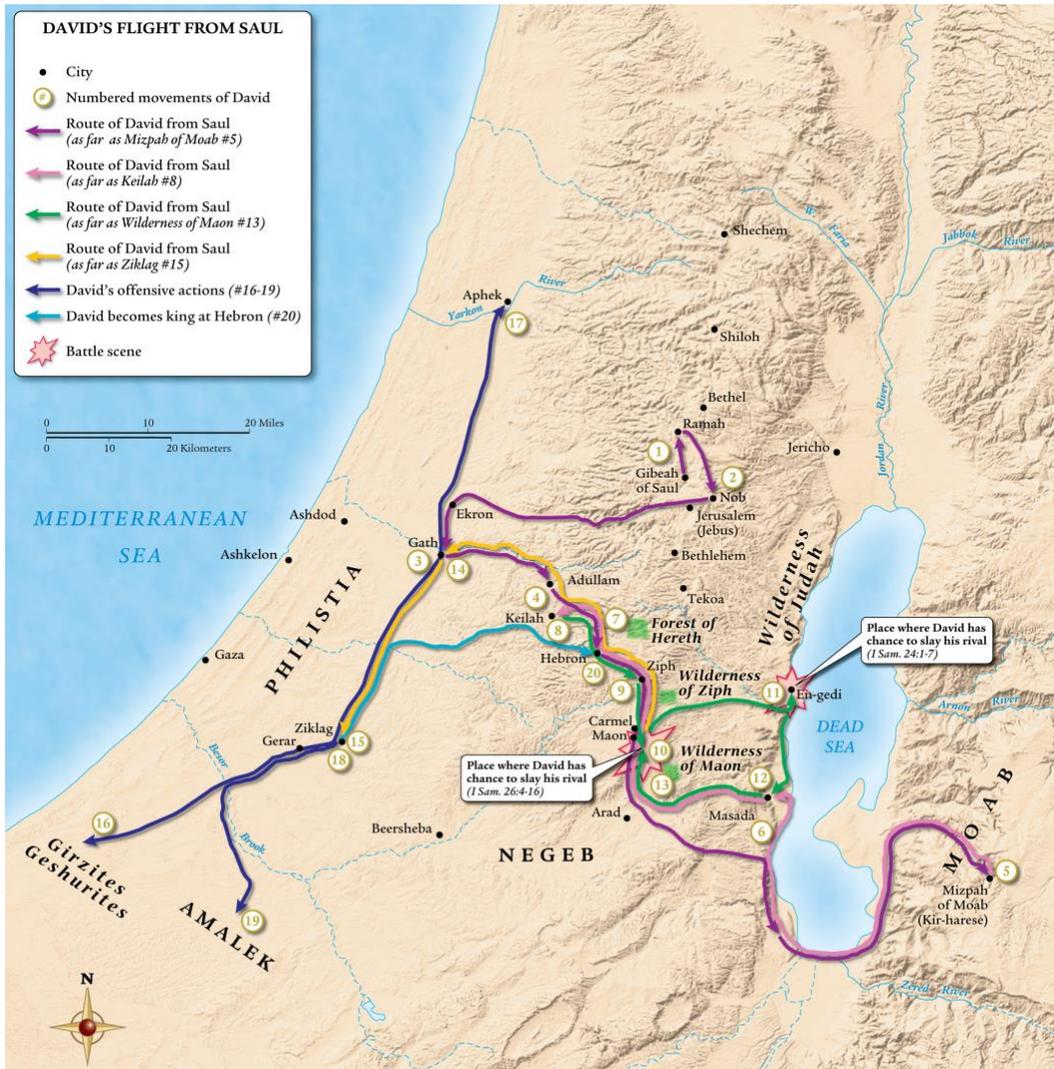




Session 7: David Flees

Introduction

Watch [this video](#) that retraces the steps of David in the land of Israel as he flees from Saul.



David Flees to Nob

1 Samuel 21:1-9, 22:6-23

Background Notes:

- The ark is still staying at Kiriath Jearim in Abinadab's house (1 Sam 7:1) without much mention of it until David brings it to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6). During this time, Shiloh was destroyed (probably by the Philistines, maybe even in conjunction with chapter 4). Jeremiah 7:12-15 describes this quite strongly. But somehow the altar and the Tent of Meeting survived. It seems they first went to Nob (this chapter), then to Gibeon during Saul's and David's time (1 Chr 16:39, 1 Ki 3:4), before being moved to Jerusalem when Solomon built the Temple (1 Ki 8:4).
- David probably resorted to a deceptive answer (21:2,8) to Ahimelech because he was trying to protect him from Saul, who may potentially view Ahimelech as one who gave support to a fugitive. Even if he had good intentions, we can hardly defend his lies here. David would later regret his actions once word got out (22:22).
- "Kept themselves from women" means "ceremonially clean." Cf. Ex 19:15 & Lev. 15:18.
- Since David captured Goliath's sword as plunder (17:54) and it now shows up here, it seems that David had dedicated it to the Lord as the true victor in the battle (17:47).
- Saul institutes the "ban" (i.e. "total destruction") on the city of Nob, reminiscent of Deut. 13:12-15. It is as if Saul believes this city has been guilty of rebellion and idolatry against the Lord, when it is really the exact opposite.
- The prophecy in 2:31 is fulfilled here, where it was prophesied to Eli that the Lord would cut short his priestly family, "so that there will not be an old man in your family line."

Contrast Leviticus 24:5-9 and Matthew 12:1-8 below. Evaluate: "Jesus is overly charitably defending David's actions."

Leviticus 24:5-9 "Take the finest flour and bake twelve loaves of bread, using two-tenths of an ephah for each loaf. ⁶ Arrange them in two stacks, six in each stack, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. ... ⁹ It belongs to Aaron and his sons, who are to eat it in the sanctuary area, because it is a most holy part of their perpetual share of the food offerings presented to the LORD."

Matthew 12:1-8 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. ² When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath." ³ He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴ He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. ⁵ Or haven't you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? ⁶ I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Agree/Disagree: “As long as I keep within the spirit of love in God’s commands today, I am not sinning.”

Agree/Disagree: “When David admitted that he was responsible for the death of Ahimelech’s family, it was false guilt. Saul was responsible.”

David Flees to Gath

1 Samuel 21:10-15

Background Notes:

- *Gath is one of the five main Philistine cities. These five cities operated almost like five capital cities.*
- *Gath was also the hometown of Goliath (17:4).*
- *Alfred Edersheim explains why David would flee to Gath, “Amidst the many doubts which must have beset the mind of David, one outstanding fact, however painful, was at least clear. He must henceforth consider himself an outlaw, whom not even the friendship of a Jonathan could protect. As such he must seek some shelter – best outside the land of Israel, and with the enemies of Saul. ... David may have imagined that in Gath, especially, the defection of such a champion from the hosts of Saul would be hailed as a notable triumph, and that accordingly he would find a welcome in seeking its protection.”*

Get inside David’s head. What factors would motivate him to act insane?

David Flees to Adullam & Mizpah

1 Samuel 22:1-5

Background Notes:

- *This is the first time it is recorded David is starting to gather an official following. These people would be his core of support, and later army, as he made the transition to be king.*
- *This “stronghold” is probably not a “castle” or “fortress” of the king but rather an area of highlands where David could easily hide. Cf. 23:14, 19.*
- *As Samuel’s life and influence is waning, Gad and Nathan will become the main prophets in David’s life. Gad is called “David’s seer” in 1 Chronicles 21:9 & 2 Samuel 24:11. He would help David with music in the Temple (2 Chr 29:25), write a history of David’s reign (1 Chr 29:29), and confront David’s sin (2 Sa 24:11-25).*
- *David fled to Moab perhaps because he was distantly related to them through Ruth (Ruth 4:18-22). Saul had also fought a war with Moab (14:47), and perhaps the king was amenable to an alliance with Saul’s internal enemy.*

Conclusion: Word Cloud

David wrote Psalm 34 when he was at Gath, Psalm 142 when he was in Adullam, and Psalm 52 when he heard about the destruction of Nob. Compare these psalms to the content in 1 Samuel to reveal more about David's emotional and spiritual state.

This section gives us one of the starkest examples of Saul's decline and the rising tension between Saul and David. **Summarize your reaction** in one and only one word (it can be hyphenated). Make that word pack a punch as it will include your personal evaluation of or emotional response to this section. Be prepared to explain why your word fits. We will join all our words together into a **word cloud** to provide us with a summary and reaction to this entire section.