

David, a Man of Integrity - 1 Samuel 24:1-32

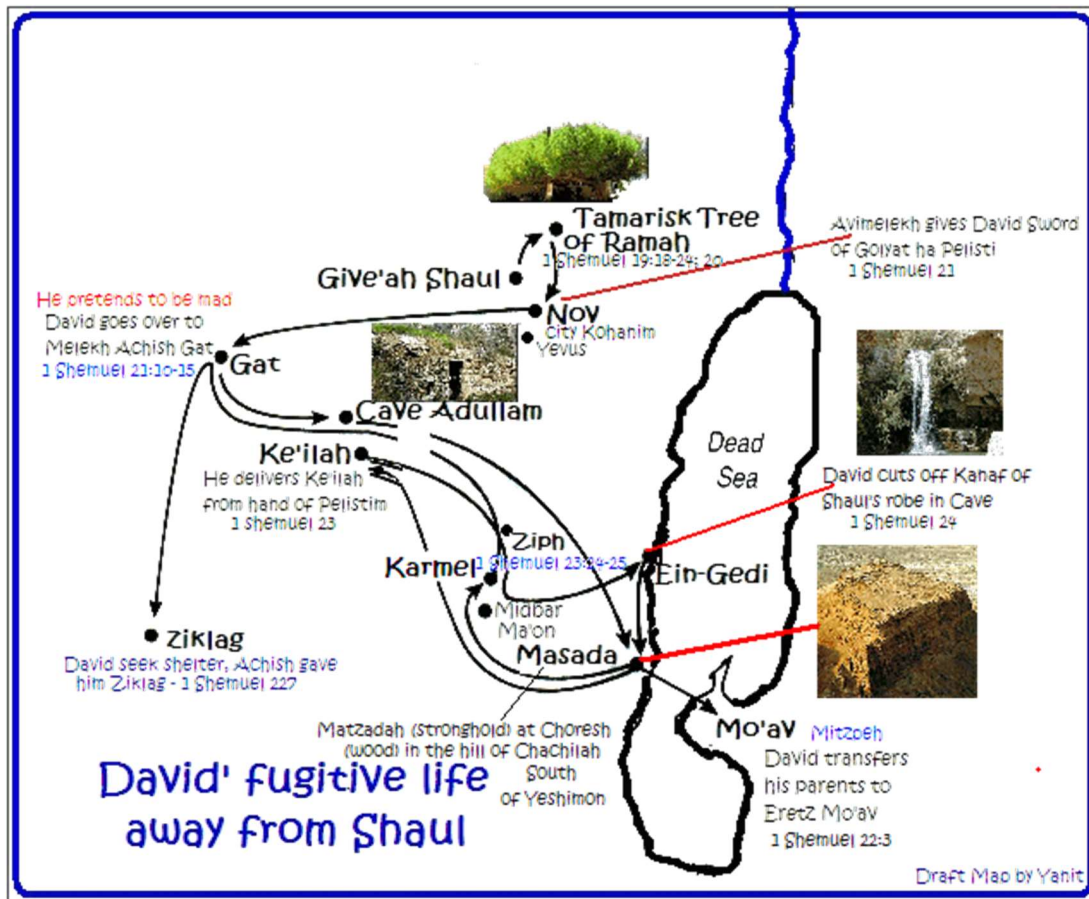
Introduction:

What would you do if your enemy was suddenly exposed and you had a chance to destroy him/her? David is on the run from King Saul, running for his life with a following of 600 men and their families. There is no doubt that when King Saul catches up to David he will kill him. The king thinks David is a threat to his position as ruler of the country. It is a terrible life being on the run, always looking over your shoulder to see if the enemy is getting closer. You are not sure who is a friend and who is an enemy, for anyone could turn you over to your enemy. It is a terrible life.

So what do you do when suddenly, and quite expectantly, your enemy is within your grasp, unprotected, unarmed and unaware of your presence. All you have to do is reach out and run your enemy through with a sword. All your troubles would be over, right? Certainly that is how most people would see things. Yet in this chapter, David is given a chance to kill King Saul. It would have been so easy. Yet he does not. Why? This chapter explains what is going through David's mind, and demonstrates once again that David truly is a man of integrity, a man God can use to lead His people.

Opportunity Knocks – 1 Samuel 24:1-7

1. King Saul was called away to deal with a Philistine problem. As soon as that is dealt with, what intel does the king receive (v. 1)?
2. What is King Saul's response to the "David problem" (v. 2)?
3. In verse 3 we find King Saul and David (with his men) in the same cave. Is the king protected?
4. What is the response of David's men to the situation (v. 4)? David's men attribute this fortuitous circumstance to whom? What does David do in response to the opportunity presented him?



- In verse 5 David regrets his actions against the king. Why do you think this detail is recorded in the sacred text?
- In verse 6 David explains why he should not have cut the king's garment. What is his reasoning?
- Verse 7 reveals something very important about David. What is it? How difficult would it have been to do what David did at that moment?

David Challenges King Saul – 1 Samuel 24:8-15

- The king leaves the cave, and when he is a safe distance away, David also exits the cave and shows himself to the king. What is the first thing David does when he gets the king's attention (v.8)? Why?

9. In verse 9 David suggests the King is being misinformed. Have you ever been in a situation where the information you were given was not correct, but you were acting on it because you thought it was the truth?
10. What proof does David give that he does not mean to do any harm to the king (v.10)? Why will David not harm Saul according to verse 10?
11. David shows the piece of garment he has cut from the king's cloak. What message does this give to King Saul (v. 11)?
12. If any harm comes to the king, who does David say it will come from (v. 12)? Who will not be the one who harmed the king?
13. What is the meaning of verse 13?
14. David never over-estimated his importance. In fact, what does he call himself in verse 14?
15. In the end, who does David put his trust in for deliverance (v.15)?

King Saul Repents – 1 Samuel 24:16-22

16. After David presented his case to the king, how does King Saul respond (v. 16)? How does the king address David? Is this significant?
17. According to verse 17, why does the king repent before David?
18. What proof does King Saul have that David is a righteous man (vss. 18-19)?
19. What other fact does King Saul confirm in verse 20? Why might it be important that this was recorded?
20. So sure is the King of what would happen in the future, he asks David to make a vow to do something in the future. What is it (v. 21)?
21. David has the upper hand at this point. Nonetheless, is he willing to grant the King his request? What does this tell us about David?

Conclusion:

David has a chance to show what kind of a man he is. The king is “delivered into his hands” and a quick thrust of the knife would have ended all David’s problems with the king. But David will not harm the king. Even if the king is out of control, he is still God’s anointed leader. It was not about agreeing with what the king was doing (David definitely did not agree with what the king was doing), it was a matter of respecting the office of the king.

David was able to show his integrity in a very difficult situation. All those around him were saying, “Why not?” They could see their lives would be easier if David just killed Saul. The pressure would have been great, but David still did what he believed to be right. He spared the king.

This would mean David’s life would still be lived under the shadow of King Saul’s threats. So was it worth it, to do the right thing? Many years later people would be deciding if they would follow David as king or someone else. They would look back on events like this and see what kind of man he was – righteous, faithful, and trustworthy. He was a man of integrity. In the end, his actions this day would serve him well, not only with the people, but also with God. When David had God’s blessing, he needed nothing else. That is what he gained this day.