

## ***1<sup>st</sup> Samuel Chapter 23***

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Booker T. Washington; Up From Slavery. *“I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.”*

- Measured by this standard, David was a successful man. He’s been on the run, a fugitive for almost 10 years while at the same time fighting the Lord’s battles and delivering Israel from her enemies.
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V: 1 The Philistines attack the city of Keilah to rob the threshing floors – sounds like the book of Judges all over again.

(Map) Keilah (fortress) a walled city with gates, was a border town, about 4 miles from the Cave of Adullam, and 10 miles from the Philistine city of Gath. A vulnerable place, especially after the harvest seasons.

- The Philistines are perennial enemies of Israel, waiting until after the harvest coming in after the hard work is done to steal the fruit of their labor.
- The people go to David as opposed to Saul. David was a shepherd accustomed to protecting the sheep.

V: 2 David hears the news, perceives the need – and inquires of the Lord.

- Just because we see the apparent need doesn’t automatically mean that it is God’s will, so wisely David asks.
- We read later in V: 6 that the priest Abiathar was there with a linen ephod, priestly garments containing the Urim & Thummim – so no doubt David is inquiring of the Lord through the priest.
- God responds and directs David to smite the Philistines and save Keilah.
- The first step to knowing God’s will is simply to ask.

V: 3-5 David’s men aren’t so sure, it doesn’t make sense that if you’re hiding out to go out and pick a fight with someone else.

- So David asks again and God again answers him, assuring him of victory.
- In obedience, David and his men go out and fight the Philistines, smite them with a great slaughter, spoiling them, and Keilah is saved.
- Obedience to God’s word is the path to victory!

**Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 7** “<sup>1</sup>And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: <sup>2</sup>And all these blessing shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.” – “<sup>7</sup>The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.”

V: 6 Abiathar – the lone surviving priest – brought the ephod with him, meaning he intended to act in the capacity of the priest.

- The linen ephod, vest with the 12 precious stones that represented the 12 tribes of Israel, made with a pouch behind it containing the urim and thummim (lights and perfections) presumably a white and black stone, yes and no answers from God to their questions.

V: 7-8 Saul hears that David and his men are in Keilah and declares that “**God hath delivered him into my hand...**”

- This is a self-deceived presumption on Saul’s part, at this point God is not seeking to bless him or give him victory over David.
- Saul wouldn’t kill all the Amalekites, but he would kill all the priests. Saul wouldn’t go to help the people of Keilah against the Philistines, but he would take an army to kill David.

V: 9-12 David knew that Saul was plotting against him, so David summons Abiathar with the ephod and once again inquires of the Lord.

- David isn’t just concerned for himself, he’s concerned for his men and for the city of Keilah and it’s inhabitants, even if they would betray him.
- These things could have been taken for granted, David has saved the city and it’s inhabitants, out of gratitude it could be assumed that David would be safe.

**Proverbs 3:6** “**In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.**”

- David asks and the Lord answers two times, which speaks of a good relationship.

V: 13-15 David and his men, now increased to 600 – possibly increased more defections from Saul or by those in Keilah who were now loyal to David, leave / escape from Keilah.

- Saul hearing that David is no longer there doesn’t bother to attack the city.

- David moves to the wilderness of Ziph. (Map)

Key phrase: “<sup>14</sup>*but God...*”

**1 John 4:4** “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome the : because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

- Saul is trying to catch David and try as he might he never does. Because God hasn't delivered him into his hands.

Jesus said:

**John 15:5** “... *apart from Me ye can do nothing.*”

V: 16-18 Jonathan seemingly knows right where to go.

- Jonathan strengthened David's hand in God.
- True friends always point us towards Jesus or somehow strengthen us in our walk.
- Jonathan exhorts and encourages David with the same word that Jesus so often repeated.

“*Fear not...*” You shall be king – just like God said.

- Jonathan is affirming God's word to David – always a good thing to do!

**John 14:26-27** “<sup>26</sup>But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. <sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

- God's word brings comfort, confidence, and peace, we should encourage each other in God's word continually.
- Again they swore friendship and loyalty to each other, and parted company for what would be the last time.

V: 19-24 The Ziphites attempt to inform Saul of David's whereabouts.

(Map) Hachilah & Jeshimone = the wilderness area East of Ziph.

**Psalm 35:7** “For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.”

- “<sup>21</sup>Blessed be ye of the Lord...” – I don't think so...

V:22 "... and who hath seen him there?..." – Saul is thinking vengeance and retribution.

- They agree to work for Saul to find David and inform him of his whereabouts.
- But David and his men were already gone.
- Map / wilderness of Maon.
- First the people of Keilah, now the Ziphites – what's up with these people seemingly turning on, or turning in David? They were probably very afraid – Saul had just wiped out the priestly city of Nob for supposedly helping David, they knew that if the priests of the Lord weren't safe neither were they.

V: 25-26 Saul pursues David into the wilderness of Maon, then they end up encamped on opposite sides of the mountain.

- Deep ravine / cliff in between these two opposing forces.
- Just about the time when Saul's troops were about to encircle David when V: 27

V: 27-28 In the middle of their search, Saul receives word that the Philistines are on the attack and leaves off his pursuit of David.

- This was a close call for David and his men.

**Psalm 54** commemorates God's deliverance: ([turn to / read](#))

V: 29 (Map) David moves onto the strong holds / caves of Engedi. (The place of wild goats)

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## *1 Samuel Chapter 24*

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V: 1-3 After dealing with the Philistines Saul returns to chasing David, taking 3,000 men – a formidable force for 1 man or 600.

- Saul enters into a cave along the way to "cover his feet" meaning to take a nap or get some rest and relief from the heat, it just so happens that David and his men are "chillin" in the same cave.
- As you enter into those caves from the outside, it's pitch black – very difficult to see; but if you are already in the cave and your eyes have adjusted to the dark and especially as you are looking from the inside towards the outside – you see everything. Saul was at a great disadvantage.

V: 4-8 David's men want or at least encourage him to take advantage of their seeming good fortune and slay Saul.

- David uses this as an example to demonstrate to Saul that he really doesn't want to harm him and only cuts off a portion of the hem of his garment while he's unaware.
- The hem of the garment the decorative border was a symbol of authority and power. David immediately regrets his action in cutting away part of the hem of Saul's robe.
- David recognizes that Saul was anointed by God and only God can deal with Saul in His time.

**Isaiah 28:16** "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

- God doesn't need our help!
- David had to hold his servants back, retrain them from killing Saul.

**Psalm 37:34** "Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."

- As Saul leaves the cave, David lets him get a little ways away and cries out after Saul.

V: 9-13 David asks Saul "why do you believe other men who say I want to hurt you?"

- Some men encouraged me to kill you but I wouldn't, I spared your life because you are God's "anointed".
- "My father" – a term of subservience and respect; you are the father, I am and son yielded to your authority.
- David offers Saul proof that he doesn't want to harm him: he had come close enough to kill Saul, but instead cut off a portion of the hem of his garment – which he now held up in his hand for Saul to see.
- David pleads his case, that he's done nothing against Saul, yet he's hunted down to be killed.
- "*Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked*" = an old Jewish proverb that simply means that character is revealed by conduct.
- "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee..."
- God will be the judge, my hand will not be upon thee.

V: 14-15 David further abases himself – who is the king of Israel chasing – a dead dog, a flea?

- All this drama, all this hullabaloo over a flea?
- Again, the Lord judge between us and plead my cause, he will deliver me out of your hand.
- 2 X's now David has appealed to God's judgment in this matter, committing himself to God's judgment.

Peter records the same thing about Jesus:

**1 Peter 2:21-23** <sup>21</sup>“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: <sup>22</sup>Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: <sup>23</sup>Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously:”

V: 16 Apparently Saul is convicted by his sinful behavior and weeps, but more probably its just another erratic mood swing, he'll be out after David again soon enough.

- This teaches us that tears don't always mean very much.
- He's weeping but he's not repenting – he's not crying out to God for forgiveness, he's just crying – lots of crazy people do that...

**2 Corinthians 7:10** “For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

V: 17-20 Saul admits that David is more righteous than himself, he's having a moment of clarity.

- You've spared my life, something that an enemy would not do.
- This is somehow proof to Saul that David will in fact be king and that the kingdom will be established in his hand.

V: 21-22 Knowing that David will be king, Saul asks the same thing as Jonathan, the lives of his family to be kept safe from revenge.

- Saul gives up the chase.
- We see this emotional response from Saul, but no real change. Another chapter or two down the road and he's back to trying to kill David.

**Joel 2:13** “And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.”

- It's not a matter of weeping and saying it with out lips – it's a matter of true repentance, then walking in it, living it out.
- David had won many battles, but one of his greatest victories occurred in that cave when he restrained himself and his men from killing Saul.

**Proverbs 16:32** “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”

**Psalms 130:5** “I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope.”