

The Jewish Kingdom - Lesson 27

David and the Philistines

David is still fearful of Saul. In seeking safety, he turns again to the enemies of Israel.

69. David Flees to the Philistines - I Samuel 27:1-2

- vs.1 - note David's state of mind. He is depressed and desperate. More than once the people around him have given his location Saul and Saul had come in force to kill David. Also note that it is not recorded that he asked God for direction. This was David's decision in a time of weakness.
- vs. 2-3 - David returns to the same place as he fled to in I Samuel 21:10. At that time he had few if any people with him. Now he brings 600 soldiers plus their families.
- vs. 4 - Why doesn't Saul chase after David? Perhaps he hopes the Philistines will kill him. Saul has not been one to go on the offensive against the Philistine armies, only reacting to their invasions. Perhaps he has reasons or fears that keep him from invading Philistia.
- vs. 5 - David's request is reasonable. His followers would have been seen as a potential threat and also been a burden on the resources of Gath.
- Ziklag - there's some debate over the meaning ("winding" or "a pressed down measure") and exact location. It is listed as being in Judah in Joshua 15:31, but people from the tribe of Simeon had settled there in Joshua 19:5. It must have been captured by the Philistines and been located in the between Philistia and Judah in the southern section of their borderlands. I'm guessing that Achish figured it was nothing special and so gave it to David.
- vs. 7 - David's time in Gath and Ziklag is brief. This would be the final months of Saul's reign.
- vs. 8 - David carries out campaigns, or more accurately raids, against some of Israel's ancient foes. We've met the Amalekites before (I Samuel 15). The Geshurites are mentioned in Deuteronomy 3:14 and Joshua 13:2,13. The Gezerites are mentioned in Joshua 16:3,10 and Judges 1:29.
- vs. 9 - David was much more thorough than Saul was! I'm sure it was part of the deal between Achish and David that David perform military action and here he is reporting back and probably sharing the spoils.
- vs. 10 - David is not honest here. One sin leads to another, and they all go back to his going to Achish. The people he claims to have attacked are the people of southern Judah, the Jerahmeelites (descendants of Judah's great-grandson) who dwelt in Judah, and the Kenites (descendants of Moses' father-in-law Jethro) that dwelt south of Judah.
- vs. 11 - David is careful to cover his tracks and maintain the illusion that he is attacking Judah. By bringing back no prisoners there was little chance that Achish would have proof that David was doing anything other than what he said he was doing. This he did for the 16 months in Philistia.

- vs. 12 - Foolish Achish thinks that he is playing David, but he is really the one being played.