

# HONESTY

Choosing to be < **TRUTHFUL** > in whatever you say & do

## David and Ahimelek 1 Samuel 21-22

**MEMORY VERSE | Proverbs 10:9**

**T**hough David had been chosen by God to be the next ruler of Israel, Saul was still king. Saul was jealous of David's popularity and victories in battle. In fact, he feared David so much that he tried to kill him!

David escaped from Saul with the help of the king's son, Jonathan. Now David was alone and on the run. He had no food and no way to defend himself when he arrived in Nob, the place where God's Tabernacle stood.

David went immediately to the high priest, Ahimelek.

"Why are you alone?" asked Ahimelek. He searched the road behind David, afraid that Israel's enemies might be chasing close behind.

"Weeeeeell," David hedged. He knew if he revealed the truth—that King Saul was trying to kill him—the priest would have to send him away empty-handed.

"It's like this," David said at last. "Um, the king gave me a secret mission. I can't tell anyone.

Ahimelek's face cleared. "Oh! I see."

"I've told my men to meet me nearby," said David. "And I'm . . . I mean, we are starving. Do you have any food for us? Maybe, oh, five loaves of bread?"

"No," Ahimelek said, shaking his head. "The only food I have is holy bread. Set aside for God."

"We have all kept ourselves holy," David declared, "so you can give it to us."

"Okay," Ahimelek agreed. "You can have it."

The priest took the bread that had been offered to God and gave it to David, who tore into it.

Ahimelek wasn't the only one to notice David's arrival. The priest's son, Abiathar, polished candlesticks just outside the tent. And a huge man named Doeg sat nearby, picking bits of roast lamb out of his teeth with a splinter of wood.

**Ahimelek wasn't the  
only one to notice  
David's arrival.**

Doeg was King Saul's chief shepherd, sent to stay at the Tabernacle for a time. He watched David with narrowed eyes and murmured to himself, "Well, well, well..."

David finished a portion of the bread and scanned the horizon. Then he turned back to Ahimelech. "I don't suppose you have a sword or a spear here?" he wondered.

"You don't have your own weapon?" Ahimelek asked in surprise.

"There was no time," David said quickly. "I had to start my, uh, secret mission for the king right away."

"The sword of Goliath is here," Ahimelek told him. "The Philistine you killed. If you want it, take it."

When the high priest gave him the heavy sword, David slashed it through the air so it glinted in the sunlight. "There's no sword like it," he exclaimed. "It's perfect for my . . . secret mission."

None of them noticed Doeg, who was still watching. He crossed his arms and smirked as he said to himself, "King Saul's gonna be none too happy about this."

David set out from Nob with food and a mighty weapon. But there was no secret mission, and he was still on the run. He tried to find protection in the nearby region of Gath, and then hid out in a cave and later in the forest. Over time, members of his family came to join him. So did other men who were unhappy or in trouble with the king.

Soon, David was leading a band of four hundred men!

Saul was sitting high on a hill beneath a lone tree when he heard the news. He turned to his officials with a snarl. "Have *all* of you joined together against me?" he thundered. "You think David is going to give you land and make you commanders in the army? No one cares about me. No one even tells me when my own son helps David escape. Now David's hiding out until he can attack me. Inconceivable!"

As Saul paused for breath, a heavy man stepped forward: Doeg, the head shepherd who had been at the Tabernacle.

"I saw David talking to Ahimelek in Nob," he offered.

"The high priest?!" Saul exclaimed.

"Yeah, he gave David food and the sword of Goliath," Doeg said.

"Inconceivable!" roared Saul. "Bring me Ahimelek and all the priests at Nob!"

The high priest and his family came before King Saul. "Are you and David in cahoots against me?" demanded the king.

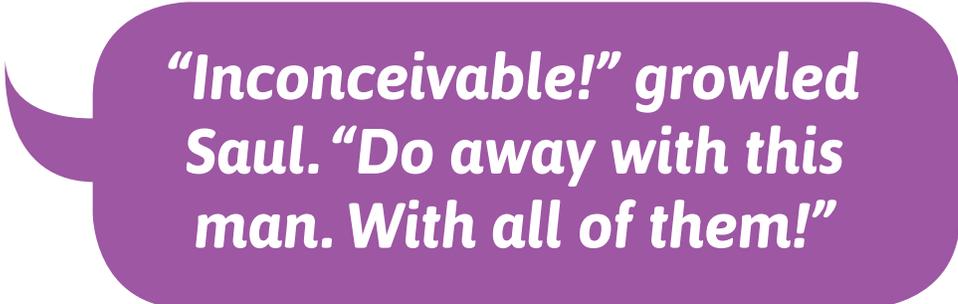
Ahimelek trembled. He had only tried to be helpful, as David had promised he was on a secret mission for the king. "No. No!" Ahimelek promised. "David is faithful to you."

"Did you give him something to eat and a weapon?" Saul asked, glaring. "He's hiding out waiting to attack me right now!"

"David's more faithful to you than anyone!" protested Ahimelek. "I don't have any idea what's going on. Just leave me out of this."

"Inconceivable!" growled Saul. "Do away with this man. With all of them!"

Saul's official stared in shock. "Kill these priests of the Lord?!" one asked, unable to believe his ears.



***"Inconceivable!" growled Saul. "Do away with this man. With all of them!"***

"They knew David was on the run," snarled Saul, "and they didn't tell me!"

Saul's officials refused to harm the priests, so the king turned to someone he knew would take action. "Doeg, you do it!" he ordered the beefy man.

"Yes, your majesty," agreed Doeg, without hesitation.

That day, Doeg did a terrible thing. He killed all the priests, just as the king had commanded.

Only one man escaped—Ahimelek’s son Abiathar. He fled to the countryside to find David.

“Saul has killed all the priests,” he cried. “Because we helped you.”

David’s knuckles tightened on his sword. “This is all my fault,” he confessed. “Stay here with me and I’ll keep you safe.”

David sank down on a nearby stone. He could feel the weight of his secret mission lie pressing down on him—a lie that had cost dozens of people their lives.



Let's  
Talk!

***Think of something you might be tempted to lie about, and share it with each other.***

**If you told that lie, what might happen? Think of all the possibilities. The truth is, a lie doesn't just affect you; it affects the people around you, too. You lie that you didn't sneak the last cookie—and your sister gets punished instead. You tell your parents you brushed your teeth when you didn't—and you end up with expensive cavities that your parents have to pay to get filled. (Not exactly fun for you, either!) It also hurts others just to know you didn't care enough about them to be truthful. That's why being honest with others is super important! Pray for each other, that you would keep your relationships strong by telling the truth, even when you're tempted to be dishonest.**