



"God is Still On His Throne"

1 Samuel 21-22

August 2, 2026

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

David and the Holy Bread

21 Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David, trembling, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?" **2** And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, 'Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place. **3** Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." **4** And the priest answered David, "I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women." **5** And David answered the priest, "Truly women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?" **6** So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the LORD, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen.

8 Then David said to Ahimelech, "Then have you not here a spear or a sword at hand? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." **9** And the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take it, for there is none but that here." And David said, "There is none like that; give it to me."

David Flees to Gath

10 And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath. **11** And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances,

'Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands?'"

12 And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. **13** So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard. **14** Then Achish said to his servants, "Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? **15** Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

David at the Cave of Adullam

22 David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. **2** And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him. And he became commander over them. And there were with him about four hundred men.

3 And David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. And he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother stay with you, till I know what God will do for me." **4** And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. **5** Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not



remain in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

Saul Kills the Priests at Nob

⁶ Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him. Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. ⁷ And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of Benjamin; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, ⁸ that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day." ⁹ Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, ¹⁰ and he inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

¹¹ Then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, and all of them came to the king. ¹² And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub." And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." ¹³ And Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he has risen against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" ¹⁴ Then Ahimelech answered the king, "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, and captain over your bodyguard, and honored in your house? ¹⁵ Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No! Let not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father, for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." ¹⁶ And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house." ¹⁷ And the king said to the guard who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David, and they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the LORD. ¹⁸ Then the king said to Doeg, "You turn and strike the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ And Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he put to the sword.

²⁰ But one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. ²¹ And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. ²² And David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house. ²³ Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping."

MAIN THEME

Life can feel chaotic, painful, and confusing, yet God never surrenders his throne. In 1 Samuel 21–22 David is running for his life and makes serious mistakes with tragic consequences. Saul, meanwhile, spirals deeper into paranoia, violence, and rebellion against God. Despite human failure and evil, God quietly continues accomplishing his sovereign purposes.

God provides for David through Ahimelech, preserves him through impossible circumstances, and even raises up faithful people who refuse to obey Saul's wicked commands. Though David sins, he repents and accepts responsibility. Saul refuses to repent and clings to power.

This passage reminds us that God's purposes are never threatened by human evil, our failures, or difficult circumstances. He remains faithful, continues shaping his people, and invites us to respond with obedience, humility, repentance, and trust.



DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Even When Evil Seems to Prevail, God Is Still Accomplishing His Purposes

1 Samuel 21:1–9; Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20

- How do David's circumstances appear from a human perspective?
- What does Goliath's sword teach us about God's provision?
- When have you seen God provide something unexpected at just the right time?
- Why is it difficult to trust God's purposes when life feels chaotic?

2. God Uses Obedient Believers to Accomplish His Sovereign Purposes

1 Samuel 22:16–17; Acts 5:29; James 1:22

- Why did Saul's guards refuse his command?
- What situations today require believers to obey God rather than people?
- What keeps us from acting on what we know is right?
- How can your obedience influence others for Christ?

3. God Shapes His People Through Repentance and Trust

1 Samuel 22:20–23; Psalm 51:17; 1 John 1:9

- What is the biggest difference between Saul and David in these chapters?
- Why is repentance a mark of spiritual maturity?
- How should we respond after our own failures?
- How can the church become a place of refuge like David offered Abiathar?

4. God Is Still on His Throne

Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 46:9–10; Hebrews 13:5–6

- What area of your life most tempts you to doubt God's control?
- How does God's sovereignty give courage during suffering or uncertainty?
- What would trusting God's timing look like this week?

PRAY

Father God, thank you that you never leave your throne and never abandon your children. Teach us to trust you when life feels confusing or painful. Give us courage to obey you, humility to repent when we fail, and confidence that your purposes cannot be stopped. Help us become people who offer refuge, compassion, and hope to others as David did. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DIG DEEPER

For Further Study:

- Psalm 103:19 — The Lord reigns over all.
- Genesis 50:20 — God's purposes overcome evil.
- Romans 8:28 — God works through every circumstance.
- James 1:22 — Be doers of the Word.
- 1 John 1:9 — The blessing of repentance.

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

1 Samuel 23 – David seeks God's guidance in the wilderness.

