

# Making Promises

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## Part 6: The Kingdom

### Review

- Samuel died. David had heard of a wealthy man named Nabal who lived at Maon and owned extensive lands and flocks at Carmel. On the verge of starvation, David requested that Nabal replenish him and his men, and Nabal refused.
- David and his men set out to kill Nabal, but Nabal's wife Abigail became aware of David's intentions and prepared the materials David had demanded. She met him on the road, offered him her goods, and begged him not to kill her husband.
- Abigail informed Nabal of his narrow escape, at which point he suffered a heart attack and died 10 days later. The Lord is able to not only keep David from bloodguilt, but fights on behalf of David and his enemies.

### David's Patience

- Once again the **Ziphites**, who seemed to have an uncontrollable hatred of David, notified Saul that his enemy was among them, at Hakilah. Saul, who quickly forgot his pledge to leave David alone, went there after him (**1 Sam. 26:1-2**).
  - Exhausted from his pursuit, Saul went to sleep on the slopes of a steep valley while the commander of his army, **Abner**, stood watch. After a time, even Abner could not stay awake, and the whole camp went to sleep (**1 Sam. 26:3-5**).
  - While Saul and Abner slept there, David and his nephew **Abishai** (**1 Chron. 2:13-16**) crept up to the king's campsite in the night and easily could have slain both Saul and Abner. Instead, they stole Saul's **spear** and **water canteen**, and silently made their way back across the gorge (**1 Sam. 26:6-13**).
  - The author is sure to make the reader aware as to why Abishai was successful in stealing the spear and water jug: Saul and his men are helpless because **Yahweh** made them that way (**1 Sam. 26:12**).
- Again, David recognized the sanctity of Israelite **kingship** and left Saul's fate in the hand of Yahweh. When Saul awoke and became aware that he had been spared only because of the mercy of Yahweh and David, he confessed once more his sin toward David and pledged never again to seek David's harm. David

knew that the claims of a **paranoid demoniac** held little value and that Saul would only intensify his efforts to destroy him (**1 Sam. 26:14-25**).

- David has learned something from his near-fiasco with Nabal. In that situation “Yahweh **struck down** Nabal so that he died” (**1 Sam. 25:38**), and here (**1 Sam. 26:10**) David considers that Yahweh may also “**strike down**” Saul.
- David has learned that Yahweh can be trusted to handle both **fools** and **oppressors** when such matters are left in his hands. Yahweh will handle Saul’s destiny. It is not in David’s hands.
- David is not looking to Saul, not hoping on Saul, not believing Saul. He places himself under **Yahweh’s eyes** and in **Yahweh’s hands** (**1 Sam. 26:21-25**).

## The Philistines

- It was obvious to David that it was only a matter of time before Saul caught up with him, so he resorted to a drastic measure—he sought **asylum** with **Achish**, lord of Gath (**1 Sam. 27:1-4**). Achish’s fears of David must’ve been assuaged by several factors:
  1. There was an **irreparable rift** that had developed between Saul and David. Without David, Saul lacked military leadership sufficient to eliminate the Philistine threat; without Saul, David lacked a power base from which to operate.
  2. Only once in his years of exile, at **Keilah**, had David fought the Philistines, and that was a **defensive measure**.
  3. David must have conveyed to Achish his willingness to **submit** to the Philistine in return for **protection**. It may even be that he pledged to make Judah a vassal state to Philistia after he seized power at Hebron.
- Under the guise of giving Achish elbow room and of alleviating the drain on expenses for the royal court, David requested that he be transferred to one of the outlying towns—where he would not be so constantly under Achish’s surveillance. So David took up quarters at **Ziklag** instead of Gath (**1 Sam. 27:5-7**).
  - Although David was **raiding** Geshurites, Girzites, and Amalekites, he told Achish that he was raiding various subdistricts of the Negev that belonged to or were controlled by Judah (**1 Sam. 27:8-12; 30:26–31**).
  - David thus has the best of both worlds. He implies to Achish that **Judahite hostility** toward David is increasing, and at the same time he gains the **appreciation** and **loyalty** of **Judah** toward himself by raiding their desert neighbors.

## Part 6: The Kingdom

<p><b>1 Samuel 26:1–2</b></p>	<p>1 Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is not David hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah, which is on the east of Jeshimon?” 2 So Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with three thousand chosen men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 26:3–5</b></p>	<p>3 And Saul encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is beside the road on the east of Jeshimon. But David remained in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness, 4 David sent out spies and learned that Saul had indeed come. 5 Then David rose and came to the place where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, with Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army. Saul was lying within the encampment, while the army was encamped around him.</p>
<p><b>1 Chronicles 2:13–16</b></p>	<p>13 Jesse fathered Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, 14 Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh. 16 And their sisters were Zeruah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 26:6–13</b></p>	<p>6 Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab’s brother Abishai the son of Zeruah, “Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?” And Abishai said, “I will go down with you.” 7 So David and Abishai went to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay around him. 8 Then Abishai said to David, “God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice.” 9 But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless?” 10 And David said, “As the Lord lives, the Lord will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish. 11 The Lord forbid that I should put out my hand against the Lord’s anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go.” 12 So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul’s head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them. 13 Then David went over to the other side and stood far off on the top of the hill, with a great space between them.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 26:12</b></p>	<p>So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul’s head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 26:14–25</b></p>	<p>14 And David called to the army, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, “Will you not answer, Abner?” Then Abner answered, “Who are you who calls to the king?” 15 And David said to Abner, “Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy the king your lord. 16 This thing that you have done is not good. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the Lord’s anointed. And now see where the king’s spear is and the jar of water that was at his head.” 17 Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is this your voice, my son David?” And David said, “It is my voice, my lord, O king.” 18 And he said, “Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? What evil is on my hands? 19 Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is the Lord who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering, but if it is men, may they be cursed before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day that I should have no share in the heritage of the Lord, saying, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ 20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the Lord, for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains.” 21 Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have made a great mistake.” 22 And David answered and said, “Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and take it. 23 The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord’s anointed. 24 Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation.” 25 Then Saul said to David, “Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them.” So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 25:38</b></p>	<p>And about ten days later the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 26:10</b></p>	<p>And David said, “As the Lord lives, the Lord will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish.</p>

<p><b>1 Samuel 26:21–25</b></p>	<p>21 Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have made a great mistake." 22 And David answered and said, "Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and take it. 23 The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed. 24 Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation." 25 Then Saul said to David, "Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 27:1–4</b></p>	<p>1 Then David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand." 2 So David arose and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maoch, king of Gath. 3 And David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. 4 And when it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought him.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 27:5–7</b></p>	<p>5 Then David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?" 6 So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. 7 And the number of the days that David lived in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 27:8–12</b></p>	<p>8 Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt. 9 And David would strike the land and would leave neither man nor woman alive, but would take away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the garments, and come back to Achish. 10 When Achish asked, "Where have you made a raid today?" David would say, "Against the Negeb of Judah," or, "Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites," or, "Against the Negeb of the Kenites." 11 And David would leave neither man nor woman alive to bring news to Gath, thinking, "lest they should tell about us and say, 'So David has done.'" Such was his custom all the while he lived in the country of the Philistines. 12 And Achish trusted David, thinking, "He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant."</p>
<p><b>1 Samuel 30:26–31</b></p>	<p>26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Lord." 27 It was for those in Bethel, in Ramoth of the Negeb, in Jattir, 28 in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa, 29 in Racal, in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites, 30 in Hormah, in Bor-ashan, in Athach, 31 in Hebron, for all the places where David and his men had roamed.</p>

# Selected Works

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