

## 17.17 David with Achish and at Ziklag (1 Samuel 27:1–12; 28:1, 2; 29:1–11; 1 Chronicles 12:1–7)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows  
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *gazelle*: a species of the antelope family; “Gazelles are known as swift animals. Some are able to run at bursts as high as 100 km/h (60 mph) or run at a sustained speed of 50 km/h (30 mph)” ([Gazelle Facts for Kids \(kiddle.co\)](http://Gazelle Facts for Kids (kiddle.co))).

### Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 27:1 Then David said in his heart, “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.” 2 So David arose and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath. 3 And David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal’s widow. 4 And when it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought him.

5 Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?” 6 So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. 7 And the number of the days that David lived in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.

8 Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt. 9 And David would strike the land and would leave neither man nor woman alive, but would take away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the garments, and come back to Achish. 10 When Achish asked, “Where have you made a raid today?” David would say, “Against the Negeb of Judah,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Kenites.” 11 And David would leave neither man nor woman alive to bring news to Gath, thinking, “lest they should tell about us and say, ‘So David has done.’” Such was his custom all the while he lived in the country of the Philistines. 12 And Achish trusted David, thinking, “He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant.”

28:1 In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, “Understand that you and your men are to go out with me in the army.” 2 David said to Achish, “Very well, you shall know what your servant can do.” And Achish said to David, “Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.”

29:1 Now the Philistines had gathered all their forces at Aphek. And the Israelites were encamped by the spring that is in Jezreel. 2 As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, 3 the commanders of the Philistines said, “What are these Hebrews doing here?” And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, “Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years, and since he deserted to me I have found no fault in him to this day.” 4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. And the commanders of the Philistines said to him, “Send the man back, that he may return to the place to which you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? 5 Is not this

David, of whom they sing to one another in dances, ‘Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands?’”

6 Then Achish called David and said to him, “As the Lord lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign. For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, the lords do not approve of you. 7 So go back now; and go peaceably, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.” 8 And David said to Achish, “But what have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” 9 And Achish answered David and said, “I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not go up with us to the battle.’ 10 Now then rise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you, and start early in the morning, and depart as soon as you have light.” 11 So David set out with his men early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

1 Chronicles 12:1 Now these are the men who came to David at Ziklag, while he could not move about freely because of Saul the son of Kish. And they were among the mighty men who helped him in war. 2 They were bowmen and could shoot arrows and sling stones with either the right or the left hand; they were Benjaminites, Saul’s kinsmen. 3 The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; also Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu of Anathoth, 4 Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a mighty man among the thirty and a leader over the thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad of Gederah, 5 Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Haruphite; 6 Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites; 7 And Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

### **Introduction/Review:**

When God caused Saul and all his soldiers to sleep soundly, David spared Saul’s life a second time. What did David take from Saul? [A spear and a jar of water.] Did David and his 600 men go back with Saul to Gibeah? [No.] Why not? Saul couldn’t be trusted. At least three times he had “repented” but soon resumed his chase after David.

### **Story:**

#### ***Relocation 1***

✓David was finding it harder, it seems, to trust the Lord. In fact, in 1 Samuel 26:29 David states he had been driven from “the inheritance of the Lord” and his enemies had encouraged him to “go serve other gods.” At other times of trouble, he had written psalms of praise to God even though he complained of his troubles in those psalms. ✓We know of no psalms written by David during this time, however. David told himself, “One day Saul is going to get me. The best thing I can do is hurry up and escape to the land of the Philistines. If I do that, Saul won’t come after me anymore.”

David, his 600 men, and their families went to Gath [locate]—the city where Goliath had lived, the same city where David had gone before and then pretended to be a crazy man in order to escape the Philistines’ anger against him. Perhaps a new King Achish, who was more sympathetic toward David, ruled over Gath. Or perhaps the former Achish had changed his attitude, but David and all these people were welcomed to stay in Gath for a while.

Did Saul come after David? No. David’s relocation plan worked; Saul no longer tried to hunt down David.

#### ***Relocation 2***

After a time David asked Achish, “If you are happy with me, please give me a town in the country where we can live. For why should I stay in the royal city of Gath with you?”

Achish answered, “Take the town of Ziklag” [locate]. So David’s people all moved down to Ziklag.

#### ***Connection***

While they were in Ziklag, several more soldiers came from Saul to David. One might suppose they were men from David's tribe, Judah. But no, they were mostly from Saul's tribe, Benjamin. In fact, some of them were relatives of Saul and had lived in Gibeah near him. These Benjamites were very skilled: they could use either their right hand or their left when throwing stones and when shooting arrows from their bows. Twenty-three men are named in this group who came to support David.

### ***Invasion***

Now that David was in Ziklag, ✓almost fifteen miles away from Gath and out of the sight of King Achish, David and his men invaded the land around Ziklag. First, they attacked the Geshurites, "some of the old inhabitants of the land of Canaan . . . the Amorites . . . [who] could never be expelled" (1 Samuel 27:8 - Meaning and Commentary on Bible Verse (biblestudytools.com)). Next he attacked the Gezrites, more people who had not been conquered when Israel entered Canaan. Finally, he went to the south of Ziklag where long-time enemies of Israel, the Amalekites, lived. These are the same people who had attacked the feeble of Israel when they were on their way to the Promised Land. Also, God had instructed Saul to destroy all the Amalekites, but he had not done it.

All the people of every city or territory that David invaded, he totally destroyed, for he did not want Achish to know what he was doing. In fact, David also liked to cover up his activity. When Achish would ask, "Where have you raided today?" David would give an answer that Achish wanted to hear: "I raided southern Judah," or "I invaded the territory of Caleb's brother's descendants (the Jerahmeelites)," or "I raided the descendants of Moses' father-in-law (the Kenites)." Achish believed David's lies and thought, "He has made his people utterly to abhor (hate) him. He will be *my* servant forever."

This battle activity and lying continued one year and four months while David stayed in Philistia.

### ***Cooperation?***

Now, about this time, the Philistines gathered their armies together to fight against Israel. Achish was a lord of those Philistines who was supposed to bring his armies to Aphek [locate], a place north, about even with Shiloh but near the Mediterranean Sea. Before he went, Achish told David, "You and your men are most certainly going to battle with me."

David was in a pickle. What could he say? How could he fight against his own nation, Israel? He answered Achish, "You know what I can do." That was an answer that didn't promise anything, but Achish answered, ✓"Oh, I know what you can do as a soldier. That's why you will be my body guard forever. Let's march!"

So as all the Philistine soldiers gathered in preparation to fight Israel in Aphek [locate], David and his men paraded behind Achish and his soldiers. However, when the other Philistines saw David and his men, they asked, "What are these Hebrews doing here!?"

Achish answered, "This is David, the servant of Saul, who has stayed with me days or years, and I have found nothing wrong with him since he has stayed with me."

Angry, the other Philistines demanded, "Make this fellow return to his town. Otherwise, he may fight against us in battle in order for Saul to forgive him. Isn't this the David of whom they sang, 'Saul has slain thousands, but David ten thousands'?"

### ***Liberation***

A ✓disappointed Achish called David to himself and advised, "David, I have found no fault with you ever since you came to me sixteen months ago, but the other lords don't like you. Go on home in peace so that we don't displease them"

"What have I done?" David pretended to protest. "Why can't I fight your enemies?"

"You are like an angel of God in my opinion," answered Achish, "but the princes of the Philistines have said you may not go with us to battle. Tomorrow morning as soon as it's light, go on home."

The next day the Philistines went on to war against Israel, and David and his men began the ✓sixty-mile journey from Apehek back to Ziklag. As he proceeded, more soldiers joined him—seven captains of thousands of soldiers from the tribe of Manasseh. David was gaining a very large army.

### Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:

One of the names of Jesus is *Immanuel*, which means “God with us” (Matthew 1:23). As the soldiers who joined David saw that God was with him, so we would want people to see that Jesus not only has God with Him but is God Himself.

### Activities:

- Play dough: lions; shields; spears; bow and arrows
- Snack: Trail mix
- Discuss lions and/or gazelles. This is a site for lion information: [Lion Facts for Kids \(kiddle.co\)](http://LionFactsforKids(kiddle.co)). Gazelle information may be found at [Gazelle Facts for Kids \(kiddle.co\)](http://GazelleFactsforKids(kiddle.co)).
- Review questions: (Game: Print the clipart soldiers found below on card stock. Cut apart in rectangles. For each question answered correctly, a student will place a soldier in a pocket chart.)
  1. When David was discouraged because of Saul, what did he say might happen to him? [He would perish by the hand of Saul.]
  2. To what city did David escape? [Gath in Philistia.]
  3. Who went with David? [His family, his soldiers, and their families.]
  4. True or false. Saul followed David to Gath. [False; Saul stopped trying to find David.]
  5. King Achish of Gath gave David what city? [Ziklag.]
  6. What people did David raid while in Ziklag? [People groups who had not been conquered when Israel had entered Canaan and the Amalekites.]
  7. What was the “pickle” David got into when Achish told to fight with the Philistines? [How could he fight with the Philistines against his own people?]
  8. How did God solve David’s dilemma about fighting his own people? [The Philistine lords did not want David to go with them.]
  9. From which unlikely tribe did soldiers come to help David? [Saul’s tribe—Benjamin.]

### Memory Verse[s]: (KJV)

- Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

### Handwork:

- Print copies of the Psalm 1:1 poster found below. Students will draw lines from the words *walketh*, *standeth*, and *sitteth* in the verse to the pictures in the graphic.

# DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL



[http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/OT/1%20Samuel/graphics/1sa\\_davids\\_flight.png](http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/OT/1%20Samuel/graphics/1sa_davids_flight.png)





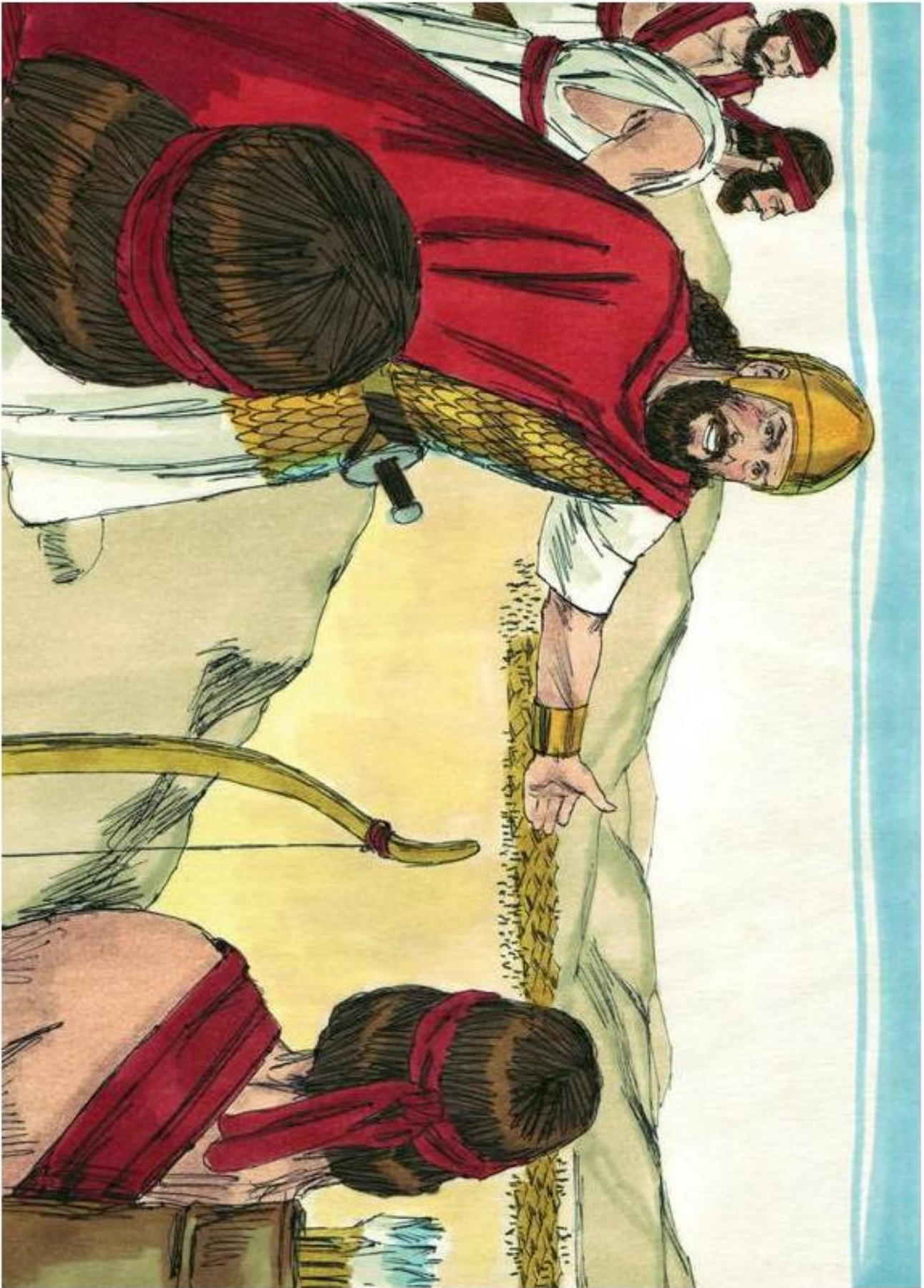
<http://www.jesuswalk.com/david/images/tissot-women-of-ziklag-taken-into-captivity-600x406.jpg>





[Serengeti\\_Thomson-Gazelle1.jpg \(2254x1690\) \(wild-facts.com\)](#)









**Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man that  
walketh not in the counsel of the  
ungodly, nor standeth in the way of  
sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the  
scornful.**

**SIT; WALK, STAND.**

