

Some questions in interpreting 1 Samuel 21-22

1. **What is the writer(s) purpose in these stories?** To generate empathy for David and opposition to Saul? To show that David is always protected by YHWH? To entertain the audience with suspenseful stories?
2. **Why does David go to Nob?** Does he already know Ahimelech? What is his true purpose in asking for bread and a sword?
3. **In the dialogue between David and Ahimelech,** what is “really” going on? Is David deceiving Doeg? Or are David and Ahimelech conspiring to deceive Doeg, agent of Saul?
4. **Who are the “young men” that Ahimelech assumes are with David?**
5. **Why the “holy” or “show” bread exchange?** Is it really about food or a symbol of something else?
6. **Why is Doeg introduced in the middle of the dialogue?** What is Doeg relationship with YHWH and/or Saul? What is his role in the Saulide court?
7. **What is Goliath’s sword doing hidden in a cloth in Nob?** Why does David take it? (it is never mentioned again)
8. **Why does David leave Nob and go to King Achish of Gath, a Philistine?** Why does David feign insanity when his fame is recognized by Achish’s men?
9. **After leaving Gath, why does David hide in the cave of Adullam?**
10. **How are all the locations and intentions being conveyed to others?** What communication network is implied?
11. **Why, after gathering a band of the oppressed and marginalized, does David leave Adullam and to Mizpeh of Moab?** (recall 12.9)
12. **Who is “the prophet Gad”** and where did he come from? (again at 2 Samuel 24.11-18)
13. **Why, when told by Gad to “go into the land of Judah” does David to to “the forest of Hereth”?**
14. After Saul rages paranoically to his gathered servants, **why does Doeg report on David’s meeting with Ahimelech?**
15. When Saul questions him, **why does Ahimelech stand up for his relationship with David?**
16. **How are we supposed to imagine Doeg single-handedly killing 85 priests and the rest of the city of Nob while one escapes?**