

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

PART I

STUDY NUMBER FIVE

1 Samuel 23:1-29

1 Samuel 24:1-22

Here are two Psalms for today's study:

Psalm 145:18-20

"The Lord is near to all who call upon Him; to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him. He will also hear their cry and will save them. The Lord keeps all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy."

Psalm 139:1-6

"O Lord, you have searched me and know me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up. You understand my thoughts from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it all. You enclosed me behind and before, and laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is too high. I cannot attain to it."

David is not the same guy you met last week. Sometimes people really get their lives together and as a result of that they are never the same. And after a cave experience like David had last week, he is not going to be the same man.

At the cave of Adullam David's life was really turned around.

It is like he has a new focus on the fact that God is capable of handling the circumstances in his life.

What a joy in this particular study to see David back in the center of God's will, walking in fellowship with Him; and with an obedient heart, following the divine plan.

Out of this particular time in his life, Psalm 31 is also written. And in Psalm 31:15 we read:

"My times are in Your hand"

In other words, you are leading, you are directing, it is yours Lord.

When we learn the three T's we finally get to the place where there is real joy and real victory.

- 1. Turn**
- 2. Trust**
- 3. Triumph**

When you Turn to the Lord in the midst of your trial and you Trust Him, you will Triumph every time. He has not lost one yet. He is always leading in triumph and it works every time.

Let's dig in and see what happens.

v. 1 When David was told, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors,"

Now Keilah is a little town about 2 or 3 miles from the cave of Adullam just a little bit south. Evidently when the Philistines came in to raid the city, one of the guys whipped up to the cave to give David a report in hopes David would do something about it. He and his 400 motley crew.

Remember, he has the distressed and the guys that are in debt and the guys that are discontented? So David has his crew there in the cave. And somebody comes up and said the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and of course, they are looting the threshing floors.

This is what they did. When the harvest was all in they would come and steal everything that had been reaped for their own sustenance. And also go to war and take over the city.

What would David from last week have done?

“Well, a need constitutes a call, let’s get after it and mop up that mess.”

David would just go blazing down there swords and all. Just clean this thing up. David is a military man. Just get after it, it’s time to go, let’s do it.

Verse 2, is great! That is the best statement in the whole study today.

v. 2 he inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" The Lord answered him, "Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah."

This is the first time in his life that he did this. David, “inquired of the Lord.” And, “*The Lord answered him*”

Now can I ask you something?

Are you so pickin’ practical that you say, “but no voices ever speak to me.”

Do you read the Word? God speaks through his Word. That is why you cannot afford to live a day of your life without spending some time in the word of God devotionally.

God speaks through his Word.

If you think you are just going to come and drop a prayer on Him and all the sudden and have a voice out of heaven say "it is time to go," you may be sitting there for a long time!

God will speak very clearly from His Word when you are in it on a regular, daily basis and you are reading and you are studying and you are praying and you are talking to Him.

The beautiful thing about David is that he is not going to get in a big hurry. He is tired of taking matters into his own hand and making such a mess out of it. He is just worn out. David has changed!

v. 3 But David's men said to him, "Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!"

There is a resistance on the part of David's men at this point. They are saying that to go to Keilah will only intensify their fears which they already have here in the land of Judah.

They are afraid of Saul and his forces and how much more if they go to Keilah against the enemy or Philistine forces.

These guys are staying put and The Lord is saying get out and fight.

I like David. He is going to go back and check signals with the Lord and be sure he got it right. He is not thrilled about arguing with 400 scared guys.

v. 4 Once again David inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him, "Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand."

The Lord comes back with a promise when you are scared.

Sometimes He asks you to do some pretty scary things.

You guys are going to win. So get after it.

v. 5 So David and his men went to Keilah, fought against the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah.

David has learned another thing and that is as soon as you know the will of God you are obedient. That's the best thing to do.

Now this is the first time the 400 motley crew have been in the war and they won their first game.

v. 6 (Now Abiathar son of Ahimelech had brought the ephod down with him when he fled to David at Keilah.)

Do you remember when Doeg massacred everybody at Nob and everyone was killed? Abiathar, the son of Ahimilech, was the only one who got away. He grabbed the ephod before he left and came down to stay with David. So Abiathar comes back into the study today.

And he has the ephod with him. The ephod is the high priestly garment. It is made of gold and scarlet and blue. It had gold chains to hold it together. It also had a breastplate with 12 stones on it representing the 12 tribes of Israel.

Involved in this ephod was also the Urim and the Thummim. That is two stones. Those two stones it is said by some scholars that when those stones were bright with light it was yes and when they were dark it was no.

So the ephod was always used to get direction from the Lord as to what should be done. And the high priest wore this ephod and he wore a linen britches or kind of a garment underneath. Usually it came down about to the waist.

v. 7 Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah and he said, "God has handed him over to me, for David

has imprisoned himself by entering a town with gates and bars."

About 18-19 miles up to the north from here is Gibea. That is where Saul is located. What is wrong with what Saul says here? He says, "God has handed him over to me." What is wrong with that?

You always test every statement against the plan, the purpose, and the promise of God.

And all three of those – plan, purpose, and promise to David are that he will never be given into Saul's hand.

David will be king. Since all of this is contrary to that then we have to say God is not speaking the truth or we have to say that Saul is not interpreting the circumstances properly.

Here's a big principle. Get this down. When you are out of the will of God, you are going to be ignorant of the ways of God.

You cannot properly interpret your circumstances if you are not in communion and fellowship with the Lord.

You will misinterpret them. You will think of them wrongly. You will relate to them wrongly.

And Saul is out of the will of God.

v. 8 And Saul called up all his forces for battle to go to Keilah to beseige David and his men.

v. 9 When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod."

David doesn't flee and fall apart in fear.

He just intelligently says, Abiathar, bring the ephod. We are going to discern what the Lord is doing in this.

v. 10 David said, "O Lord, God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me.

v. 11 Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O Lord, God of Israel, tell your servant. And the Lord said, "He will."

v. 12 Again David asked, "Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul?" And the Lord said, "They will."

When the word gets to David that Saul is plotting against him, he once again consults the Lord, asking some very specific questions. David was not willing to act on man's word alone. He wanted to hear it from God.

God had answered his second question, but not his first. So David asked the first one again. David wanted to know what would actually happen if he remained inside the walls of the city. And he finds out the truth; that the men of Keilah will betray him.

Can you believe that? It is bad enough to have to face an enemy, but it is even more difficult to be betrayed by friends.

v. 13 So David and his men, about six hundred in number, left Keilah and kept moving from place to place. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he did not go there.

v. 14 David stayed in the desert strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands.

The area described is about 11 miles south of Keilah. How wonderful and how faithful the Lord is! "Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands."

v.15 While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life.

v. 16 And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God.

When you trust in the Lord and you are just hanging in there and it is tough, God is going to bring somebody around to put their arm around you and encourage you, and lift you up.

But when you take it into your own hands and you are doing it on your own, you are going to miss all these special provisions because the Lord knows our needs and he knows just how to send people to you.

Jonathan, in coming to David on this mission, helped him how?

Verse 16 says, "He helped him find strength in God."

Here are all the Psalms that have the word "strength" in them.

Psalm 27:14

"Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for the Lord."

Psalm 28:6, 7

"Blessed be the Lord because He has heard the voice of my supplication. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him and I am helped. Therefore, my heart exalts; and with my song I shall thank Him."

Psalm 29:11

"The Lord will give strength to His people. The Lord will bless His people with peace."

Here is a good one:

Psalm 46:1

"God is our refuge and strength; an ever-present help in trouble."

Psalm 59:16

"But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength. Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, for You have been my stronghold and a refuge in the day of my distress."

Psalm 105:3-5

"Glory in His name. Let the heart of those who seek the Lord and be glad. Seek the Lord in His strength; seek His face continually. Remember His wonders which He has done, His marvels and the judgements uttered by His mouth."

Psalm 118:14

"The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation."

Strength, song, and salvation.

Psalm 138:3

**"On the day I called, You did answer me.
You did make me bold with strength in my soul."**

Psalm 147:5

**"Great is our Lord and abundant in strength.
His understanding is infinite."**

Now what does Jonathan say? You have to savor these words because these are the last recorded words of Jonathan in the scripture.

v. 17 "Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this."

Isn't that great, "Don't be afraid." Every time Jonathan has been around David he has been scared.

What outstanding words of faith expressed by Jonathan on this occasion. He once again refers to the certainty that David is safe and that ultimately he will be king over Israel.

v. 18 The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh.

Jonathan just came down, said a few words, encouraged old David, then 28 miles back to the house. And when they said goodbye, that was it. That is the last time these two guys see each other on the face of the earth.

v. 19 The Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeon and said, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hakilah, south of Jeshimon?"

Remember the people in Keilah betrayed him? Now even his own tribe is going to betray him. The Ziphites are from the tribe of Judah.

v. 20 Now, O king, come down whenever it pleases you to do so, and we will be responsible for handing him over to the king."

v. 21 Saul replied, "The Lord bless you for your concern for me.

Yuk, "The Lord bless you for your concern for me."

Coming from Saul who turned his back on God.

v. 22 Go and make further preparation. Find out where David usually goes and who has seen him there. They tell me he is very crafty.

v. 23 Find out about all the hiding places he uses and come back to me with definite information. Then I will go with you; if he is in the area, I will track him down among all the clans of Judah."

v. 24 So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the Desert of Maon, in the Arabah south of Jeshimon.

They went 6-8 miles even further down than Ziph. They were way down there in the wilderness.

v. 25 Saul and his men began the search, and when David was told about it, he went down to the rock and stayed in the Desert of Maon. When Saul heard this, he went into the Desert of Maon in pursuit of David.

v. 26 Saul was going along one side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his forces were closing in on David and his men to capture them,

v. 27 a messenger came to Saul saying, "Come quickly! The Philistines are raiding the land."

God does it every time. Providential circumstances, yes! Coincidence, no. They can get close but God's timing will be perfect. David is going to be delivered.

How perfect is God's timing!

v. 28 The Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to meet the Philistines. That is why they call this place Sela Hammahlekoth.

v. 29 And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.

Now before we go on to the rest of this study let's think about some things.

- 1. God has made tremendous provision for David's needs. He has taken care of him.**
- 2. And we have seen the blessing of friends who come to encourage. Are you doing that? Are you ministering to others in a positive and affirming way?**
- 3. And then we saw Jonathan's last statement. I want to repeat it so you can keep it in your mind. 'Don't be afraid,' he said. 'My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this.'"**

CHAPTER 24: v. 1

This chapter should be titled LOVE YOUR ENEMIES. Here is David's first opportunity to take Saul's life. He is going to get another chance in chapter 26.

24: v. 1 After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the Desert of En Gedi."

v. 2 So Saul took three thousand men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Craggs of the Wild Goats.

Three thousand men versus six hundred. That is not very good statistics. "Craggs of the Wild Goats" means that is very rugged territory.

v. 3 He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave.

These are gigantic caves. They found one cave down there that they believe that 30,000 people at one time were saved from a violent storm by getting into it.

So David and his men are way back in the cave.

Saul comes into the cave all alone to take a little afternoon siesta here and is unaware of David and his men hiding in the back of the cave.

v. 4 The men said, "This is the very day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

From a human perspective it all seemed logical. Saul had tried to pin David to the wall several times, sent him to battle, hoping he would be killed, and now he chased him all over the country.

What an opportunity to avenge himself. It seemed too good to be true. His men watched him slip up to Saul with a knife in his hand. They expected to see David stab Saul in the back. Imagine how surprised they were to see David just cut off a piece of his robe.

What is this telling you when he cuts off the corner of his robe? It is telling you David has learned even a bigger lesson. And that is he is going to wait for God's timing.

He will not make the mistake again of taking matters into his own hands. If he had killed Saul, his kingdom would have been in jeopardy, he would have never probably written another Psalm, and that one decision could have been fatal for him.

But he is going to wait even if it is going to take ten years for the Lord to put him where he needs to be.

Faith will always wait on God.

Abraham, that great father of faith, was strong in faith, giving glory to God, that what God had promised He was able also to perform. It took him 25 years but he held that little baby in his arms at a time when both he and Sarah were past the ability to bear.

v. 5 Afterwards, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe.

v. 6 He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord."

Right away David regrets this. You can imagine the embarrassment to Saul. He gets up from his nap, rolls up his sleeping bag, grabs his robe in the darkness and ends up with a miniskirt. He walks out with a big gash in his royal robe.

v. 7 With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

I think there is a greater miracle than the fact that David did not kill Saul when he had a chance and that is the fact that he restrained 600 men that were ready and smelling blood. That is a tremendous

demonstration of leadership. Those guys respected his authority.

v. 8 "Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

Complete respect for authority.

v. 9 He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you'?"

v. 10 This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed.'

David makes it quite clear that the Lord is the one who delivered Saul into his hand, and he also makes it clear that he was urged by his men to take the opportunity to destroy Saul.

v. 11 See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. Now understand and recognize that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life.

v. 12 May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you.

In this verse David expresses a two-fold wish from the Lord:

**that the Lord will be the one that will judge between them
and that the Lord will avenge the wrongs that Saul has done to David.**

And then David says, "But my hand will not touch you."

v. 13 As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you.

**v. 14 Against whom has the king of Israel come out?
Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea?**

There are four questions in this verse:

- 1. Against whom has the king of Israel come out?**
- 2. Whom are you pursuing?**
- 3. A dead dog?**
- 4. A flea?**

v. 15 May the Lord be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it. May he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand."

There is a three-fold wish in this 15th verse:

1. That the Lord be our judge and decide between us.

2. That he consider my cause and uphold it.

3. He vindicate me by delivering me from your hand.

v. 16 When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" His response to this question is "He wept aloud."

Lots of tears but no real repentance. You have to watch it. Sometimes people will cry when they are confronted with wrong things but they are still just as stubborn as the dickens.

Saul is the one man who never learned to really repent.

v. 17 You are more righteous than I." he said. "You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly.

v. 18 You have just now told me of the good you did to me; the Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me.

Now he finally says it. It has been completely reversed. Early in the study it was “the Lord has delivered him into my hand” and now at the end of the study he really sees it. The Lord is on your side; “the Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me.”

v. 19 When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today.

v. 20 I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.

This is the first time that Saul acknowledges that David is going to be the king.

v. 21 Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family."

v. 22 So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

At En Gedi and the curtain drops on today's study.

There are a couple of things that really stand out before we review the lessons.

The first critical thing that stands out is that David is learning to let God lead. That is so important. David is learning to let God lead.

And then secondly he is finding safety in never taking matters into his own hands.

He does not kill Saul. He restrains himself at this point. He is not going to take matters into his own hands. He is going to let the Lord judge; he is going to let the Lord take care of all of this.

Lessons Learned In The Life Of David:

STUDY NUMBER FIVE - 1 Samuel 23:1-24:22

LESSON #1: It is always safest to inquire of the Lord before moving into action.

LESSON #2: Fear brings a snare but whoso puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

LESSON #3: When we are obedient, God gives the victory.

LESSON #4: When you are out of God's will, you will not interpret circumstances properly.

LESSON #5: The Lord protects David through all of Saul's pursuits.

LESSON #6: Jonathan strengthens David in God.

LESSON #7: Be careful when you are following the advice of a crowd.

LESSON #8: David experiences victory in self-control.

Lessons Learned In The Life Of David

PART I

STUDY NUMBER FIVE - 1 Samuel 23:1-24:22

23:v. 1 When David was told, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors,"

v. 2 he inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" The Lord answered him, "Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah."

v. 3 But David's men said to him, "Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!"

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v. 5 So David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah.

v. 6 (Now Abiathar son of Ahimelech had brought the ephod down with him when he fled to David at Keilah.)

v. 7 Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah, and he said, "God has handed him over to me, for David has imprisoned himself by entering a town with gates and bars."

v. 8 And Saul called up all his forces for battle, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men.

v. 9 When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod."

v.10 David said, "O Lord, God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me.

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v.18 The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh.

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v.20 Now, O king, come down whenever it pleases you to do so, and we will be responsible for handing him over to the king."

v.21 Saul replied, "The Lord bless you for your concern for me.

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v.24 So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the Desert of Maon, in the Arabah south of Jeshimon.

v.25 Saul and his men began the search, and when David was told about it, he went down to the rock and stayed in the Desert of Maon. When Saul heard this, he went into the Desert of Maon in pursuit of David.

v.26 Saul was going along one side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his forces were closing in on David and his men to capture them,

v.27 a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Come quickly! The Philistines are raiding the land."

v.28 Then Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to meet the Philistines. That is why they call this place Sela Hammahlekoth.

v.29 And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.

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v. 3 He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave.

v. 4 The men said, "This is the very day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

v. 5 Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe.

v. 6 He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord."

v. 7 With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

v. 8 Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

v. 9 He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you?'"

v.10 This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed.'

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QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Samuel 23:1-24:22 several times and in your own words outline what is happening in the life of David.**
- 2. How does David discern the Lord's direction in his life, according to 23:1-6?**
- 3. What does Saul plan to do, according to verses 7 & 8?**
- 4. Who is the One protecting and directing David, according to verse 14?**
- 5. What does Jonathan do for David in verses 16-18?**
- 6. How is David delivered from Saul, according to verses 27 & 28?**
- 7. Why does David not take the life of Saul when he has a chance in 24:5-7?**
- 8. What is Saul's response to David's gracious deliverance, according to 24:17-21?**
- 9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**