

# ***“Lead us not into temptation ...”***

The Christian life is not an easy one!

e.g. Pilgrim's progress

- *narrow path to follow*
- *giant to intimidate and capture him*
- *distractions to divert him*
- *enemies who would destroy him*
- *difficult decisions to test him*

David faced one such difficult decision in 1 Samuel chapter 27. He is under enormous pressure and there doesn't seem to be a way out.

# ***“Lead us not into temptation ...”***

Us too: What is the way out?

- applied for jobs ... but nothing is offered ...
- bills keep piling up and money is short ...
- ill health seems to go on and on ...
- homeland in a terrible state ... emigrate?
- young person getting older each year, no future partner seems to be provided ...

... what is the way out?

OR: lots of ***possible/dodgy*** ways out, but what is the way of faith?

# ***“Lead us not into temptation ...”***

What is the way out?

- there are ways out that will probably work ...  
but is that the right thing to do?

??? Steal

??? Lie

??? Get into an unwise relationship

??? Give up “faith” altogether

➔ This is the sort of real dilemma that David faces

## ***Background info***

We have God's King over God's people in the time before Jesus came.

### ***King/anointed/Messiah/Christ***

- Saul: wrongly chosen, anointed, failed. Changeable, suspicious – losing grip
- David: God's chosen King, anointed, rejected, persecuted, “waiting”



➔ No short cut to the throne ... suffer and thus enter into his glory

# ***How we got to this ...***

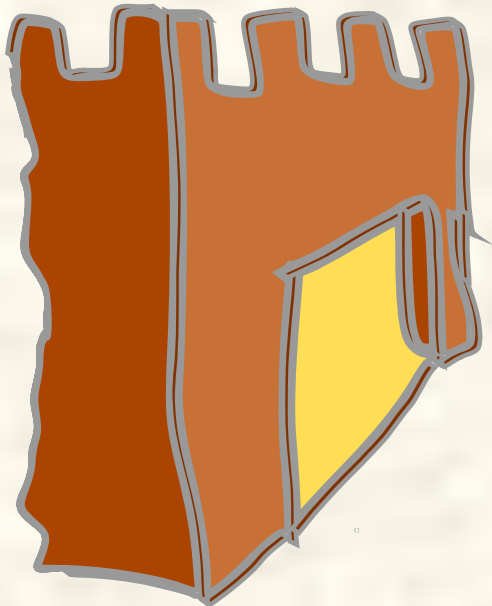
## **It's a long-running saga:**

- Saul became jealous of David:
- - “Saul has slain his thousands [of Philistines] but David his ten thousands”
- Saul has “searched/sought” to kill David with his spear (19:10), by his police (19:14)
- David has taken refuge with Achish Philistine King of Gath (21:10) – and had to pretend to be mad
- Saul has searched/sought David with his army x4 (23:8,14, 24:2, 26:2)
- David has refused the opportunity to kill Saul x2 (cave :24, water jug and spear :26)
- ➔ “enough is enough” ... lost patience

# *Tell the story in four parts*



- 1. What he said in his heart**
- 2. What he did with his feet**
- 3. His way of life**
- 4. The conclusion**



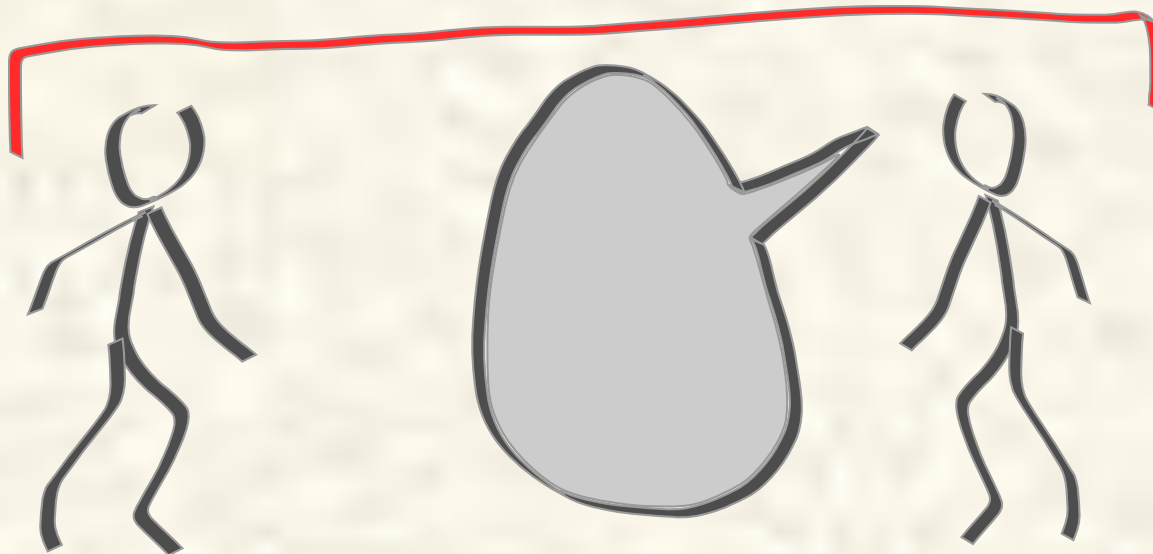
# ***1. What he said in his heart***

“But David thought to himself ...”

=“And David said in his heart ...”

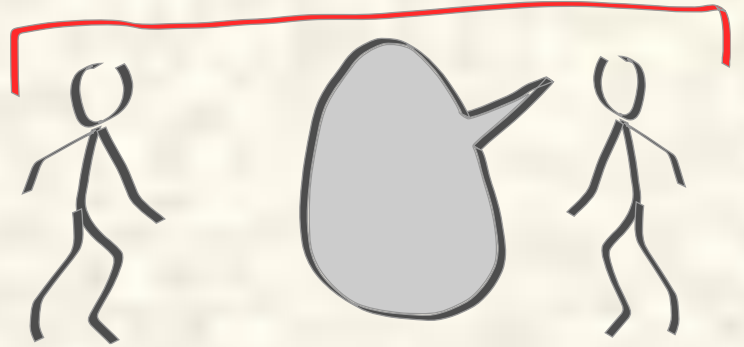
N.B. in the bible “heart” is not distinguished from “head”

- Heart = the core where deep motivations operate, plans are made.





# ***1. What he said in his heart***

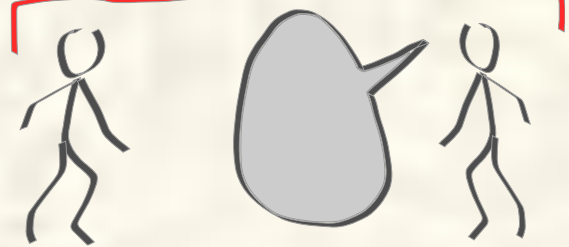


- “one day I will be **swept away** by the hand of Saul  
- there is nothing **good** other than **escape** speedily  
to the land of the Philistines ...”
- I’ll be swept away
  - Saul despair of **searching** for me
  - I shall **escape** from his hand”

Q: was he right or wrong to say that?



# 1. *What he said in his heart*



N.B. What we say to ourselves in our hearts is hugely important!

- foolish or wise ...

*“the fool has said in his heart ...” Psalm 53:1*

*“Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”*

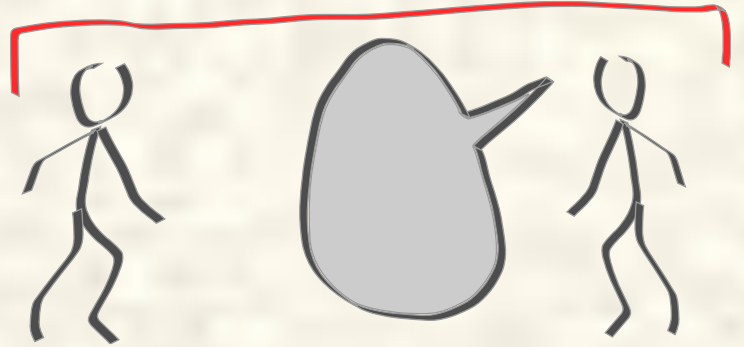
*Luke 12:13*

*“....[ ] treasured up these sayings in her heart”*

➔ *What we say in our hearts?*

# ***1. What he said in his heart***

**Was he right or wrong?**

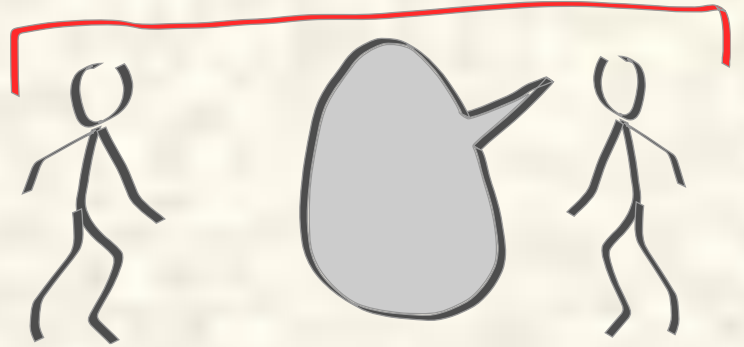


## ***Factors (1): previous experiences***

- *being anointed as King rather than shepherd*
- *being given the Kingly Spirit of the LORD*
- *defeating Goliath*
- *multiple narrow escapes (“just a step” 20:3)*
- ➔ *His love in times past forbids me to think ...*
- ➔ *the value of keeping a diary/journal ... and drawing the right conclusion*

# ***1. What he said in his heart***

**Was he right or wrong?**

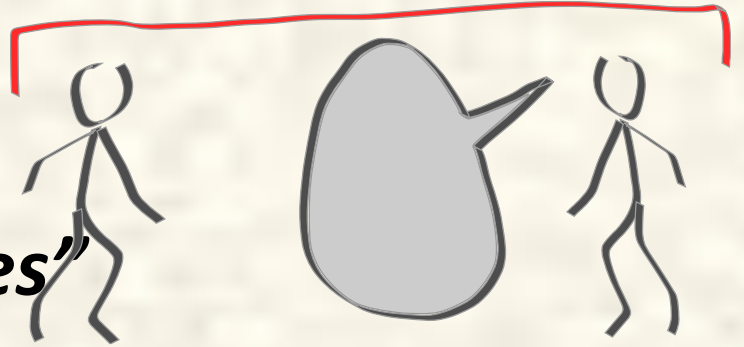


***Factors (2) : previous words***

- *Jonathan 20:15, 23:17 “you shall be king and I shall be second to you”*
- *Saul: “you will surely be King” 24:20, 26:25*
- *Abigail: “when the LORD has fulfilled every good thing he promised ...” 25:30*
- ➔ *The value of friends who tell you God’s promises*
- ➔ *the value of God’s promises!*

# ***1. What he said in his heart***

**Was he right or wrong?**



***Factors (3): present “realities”***

- *chronic pressure*
- *Saul’s determination and changeability*
- *sheer physical and mental frustration*
- *spiritual isolation*
- *seed thoughts 26:19*

***“we walk by faith and not by sight” 2 Cor 5:7***

***N.B. one voice that is not present?***

- *ephod meant?*
- *a significant omission.*

# ***1. What he said in his heart***

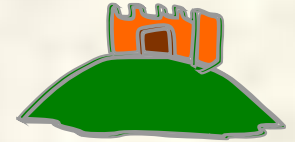
*"I will run away ..."*



- ➔ *The factors of this world are very strong ... sense, bodily/mental pain ... even God's providence*
- ➔ *Be very sympathetic, but really wonder whether this was a faith-based decision*
- ➔ *DO look back at what the LORD has done!*
- ➔ *DO remember what he has said*
- ➔ *DO gather encouragement of believing people*
- ➔ *DO pray and listen to God's voice*
- ➔ *"lead us not into temptation ..."*

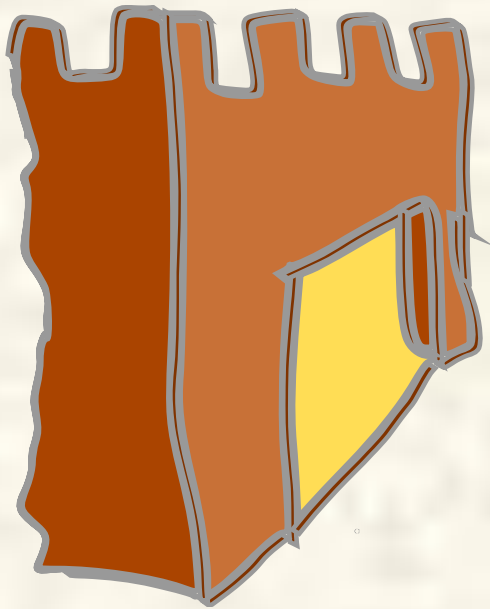


## ***2. What he did with his feet***



*“I will run away ...”*

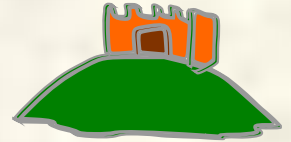
*Saul’s #1 enemy is welcomed by his other #1 enemy  
- “settled in Gath with Akish” 27:2*




*And it worked! 27:4 = Saul stopped searching*



## 2. *What he did with his feet*

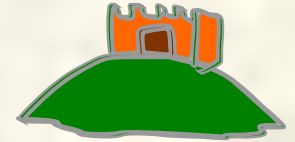


David: *Could I get somewhere away from the action... Ziklag? (27:5)*  
*- which sounds polite and convincing ...*

- ➔ *Point out “the best of men are men at best”*
- ➔ *David is capable of great inconsistency (c.f.Ps)*
- ➔ *for all his achievements and blessing he is just a forgiven sinner ... a work in progress.*
- ➔ *Don’t put him (or anyone else) on a pedestal*
- ➔ *The only person to put on a pedestal is Jesus himself.*



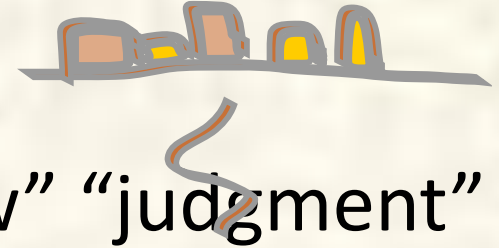
## 2. *What he did with his feet*



*Escape to Ziklag*

- ➔ *It all worked ...*
- ➔ *most scary part. God did not intervene this time*
- ➔ *E.g. Jonah... found a ship to Tarshish*
- ➔ *E.g. the villagers who begged Jesus to go away ...  
he did!*
- ➔ *God does not always rescue us from our rashness*
- ➔ *“watch and pray that you may not enter  
temptation”*

### 3. *His way of life*



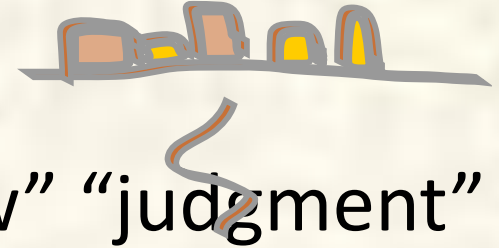
His “mishpat” v.11

- usually means something like “law” “judgment”
- usually positive

#### a. **heartlessness, ruthlessness**

- raiding and looting historic enemies of Israel
- killing all (v.9) (even the Amalekites didn't!)
- politically vital
- was that right? Unavoidable?
- ➔ later on he could do more heartless, ruthless things to Uriah the Hittite
- ➔ maybe better not to get used to such?

### ***3. His way of life***



His “mishpat” v.11

- usually means something like “law” “judgment”
- usually positive

#### **b. Constant deception**

- to Akish: I raided Israelite towns (v.10)
- Akish trusts David v.12 (“he must stink in Israel”)
- ➔ David getting used to deceptive pragmatism ...  
not a good thing to get used to ..
- ➔ This might have unforeseen consequences ...

## 4. conclusion



Except it isn't a conclusion ... it's a cliff hanger

- Akish is gathering for a decisive battle against Israel (28:1)

- "you must come with me": David headed for disaster

- Saul is also headed for disaster (see next chapter)

- the only person who isn't in a fix is the LORD God

- ➔ *He knows the end from the beginning*

- ➔ *He knows our folly and our weakness, our mess and our muddle*

- ➔ *He still keeps his promises*

- ➔ *Good or what?*

## ***Review***

### **1. What he said in his heart**

- factors: experience, achievements, encouragements. “realities” no prayer

### **2. What he did with his feet**

- he ran away: it worked ... in a way

### **3. His way of life**

- no option apart from ruthlessness and deception → dangerous place, consequences

### **4. The conclusion**

- David is in a fix. But God is not.