

Journey Through the Bible (51)

# The United Kingdom (5) David Flees from Saul

**1 Samuel 21-26**

# The United Kingdom

- We are continuing the 9<sup>th</sup> of 17 time periods of Bible history – the United Kingdom. This was a period where Israel is governed by a king.
- This period lasted 120 years under 3 kings – Saul, David and Solomon. From ~1050-930 BC.
- It was a period of relative peace and expansion
- Biblically - **1 Sam. 8 – 1 Kings 11, 1 Chronicles 1 - 2 Chronicles 9.**  
Also, the period of much poetic literature.

# The United Kingdom

- In our last lesson, we addressed David confronting Goliath as well as noting the beginning of Saul turning against him.
- David was nothing but loyal to Saul, but Saul's jealousy, pride and insecurity hindered a good relationship.
- We began to see Saul's desire to defeat David.
- We also discussed David and his close relationship with Jonathan – platonic.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 21** – After determining that he could no longer return to the presence of Saul, David flees to Nob.  
There he finds Ahimelech the High Priest and requests food and a weapon. He deceives Ahimelech telling him he is on a mission for Saul. He is given week old showbread (they were undefiled) and Goliath's sword.
- **21:10-15** - From there he flees to Gath of the Philistines and before king Achish he pretends to be mad so that he is removed from his presence.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 22:1-5** – David returns to Judah, a cave – Adullam. He also begins to amass a following of the discontented and debtors of about 400 men. He is also joined by his family (now unsafe) and he takes them to Moab (remember that Ruth is David's great grandmother).
- **22:6-23** – Saul hears from Doeg the Edomite that David had fled to Nob. He goes there and executes Ahimelech and 85 priests. He then destroyed the city of Nob itself.
- Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech escapes and reports to David. David grieves and feels responsible.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 23:1-13** – Next David hears about Keilah, a city of Judah being attacked by the Philistines. He inquires of YHWH and is told to go and deliver the city. He is successful.
- Saul is told that David is in Keilah and as he is going David inquires of YHWH again if it is safe for him to stay. It is not.
- **23:14-29** – So David flees to the wilderness of Ziph. Saul searches for David and cannot find him.
- David also meets Jonathan for the last time here and again they make a covenant – **23:16-18**
- Saul comes close to catching David, but he is called away to deal with the Philistines again.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 24:1-22** – Saul resumes his pursuit of David at En Gedi. With 3000, he pursues David's 600 men.
- Hiding in the crevices of a cave, Saul goes in to "cover his feet". David could kill him, but instead he cuts off a piece of his robe. He even feels guilty about that.
- When Saul is done and away, David calls out to Saul and tells how he spared his life. Saul wept and acknowledge that David was more righteous. He also admits David will be king but he requests that he not destroy his name or family - **24:19-21** So David flees to the wilderness of Ziph. Saul searches for David and cannot find him.
- David left for his stronghold and Saul went home.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 25:1** – Samuel dies and Israel laments for him.
- **25:2-44** – David is in the wilderness. He and his men protected shepherds that belonged to **Nabal**. After awhile, they request supplies from him, but he refuses and is harsh. When reported to David, in anger, he prepares to attack Nabal's place. But his wife, **Abigail** is told about it by her servants. She quickly prepares rations for the men and goes out to meet David. As she reasons with him, David turns and praises her for her wisdom.

# David Flees from Saul

- **1 Sam. 25:36-44** –The next day, when Nabal is sober, she tells him what she did. He has a heart attack and 10 days later he dies.
- David takes Abigail to be his wife. He also marries Ahinoam of Jezreel.
- Note **vs. 44** – Saul gave Michal to another man.

# David Flees from Saul

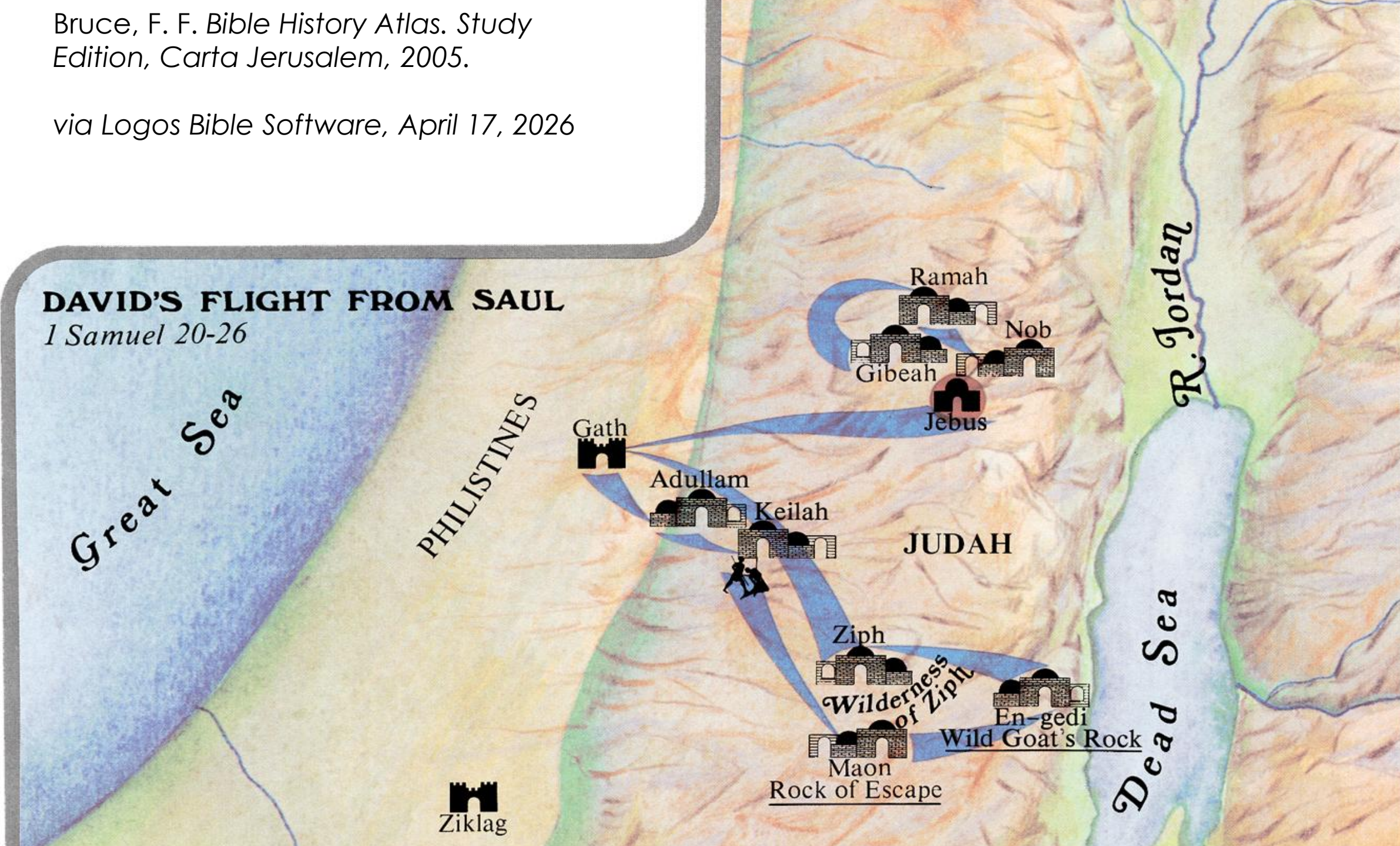
- **1 Sam. 26:1-25** – Saul resumes pursuing David in the wilderness of Ziph. The Ziphites report to Saul about his whereabouts.
- As Saul and his troops are encamped and sleeping (God caused a deep sleep on all of them), David and Abishai go into the camp. Abishai offers to kill Saul but David says no – leaves it in God's hands (see. **Vs. 9-11**). But they take his spear and a water jug that was by his head.
- The next morning David calls out to Saul and rebukes Abner (his general) for not protecting his king. He shows him the spear and water jug.
- Again Saul relents and says he has sinned. He blesses David and again returns home. David goes his way.

Bruce, F. F. *Bible History Atlas. Study Edition, Carta Jerusalem, 2005.*

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## DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL

*1 Samuel 20-26*



Great Sea

PHILISTINES

Gath

Adullam

Keilah

Ziph

Wilderness of Ziph

En-gedi

Wild Goat's Rock

Maon

Rock of Escape

JUDAH

Ramah

Nob

Gibeah

Jebus

R. Jordan

Dead Sea

Ziklag

# Lessons to Consider

- Trusting God, a recurring theme throughout these studies – David in very trying times trusts in God.
- During this period of his life, we have 4 psalms directly keyed to the events of our text.
- **Psalms 34 & 56** - while David is captured and taken to Gath where he pretends to be crazy and is cast out.  
**34:12-16**, note **1 Peter 3:10-12**
- **Psalms 142** – when David was in the cave
- **Psalms 52** – when Doeg betrayed David to Saul

- The importance of honesty – David's lie to Ahimelech brings trouble he did not expect.  
**Colossians 3:9, Ephesians 4:25**
- Help may come from unlikely sources – David amassed a following – they were loyal to him.  
**Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:27**
- Saul's continued downward spiral – when we do not address our sins and problems it almost always gets worse.

# Lessons to Consider

- God can provide for us, even in times of great distress
- Will you seek God's guidance before you act – David inquire of YHWH twice in this text. Do we look to God's word for our guidance?  
**Psalm 119:105, Colossians 3:17**
- God's plans will prevail! – they always do. Saul could NOT derail God's will.  
**Cf. Proverbs 19:21, Romans 8:28**
- Will you help others in time of trouble – David and his men did – they rescued Keilah and protected Nabal's servants

- What is your view toward government? David showed reverence to God's anointed  
**Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-15**
- Let God take the vengeance – David left judgment in His hands  
**Romans 12:18-21, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8, etc.**
- We also see David's integrity – even in troubling circumstances David maintained his integrity. During such times is when we are tested.

- Understanding true repentance  
Saul was sorrowful (at least for the time). True repentance involves more – **2 Corinthians 7:8-11**
- Pride goes before a fall – King Saul AND Nabal
- True wisdom demonstrated – by Abigail. She prevented trouble. Wisdom can come from unlikely sources also – **cf. Ecclesiastes 9:14-16, Proverbs 2:10-11**

## Concluding remarks

- The history of God's people is filled with lessons to learn. David's trust in God is continuing to grow as he goes through some of the darkest times in his life. He never gives up!
- As we face life, whatever it gives us, let us too learn to trust God always. Let whatever happens make us better and draw us closer to Him.

Do you trust God like  
David did?



# DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL

1 SAM. 19:8-27:12

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- Stronghold at Masada
- David's odyssey
- Possible route to Moab
- Philistine attacks
- Amalekite pressure
- Saul's kingdom

