

David Refuses to Accelerate God's Plan

The Making of a King: Part 13

1 Samuel 24:1-22

January 18, 2026

David has seemingly been wronged again by no fault of his own. After selflessly defending Keilah while running for his life, God makes it clear that the people would have handed him over to Saul if given the chance! To make matters worse, the people living in the place he flees to in the aftermath (the wilderness of Ziph) go out of their way to turn him into Saul! Surely, David had to be feeling cheated at this point in time.

But as we come into our passage today, David is going to be presented with perhaps his most tempting opportunity to take matters into his hands. While we may not face the same stakes as David, many of us can relate to this type of temptation. David has a chance to accelerate his timeline, take the life of the man who has made this portion of his life extremely difficult, and take his place as king of God's chosen people. But the question is: how would David respond when faced with such an enticing situation?

Discussion Question: Read verses 3-4. How did David demonstrate his trust in the Lord by what he chose to do (or not do)? How is our trust (or lack of trust) in God shown by how we respond in the times when we're tempted to take matters into our own hands?

But what happens right after this is so interesting and displays such an incredible aspect of David's character and his relationship with God. Many of us would agree that, humanly speaking, David had earned the right to be a little selfish. Many of us, if put into a similar situation, likely would have felt very little remorse doing something like this. After all, we had been through so much, we had earned the right to do something like this! Yet, how does David respond in this same situation?

Discussion Question: Read verses 5-7. How does the Bible show us that David's heart was still tender to the Lord, even in difficult times? What is the danger of only being open to God when things are going well?

Not only did David make a good choice in choosing not to take Saul's life, but these verses tell us David was also able to persuade his men to not make a mistake as well. Talk about setting the right example as the leader! This is a valuable lesson for us as Christians. Oftentimes it can be tempting to instruct others to "do as I say, not as I do." But we quickly find this to be a toxic and highly ineffective leadership strategy. David held himself to a high standard, and as a result, we see his men follow suit, even though it meant their difficult season would continue as well.

Discussion Question: If David wanted his men to do the right thing, he had to set the example himself. Every single one of us is a leader in one way or another. Why, then, is it so important that we seek to lead by example for those who are watching/looking up to us?

Once Saul finishes relieving himself, David speaks up and begins a speech. This speech demonstrates for us just how godly David truly was. There are several aspects of this speech that are such an incredible testimony of David and his devotion to the Lord. One thing is clear: even when human leadership failed, David submitted to a higher authority. This was the driving force behind every path David took and ultimately every decision he made. And David's godliness and integrity was about to have an incredible impact.

Discussion Question: Read the interaction between David and Saul in verses 8-22. How had David's integrity given him the ability to speak with such boldness toward Saul? How did David's testimony open the door for God to break through even the most hardened heart like Saul's? Could our testimony have a similar effect on those around us?

For Personal Reflection: What is the biggest lesson you personally learned from this lesson? Write it out below.
