

**1Samuel 27:1** ¶ And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: *there is nothing* better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

**1Samuel 27:2** And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that *were* with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.

**1Samuel 27:3** And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even* David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

**1Samuel 27:4** And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

As time marches on, David begins to think that if he doesn't do something, Saul will kill him. He thought that if he escaped to the land of the Philistines, Saul would quit looking for him. So he took his 600 men and their families to seek refuge with the king of Gath—Achish, the son of Maach.

This is definitely a time when David's faith is weak. He should have known he had no reason to fear for his life since the LORD had chosen him to be the next king of Israel. Notice that he didn't seek the LORD's direction through the priest. I think it is because he didn't want to hear the answer because he already knew it deep inside. We were told that the prophet Gad had instructed David to go back to Judah; we aren't told that he ever changed that instruction.

*1 Samuel 22:5 "And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah."*

It is noted that David had both of his wives with him—Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's former wife.

When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he quit looking for him. It appears David had reasoned correctly.

**1Samuel 27:5** And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

**1Samuel 27:6** Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

**1Samuel 27:7** And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

David (and his men I presume) was evidently a bit uncomfortable at the thought of living in the royal city with the Philistine king. So he decided to ask Achish if he would give him a place in some town in the country for him and his followers. Achish must have respected David because he gave him the city of Ziklag, and it still belonged to the kings of Judah when this record was written. This city was actually part of the land allotment given to Simeon within Judah that was never conquered.

Maybe Achish looked at David with the mindset of the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Though Achish probably thought of it that way, that really wasn't true from David's perspective. Saul considered David his enemy; but David looked at Saul as the LORD's anointed, but as an enemy only because he threatened David's life. He would much rather have been Saul's friend.

David and his followers lived in the land of the Philistines for 16 months.

JFB offered this insight: "It was a prudent arrangement on the part of David; for it would prevent him being an object of jealous suspicion, or of mischievous plots among the Philistines. It would place his followers more beyond the risk of contamination by the idolatries of the court and capital; and it would give him an opportunity of making reprisals on the freebooting tribes that infested the common border of Israel and the Philistines."

**1Samuel 27:8 ¶ And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt. 1Samuel 27:9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.**

During that time, David and his men invaded the Geshurites, Gezrites and Amalekites (all enemies of Israel) who lived in the land that stretched from Shur to Egypt. When they attacked, they killed all the people and took possession of their livestock—sheep, oxen, asses and camels—and clothing.

It's hard for me to picture David taking mass numbers of human lives without in light of his relationship with the LORD and the knowledge of His word. Psalm 139 testifies to his recognition of the value of each person's life in the sight of God. Did he know that God had commanded the tribes of Israel to take possession of the land of Canaan by destroying all its inhabitants as they did so? I would imagine that would be common knowledge throughout the families of Israel. If so, his actions fulfilled a dual purpose since he and his followers and their families needed the livestock and clothing.

He then returned to report to Achish.

**1Samuel 27:10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites. 1Samuel 27:11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring *tidings* to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so *will be* his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines. 1Samuel 27:12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.**

It appears from the narrative that David always reported to the king after making a raid. When the king asked him where he had been on any given day,

he would tell him that he had raided different areas belonging to Israel, knowing that there were no surviving witnesses to testify any differently. This was a practice of intentional deception to curry the favor of the king. Achish believed David. He reasoned that since David had made himself hated by his own people, he would be a faithful servant to Achish.