

THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD®

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



David Prepares to Rule Israel



LEVEL 5
LESSON 3

David Prepares to Rule Israel

In Lesson 2, we learned that the nation of Israel rejected God by asking for a king. They wanted to be just like all of the Gentile nations around them. As a result, God had Samuel anoint Saul as king of Israel.

At first Saul was a good king. But then something happened—he lost the humility that he once had and he began to disobey God. As a result of this attitude, God was sorry that He had made Saul the king of Israel. God rejected Saul’s house from ruling over Israel and chose to anoint someone else.

We also learned about how the Philistines posed a challenge to Israel. They would put their champion Goliath up against any Israelite. Goliath was a huge man, and everyone in the Israelite camp was afraid to go up against him. Yet, a shepherd boy named David was brave enough to fight this giant. He had confidence in God and was sure that God would deliver Goliath into his hands. With this assurance, David, with God’s help, was able to kill the giant. This was just one great milestone in David’s event-filled life.

David Bonds with Jonathan

Having defeated the Philistine champion, the Israelite army returned home to an over-

joyed and cheering crowd. As King Saul and the troops marched along, the women greeted them with musical instruments, songs and dancing.

The king, who loved to have the praise of the people, cheerfully waved as the women sang. But this cheerful attitude would not last for long. The women sang, “Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”

Saul was instantly offended and extremely angry at this saying. He was jealous of all the attention the people were giving to David. He thought to himself, “They have attributed to me 1,000 kills and to David 10,000 kills. They have elevated this boy above me. Other than the kingdom itself, what is left for him to take from me?”

From then on, Saul was distrustful of David. And that distrust turned into pure hate. One day, David was playing his harp to calm and soothe the king. As David played, the king brooded over the glory that David had stolen from him. He thought to himself, “David is a threat to me. Could he possibly be God’s chosen replacement? If so, that makes him my enemy, and he must surely die.” Then Saul tightly gripped his javelin and fiercely threw it at David twice. But he managed to dodge both attempts on his life.

Saul's intention from that day forward was to kill David. The king made David a captain in the army so that he would die in battle. He even gave David his daughter Michal to marry, thinking that she could be a key in his undoing. But God prospered David, and Michal and all of Israel loved him. This angered and frightened King Saul even more.

However, Jonathan, the king's son, didn't share his father's feelings about David. Jonathan and David quickly realized they shared common traits and goals. They both faithfully obeyed God and put His will first. Jonathan and David loved each other greatly. Jonathan realized that David was the man whom God had chosen to replace his father as king, whom the prophet Samuel had anointed for this role. So the prince honored the future king by removing his royal robe, bow and arrows, and his sword and giving them to David. Jonathan, a wise and popular military leader of noble character, had the potential to become a wonderful ruler, but he humbly stepped aside to support David, his friend.

Many times, Jonathan interceded for David, warning him that his father was seeking to take his life. Jonathan urged his father not to do this. Turn to I Samuel 19:4-5: "Let not the king _____, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been _____. For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and _____ brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent

blood, to kill David without a cause?" For the moment, Saul agreed.

However, as soon as David was in his sight, an evil spirit came upon Saul and he tried to kill David again. Yet, David once again dodged Saul's attack and fled. He met with Jonathan and told him what his father had done. Jonathan asked David what he wanted him to do. David devised a plan to find out Saul's intentions.

David said, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I'm supposed to eat dinner with your father at the festival. Instead, I'm going to hide in a field until the third day at evening. If Saul wonders where I am, tell him, 'David asked me to let him go to Bethlehem, his hometown, so he could take part in a sacrifice his family makes there every year.' If your father does not get angry, then you will know that I am safe. But if he becomes wrathful, then you will know that he wants to do me harm." Jonathan agreed to the plan and determined how he would deliver the news to David.

Then Jonathan said, "People attending tomorrow's festival will wonder where you are. By the third day, you will be greatly missed. Then go to the place where you hid before and stay beside the stone Ezel. I will shoot three arrows off to the side of the rock, and send my servant to find them. If I say, 'The arrows are on this side of you, boy! Pick them up!' then you will know that you are safe. But, if I say to the boy, 'The arrows are farther away!' then you will know that the Lord has sent you away."

So, Jonathan departed, while David hid in the field.



On the first day of the feast, Saul noticed that David's seat was empty. But he didn't say a word, thinking to himself, "Something has kept him from coming. He probably isn't clean. I'm sure that's it." But on the second day, he noticed that David still was missing. Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't David come to the feast, either yesterday or today? Where is he?" And Jonathan answered, "David asked me to let him go home to Bethlehem. He said, 'My family is offering a sacrifice in the city, and my brother told me that I have to be there. If I have found grace in your eyes, allow me to go to my family.' Therefore, David will not be coming to the king's table."

Saul was furious. He said, "You son of perverse rebellion! You don't think that I

know that you have chosen to be loyal to the son of Jesse to your own shame? Your own mother should be ashamed of your birth! Don't you know that as long as the son of Jesse lives that neither you nor your kingdom will be established? Therefore, go get him and bring him to me, because he must be killed!"

Jonathan replied, "Why must he be killed? What did he do?" This further enraged Saul. He grabbed his javelin and fiercely threw it at Jonathan. Shocked by his father's actions, Jonathan left the table enraged. Knowing that his father was determined to kill David, Jonathan fasted the rest of the day for his friend.

The next day, Jonathan and a little boy went out into the field where David was hiding. Jonathan shot the arrows beyond the boy and shouted, "Didn't I shoot the arrow past you?" That was the signal for David to flee. After Jonathan sent the boy back to the city, David got up from his hiding place and bowed low to the ground three times. He was humbly acknowledging that Jonathan was a just prince, true to his word. Then he gave Jonathan a brotherly kiss, and both men wept bitterly, for they knew that they might not see each other again for the rest of their lives.

A friendship like this is very rare in today's world. David and Jonathan could have been enemies. It would have been easy for each to turn against the other. But instead, they set aside jealousy, resent-

ment, bitterness, competition and lust for power and became the best of friends. You should strive to be the kind of friend to others as David and Jonathan were to each other.

Test Your Memory:

1) Why was Saul jealous of David? _____

2) What traits did Jonathan and David have in common? _____

3) Why did Saul try to kill Jonathan? _____

King Saul Pursues David

David greatly feared for his life and, thus, fled from the presence of Saul. David first traveled to Nob to seek the help of Ahimelech the priest. The priest provided David and his men with food, and gave David the sword of Goliath. Then David and his men fled to the mountains and hid out in the cave Adullam.

When his family and other groups found out where he was, they came and joined him. However, God, through the prophet Gad, warned David not to stay in the cave, but to flee and hide in the land of Judah. So David obeyed the Eternal and settled in the forest of Hareth in Judah.

Then Saul appealed to his fellow Benjamites. He asked them why they were conspiring against him. He wanted them to tell him where David was hiding.

Then Doeg the Edomite recalled how he saw David in Nob consulting with Ahimelech the priest. He also told him that the priest talked to God for him, and gave David Goliath's sword.

Saul sent a message to Ahimelech and all the rest of the priests commanding that they come to him. Ahimelech and the priests complied.

When they got there, the king accused them of conspiring with David against him. Ahimelech was totally shocked by the charge and said, "My lord, what are you saying? None of your officers and servants is more loyal than David! Is he not your son-in-law and the captain of your guard? Everyone in your family respects him.





Respect for God's Government

Then one day, Jonathan discovered that David was hiding out in the wilderness of Ziph, so Jonathan visited him. Jonathan strengthened David in God saying, "Don't be afraid, David. My father will not be able to kill you, because one day, you will be king over Israel and I will be right by your side. Deep down, my father knows that also." After Jonathan finished his words of encouragement, he and David confirmed their covenant with one another, and then Jonathan went back to his house.

Meanwhile, Saul was right on David's heels. Sensing this, David moved his men to the wilderness

Besides, this is not the first time I have talked to God for David, and it's never made you angry before. So please don't accuse me or my family of wrongdoing. I have no idea what is going on."

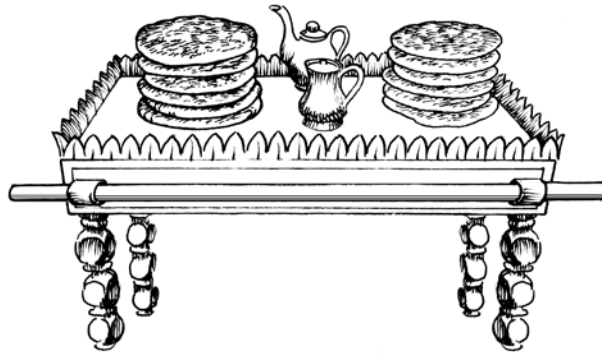
The king, sure that Ahimelech was lying to him, commanded his soldiers to kill the priests. But, none of the soldiers would attack God's priests. Therefore, Saul commanded Doeg to kill the priests—a job he gladly did. Doeg killed 85 priests that day. However, one priest escaped—Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech. He ran and caught up with David and told him what happened to Ahimelech and the other priests.

David knew that he couldn't stay in one place for too long. So, he and his men kept moving.

of Maon, south of Jeshimon. Then messengers reported to Saul where David had run to, and Saul fiercely pursued him. However, at this time, the Philistines were attacking Israel, so Saul had to stop pursuing David in order to protect his kingdom. God intervened on David's behalf, saving him from Saul's grasp.

After Saul defeated the Philistines, he learned that David had fled to the wilderness of En Gedi. Therefore, Saul took 3,000 men and once again pursued David. Saul decided that he would rest in a cave that he found along the way, not knowing that David and his men were in there. One of David's men said to David, "Look! This is the day that the Lord spoke to you about, saying, 'I will deliver your enemy into your hand.'"

Then David cut the skirt off of Saul's robe. But, David was upset with himself for what he had done. Turn to I Samuel 24:5-7. Notice: "Now it happened afterward that David's heart



'Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you."

After David had finished speaking, Saul called out to David and wept. He admitted that David was better than

_____ because he had _____ . And he said to his men, ' _____ that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, to _____ , seeing he is the anointed _____ .' So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul."

Even though Saul was trying to kill him, David showed great respect for God's chosen leader. He was determined to be loyal to God's government, regardless of the current leader's sins and shortcomings. David decided to wait on God to fulfill His promise His way, according to His plan and timing.

Saul got up and left the cave, intending to continue his search for David. Then David yelled out to Saul. David told the king about how his men wanted to kill him, but David would not let them. He tried to convince the king that he was not his enemy. He also gave proof by showing Saul the skirt that he had cut from his robe.

Look at what David said next. I Samuel 24:12-13: "Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. As the proverb of the ancients says,

him. He also acknowledged that he had no doubt that the Lord had chosen David to be the next king of Israel.

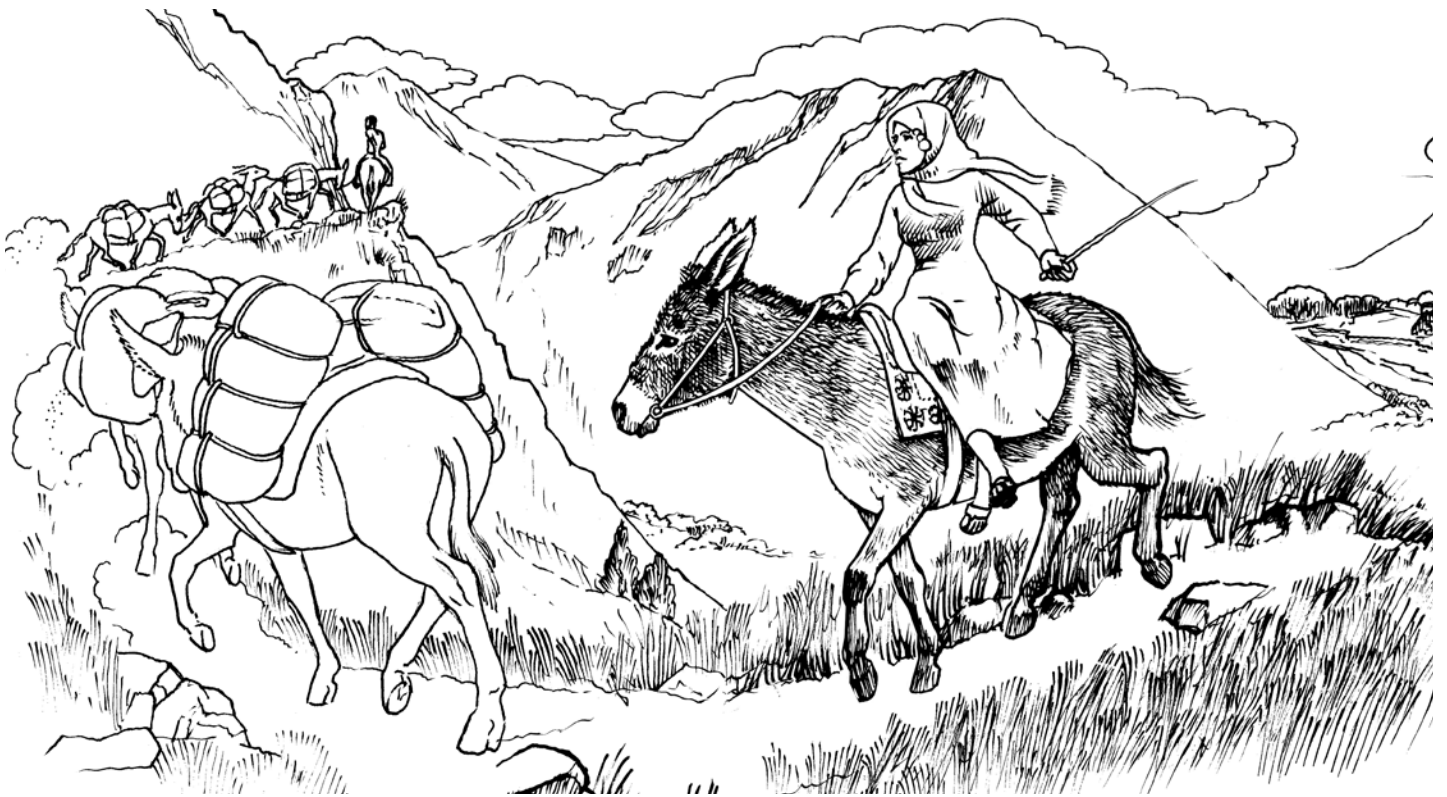
At that moment, Saul made a covenant with David. Saul said, "Promise me by God in heaven that you will not cut off my descendants after I am dead and you will not wipe out my name from my father's house." And David promised. So, Saul went home, but David, not trusting the sincerity of Saul's remorse, went back to his hideout.

David and Abigail

While David was in Maon, he had heard that a man named Nabal was shearing his sheep in Carmel. He was a very wealthy man with many great possessions. He was married to a beautiful and wise woman named Abigail. But Nabal was evil and only cared about his possessions.

David had protected this man, his family, his shepherds, and his possessions. David thought to himself, "Surely, this man will be very grateful for all that I have done for him. I will ask him for some of his goods. Surely, he will be willing."

David sent ten messengers to Nabal. They informed Nabal of how they had protected all of his goods, making sure that the shepherds



felt safe from thieves. The servants assured him that they had never taken anything and that they had dealt honestly with him. Then they asked him to be gracious and to share any food and wool with them that he could spare. The servants were not prepared for the response that they received.

Nabal pretended like he didn't know of David. He also implied that David's servants could be lying and that David really didn't send them.

Nabal was so selfish that he did not want to share any of the blessings of his wealth.

So the ten messengers returned to David and told him what Nabal said. David was furious. He told 400 of his men, "Get your swords, and let's go!" David and his men were on their way to totally wipe out Nabal's household.

But, one of Nabal's servants ran and told Abigail about Nabal's evil reply to David. The servant said, "David sent messengers to happily greet our master, but he insulted

them. But they were very good to us. They protected us, and nothing was ever stolen. Now, something must be done quickly, because if you don't, I'm sure that David will destroy our master and his whole household. I would tell the master, but he is so stubborn that he won't listen to anyone."

Abigail acted quickly. She quickly got together 200 loaves of bread, two large skins of wine, the meat from five sheep, a large sack of roasted grain, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of dried figs.

She loaded all the food on donkeys and told her servants, "Take this on ahead. I will catch up with you." She didn't tell her husband what she was doing, because she knew that he wouldn't understand the wisdom in not angering Israel's future king.

Suddenly, Abigail met David as he and his men headed straight at her. She quickly got off her donkey and humbly bowed down in front of David. She begged David for mercy. She asked him to disregard the

insults of Nabal, whose name means “fool.” She told him that the Eternal had stopped him from killing innocent people, and that He would handle all of David’s enemies. Abigail also assured David that God would continuously protect him. She also asked him to remember her when he received all that God had promised him.

Turn to I Samuel 25:32-34 for David’s response: “Then David said to Abigail: ‘Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, _____ to meet me! And blessed is your advice and blessed are you because you have kept me this day from _____ and from _____ with my own hand. For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, _____ from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!’”

David then accepted the gifts that Abigail had brought.

“Do not worry,” he said. “You can go home in peace. I will do what you asked.”

Abigail returned home and found Nabal throwing a huge party, and he was very drunk. So she decided not to tell him anything that night. But the next morning, she told him everything that had happened. When Nabal heard how close he had come to losing his life, his fear was so terrible that he had a stroke. He laid in bed for ten days, and then God took his life.

God avenged David on Nabal. When David heard that Nabal had died, he praised God for judging between him and Nabal, and he was grateful that God kept him from sinning out of anger.

Sometime after the death of Nabal, David married Abigail.

Test Your Memory:

1) Why did Saul kill Ahimelech and the other priests? _____

2) Why didn’t David kill Saul when he had the chance? _____

3) Who stopped David from killing Nabal? _____

Saul Speaks to a Demon

One day, David thought to himself, “Surely, Saul is going to kill me if I stay around here.” So David decided to flee into the land of the Philistines. He and his followers went and lived in Gath with King Achish.

Since David had become a well-known adversary to Saul, this Philistine ruler was glad to welcome him. Achish gave David the town of Ziklag, which was about 13 miles away from Beersheba.

When Saul heard that David had left Judah and fled into the land of the Philistines, he no longer pursued David.

However, one day, King Achish and his generals had made plans to attack Israel. The king commanded that David and his men fight alongside the Philistines. David agreed to help out in any way.



Meanwhile, Saul could see that the Philistine army was gathering for battle. He decided to ask the Eternal what he should do, but God did not answer him.

Now terribly fearful because the Lord would not answer him, Saul sent his servants out to find a witch. Some of his servants knew of a witch that resided in En Dor. So, Saul put on a disguise and went to see her.

As king, Saul had spent most of his reign removing witches, wizards, sorcerers and other such demon-influenced people from

Israel. He knew that God commanded that all witches, wizards, sorcerers, spiritists and charmers be put to death. But Saul had now grown so desperate that he was willing to seek the aid of witches and other servants of Satan!

Disguised, Saul asked the witch to bring up the spirit of someone for him. But she said to him, “You know what King Saul has done, how he will not allow witches to live. Why are you trying to trick me? You are going to get me killed!” But Saul assured her that nothing would happen to her.

So he asked her to raise up the spirit of Samuel the prophet.

As she had done many times in the past, the witch relied on evil spells to call upon the demon world. Then something strange flashed before her eyes: An eerie image of an old man floated just before her! The witch screamed, assuming that it was Samuel.

But it wasn’t really Samuel; it was only a demon pretending to be the dead prophet. The witch knew that she did not have the power to bring the dead back to life—only God does. However, since Saul was determined to speak to the dead, God decided to use the king’s wicked plan against him.

Assuming that the “spirit of Samuel” was floating before her, the witch turned to Saul and said, “You’ve tricked me! You must be King Saul!”

Saul asked her to tell him what she saw. She described the image as an old man covered with a mantle. Saul assumed that it was Samuel and bowed to the ground.

Still posing as Samuel, the demon asked Saul why he had called him. Saul explained

how the Philistines were gathering together to battle him and he didn't know what to do, because God was not answering him anymore. The demon proceeded to tell Saul of his terrible fate—that Saul and his sons would be killed.

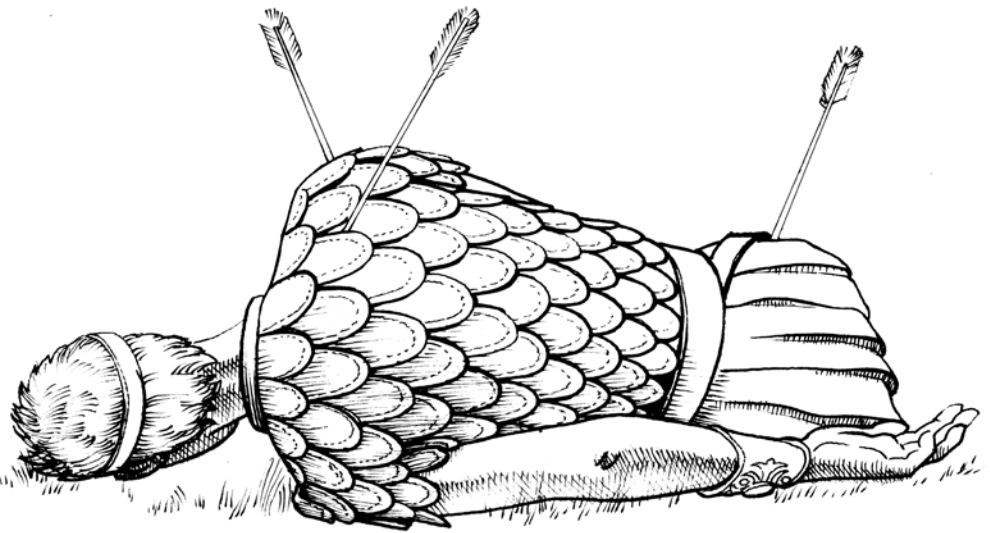
Saul was sorely afraid. He was so scared that he didn't even want to eat. But after continuous prodding, the witch and his servants got him to eat something.

The Death of a King

As the Philistines gathered to attack Israel, the Philistine princes noticed that David and his men were marching as well. They were angry at the king and told him that they refused to fight with the Hebrews. King Achish tried to convince them that David would be loyal, but it was all to no avail. So, the king sent David and his men back to Ziklag.

The Philistines were slaughtering the army of Israel at Mount Gilboa, causing the Israelites to run. King Saul and his sons were also on the run. The Philistines caught up with the king's sons and killed them—Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua were dead.

Then the Philistines turned their attention to King Saul. The fighting was fierce and heavy all around the king. Then Saul was



severely wounded by an arrow and he knew that he couldn't go on any longer. He turned to his armor bearer and said, "Draw your sword and kill me with it! Don't let me fall into the hands of these worthless Philistines so that they can torture and ridicule me!"

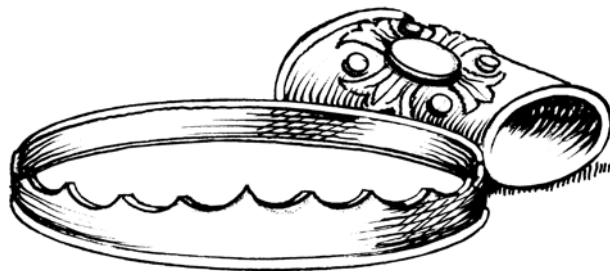
But the armor bearer was too afraid to slay the king. So the king drew his own sword and fell on it. Saul had taken his own life.

To celebrate their victory, the Philistines cut off Saul's head and took his body and put it on display on the city wall of Beth Shan.

When the people of Jabesh heard what they had done to Saul and his sons, some brave men sneaked into Beth Shan, retrieved their bodies and brought them back to Jabesh. They then burned the bodies, buried them under a tree in Jabesh, and fasted and

mourned for seven days.

In the next lesson, we will learn about how David becomes the king of Israel.



BIBLE MEMORY: I Samuel 15:17, 19, 22-23

MATCHING

Can you remember the important people mentioned in this lesson? Answer the questions in the left-hand column with the people listed in the right-hand column. Write the correct letter next to the correct question.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| ___: He was commanded to kill the priests who helped David. | A) Abigail |
| ___: She was the daughter of Saul who became David's wife. | B) David |
| ___: He was the prophet who anointed David to be king of Israel. | C) Jonathan |
| ___: He gave David his royal robe, sword, bow and girdle. | D) Saul |
| ___: She kept David from killing innocent people out of anger. | E) Nabal |
| ___: His name means "fool." | F) Michal |
| ___: He is the priest who was killed for giving David food and Goliath's sword. | G) Ahimelech |
| ___: This king gave David and his men the city of Ziklag. | H) Samuel |
| ___: This king continuously tried to kill David by throwing spears at him. | I) Goliath |
| ___: This man kept one of his servants from killing Saul in a cave in the mountains. | J) Achish |
| ___: This man was a giant and the champion of the Philistines, who was killed by David. | K) Doeg |