

Bible Stories for Adults

David Flees Saul

1 Samuel 21 - 27

Opening

Gathering: Share a time that you gave a difficult situation over to God. How did He respond?

Today's Focus: Despite Sauls' obsessive pursuit, David trusted God for protection and justice.

Key Verses: *Because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved.* Ephesians 2:4-5

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Luke 6:27

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Saul's Jealousy (*1 Samuel 18*)

How did Saul feel about David when he first met him?

1 Samuel 16:21-22 = David was recruited as a musician, Saul liked him very much

How did God bless David after he joined Saul's army?

1 Samuel 18:2, 5 = God gave him success in everything, Pleased everyone

How did Saul feel about David's success?

1 Samuel 18:6-9 = He kept a jealous eye on David

How serious was Saul's jealousy?

1 Samuel 18:10-11 = He tried to kill David twice by throwing spear

What did Saul do to try to get rid of this kid who was receiving more praise than he?

1 Samuel 18:13, 17, 21, 25 = Put him in situations where he'd get killed by Philistines

Did Saul's attempt to have David fall at the hands of the Philistines meet success?

1 Samuel 18:30 = No, it continued to backfire as David grew more successful

Jonathan Stands up for David (*1 Samuel 19*)

How did Saul take a more direct effort in eliminating this perceived threat?

1 Samuel 19:1-2 = Gave orders to have David killed, his son Jonathan protected David

What did Saul do after his son explained that David had helped Saul, not threatened him?

1 Samuel 19:6, 11 = Withdrew orders; later sent an assassination squad

To whom did David turn when faced with this new threat?

Psalms 59:1-3, 17 = Looked to God for protection and wrote this psalm

How did God protect David when Saul pursued him when he hid in Ramah with Samuel?

1 Samuel 19:23-24 = God sent His Spirit to Saul & his men and caused them to prophesy

Dad Threatens Jonathan's Friend (*1 Samuel 20*)

How did Jonathan respond when his best friend asked why Saul was trying to kill him?

1 Samuel 20:1-2 = Didn't believe it

Did Jonathan get clear proof of his father's intentions after following a test David suggested?

1 Samuel 20:32-33 = Yes, Saul hated David so much he tried to kill Jonathan for siding with him

Why did Saul feel that Jonathan should also want David dead?

1 Samuel 20:31 = David threatened Jonathan's inheritance of the throne

Did Jonathan agree with his father's concern for his future?

1 Samuel 23:17 = Jonathan recognized and accepted God's plan of David as king

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David Gets Supplies (1 Samuel 21:1-6)

- Did David run north to Samuel at Ramah again? = Asked for food and weapons
1 Samuel 21:1-3, 8 = Went SE to Nob to Ahimelech, the high priest (Eli's great grandson)
- Was Ahimelech able to give David any food?
1 Samuel 21:6 (4-6) = He only had the consecrated bread to give him
- How does this tell us what day this was? = Bread given to David was a week old
Leviticus 24:8 = It had just been replaced with fresh bread, so it was the Sabbath
- How did Jesus later use this story to explain God's intentions of rest on the Sabbath day?
Matthew 12:1-4, 12b = Rest on the Sabbath is no excuse for not doing good on Sabbath

Not Just Moldy Bread (1 Samuel 21:7-10)

- Was Ahimelech any help with a weapon?
1 Samuel 21:9 = He gave him the sword he had captured from Goliath
- What is interesting about where David went after leaving Nob?
1 Samuel 21:10 = He fled to Gath in Philistia, Goliath's home town (1 Samuel 17:4)
- Had anyone seen David get these supplies?
1 Samuel 21:7 = Doeg, a mercenary from Edom working for Saul
- Was David concerned that Saul would learn what he had done and pursue him?
Psalm 43:1-3 = Yes, and wrote psalms looking for refuge in God

David in Gath (1 Samuel 21:10-15)

- How did the Philistines feel about David coming to their town?
1 Samuel 21:11-12 = They thought he was spying
- How did David respond when the Philistines seized him to take him before King Achish?
Psalm 56:1, 11 = He turned to God for mercy and wrote this psalm
- How did David protect himself from this danger?
1 Samuel 21:13-15 = He acted insane, so they left him alone
- How could David have the guts to try something so risky?
Psalm 34:4, 22 = He sought the Lord who delivered him, wrote this psalm in response

David Seeks Refuge (1 Samuel 22:1-5)

- Where did David go now that he saw it was not safe in Philistia?
1 Samuel 22:1 = To cave of Adullam, one of many caves in valley where he killed Goliath
- To whom did he turn before his family joined him?
Psalm 57:1-2 = He looked to God for refuge and wrote this psalm
- Did anyone else come to David's support besides his family?
1 Samuel 22:2 = Around 400 other outcasts rallied around him
- Note: See 1 Chronicles 11 & 12 for information and stories on some of the men who joined David
- Realizing Saul would likely track down his family, what did David do to protect them?
1 Samuel 22:3-5 = Had his family take refuge in Moab, returned to hide in Judah forest
- Why might David have felt that Moab would be safe for his family?
Ruth 1:22a; 4:13, 17 = His great grandmother, Ruth, was a Moabitess

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Saul Punishes Nob (1 Samuel 22:6-23)

Did word of Ahimelech's aid to David get to Saul?

1 Samuel 22:9-10 (6-10) = Yes, Doeg the Edomite told him what he had seen

Did Ahimelech feel like he had done anything wrong?

1 Samuel 22:13-15 (11-15) = No, he thought he was helping David on a special mission for Saul

Did this explanation satisfy Saul? = Saul's men refused to kill God's priests

1 Samuel 22:16-17 = No, he was too irrational with hatred and ordered them all killed

Was Saul able to get rid of these "evil" priests? = Contrast with incomplete over Amalekites (1 Sam 15)

1 Samuel 22:18-19 = Doeg killed them, as well as the entire town

How did David learn of what had happened?

1 Samuel 22:20-21 = Abiathar, the only remaining descendant of Eli, survived & told him

How did David respond to what he learned? = King to be now had a priest & a prophet, Gad (v5)

1 Samuel 22:22-23 = He blamed himself and offered refuge to Abiathar

What other response did David have for this incident?

Psalms 52:7-9 = Wrote this psalm contrasting his faithfulness with Saul's wickedness

Still a Caveman (1 Samuel 23:1-18)

Were David and his men entirely focused on hiding from Saul? = First inquired of the Lord

1 Samuel 23:1-2, 5 (1-6) = They rescued the town of Keilah from the Philistines

How did Saul respond when he heard about David's rescue of Keilah?

1 Samuel 23:7-8 = He only saw the opportunity to catch David, ignored victory

Did Saul catch David in Keilah? = David's force had grown to 600 men

1 Samuel 23:13-14 (9-14) = No, David left Keilah and hid in desert caves

Another dumb question: To whom did David turn during this time of hiding and trouble?

Psalms 63:1, 7-8 = He earnestly sought God and looked to Him for help and strength

Psalms 142:1-2, 5-6 = He cried to the Lord for rescue

Who consoled David while he was in the stronghold and why?

1 Samuel 23:15-18 = Jonathan – He knew and accepted that God would make David king

Ziphites Don't Make the Best Neighbors (1 Samuel 23:19-29)

Who helped Saul in his effort to pursue David?

1 Samuel 23:19-20 = Men from the desert of Ziph, where David was hiding

Did Saul accept this help?

1 Samuel 23:23 (21-23) = Yes, he sent them out to get detailed intelligence and report back

How did David feel about these men who were helping Saul?

Psalms 54:3-5 = He called to God for help in this psalm, knowing God would deliver him

How did God deliver David when Saul's forces were closing in?

1 Samuel 23:26-29 (24-29) = A messenger told Saul of raiding Philistines so they left

The En Gedi Encounter (1 Samuel 24)

How close did Saul get to David when searching for him in the desert of En Gedi?

1 Samuel 24:3-4 (1-4) = Went unknowingly into the same cave, David cut a piece of his robe

Why didn't David take this opportunity to kill the man who was trying to kill him?

1 Samuel 24:5-7 = Wrong to harm Lord's anointed, let God do it, felt bad for cutting robe

How did Saul respond when David announced to Saul what had happened?

1 Samuel 24:16-20 (8-22) = Praised David for his righteousness, admitted David would be king

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For Home Study (*1 Samuel 25*)

Read 1 Samuel 25 and look for parallels between Nabal (*fool*) and Saul, also David and Abigail

The Missing Spear and Canteen (*1 Samuel 26*)

Who encouraged Saul to go after David again?

1 Samuel 26:1-2 = The Ziphites (descendants of Caleb's grandson Ziph)

What did David do when Saul and his troops camped near where David was hiding?

1 Samuel 26:7-12 (3-12) = Snuck up at night and took Saul's spear & canteen, wouldn't harm

What complaint did David make to Abner, the commander of Saul's army?

1 Samuel 26:13-16 = Complained about poor security for the Lord's anointed

How did Saul respond to this lesson by David?

1 Samuel 26:21, 25 (17-25) = He confessed his sin and foolishness, blessed David

David in Philistia, Again (*1 Samuel 27, 29-30*)

Where did David decide to go that would cause Saul to give up his search and act like a king?

1 Samuel 27:1, 4 (1-4) = Back to Gath in Philistia

Did David have to act insane to be accepted this time?

1 Samuel 27:12 = No, King Achish saw David as a fugitive and an enemy to Israel

How did David reinforce this impression?

1 Samuel 27:8-10 (8-11) = He told Achish he was raiding Israelites when he hit other groups

How did Achish show his acceptance of David and his men?

1 Samuel 27:6-7; 28:1-2 = Gave Ziklag to David, enlisted David into military service

Was Achish really comfortable with the idea of David joining the battle against the Israelites?

1 Samuel 29:2-4 = Achish was fine, but the army commanders didn't want him

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. What rules have I made for myself that get in the way of doing God's good?
(*1 Samuel 21:1-6; Isaiah 1:11-17; Matthew 12:1-13; 23:23; Mark 3:1-5; Luke 10:25-37*)
2. Do I turn to God whenever I am in need?
(*1 Samuel 19:18; 21:1; 23:9-13; Psalm 56; Mark 11:22-25; Luke 11:9-13; James 1:13-18*)
3. Do I turn to God in praise and thanksgiving when He rescues me?
(*2 Samuel 22; Psalm 68:17-20; Isaiah 12; Philippians 4:4-7; Psalm 150*)
4. Do I turn to God and inquire of His will in times of decision?
(*1 Samuel 23:1-6, 9-13; Isaiah 8:19; Romans 12:1-2; James 4:13-17*)
5. When have I left vengeance to the Lord and when have I taken it in my own hands?
(*1 Samuel 24; 26:9-10; Proverbs 20:22; Romans 12:17-21*)