

THE END OF SAUL

Cast:

Narrator	Samuel
David	A lord of the Philistines
Achish	Abiathar
Saul	Egyptian
Medium	Servant of David
Servant of Saul	Amalekite

NARRATOR: After several years of being chased by Saul all over the land of Israel, David was tired. He wanted to settle down in one place for a while.

DAVID: If I want any peace at all, I think my only option is to go down to the land of the Philistines. Perhaps I can make a peace treaty with one of their lords. I know that Saul fears the Philistines and he won't come into their territory, so I will be safe.

NARRATOR: David went to talk to Achish, the son of the king of Gath.

DAVID: If I have found favor in your eyes, please allow me to live in one of your small towns. I want to bring my family and friends to live with me also, if that is okay.

ACHISH: Certainly! You can live in the royal city with me!

DAVID: Oh, no! Never! I just want to live a quiet life out in the country.

ACHISH: All right, then. You can live in the town of Ziklag. It's pretty small but maybe you can make something of it.

DAVID: Thank you. God bless you.

NARRATOR: David lived among the Philistines in Ziklag for a year and four months. He and his men brought their families to live with them there. During this time they would go out on raids. Being in Philistine territory gave David the opportunity to get rid of some possible future enemies once he became king of Israel. One by one, he started wiping out town after town. He would kill every last person in the town so that there was not a single survivor left to tell anyone what had happened. David would sometimes bring plunder to Achish.

ACHISH: Wow! What nice plunder. Where did you go raiding this week?

DAVID: Ah... up into the territory of Judah.

ACHISH: Wonderful. And where will you go next?

DAVID: I think I'll go over and raid the Kenites who live in the territory of Judah.

NARRATOR: David was not telling the truth. He was not going into Judah. He was trying to fool Achish into trusting him. And it worked.

ACHISH: The Israelites hate David so much he will never be able to live in Israel ever again. This is great for me. Now I will have David on my side. He will fight for the Philistines!

NARRATOR: Once again, the Philistines gathered their forces to make war against Israel. Achish planned to take David into battle with him.

ACHISH: You know that since you made a peace treaty with me, that means you have to support me in battle and fight on my side.

DAVID: Yes, I know that. I will fight for you. You know I am quite a warrior!

ACHISH: I want you to be my personal body guard. You and your men shall stay near me and fight alongside me during the battle.

DAVID: I shall go with you.

NARRATOR: The Philistine army went into Israel and camped at a place called Shunem. Saul gathered his forces and camped at Mount Gilboa. From Mount Gilboa he looked out and saw all the thousands of Philistine soldiers. The Philistines had more soldiers, better weapons, and chariots. Saul was afraid. He wanted to inquire of God to find out what to do. But God would not answer him. God did not send dreams, he did not send prophets, and he did not speak to the priests. Saul was on his own.

Saul wished he could ask Samuel what to do, but Samuel had died recently. Then Saul thought of an idea. He decided to go to a medium (a witch) who claimed to be able to contact the spirits of people who had died. Saul had to disguise himself, however, because he himself had outlawed this activity. This kind of behavior was against God's law and Saul knew it. He had made it illegal in Israel. He knew very well he should not consult a medium, but he did it anyway.

SAUL: I need to consult a medium. She will be able to contact Samuel for me.

SERVANT OF SAUL: I've heard that there is a medium in the town of Endor. That is not too far away. Do you want to go there?

SAUL: Yes, I will disguise myself so she will not recognize me. Take me to her at once.

NARRATOR: So Saul and two of his men disguised themselves and went to Endor that night.

SAUL: I want you to bring up a certain person who has died recently. Bring up his spirit so I can talk to him.

MEDIUM OF ENDOR: But don't you know what Saul has done? He has passed a law making it punishable by death to contact the spirits of the dead. If I get caught doing this, I might be killed!

SAUL: I promise that you will not get into trouble for doing this.

MEDIUM: I really would rather not.

SAUL: I promise that no punishment will come upon you. I promise!

MEDIUM: Promise?

SAUL: Yes, I promise!

MEDIUM: Okay. Who do you want to contact?

SAUL: Bring up Samuel for me.

NARRATOR: The medium began to call out for Samuel, not really expecting him to come. When she saw Samuel's spirit coming up, she let out a scream. She then realized what was going on.

MEDIUM: You have deceived me! You are King Saul!

SAUL: Don't be afraid! I won't hurt you. Just tell me what you see.

MEDIUM: I see an old man with a white beard, wearing a white robe. It looks like Samuel. He is coming! He is coming!

SAMUEL: Saul, Saul! Why have you disturbed me?

SAUL: Samuel, I am in great distress right now. I really need your help. The Philistines are about to make war against me. And when I ask God what to do, I get no answer. I need to know what to do.

SAMUEL: Why do you consult me? If the Lord has turned away from you, what can I do about it? The Lord is fulfilling the prophecy spoken against you. I told you that God has taken the kingdom from you and given to David. God is especially angry at you for not obeying Him concerning the Amalekites. You were told to wipe them out and you did not. Therefore, you will lose not only this battle but also your life. By tomorrow, you and your sons will be dead and will be down here with me.

NARRATOR: The next day, the Philistine troops began to move. David and his men were with Achish. When the other Philistine lords arrived and saw David there, they were very upset.

PHILISTINE LORD: Achish, why have you brought an Israelite with you to fight against the Israelites?

ACHISH: Oh, but this is my friend David. He is very trustworthy. He promised to fight on my side.

PHILISTINE LORD: Are you crazy? Sure, he says he will, but in the middle of the battle can you be sure he won't suddenly switch sides? After all, he is an Israelite, not a Philistine.

ACHISH: No, really-- we can trust him.

PHILISTINE LORD: Sorry, but I don't trust him. Achish, this is DAVID! They sing about him in Israel: "David has killed his tens of thousands." Tens of thousands of what? Of Philistines! I'll bet this is one of his tricks. We can't trust him.

ACHISH: Okay, okay. David, sorry but the other Philistine lords say you have to go home.

DAVID: What have I done? Why don't they trust me?

ACHISH: I know, I know. You are as blameless as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the other lords won't be convinced. We can't go against what they say. You will have to go back to Ziklag.

DAVID: I understand. It's okay. I'll start back first thing in the morning.

NARRATOR: So David headed back to his home in Ziklag. However, when he got there a horrible sight met him. The town had been destroyed with fire. All the crops and houses had been burned and the animals and people were gone. David and his men were devastated. Their wives and children were gone! David wept before the Lord and went to Abiathar the priest to ask what to do.

DAVID: Please inquire of God, for me. Shall I pursue the soldiers who did this?

ABIATHAR: The Lord says, "Yes, pursue them."

DAVID: Will I succeed?

ABIATHAR: The Lord says, "Yes, you will succeed."

NARRATOR: So David and his 600 men set out to find the men who had burned their town and stolen their wives and children. Now it happened that some of the soldiers found an Egyptian man who was almost dead of hunger and thirst. They gave him bread and water and revived him and then brought him to David.

DAVID: Who are you? Where do you come from? Do you know anything about a raid on the town of Ziklag a few days ago? Speak!

EGYPTIAN: I am an Egyptian. I am the servant of an Amalekite. I was with my master as he and his fellow soldiers burned the town of Ziklag. Then I got sick and could not travel anymore. So I was left behind to die, and the Amalekites went on without me. Then your men found me.

DAVID: Will you lead me to this band of Amalekites?

EGYPTIAN: If you promise not to kill me, or to hand me over to my master so that he kills me.

DAVID: I promise.

EGYPTIAN: Okay, I will show you where they are.

NARRATOR: The Egyptian led David and his men to where the Amalekites were camped. And there they were-- eating, drinking, laughing and having a grand party, celebrating their victory. They never saw David and his men coming. David's forces overwhelmed the Amalekites and killed all of them except for four hundred men who got on camels and rode away. Everything the Amalekites had stolen was still there. Not a single woman or child or animal had been harmed. David and his men happily gathered up their families and their belongings and headed back to Ziklag.

Meanwhile, things were not going so well on Mount Gilboa. Just as Samuel had said, the Philistines won the battle. Only a few days after David got back to Ziklag, a messenger came into the town.

SERVANT OF DAVID: David, look! Here comes a messenger. Maybe he has news of the battle.

DAVID: Your clothes are torn and you have dust on your head. Who are you and where have you come from?

AMALEKITE: I have just escaped from the camp of Israel, from the battle with the Philistines.

DAVID: How is it going? Tell me.

AMALEKITE: All the survivors have fled from the area where the battle was. Only the dead remain. Saul and his sons are dead.

DAVID: Are you sure? How do you know they are dead?

AMALEKITE: By chance, I just happened to be on Mount Gilboa. I saw Saul leaning on his spear to kill himself because he was already wounded. The chariots and horses were coming. He saw me and called to me and said:

SAUL: Who are you?

AMALEKITE: I am an Amalekite.

SAUL: Come over here and kill me, please. I am badly wounded. I tried to kill myself but I am still not dead. I am in great pain and want it to be over. Please put me out of my misery.

AMALEKITE: So I thrust my sword into him, so that he would not be in pain any more. I picked up his crown and his arm bands, and I have brought them to you. Here they are.

NARRATOR: Then David took his clothes and tore them, to show how sad he was. His best friend, Jonathan, had been killed. He wept and would not eat for the rest of the day. He looked for ways to show his loyalty to the family of Saul, even though he knew that God was choosing him to take Saul's place. It really bothered him that an Amalekite had dealt the final death blow to Saul, even though Saul had asked him to.

DAVID: Who did you say you were, again?

AMALEKITE: I am an Amalekite.

NARRATOR: Upon hearing that he was an Amalekite, David ordered him to be executed. David considered that he was simply carrying out God's decree against the Amalekites--- the decree that Saul had not fulfilled. Then David composed a funeral song for Saul and Jonathan.

DAVID: Your glory, O Israel, has been slain on the high places. How the mighty have fallen. Tell it not in Gath, or in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice. Saul and Jonathan were together in life, and also in death. They were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions. Weep for them, O daughters of Israel!

NARRATOR: And thus ended the reign of Saul. It would be several more years until David was king over all of Israel. Everyone in Israel knew the prophecy, but some would continue to fight against David. God had a plan in all of this, and David would have to learn to trust God even more.