!

**1 Sa 27/ Mk 4**

**Main theme: Do not follow one’s own desires, pay attention to obey the Word, and bear fruit for a hundred times**

**-Follow one’s own desires / Listen to the Word and act accordingly**

Golden verses: 1 Sa 27:1 Mk 4:24-25

A discussion on following one’s own desires and listening to the Word and act accordingly – on one side it concerned David fixed his eyes on the environment and feared in distress. By his own desire he took refuge in Achish, King of Gath to escape Saul’s pursuit. Thus he failed and was miserable. He disgraced God’s name. All this lasted for a year and four months. On the other side Jesus used parables to teach the disciples that they ought to pay attention to listen to the Word and act accordingly. Then they would bear fruit for a hundred times and shine to glorify God’s name.

**A. Do not follow one’s own desires, listen to the Word and act accordingly**

Go over to men (1Sa 27:1-7) – Listen to the Lord (Mk 4:1-29)

1.【Go after one’s own desires】1-4 David was under distress for a long period of time so it was inevitable his faith was shaken when he fixed his eyes on the environment. He became afraid and had forgotten God's words. (1Sa 22:5) He thought he might die under Saul's hands, so the best thing might be escaping to the land of the Philistines. David did not inquire of God and followed his own desire. He brought his followers and their family and went over to the king of Gath.

※【Listen to the Lord’s Word will be favored】1-9 Jesus used parables to teach the people. The Lord's Word was like seeds of life. (1 Pe 1:23) sowed on the hearts of different people. If it took root in the heart, it would sprout and grow. Many people gathered in the Lord and were favored. David went over to the foreign king by his own desire and lost the grace. The Word in his heart was eaten away by the birds. It withered due to little soil. He was worried and upset, so like thorns, the Word was choked. He ran a wrong path and affected his followers. They all took refuge in the power of the earth.

2.【Take refuge in men brings bitterness and sorrow】5-7 David fled to the land of Philistia away from the will of God. He lived before men and had to beg the enemy for a place to stay. King Achish gave him Ziklag (enveloped in grief). For one year and four months, it seemed everything was peaceful outwardly. But there was not a moment of peace in his heart. He lived in worry and terror.

※【Listen to the Word and act accordingly will bear fruit and shine】10-29 Jesus explained the parable of the sower and the mystery of God's kingdom to the disciples. We ought to abandon all the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things, then we may be fruitful and shine. Listen to the Lord's Word and become a good soil to sprout and grow, and produce to be the full kernel in the head with a harvest of thirty times, sixty times and one hundred times. David in Ziklag was like falling onto the thorns and thistles and like a lamp put under a bowl, darkened without light and lost the witness.

**B. To fawn man versus calling upon to the Lord**

Fawn (1Sa 27:8-12) –Call for help (Mk 4:30-41)

1.【Depend on oneself brings uneasiness and agony】8-12 David went over to Achish. He could not but pleased men and lived before men. He was worried and frightened. He was miserable and in agony. By his own wisdom he attacked and defeated his neighbors completely without leaving anyone alive on one side. While on the other side he vaguely replied and deceived Achish he had raided the Negev so Achish thought he had been attacking his own clan. Achish believed him and was pleased. He thought David would be his servant forever.

※【Depend on God brings calmness】30-41 God's kingdom was like a mustard seed which grew to be a big tree. The birds would perch in its shade showing the effect of faith. When David fixed his eyes on the environment, he lost his faith. Thus his life withered. Jesus and the disciples crossed over the sea. Suddenly a furious squall came up. The Lord was asleep in the boat. In great distress the disciples woke Him. Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and the waves. It was completely calm. Jesus blamed the disciples were frightened and faithless. In hardship David lost the faith. He was terrified but did not cried to God for help. He only struggled by himself and tried to be wise to please. He failed greatly. Through the wind the disciples began to know who the Lord was. Through failure David also knew God and he became God's servant forever.

**Ps 43/ Rev 12:13 Main theme: Seek and put hope under persecution, obey the true light of the Lord and act accordingly**

**- Obey the Word / Persecution**

The enemy was hurled down. He was not reconciled and persecuted God’s children**.**

(1)【Plead the Lord to vindicate and escape from the enemy】1Vindicate not by men or by self. Only vindicate by God to save me from deceitful and wicked men.

(2)【Obey the Word and act by the Lord】2-4 May God be my stronghold so I may obey to act in the truth (true light) of the Lord, to love Him above everything and be willing to sacrifice everything to keep His will.

(3)【Put hope in the Lord will have glory】5 Do not be downcast and disturbed. Put hope in the Lord in times of distress. Obey His will by Him and we will not be ashamed. But we will gain glory.

**Central point of the wheels: Listen and walk the Way, do not depend on men, obey the Word, seek salvation and overcome**

Dear Lord, may you make me pay attention to your Word, to obey your will and act, to bear fruit and shine, triumph over temptation and persecution and glorify your name!

**1 Sa 28/ Mk 5**

**Main theme: Do not follow men, do not inquire of the ghost, believe and beseech the Lord and be healed**

**-Inquire of the ghost / Beseech the Lord**

Golden verses: 1Sa 28:6, Mk 5:19

A discussion on inquiring of the ghost and beseeching the Lord – on one side it concerned Saul did not repent to God in his dead end. Instead he violated His order wilfully and inquired of a woman who was a medium. Thus he offended God greatly and was abandoned by Him. On the other side it concerned all the afflicted and sick came before the Lord. They asked by faith and were healed and brought glory to God. This teaches us we should beseech God’s grace, do not turn to mediums, sorcery and evil spirits lest God will set His face against us.. (Lev20:6-7)

**A. Do not follow men, do not turn to mediums, come before the Lord and be released.**

Follow men (1Sa 28:1-14) – Follow the Lord (Mk 5:1-24)

1.【Follow Achish to fight】1-2 The Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel. David was obedient to Achish and followed him to the battle. Achish was proud and thought David would be his bodyguard for life. But God loved David and prevented him from fighting against his own people which would provoke God to anger through the leaders who was angry with Achish.

※【Follow Jesus to preach】1 Jesus preached throughout the land and His disciples followed Him. David was supposed to be God's servant, the anointed one of the Lord. But he became the servant of Achish and followed him to the battle to fight against God's people. Who should we fight for and should we be whose servant? We ought to imitate Paul who followed the Lord all his life and only be the servant of Christ. (Gal 1:10)

2.【Sin upon sins】3-7 The Spirit of God had departed from Saul and He was not with him. When Saul saw the army of the enemy, he was afraid and terrified. But he still would not repent. He inquired of God but God did not reply him. Thus he went to seek the mediums. Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land. (Deu 18:9-14) This was hated by God. But now he purposely violated this command and increased his sins upon sins.

※【Blessings upon blessings】1-20 Jesus crossed the lake to Gerasenes to save a demon-possessed man. This man came from the tombs. Even the chains could not bind him. When he came before Jesus, the demons left him and went to a large herd of pigs when Jesus rebuked them. That man dressed and was in his right mind. He listened to the Lord's order to go back home to proclaim how much Jesus had done for him. He had blessings upon blessings. Saul was bound by sin and the devil came upon him. He was not relieved just like the demon-possessed. He was unwilling to humble to repent. Instead he went to seek the mediums. As the king of Israel, he could not escape God's righteous judgment.

3.【Beseech the ghost】8-14 As Saul was afraid of the people, he disguised himself and went to the medium hoping to bring up and consult the dead Samuel. He swore to the woman she would not be punished for doing this. She cried out at the top of her voice and saw a spirit coming up out of the ground. Saul immediately bowed down and prostrated himself before the false Samuel. He was inclined to sorcery and was deceived. He was trapped in the temptation of falsehood.

※【Beseech the Lord】21-24 Jesus crossed over again to the other side. Many people had gathered before the Lord. One of the synagogue rulers fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded Him earnestly to put His hand on his little daughter so she might recover because she was nearly dead. Jesus saw his faith and went to his house. Saul was at the edge of a national crisis. In his desperation he did not cry to God for help. Instead he sought the spirit. God could only let him run a rebellious and destructive path.

**B. Beseech the Lord and receive great favor; beseech the ghost and fall**

Fall down (1Sa 28:15-25) –Resurrection (Mk 5:25-43)

1.【Self-deceiving and self-hurting】15-19 The female medium pretended to be Samuel. She was pretentious and rebuked Saul. She deceived herself and others. How could Samuel come from the ground? There is a great chasm fixed between the living and the dead. (Lk 16:26) Saul sought the mediums and was self-deceiving and self-harming. He greatly violated God.

※【Touch the Lord and be healed】25-34 Jesus was walking and a large crowd pressed around Him. A woman who had been subject to bleeding was there. She suffered a lot and had spent all she had. Yet it grew worse. When she heard about Jesus she grasped the chance to touch His cloak among the people. At once, she was healed. She fell at His feet and gave thanks to witness God. Saul was like suffering from the incurable bleeding. At his dead end, he still would not grasp God. Finally he was rejected and fell due to seeking the mediums and violating God. He was self-deceiving and harmed himself.

2.【Beseech ghost and fall full length on the ground】20-25 Saul was unwilling to confess his sins. He sought the mediums and fell full length on the ground. Isa 8:19-22) The woman was frightened and quickly served some food and urged him to eat. That same night they got up and left.

※【Beseech the Lord and the dead child came back to life】35-43 Jesus was still on the way and news of the death of the daughter of the synagogue came. Jesus said, "Don't be afraid, just believe." Men saw she was dead but the Lord saw her asleep. He then put them all out and told the girl to get up. He also told them to give her something to eat. On one side was pleading the Lord by faith. The dead child rose up. On the other side was seeking the medium by rebellion and fell full length. The people did not believe the Lord. They wailed loudly and laughed at Him. The female medium rejected the Lord. She was terrified and afraid. Only the ruler of the synagogue believed by the Lord and the whole family was blessed and joyous.

**Ps 44/ Rev 12:14 Main theme: Read the Scriptures, pray and withdraw to the desert may avoid death and be fruitful**

**- Listen and beseech / Two wings**

We ought to utilize the wings given by God – listen to the Lord’s words and beseech His words to flee to the desert to escape from the temptation and danger of the evil one.

(1)【Listen to the Lord’s words】1-3 From the Scriptures we heard that our fathers trusted in God and were able to overcome and gain the inheritance.

(2)【Trust in the Lord’s words】4-8 And trust in God's name (Word) to subdue the enemies.

(3)【The current situation】9-16 We have failed and were put to shame. We are scattered and devoured quickly.

(4)【We had not turned back and been false to the covenant】17-22 We have not strayed from the Lord's path and spread out our hands to a foreign god.

(5)【Plead for revival】23-26 The prayer of the righteous has great effect. (Jas 5:16) May God rise up to help us and redeem us so we may gain revival.

**Central point of the wheels: Do not be self-deceiving, plead to take refuge in the Lord and be favored to overcome**

Dear Lord, may you give me faith, to flee and dwell in You, to be healed by You, and to overcome the power and pursuit of Satan by You!

**1 Sa 29/ Mk 6**

**Main theme: Follow people bring shame, deny yourself to follow the Lord will fully see the glory of God**

**-Follow people / Follow the Lord**

Golden verses: 1Sa 29:9, Mk 6:41-42

A discussion on following people and following the Lord – on one side it concerned the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites. Through the anger of the Philistine commanders God forced David to come back to the will of God, which showed God’s unchanging eternal love to David. On the other side it concerned the disciples followed Jesus to preach and were filled with power. This teaches us that we should not follow men but follow the Lord. We should not accept men’s praise but to please God and to follow the Lord to the end. Then we will see God’s glory.

**A. Follow people leads to failure, follow the Lord brings victory**

Disgraced (1Sa 29:1-5) – See glory (Mk 6:1-29)

1.【Follow people and be praised】1-3 David was weak in faith and went over to men. He received the praise from king Achish but was against God's will. The Philistine forces marched according to their division. David and his followers were also marching at the rear after their enemy to fight against his people. Though he was praised before men, he was not commended before God.

※【Follow the Lord and be rejected】1-6 The disciples followed Jesus to His hometown. On the Sabbath, He taught in the synagogue. Many recognized Him by the face and took offense at Him. The Lord was amazed at their lack of faith. So He could not do any miracles there and went to the surrounding villages. The disciples followed the Lord and suffered. They were being forsaken but were remembered by God. David followed the king of the world. Though he was honored, he departed from God's will and turned to nothing instantly.

2.【Go into battle with the enemy brings opposition】4 David was about to go to the battle with king Achish. The Philistine commanders were angry with Achish. They insisted David had to return without going to the battle lest he might turn against them during the battle. This was the good intention of God to force David to go back to God's will. (Saul died in this battle.)

※【Sent by the Lord and is given authority】7-13 Jesus sent out the twelve to preach and gave them the authority to heal sickness, drive out demons and teach the people to repent to save men. David wanted to follow Achish to the battle and this harmed God's people. Before the disciples were sent, they had to listen clearly to the instructions and be ready to walk a path to deny oneself and suffer. David did not pay attention to do God's will. Instead he violated God's order and went to battle with the enemy. He was rejected by the Philistine commanders. The disciples were also rejected when they went out to preach. They were not welcomed but they suffered for the Lord!

3.【Triumph over temporarily】5 The Philistine commanders recognized David was the warrior whom the Israelite women sang in their dance he had slain tens of thousands. God was with David, so he triumphed over the enemies greatly before. Now he failed and surrendered under the enemy.

※【Triumph over to the end】14-29 King Herod heard about Jesus' name and thought it was John the Baptist who had raised from the dead. John was hated and put to jail for rebuking Herod because he married his brother's wife. Finally he was killed but he triumphed over to the end. David had killed Goliath and overcame for a time. Now he failed. The Philistine commanders recognized David was the king of Israel. Herod also knew John was a righteous and holy man. But he was against him and was also against God. John sacrificed for the truth. David surrendered before the enemy without any witness!

**B. Do not accept praise, break oneself completely, and feed all the people**

Turn back (1Sa 29:6-11) –Break oneself (Mk 6:30-56)

1.【Not willing break oneself】6-8 To Achish, David was good, but because the rulers objected, he could not but ordered David to go back. David was still not alert. He disregarded God's will and did not break himself up. He was willing to be the servant of the enemy and he had forgotten he was chosen and anointed as king.

※【Break oneself thoroughly】30-44 The disciples returned from their preaching work. Jesus brought them secretly to a solitary place to rest. Again the people gathered before the Lord. Jesus taught them and had compassion on them. But the disciples were selfish. They did not care if they had nothing to eat. But the Lord broke Himself like the five loaves and two fish so thousands were fed. The disciples and David were unwilling to break themselves and God's will was hindered.

2.【Forced to turn back】9-11 Through the anger of the Philistine commanders, God forced David to turn back without following king Achish to fight against the Israelites. The king gave the order to leave in the morning. Thus this forced David to leave the battle place back to God's will.

※【Cry out in difficulty】45-56 Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat. Then He Himself went up on a mountainside to pray. The wind was against them. Then they saw Jesus walking on the lake. So they cried out to the Lord and were saved. David met the objection of the commanders of the enemy. He was also like encountering the storm which forced him to return to God. As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, people brought all who were sick to beg the Lord to allow them to touch the edge of His cloak. For nothing is impossible with God, only receive by faith. Whoever touched it was healed. (Num 15:37-41) God forced David to come before Him through the environment so he might be healed and be shown mercy.

**Ps 45/ Rev 12:15 Main theme: Love righteousness, hate evil, press on toward the goal to avoid from being harmed**

**- Run forward / Avoid from being harmed**

Do not turn back and look, run quickly up the mountain to avoid being flushed by the foul water spewed from the evil one just like the wife of Lot who turned to a pillar of salt.

(1)【Imitate the Lord to love righteousness and hate sin】1-9 Our Lord is the most beautiful. He is full of gracious words and He saves men continuously. He is all equipped and press forward in obedience to the Spirit victoriously. He loves righteousness and hates evil. His authority is everlasting. He has the honored queens and overflowing joy. We ought to imitate the Lord and be favored by the Lord's grace.

(2)【Forget what is behind and press forward】10-17 We also ought to be the bride of the Lamb. Be attentive to the Lord's words to forget about the past and be diligent to go forward. Then we will not be engulfed by the unpurified water spewed by the serpent. Be wholehearted to the Lord, run close before Him and be able to lead men completely to the Lord, be fruitful and forever be remembered.

**Central point of the wheels: Break oneself to follow the Lord, be faithful and unyielding, press on ahead to avoid being harmed**

Dear Lord, may You let me break myself thoroughly for You, to follow You to the end, to triumph over by You, and lead the sinners to be your bride!

**1 Sa 30/ Mk 7**

**Main theme: Be steadfast to trust in God, plead humbly and be favored, share God’s grace widely**

**-Share the grace / Beg for grace**

Golden verses: 1Sa 30:6, Mk 7:28-29

A discussion on sharing the grace and begging for grace – on one side it concerned David came back to Ziklag and found that the kindred of himself and his followers were taken captive by the Amalekites. David was strengthened and recovered everything by trusting in God in his critical situation. He also shared his plunder generously. Not only did he share them equally among the fighting soldiers and those who stayed with the supplies, he also sent the plunder to other people to share God’s abundant grace. On the other side it concerned Jesus rebuked the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He taught the people to pursue the inner holiness and to keep God’s command lest they might be captured by hypocrisy and evil. The Amalekites represent the sinful desire of the flesh which is our inner enemy and always capture us away. (Exo 17:8-16)

**A. Do not emphasize on the appearance, cleanse the inner impurity, and recover the captive**

Pursue the enemy (1Sa 30:1-20) – Rebuke sins (Mk 7:1-23)

1.【Strengthened by God at difficulty】1-6 David and his followers returned to Ziklag. Unexpectedly all their kindred were taken captive by the Amalekites. David and his men wept aloud. David was greatly distressed because they were talking of stoning him. In such affliction, David found strength in the Lord his God.

※【Unmoved under censure】1-13 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees held to the tradition of the elders and admonished Jesus because some of His disciples did not wash hands before eating which was against the tradition. The Lord rebuked their hypocrisy. They took people captive by the tradition of the elders. They paid lip service to the Lord but their hearts were far away from Him. They forsook God's command and kept the tradition of men. They captured people by the basic principles of the secular tradition. David had to face the capture of the kindred of himself and his co-workers. But he was strengthened by God like the Lord was not shaken.

2.【Inquire of God and rescue the captives】7-20 In his distress, David first inquired of God. He was granted to pursue the enemy to rescue the captive family members. By love David also rescued a Egyptian slave forsaken by the Amalekites. He gave him water to drink and food to eat. He revived and led them to the enemy's camp. David killed the Amalekites and recovered everything from them without losing one.

※【Listen to the Lord’s words and remove the inner filth】14-23 Jesus told the people to listen carefully to His words. The Lord's word is food and water which revives the soul and restore the spirit. Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man like evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, adultery, greed, etc. It is like the Amalekites who capture others and defile others. Therefore we ought to rescue those who are captured by sin and lead men to be cleansed inwardly, and then they may serve the Lord in a holy way.

**B. Beg humbly, share the grace widely, and keep the Way of love**

Share the grace (1Sa 30:21-31) – Beg for grace (Mk 7:24-37)

1.【Give thanks and share the grace】21-25 David returned victoriously. He knew he was favored. He was grateful and glorified God. He bored the mind of God and divided the plunder equally with those who went to the battle and those who stayed with the supplies. This became a statute and ordinance for Israel. David kept God's righteous ordinance. He was generous without a selfish heart. He also persuaded the opposing evil men and troublemakers.

※【Grasp the grace and get it】24-30 A Canaanite woman fell at Jesus' feet and begged Him for her little daughter who was possessed by an evil spirit. Jesus purposely said, "First let the children eat all they want for it is not right to toss it to their dogs." The woman knew she was a foreigner. Regardless of anything, she grabbed on to salvation and begged, "Yes, Lord, the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Jesus saw her faith and immediately summoned the demon to leave her daughter. Those evil men and troublemakers who followed David were selfish. They thought they were the heroes. They did not knew they were favored and were ungrateful. David would definitely not agree to them. The Canaanite woman valued God's grace. David was grateful and shared his grace. He was favored and others were also favored.

2.【Witness God’s grace】26-37 David also bore the heart of God. He shared his plunder as presents with the elders of Judah and all his friends. He shared and witnessed God's grace.

※【Tell of salvation】31-37 Jesus proclaimed salvation everywhere. He healed a man who was deaf and could hardly talk. This man was grateful and praised God. Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more they kept talking about it and witnessed God's grace. David returned victoriously from the battle. He was grateful. He sent presents to the surrounding people, so they gave thanks and praises together to glorify God. Jesus preached and saved men. But He hid Himself. David came back with abundance. He shared profoundly and nothing for himself.

**Ps 46/ Rev 12:16 Main theme: Come over and rest in the Lord, with the presence of God, heaven and earth work for the good of it**

**- Rest / God helps**

Everything will work for the good of those who obey the Word and love God.

(1)【God is our help】1-3 Only put hope in Him and withdraw from His unlimited power of resurrection. Then we will not be afraid even if heaven and earth turned upside down, because in Him there is peace which cannot be taken away.

(2)【There is the river of life and the presence of God】4-7 In the holy city, there is a river of the water of life (Rev 22:1), there is the Word of the Lord in our heart and God's presence. When the time comes, God will help His holy people.

(3)【Be still and observe what God does】8-11 Obey the Word by the Lord and be still just like Joseph rested in his waiting. God worked miracle and great things for him. Daniel trusted in God. He rather be put in the lions' den. He prayed continuously. God closed the mouth of the lions so His name was exalted among the land. Moses was attacked by the party of Korah. God made the land open its mouth and swallowed them. Heaven and earth worked for the good of it and there is help from God.

**Central point of the wheels: Recover the captives, triumph over the sinful filth, obey the Word, rest and share the grace**

Dear Lord, may You cleanse my inner filth, triumph over my flesh by You, rescue the captivated children and share your abundant great love!

**1 Sa 31/ Mk 8**

**Main theme: Disobey God will fall; deny oneself to follow the Lord and rescue all people**

**-Fall /Rescue people**

Golden verses: 1Sa 31:6, Mk 8:31

A discussion on falling and rescuing people – on one side it concerned Saul, together with his three sons and his followers all fell on Mount Gilboa. Saul represented the old self that was completely fallen. Then David might reign according to God’s will. On the other side it concerned the Lord set Himself as an example for his disciples. He denied Himself to break so all the people might be fed and delivered. Likewise, our old life must be completely broken and died thoroughly, and then we may save men so others may gain life because of us.

**A. The old self falls and all the people are fed**

Follow closely (1Sa 31:1-7) – Break (Mk 8:1-21)

1.【Follow Saul closely and fall together】1-3 The Philistines fought against Israel. God's spirit departed from Saul. Thus the Israelites fled from the enemy. But the Philistines pressed hard after Saul and his sons. His sons were killed and many fell slain on Mount Gilboa. It was tragic that Jonathan who loved David also fell slain for following closely after Saul. He was unable to separate from him. The fighting grew fierce and the Philistines pursued Saul closely. Saul was unwilling to confess his sins and was overtaken by sins. Finally he was wounded by an archer. (Eze 35:6) He was wounded critically and dying.

※【Follow Jesus closely and all people are fed】1-9 During those days another large crowd gathered. They had nothing to eat for three days. Jesus had compassion on them and could not bear to send them home hungry. The disciples were unwilling to break themselves. They had no love and could not think of any means. Jesus took the seven loaves, gave thanks and broke them. He broke Himself and fed four thousand people. Jonathan was unwilling to break completely. Though he loved David deeply, he would not separate from Saul of the love of father and son and died tragically. (2 Sa 1:23)

2.【Fall on the sword and die】4 Sadly Saul was unwilling to lose his face till death. He would not repent. He was afraid to be humiliated by the uncircumcised. Thus he took his own sword and fell on it. This was the result of forsaking and violating God. The old self had to fall, then David would reign.

※【Die to the old self and live a new life】10-13 The Pharisees came to question Jesus. To test Him, they asked for a sign from heaven. The Lord sighed deeply. None would be given except the sign of Jonah. (Mt 12:39-40) Saul represented the old self which had to fall to be nailed on the cross with the Lord so we might die out alive. The renewal of life is the greatest sign just like Jonah was in the fish for three days and three nights and became the miraculous sign of the age. He led the whole city of Nineveh repent.

3.【Follow others to flee after defeat】5-7 So Saul and his three sons and all his men died together that same day. Saul was rebellious against God till death. He was forsaken by God and failed thoroughly. It was a pity the people saw the army fled and that Saul and his sons had died. They abandoned their towns and fled, allowing the enemy to occupy them.

※【Follow the Lord is abundant】14-21 Jesus wanted the disciples to be careful to watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod which was hypocrisy and the false worldly lessons. But the disciples were still not aware. They cared only for the food of the body and could not identify the false lessons. They did not know the Lord was the Word. Those who followed the Lord would not only be self abundant and could feed thousands and be abundant. The people followed Saul and abandoned the city and fled. They lost everything and wandered in distress.

**B. Die thoroughly to the old self, have in mind the things of God, and deny oneself to follow the Lord**

Die thoroughly (1Sa 31:8-13) –Follow the Lord (Mk 8:22-38)

1.【Die to the old self thoroughly】8-10 The next day the Philistines cut off the head of Saul and stripped off his armor. They sent messengers throughout the land to proclaim the news in the temple of their idols and among their people. Saul was a head taller than others. But now his head was cut off by his enemy. The armor which he boasted of as majestic was stripped off. Even his body was fastened to the wall of Beth Shan being displayed in disgrace. Our 'old Saul' also has to die completely and be put to shame thoroughly.

※【Beg the Lord to open his eyes】22-30 Someone brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. The Lord's word was like a spit wiped on his eyes. (Ps 19: 7-8) Jesus also put His hands on him for twice so his sight was restored. Then Jesus sent him home. On the way Jesus asked the disciples who was He. Peter knew the Lord was the Christ. We too have to beg the Lord and follow Him. When our spiritual eyes are opened, then we may know the Lord. The 'old Saul' did not die completely like the blind man. So he never knew God and also David whom God had anointed.

2.【Do not forget the old favor】11-13 The people of Jabesh Gilead did not forget the kindness which Saul had rescued them in the past. (1 Sa 11)When they heard Saul was killed, the valiant men journeyed through the night to take the bodies of Saul and his sons. They burned and buried them and fasted seven days to mourn for them.

※【Should have in mind the things of God】31-38 Jesus then began to teach them that the Son of Man had to suffer and be killed. After three days He would rise again. Peter momentarily considered men's intention and did not bear God's mind. He dissuaded Jesus. The Jesus turned and rebuked him, "Get behind me, Satan!" The people of Jabesh Gilead did not forget the kindness of Saul. We as the Lord's disciples should not forget the Lord's kindness but to bear God's mind and adore the precious cross of the Lord. We ought to be willing to carry the cross to follow the Lord till the end to satisfy His heart. Saul fell and he deserved it. Jesus was about to be nailed and innocently killed. We ought to be the valiant men of heaven to die for the Lord and the gospel to gain life. What the people of Jabesh Gilead and Peter had in mind was not God's intention. It was men's affection and idea.

**Ps 47/ Rev 12:17 Main theme: Witness by keeping the Word, shout with cries of joy by faith, all people come to the Lord**

**- Cries of joy / The enemy’s anger**

Those who keep the Lord’s commandments and witness for Him are the object of attack of the enemy

(1)【Shout with cries of joy by faith】1-4 Do not be afraid of the anger of the enemy, we ought only to keep and witness the Word and to act according to the Lord's words. The enemy cannot harm us if our foundation is built on the rock. We also ought to triumph by faith because God is the Most High. He can subdue nations under Him through us so they may become our inheritance and pride.

(2)【Shout and praise by faith】5-9 We ought to cry out by faith and the strong city will fall just like marching around Jericho. Consecrate and sing praises, sing praises and God will subdue nations to be His people because God is the Most High!

**Central point of the wheels: Die to the old self completely, keep the Word and cry for joy, all nations come to the Lord.**

Dear Lord, may You make me experience the miracle of the cross, to let you reign in my life forever, to praise and shout with cries of joy!