

# The Life of David

*In-Depth Bible Study Series*

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## David on the Run

*1 Samuel 21-22*

### Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, You entered this sinful world to defeat sin and evil and to set us free from the chains of sin and the condemnation of your Law. Gather us to You, redeemed and forgiven, that we may share in Your victory and rejoice to be Your people. Amen.

**Read through the complete passage for this study, 1 Samuel 21–22. Then review the questions below concerning this section of 1 Samuel and write your notes on them. As you prepare, ask yourself: What does the passage actually *say*? What does the passage *mean*? How does this truth affect my *life*? What does this tell me about *the Gospel*? (For further background, see the *Lutheran Study Bible*, pages 470–473, or any other study bible you may have).**

1. Saul was condemned for offering sacrifices that only a priest should offer. Why is David not condemned for eating bread that only a priest should eat? (See: 1 Sam. 13:8-15; Lev. 24:9). However, Jesus comments on this very scene. Read Mark 2:23–28. How does Jesus' commentary affect our understanding of David's receiving the holy bread? How do we know when it is permitted to break one of God's commands? What does the holy bread prefigure?

2. In recent chapters, David has more than once “fled” the scene because of Saul’s threats (1 Sam. 19:10, 18; 20:1, 42). Now in 21:10 he flees to Gath. Look back to 1 Samuel 17:4 to recall the significance of this town. How desperate must David be to flee from Saul to Gath? Do you think David’s survival tactics in these chapters waver between faith and folly? Do you think David is sinfully distrusting the Lord when he feigns insanity before the king of Gath (21:13)? Explain why you think so.
  
3. Read Psalm 56 (written by David about his capture in Gath) and Psalm 34 (written about his feigned insanity and escape). How do these psalms help us to understand the scene in Gath? What insights on your own life do you gain as you look at David’s life and the way God dealt with David?
  
4. In 22:1 David flees again, now to a cave in the wilderness. This once again shows how desperate and alone he truly is (see Psalm 142). But he is soon joined by family (1 Sam. 22:1). What significance do you see in David’s concern for his parents, as indicated in 22:3–4?



7. Why does Saul kill eighty-five priests at Nob? Why does he also destroy the city? In light of Deuteronomy 17:14–20 and 19:15–21, how would you critique Saul’s actions in 1 Samuel 22:13–19? What light does 1 Samuel 2:31–36 shed on the death of Ahimelek and the priests? What comfort could that provide for us?
8. Compare 22:9–19 with the situation described in the heading to Psalm 52. In what ways does the content of Psalm 52 appear to reflect David’s circumstances and spiritual condition in 1 Samuel 22?
9. What contrasts do you see between Saul’s treatment of Nob in chapter 22 and his actions toward Amalek in chapter 15? In what ways can you compare and contrast these stories? What does this difference reveal about Saul’s priorities?

10. David is a king who welcomes the lowly and needy. Such people find refuge in him. What does that tell you about Jesus? (See Luke 7:34 and Matt. 11:28).
11. What would you select as the key verse or passage in 1 Samuel 21-22—one that best captures or reflects the dynamics of what these chapters are all about?
12. List any lingering questions you have about 1 Samuel 21-22.

**Acknowledgements**

Study questions have been adapted from the following sources:

Eddy, Mark. 2010. *LifeLight: Life of David - Study Guide*. Edited by Ken Schurb. St. Louis: Concordia.

Kelly, Ryan. 2018. *Knowing the Bible: 1-2 Samuel, A 12-Week Study*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Lessing, Reed. 2012. *LifeLight: 1 and 2 Samuel - Study Guide*. Edited by Brian Chisamore. St. Louis: Concordia.

The Navigators. 2012. *LifeChange: 1 & 2 Samuel*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.