

David Among the Philistines

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Achish, Saul, Abner

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 1 Samuel 27-28

DAVID: *(to himself)* One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines.

ABIGAIL: Why?

DAVID: Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand.

ABNER: *(to Saul)* David, the six hundred men with him and their families have gone over to King Achish of Gath.

SAUL: Call off the search for David.

DAVID: *(to Achish)* If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be assigned to me in one of the country towns, that I may live there.

ACHISH: I give you Ziklag; *(to himself)* David has become so obnoxious to his people, the Israelites, that he will be my servant for life.

ABIGAIL: David and his men raided for a year and 4 months until the Philistines gathered their forces to fight against Israel.

ACHISH: You must understand that you and your men will accompany me in the army.

DAVID: You will see for yourself what your servant can do.

ACHISH: Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.

Saul and the Medium at Endor

CHARACTERS: Saul, Witch, Samuel, Priest, Attendant

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 1 Samuel 28

PRIEST: Samuel is dead and buried.

ATTENDANT: (*fearful*) The Philistines have come to fight us.

SAUL: (*terrified*) Inquire the Lord for me.

PRIEST: The Lord does not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets.

SAUL: (*to his attendants*) Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.

ATTENDANT: Samuel expelled most of them but there is one in Endor,

SAUL: I'll go to her in disguise. (*to witch*) Consult a spirit for me. Bring up for me the one I name.

WITCH: Surely, you know Saul has cut off the mediums and witches from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?

SAUL: As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this.

WITCH: Whom shall I bring up for you?

SAUL: Samuel.

ATTENDANT: When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice

WITCH: (*to Saul*) Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!

SAUL: Don't be afraid. What do you see?

WITCH: I see a ghostly figure, old man wearing a robe, coming up out of the earth.

ATTENDANT: Saul bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

SAMUEL: Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?

SAUL: I am in great distress. The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do.

SAMUEL: Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has departed from you and become your enemy? The Lord has done what he predicted through me by tearing the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors—to David.

SAUL: Why?

SAMUEL: Because you did not obey the Lord or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this to you today. Tomorrow you'll lose to the Philistines you and your sons will be with me.

ATTENDANT: Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel's words. His strength was gone, for he had eaten nothing all that day and all that night.

WITCH: (*seeing Saul was greatly shaken*) Look, I, your servant, have obeyed you. I took my life in my hands and did what you told me to do. Let me give you some food so you may eat and have the strength to go on your way."

SAUL: I will not eat.

ATTENDANT: You had better eat.

SAUL: Okay.

Achish Sends David Back to Ziklag

CHARACTERS: Achish, David, Philistine commanders 1 & 2, Joab, Ahinoam, Abigail, Priest, Troublemaker, Egyptian

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 1 Samuel 29-30

PHILISTINE COMMANDER: *(to Achish)* You must bring David with us into battle, or he will turn against us during the fighting.

ACHISH: Why not? He has already been with me for over a year, and from the day he left Saul until now, I have found no fault in him.

PHILISTINE COMMANDER: How better could he regain his master's favor than by taking the heads of our own men?

PHILISTINE COMMANDER 2: Isn't this the David they sang about in their dances: Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands'?

ACHISH: David, turn back and go in peace; do nothing to displease the Philistine rulers.

DAVID: But what have I done? Why can't I go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

ACHISH: I know that you have been as pleasing in my eyes as an angel of God; nevertheless, the Philistine commanders don't trust you so leave in the morning as soon as it is light.

JOAB: David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day.

ABIGAIL: While David was gone, the Amalekites had attacked Ziklag and burned it, taking captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old.

AHINOAM: They killed none of us, but carried us off.

JOAB: *(horried and in shock)* Our homes are destroyed by fire and our wives and sons and daughters taken captive.

TROUBLE MAKER: We should stone David.

DAVID: *(aside)* But I found strength in the Lord his God. *(to Abiathar the priest)* Bring the ephod to inquire of the Lord if I pursue this raiding party and overtake them?

PRIEST: Pursue them. You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.

DAVID: Let's go!

JOAB: David, 200 of the army are too exhausted to cross the valley.

DAVID: They can stay behind but I and the other four hundred will continue the pursuit.

JOAB: We found an Egyptian in a field half dead and starved.

DAVID: *(to JOAB)* Give him food and water. *(to Egyptian)* Whom do you belong to? Where do you come from?

EGYPTIAN: I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite. My master abandoned me when I became ill three days ago. We raided the Negev and burned Ziklag.

DAVID: Can you lead me down to this raiding party?

EGYPTIAN: Swear to me before God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them.

DAVID: Okay.

EGYPTIAN: I led David down, and there the Amalekites were, scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken.

DAVID: Attack!

EGYPTIAN: David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled.

DAVID: We have recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including my two wives.

JOAB: Nothing is missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken.

ABIGAIL: David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind.

TROUBLE MAKER: Because they did not go out with us, we will not share with them the plunder we recovered. However, each man may take his wife and children and go.

DAVID: No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the Lord has given us. He has protected us and delivered into our hands the raiding party that came against us.

TROUBLE MAKER: *(defiant)* So?

DAVID: The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike.

ABIGAIL: David made this a statute and ordinance for Israel from that day to this.

AHINOAM: When David reached Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah, who were his friends.

DAVID: Here is a gift for you from the plunder of the Lord's enemies.

Saul's Final Battle and Death

CHARACTERS: Saul, Jonathan, Philistine Commanders 1 & 2, Abigail, Armor bearer, David

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 1 Samuel 31

JONATHAN: The Philistines fought against Israel; we Israelites fled and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa.

SAUL: The Philistines have killed my sons and the archers have wounded me critically. (to his armor-bearer) Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me.

ARMOR BEARER: (*terrified*) I won't do it.

ABIGAIL: Saul took his own sword and fell on it.

JOAB: When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him.

ABIGAIL: Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day.

PHILISTINE COMMANDER: Here are the dead bodies of Saul and his three sons.

PHILISTINE COMMANDER 2: Cut off his head and strip off his armor.

PHILISTINE COMMANDER: Let's send messengers throughout our land to proclaim the news in the temple of our idols and among their people.

PHILISTINE COMMANDER 2: We'll put Saul's armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and fastened his body and those of his sons to the wall of Beth Shan.

ABIGAIL: When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, all their valiant men took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall and buried their bones

DAVID: They fasted seven days.