

General Church Education



David's Flight from Saul

1 Samuel 21; 22:1-5, 15-18

Lesson 14

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

David's Flight From Saul

1 Samuel 21; 22:1-5, 15-18

Teacher Background

Saul became jealous of David and wanted to kill him, so David took a long and complicated journey to escape. First, he went to Ahimelech, the high priest at Nob, where he ate the show-bread and took Goliath's sword for protection. But Doeg, Saul's chief herdsman, witnessed these events and told Saul. In retaliation Saul killed eighty five priests. Next, David ran to the Philistine city of Gath, and pretended to be crazy. Then he went to the hills of Judah and hid in the cave of Adullam. There, four hundred outlaws joined him and became his warriors. Next, he went to Moab. Then he hid in the forest of Hareth. While he was there he drove the Philistines out of Keilah. Then David fled to the wilderness of Ziph, where he met Jonathan. David avoided capture because Saul left to fend off a Philistine invasion.

David showed great courage in fleeing from Saul. Everywhere he turned, he was betrayed. Children may sometimes be called on to protect friends or acquaintances. It takes time for them to learn when they should speak out, and when they should be silent. Parents and teachers can encourage children to give only essential and true information about others.

Focus Points

- David fled from Saul's jealous anger.
- David sought safety but was continually betrayed and had to flee.
- David met Jonathan in the wilderness of Ziph.

Readings from the Writings

"You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice." Exodus 23:1-2

"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Matthew 7:1-5

In civil and moral life there exist what is honorable and what is becoming. What is honorable is to will well to others from the heart in the affairs of civil life, and what is becoming is to testify this in speech and gesture." *Arcana Coelestia* 4574

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers students the following choices:

Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

"I will love You, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;
My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my enemies." (Psalm 18:1-3)

Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

David's Flight from Saul Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer.

Make a Map of David's Hideouts

David hid in many places as he fled from Saul. Look at the map to see where he went.
In each circle, draw a picture of what happened there.

Additional Project and Activity Choices

David Flees from Saul Maze

David fled from Saul and his soldiers. While he was on the run he and his men constantly dodged Saul's soldiers. Help David find his path through a maze while avoiding Saul's soldiers. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-david-flees-from-saul-maze-1samuel21-24.pdf>

David Escapes and Saul Murders the Priests Book-in-Hand Theater

A script for acting out the story of David's escape and Saul's murder of the priests of Nob. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/play-david-escapes-and-saul-murders-the-priests-1-samuel21.pdf>

David's Flight From Saul

1 Samuel 21; 22:1-5, 15-18

Vocabulary

herdsman—a person who takes care of cows and sheep

showbread—bread dedicated to the Lord and kept in the tabernacle which only the priests were allowed to eat

hideout—a shelter in which to secretly hide

The Path of David's Flight From Saul

This story is about the long and complicated journey David took as he fled from Saul's home in Gibeah. During David's journey the Lord protected him. No matter how many times Saul tried to capture and kill him, his plan always failed.

Long before this story starts the Lord had chosen David to be the next king of Israel. King Saul knew that the Israelites admired David and that one day he would replace him as King. Saul was jealous and afraid of David, even though he never tried to harm him or seize the throne. But he did not know that Samuel had already anointed David privately when he visited David's family.

David Runs to Nob

When David fled from Saul he needed help. He needed to think of where he could go to find protection. He thought he could trust the high priest, Ahimelech. David ran to the tabernacle at **Nob**, a few miles south Gibeah, Saul's birth place. David asked Ahimelech for bread to eat. But Ahimelech only had the holy show-bread that the priests were allowed to eat. So he gave David the showbread.

David had escaped in such a hurry that he had no weapons with him. He also asked the priest for a spear or a sword. David must have been very surprised when Ahimelech showed him the only sword he had. It was Goliath's sword, the one David used to cut off Goliath's head! David took the sword and left.



David and the Priest of Nob

Lesson 14 • David's Flight from Saul

Unfortunately, that day Saul's chief herdsman, Doeg, saw David and Ahimelech and reported everything he had seen to his master, Saul. When Saul heard what had happened he went to Nob and killed Ahimelech and eighty-five priests for helping David. He also killed their families and their cattle.

David Flees to Gath

Next David made a daring run to **Gath**, in the country of the Philistines. Not only was Gath where the giant Goliath had lived, but David had Goliath's sword with him! David must have been very desperate to seek shelter among his enemies. Perhaps he hoped that they would not remember him, or that Saul would not dare to go into enemy territory. Unfortunately, the king's servants recognized him.

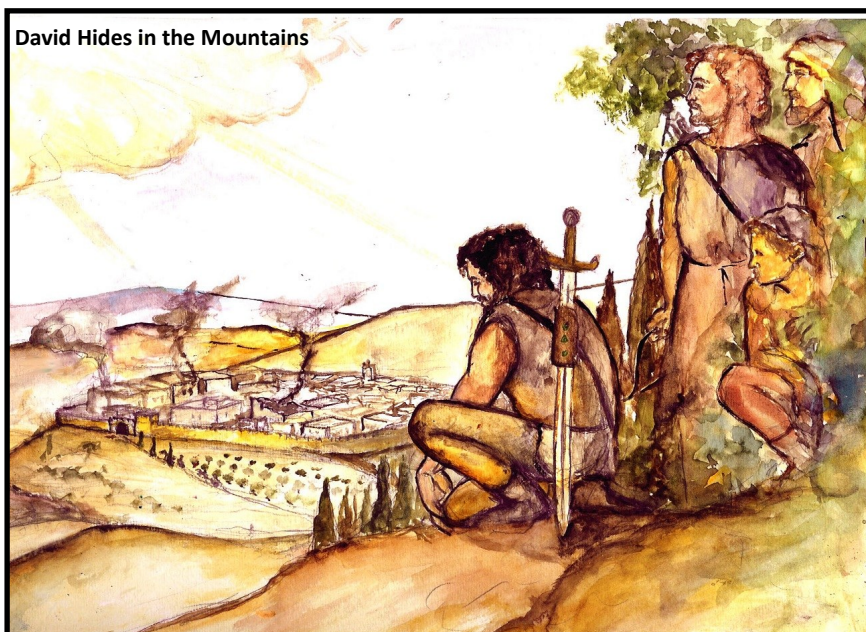
David had to quickly think of a way to save himself! So he pretended to be crazy. He scribbled on the doors of the city gate and dribbled on his beard.

David Gathers Four Hundred Men

Then David looked for a safe hiding place in the hills of Judah, in the **cave of Adullam**, near where he had fought Goliath. His brothers and the rest of his family heard that he was there and went to join him. Soon other people who were in trouble, or in debt, or not in favor with Saul went to David's hideout. About four hundred men joined David there, and he became the leader of this fairly small band of warriors.

David knew that his elderly parents would not be able to keep up with his men as they moved from place to place. So he took them to **Moab** on the eastern side of the Dead Sea where the king of Moab let them stay safely.

David knew that his elderly parents would not be able to keep up with his men as they moved from place to place. So he took them to **Moab** on the eastern side of the Dead Sea where the king of Moab let them stay safely.



David Hides in a Forest

A prophet warned David to leave Moab and return to Judah. So he and his fighters hid in the hills in the **forest of Hareth**.

While David was hiding in the forest, he heard that the Philistines were

stealing grain from the people in the city of Keilah. He asked the Lord if he should attack them. The Lord told David to attack, but his men were uneasy about leaving the forest. So David asked the Lord a second time what he should do. The Lord promised that He would deliver the Philistines into his hand.

David Saves Keilah

After driving the Philistines out of the **city of Keilah**, David asked the Lord if he would be safe there. Saul knew that the city was protected by gates and bars. He was sure he could trap David inside. But once again, David trusted the Lord to protect him. The Lord warned David that the citizens of Keilah would betray him and help Saul catch him. So David left for the Wilderness of Ziph.



David Meets Jonathan

The **Wilderness of Ziph** is very wild. It has many caves and hiding places. Saul searched the wilderness, but the Lord did not let him find David. However, Jonathan found him, and gave David courage by saying,

“Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that.” (1 Samuel 23:17)

David must have been grateful for Jonathan's kind words. Many people were willing to betray him. Even the Ziphites from his own tribe, Judah, betrayed his hideout! Saul came very close to capturing David. However, as he and his men were beginning to surround David's relatively small group of warriors, Saul received news that the Philistines were invading. So Saul turned back to hold them off. The Lord had saved David again!

To Tell or Not Tell?

This story shows that the children of Israel were afraid of Saul. They were worried about what might happen if they helped David or did not tell Saul his whereabouts. It is important to know the difference between telling tales and being responsible for reporting something important. One question you could ask yourself is, “Am I trying to stop someone from hurting themselves or others, or am I telling to enjoy seeing someone get into trouble?” Knowing when to keep a secret and when to tell someone takes a lot of thought. You might need to ask for help.

Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“I will love You, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;
My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my enemies.” (Psalm 18:1-3)

Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

David's Flight from Saul  Multiple Choice

Read questions and circle the best answer.

Make a Map of David's Hideouts

Using the map of Canaan on the following page, draw a picture in each white circle that shows what happened in each of David's hideouts.

David's Flight from Saul Multiple Choice

1 Samuel 21, 22

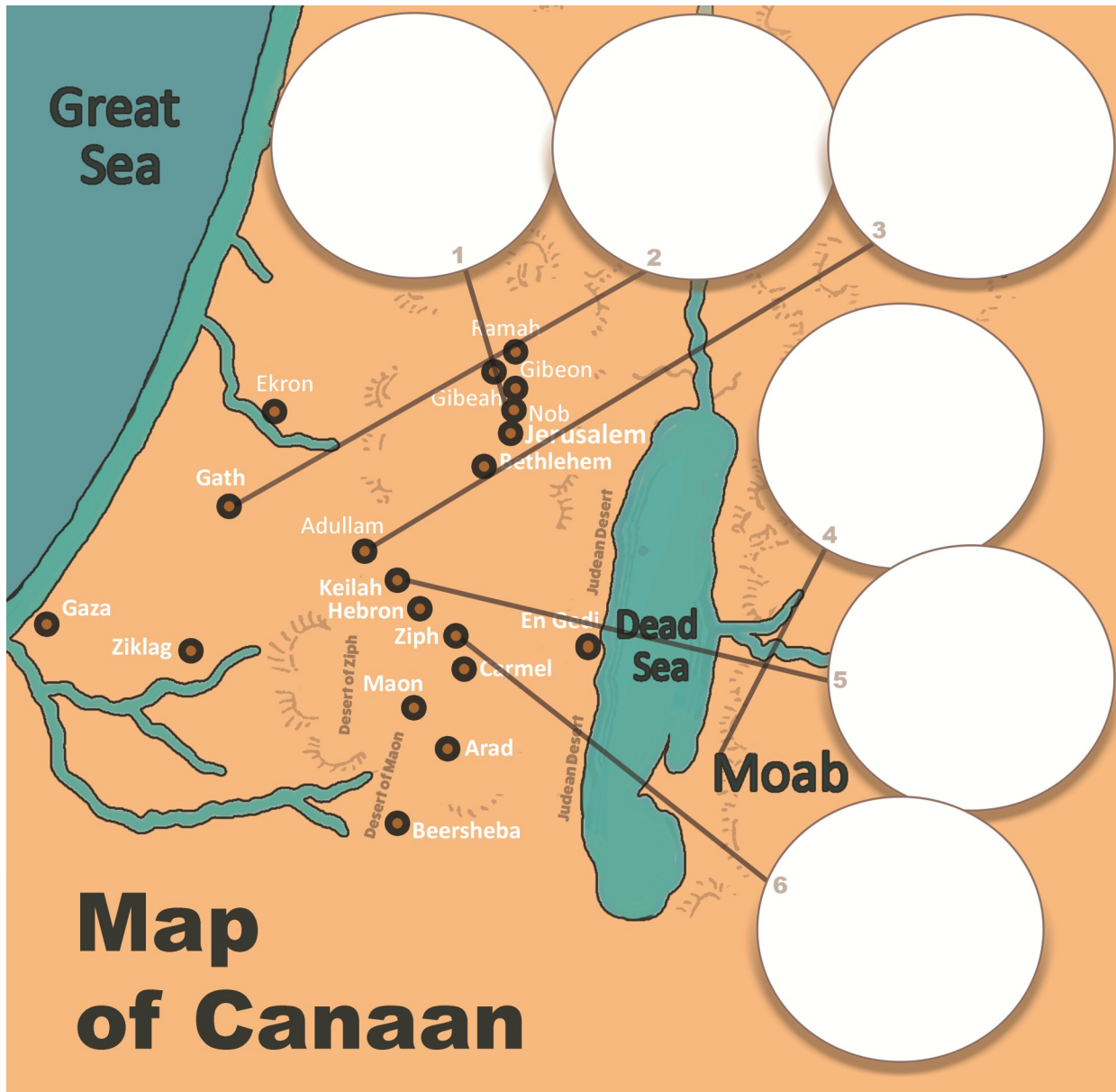
Circle the best answer for each of the following questions:

1. Where did David go first?
 - a. Gath
 - b. Nob
 - c. Adullum
2. What did David ask for from Ahimelech?
 - a. bread and water
 - b. a sword and some figs
 - c. bread and a weapon
3. How did David escape from Achish, king of Gath?
 - a. he pretended to be crazy
 - b. he killed him with Goliath's sword
 - c. he bribed the captain of his guard
4. Who joined David in the cave of Adullum?
 - a. his family and about 400 men
 - b. his brothers
 - c. Jonathan and Samuel
5. Who killed Ahimelech and the priests, and why?
 - a. Saul's servants, because Saul commanded them to
 - b. Saul, because they wouldn't tell where David was
 - c. Doeg, because Saul was angry that they helped David
6. Why did David attack the Philistines at Keilah?
 - a. to make Saul friendly toward him again
 - b. the Lord told him to attack them
 - c. David's men wanted to save the city
7. Who came to comfort David in the wilderness of Ziph?
 - a. Jonathan
 - b. Samuel
 - c. his father, Jesse
8. Why didn't Saul find David when he was hiding in the wilderness?
 - a. Saul wasn't very careful when he looked for him
 - b. the Lord was protecting him
 - c. David was good at hiding

Make a Map of David's Hideouts

1 Samuel 21, 22

David hid in many places as he fled from Saul. Look at the map to see where he went. In each circle, draw a picture of what happened there.



Answers

Lesson 14

David's Flight from Saul Multiple Choice

1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. a, 5. b, 6. b, 7. a, 8. b.