

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

- 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 Philistines forces!"
- 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."
- 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.
- 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."
- 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.
- 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.
- 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."

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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 chosen men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crags of the Wild Goats.

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 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."

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.'
- 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.
- 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?"
- 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."
- v. 16 When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 139:1-6

"O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou dost know when I sit down and when I rise up. Thou dost understand my thought from afar. Thou dost 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, thou dost know it all. Thou hast enclosed me behind and before, and laid Thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is too high. I cannot attain to it."

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.

What is a good TITLE for this chapter?

LEARNING TO LOOK TO GOD
FROM FEAR TO FAITH
LOOKING FOR THE MIND OF GOD
BETRAYED

Being in the cave for awhile has once again helped David to focus his mind and heart on the Lord rather than on his own skills and abilities. He had a lot of quiet hours to think and reflect, and he realized that he had blown it--taken matters into his own hands and made a mess of things.

You know, when we study David's life, we have one great advantage, because we can look at it in retrospect. We can see it all--especially how the purpose of God was so wonderfully fulfilled.

At this particular time David didn't know anything of his great future except by faith. In fact, it didn't look too bright right now, but God was shaping his life. He was learning to look to the Lord.

We too are going to share a throne with the King of Kings one day, but right now we have to live toward that day by faith. This is our training and preparation time.

Psalm 54:1-7

"Save me, O God, by Thy name, and vindicate me by thy power. Hear my prayer, O God, give ear to the words of my mouth, for strangers have risen against me, and violent men have sought my life. They have not set God before them. Behold, God is my helper. The Lord is the sustainer of my soul. He will recompense the evil to my foes, destroy them in Thy faithfulness. Willingly I will sacrifice to Thee. I will give thanks to Thy name, O Lord, for it is good; for He has delivered me from all trouble, and my eye has looked with satisfaction upon my enemies."

Redpath points out, "At this point in his experience, David wrote at least three psalms: the 27th, the 31st, and the 54th. Others may also have been written at this time but these three sum up the spiritual conflict that was going on in his heart. They show what was shaping his life to make him a man of God."

"My times are in Thy hand" (Psalm 31:15), and that means that in this moment of adversity and trial, David knew that all the question marks of his life were in the hand of God. He knew it was impossible to be in God's hand and in the enemy's hand at the same time. The gloom begins to disappear and fear departs as faith emerges in glorious triumph. This man is rising out of his testing and adversity to learn to put his utter dependence on the Lord. If you begin with God, your enemies grow small. "If you begin with the enemy, you may never reach God. If you begin with Him, the problems begin to dwindle. If you begin with the problems, you never get through to God. Think of that and apply it to your life, in your adversity and testing."

Getz points out, "Following David's period of deep distress and fear which caused him to take matters into his own hands and woefully make a mess of things, he emerged from the cave of Adullam a different man. While hiding there from Saul, he had many quiet hours to think and reflect on his bizarre and deceitful behavior. It was there he no doubt had a unique encounter with his Lord."

Joseph Addison says,

"How are thy servants blessed, O Lord,
How sure is their defense.
Eternal wisdom is their guide,
Their help omnipotence."

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

Keilah is about 3 or 4 miles southeast of Adullam, and evidently someone from that city or some close friend came with a report that the Philistines were fighting against the city and were looting the threshing floors, meaning that they were getting the harvested grain to sustain them.

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."

Boy, do we ever love to hear what we hear in this verse! "HE INQUIRED OF THE LORD." David and the Lord are back on speaking terms again, and out of this fellowship and oneness he asks the Lord, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines?"

Because David is in fellowship with the Lord and walking with Him, the Lord answers him, "Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah."

News reached David that the Philistines had come against Keilah. He asked the Lord whether he should go and fight them. In spite of the fact that David was being hunted and persecuted, he loved his own people and was not so engrossed in his own problems that he forgot theirs.

Luis Palau makes an interesting observation: "If David had applied this same principle to his domestic life, how different his family history might have been. David committed his military decisions to the Lord but he neglected to consult God regarding marriage. He simply didn't pray about the women in his life. And that severely crippled his effectiveness for God. This has happened to many people, not just to David. People will pray about a job, a church, unsaved relatives, and the Sunday School lesson, but when it comes to choosing a girlfriend or a boyfriend, they think, That's my choice. God doesn't have to be involved, so they refuse or carefully neglect to speak to the Lord about this portion of their lives. In Proverbs we read, 'Above all that you guard, watch over your heart, for out of it are the sources of life' (Proverbs 4:23)."

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.

David got his answer and tells his men, but they don't want to go. They couldn't go with just David's faith. They had to have their own. So David inquires again for them. Here he is teaching his men to believe in God, personally and directly.

We don't have victory on the basis of another person's faith. We have to live by the faith that God gives and not just what someone else says. Faith is personal and given to us personally by the Holy Spirit which indwells each believer.

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, in his answer the second time to David in verse 4, expands upon the command by giving a promise to alleviate their fears. "Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand."

The Lord is saying, "I'm going to go with you, and I'm going to give you the victory; so you need not fear. I'm going to intervene in this situation.

Getz points out, "David's 400 men, a motley crew, responded to this challenge with tremendous hesitation and fear. From a human perspective we can understand why these men were so fearful. First, they weren't first-class soldiers. In fact, they were classified 3-D. Scripture records that 'Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented, gathered to join David in the cave of Adullam.' "

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.

The result of the Lord's command and promise is found in David's obedience. He and his men went to Keilah; and the Lord being faithful to His promise, causes David's men to be successful in inflicting heavy losses on the Philistines and saving 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.)

You will remember that Abiathar was the lone survivor of the massacre of the priests at Nob. He fled to David, and David told him to stay with him because the same man who was looking to take his life was also looking for David. He also promised that he would be safe with him.

The EPHOD was a sacred vestment originally designed for the high priest and made of gold, blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, held together by two shoulder pieces and a skillfully woven band which served as a girdle for the ephod. On the shoulder pieces were two onyx stones on which were engraved the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. It is not known whether the ephod extended below the hips or only to the waist. Attached to the ephod by chains of pure gold was a breastplate containing 12 precious stones in four rows. Underneath the ephod was the blue robe of the ephod extending to the feet of the priest.

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."

This is about an 18-19 mile trip for Saul from Gibeah if he plans on going to Keilah.

What Saul says is inconsistent with the Father's PLAN, PROMISE and PURPOSE. David has been anointed as the next king, and so what is now being perpetrated by Saul is not consistent with that promise and that plan.

Saul's system of espionage was at work tracking David. Word got to Saul that David was at Keilah, and he orders his soldiers to get him. He doesn't even consider the fact that David has just defended part of the king's country, and he even has the gall to say that "God has delivered him into my hand" in verse 7.

Winter points out, "Why did Saul think he could catch David in Keilah. A man is hard to catch in the open fields. Those who are skilled in guerrilla tactics can slip off into the woods, hide in the caves or literally blend into the landscape. A group of men in a city are easier to catch. Saul evidently thought David had made a tactical mistake in going into a city which had gates and bars. If Saul could only besiege the city, set watchmen at the walls and block the gates, then it would be impossible for David to escape. Even if Saul could not fight his way into the city, he could lay a siege and starve David and his men until they were forced to surrender."

Epp points out, "Saul said, 'God has delivered into my hand, for he is shut in by entering into a town that has gates and bars.' This was Saul speaking, a man who had been so disobedient to God that the Spirit of God had departed from him. We must always be careful of our interpretation of circumstances. If our wills are not wholly given over to the Lord, we are bound to misinterpret the circumstances surrounding us."

There is a principle involved here that **WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF THE WILL OF GOD, YOU ARE IGNORANT OF THE WAYS OF GOD.**

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

Saul is going to make an all-out effort on this occasion to apprehend David at Keilah.

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

On the first occasion that we see David operating in this chapter, he dialogues with the Lord. Now he asks for the priest to 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.

Here David, as he speaks to the Lord, tells Him that he has heard word that Saul is coming and is going to destroy the city of Keilah just because David and his men are there.

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."

Here David asks two questions:

1. Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me?
2. Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard?

And the end of the verse 11 is in response to David's words:

"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."

Pink points out, "And the Lord said, 'They will deliver thee up.' This must have been saddening to David's heart for base ingratitude wounds deeply. Yet, let us not forget that the kindness of other friends, whom the Lord often unexpectedly raises up, counterbalances the ingratitude and fickleness of those we have served."

Vos points out, "The inhabitants would give up to save themselves. This revelation sounds like horrible ingratitude after what David had just done for them. But no doubt, the memory of the Nob massacre was fresh in the minds of the people of Keilah. They knew Saul was perfectly capable of pulling down the walls, burning the city, and killing all of its inhabitants. David and his force, which had now grown to 600, withdrew from Keilah and wandered about."

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.

The treachery of the people of Keilah was like that of Judas. David had risked his life to save the town from the Philistines. You would think that they would be grateful, but evidently they had no sense of honor. They would do the thing they thought best for their own self-interest.

We can really sit back and talk about how awful they are, but not so fast. Judas and the people are not the only ones who betray the rightful king.

In business and social life, there comes almost every day opportunities to stand for Christ against his enemies. But how often for fear of man or in the hope of gaining favor or making money will a child of God, like a coward, betray the Lord by an act or by a laugh, or worst of all, by silence when he should speak. Guilty, anyone?

David looked for God's mind in every step. He told Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod. Abiathar was the only member of the priestly house of Eli who escaped from the massacre instituted by Saul. He brought with him the ephod which was some kind of cloak that the priest of Israel wore. The high priest also wore a breastplate which contained 12 stones, each stone representing one of the tribes of Israel. Then there were two stones called Urim and Thummin, by which the will of God was determined. Just how this was done is not clear but some scholars believe that the priests would pray to God, ask the necessary questions. If the answer was yes, the stones would shine brightly. If the answer was no, the stones would become dark.

Regardless of how God communicated then, He communicates with us through his Word, and with illumination in our souls and joy as we walk in His will.

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.

A guided life is dependent upon a clean heart. If we ask for wisdom and want it for the purpose of continuing in the will of God, He will give it to us. But on the other hand, if we want it so that we might sit in judgement and decide whether we want to do the will of God or not, then God will not show us.

John 7:17

"If any man is willing to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself."

I imagine that David was pretty heartbroken that the men of Keilah were so disloyal to him.

Pink points out, "Great must have been the temptation to put an end to Saul's persecution by the use of force. He was a skilled leader; had six hundred men under him, and he might easily have employed strategy, lured his enemy into a trap, fallen upon and slain him. Instead, he possessed his soul and patience, walked in God's ways and waited God's time. And the Lord honored this, as the sequel shows."

Psalm 27:11-14

"Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a level path because of my foes. Do not deliver me over to the desire of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for the Lord."

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 here is about 11 miles southeast of Keilah, or 15 miles from Adullam.

How wonderful and how faithful the Lord is! "Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands."

How different this is from Saul's interpretation of events back in verse 7: "God has handed him over to me."

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

Now Saul has definitely, with his men, taken the long trip south. He is trying to track down in the Desert of Ziph to take his life.

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

How perfect the timing! How precious the provision!

Jonathan, in coming to David on this mission, has probably had to travel about 28 miles from home, and he will have to travel 28 miles back after he finishes this time with David.

Our text says, "He helped him find strength in God."

How is this done? --

Isaiah 40:31

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

Philippians 4:13

"I am ready for anything through the strength of the One who indwells me."

Colossians 1:11

"Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

Psalms 27:14

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

Psalms 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."

Psalms 29:11

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

Psalms 46:1

"God is our refuge and strength; a very presence help in trouble."

Psalms 59:16

"But as for me, I shall sing of thy strength. Yes, I shall joyfully sing of thy lovingkindness in the morning, for thou hast 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."

Psalm 138:3

"On the day I called, thou didst answer me. Thou didst make me bold with strength in my soul."

Psalm 147:5

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

Thank heaven for friends! "He encouraged him in God." How great. These two friends parted forever here until they met again in heaven.

"And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken."

Winter points out, "Jonathan's strengthening of David was primarily in God. One might expect such encouragement to be the function of the prophet or the priest but the covenant between Jonathan and David had been a sacred vow. The flight of David was even worse than he had anticipated, and Jonathan's coming to him have him a great deal of reassurance. He was strengthened to know that Jonathan had not forgotten. This knowledge would be an immense boost to David's morale."

Laney points out, "These verses record the last meeting between David and his loyal friend Jonathan. There in the wilderness at Horesh Jonathan sought out and encouraged David, assuring him that he would be the next king over Israel. Jonathan exemplifies the attitude of servanthood Paul encourages in Philippians 2:3-11. Although he knew his position as Saul's heir to the throne, Jonathan was content to take second place to God's

anointed king, David. Before parting, the two friends renewed the covenant that had been made earlier. In Proverbs Solomon says, "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Jonathan was that kind of a friend."

Gehrke points out, "Just at this low point of his passion, when the strain of unrelieved insecurity begins to weigh on David's spirits and he doubts his promised future, David is visited by Jonathan. His friend boosts David's morale with the assertion that not only will Saul's hand not find him, but also that he will yet be king-- A king who can count on Jonathan's support so that for the joy that is set before him, David may despise the presence of shame. What David in his loneliness had no longer been certain of is the unshakable conviction of his friend.

"Jonathan even adds, "Saul my father also knows this." And to guarantee this to David, he renews the covenant in the presence of the Lord, reestablishing a relationship that will take precedence over every other tie or claim."

Vos points out, "The town of Ziph was about 3 or 4 miles southeast of Hebron and the wilderness of Ziph was that part of the wilderness of Judea to the east of the town between Ziph and the Dead Sea. In ancient times there was in that desert and area known as Horesh, meaning 'thicket.' Evidently, the area was overgrown with brush wood, although no trace of these scrub trees exists today. Saul went home while David was in Horesh, but Jonathan heard where David was, and at great personal risk, located his beloved friend. Jonathan strengthened his hand in God, strengthened David's heart by his assurances and renewal of the covenant. There is no certainty from what is said that either Jonathan or Saul knew anything of David's anointing. What a magnificent person Jonathan must have been, and how great must have been his victory over natural feelings and ambitions. With calm assurance he could talk of his dearest friend taking over the kingdom he should have inherited. And in loving self-denial, he could request the second place in the kingdom. He had certainly learned to bow before what he believed to be the sovereign will of God with complete peace of mind. Once more, the two renewed the covenant by solemn oath, and they parted, never to see each other again on earth."

Gulston says, "In a wood in the wilderness of Ziph Jonathan and David met for the last time. In the silence of a forest Jonathan poured out his words of reassurance. Brave prophetic words but some of the future was still veiled to Jonathan. He would not be there when triumph like a flood came in upon his friend. He would have played his matchless part in a unique drama, leaving his name to be forever synonymous with all that is loyal."

Alexander Whyte makes an interesting observation, "Are any of you being sent at this moment to that school to which God sent Jonathan? Are humiliations and disappointments and losses and defeats your tutors and governors? Grudge not your neighbor his divinely ordained promotion or praise, but rather, as you have opportunity, strengthen his hand in God. 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten and humble and put down and make second; but to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame. He always wins who sides with God. To him no chance is lost. God's will is sweetest to him when it triumphs at his cost. The cross of Christ was made of a tree that had grown in the wood of Ziph, and yours will be made of the same shining timber.'"

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."

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.

Jonathan doesn't have clearly in his mind his position, however, when he says, "I will be second to you."

Blaikie points out, "In such circumstances the cheering words of his friend and the warmth of his embrace must have come on David with infinite satisfaction. They were to him what the loving words of the dying thief were to the Savior amid the babble and blasphemy of Calvary. Who indeed does not see in the David of this time persevering in his work, under such fearful discouragements, under the treachery of men with hearts like Judas Iscariot, experiencing the worst treatment from some who he had benefitted already and from others who he was to benefit still more. Who can fail to see the type of Christ patiently enduring the cross at the hands and in the stead of the very men whom by His suffering He was to save and bless."

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

After they made their covenant together before the Lord, Jonathan went back to Gibeah, 28 miles back to the north, but David remained at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph.

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

It is right at this point that David is said to have written Psalm 54

"Save me, O God, by Thy name and vindicate me by Thy power. Hear my prayer, O God, give ear to the words of my mouth, for strangers have risen against me and violent men have sought my life. They have not set God before them. Behold, God is my helper. The Lord is the sustainer of my soul. He will recompense the evil to my foes, destroy them in thy faithfulness. Willingly I will sacrifice to thee. I will give thanks to thy name, O Lord, for it is good, for he has delivered me from all trouble, and my eye has looked with satisfaction upon my enemies."

In these verses David is betrayed once again, and now it is worse than before because he is betrayed by his own tribe.

Barber points out, "Shakespeare may have had the words of James 1:2-8, our Lord's brother, in mind when he wrote,

'Sweet are the uses of adversity, which like a toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in its head. And this your life exempt from public haunt finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything.'

Yet most of us treat trials as unwelcome guests because we must all face the many and varied problems of life. We should take courage. The problems that beset us are designed to help us grow spiritually. The difficulties we face insure that we neither become complacent nor unproductive. By responding positively to hardships, we develop steadfastness of purpose, and the grace of God can be seen in our lives. David was prepared for service as Israel's king by working through the adversity he encountered. As with the Lord Jesus, he came to full maturity as a result of the things he suffered."

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."

Not only are the Ziphites reporting on David's location, they are also making a commitment of themselves to hand David over to the king when he comes south to them.

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

Winter points out, "The benediction would be a lot of empty words to anybody who knew Saul's real character. Since Saul had turned his back on God and was forsaken of God, one could hardly expect that God would hear his prayer for a blessing to be upon anybody. Here is an instance of a pitiable reference

to God by one who had essentially abandoned God and thereby had been left desolate by 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.

Saul commands the Ziphites to go and make still further preparation for this occasion by finding out David's regular schedule and who has seen him there. He then makes the statement, "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."

Saul now makes his final commitment to the Ziphites, that once these preparations have been made, he'll come down and track him among all the clans of Judea.

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.

This is about 6-8 miles south of Ziph.

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.

It is believed that David writes Psalms 16, 17 and 31 on this occasion. In Psalm 16 we read:

"Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in Thee. I will bless the Lord, who has counseled me; indeed my mind instructs me in the night. I have set the Lord continually before me; because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; in thy right hand there are pleasures forever."

Psalm 17

"Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me in the shadow of thy wings."

Psalm 31

"In thee, O Lord, I have taken refuge. Let me never be ashamed. In thy righteousness deliver me; incline thine ear to me; rescue me quickly. Be thou to me a rock of strength, a stronghold to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me and guide me. I will rejoice and be glad in thy loving kindness because thou hast seen my affliction; thou hast known the troubles of my soul; and thou hast not given me over into the hand of the enemy. Thou hast set my feet in a large place. O love the Lord, all you his godly ones; the Lord preserves the faithful and fully recompenses the proud doer. Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the Lord."

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."

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.

This is about 12 miles back to the northeast from Maon on the shores of the Dead Sea.

There are three things that really stand out in this particular chapter before we move on to chap. 24:

1. GOD'S ABUNDANT PROVISION FOR OUR NEEDS
2. THE BLESSING OF STEADFAST FRIENDS
3. GOD'S GOOD PROVIDENCES

In this chapter we see the last meeting of Jonathan with David, and we also read Jonathan's last statement in Scripture: "Don't be afraid. 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

It is believed by many that David wrote Psalm 7 at this time:

"O Lord my God, in thee have I taken refuge. Save me from all those who pursue me, and deliver me. My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart. God is a righteous judge, and a man who has indignation every day. If a man does not repent, he will sharpen his sword. He has bent his bow and made it ready. He has also prepared for himself deadly weapons. He makes his arrows fiery shafts. Behold he travails with wickedness and he conceives mischief and brings forth falsehood. He has dug a pit and hollowed it out and has fallen into the hole which he made. His mischief will return upon his own head, and his violence will descend upon his own pate. I will give thanks to the Lord according to his righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high."

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.

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

David and his band took refuge in the strongholds of En Gedi, a place designated as the rocks of the wild goats. Here were many caverns and caves, one being so large that it is reported that it once sheltered 30,000 people from a terrible storm. Scholars believe this was the cave David used as a hiding place from Saul.

Pink points out, "Saul had been providentially blocked while pursuing David by the invading Philistines. But now, as soon as this hindrance was removed, he redoubled his evil efforts. O unsaved reader, has it been thus with you? Your course of self-pleasing was suddenly checked by an illness? Your round of pleasure seeking was stopped by a sick bed? Opportunity was given you to consider the interest of your immortal soul, to humble yourself beneath the mighty hand of God. Perhaps you did so in a superficial way, but what has been the sequel? Health and strength have been mercifully restored by God, but are they being used for his glory, or are you now vainly pursuing the phantoms of this world harder than ever?"

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

Saul is very intent on this occasion of finding David, so he goes down in the area of the Desert on En Gedi, or the Crags of the Wild Goats with three thousand chosen men.

This is 3,000 versus 600; or five times as many men as David has.

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.

Because Saul could be seen with his 3,000 men coming to find them, David sought refuge far back in this huge cave along with his men, in hopes that Saul and his men would soon pass by.

However, something very unexpected happened. Saul, I am sure, being tired and weary from the pursuit, wanted to get in out of the heat and probably came inside the cave to take some rest.

Saul came into the cave alone and was unaware of David and his men hiding in the sides 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.

Here David has a tremendous victory in SELF-CONTROL. The men are making wrong assumptions and giving wrong counsel.

Psalm 1:1

"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers."

Psalm 131

"O Lord, my heart is not proud, or my eyes haughty, nor do I involve myself in great matters or in things too difficult for me. Surely I have composed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child rests against his mother; my soul is like a weaned child within me. O Israel hope in the Lord from this time forth and forever."

While Saul is taking his rest, David crept up unnoticed to him and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

Winter raises the question, "Why did Saul come into the cave? It is said that Saul went into the cave to cover his feet. The expression occurs also in Judges 3:24 when Eglon's servants were afraid to disturb him as they thought he had gone into his chamber to cover his feet. The Peshitta, an ancient version of the Bible, translates this Hebrew phrase as meaning 'to sleep.' What follows seems to favor this. David must have gone into the cave to rest and Saul found the spot to be suitable to his needs as well."

Epp points out, "Leaving most or all of his men outside, Saul carelessly entered and laid down and dropped off to sleep. To David's men, this was his opportunity to rid himself of Saul. They thought it was a God-given opportunity, but David did not agree. David's men jumped at the conclusion that these circumstances were God-made for David to take the life of Saul. They even quoted one of David's favorite Psalms, 'Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand' to back up their argument. It does not take a strong imagination to picture how they must have argued and pleaded with him to get rid of his enemy once and for all. It would mean an end to their hardships and suffering. It would mean that David would have the throne for himself and would rid the land of its apostasy and idolatry. Like many in our day, they very probably believed that the end justifies the means. They possibly believed that for David to kill Saul would be carrying out the will of God. This would bring rest and peace to their country and especially to David and the men who had followed with him. We can see from this that the test before David was no small one."

But David had been learning that reason alone was not sufficient. He decided to wait on God. If David took matters into his own hands now, it would be at the expense of a thousand precious experiences of God's care, provision, guidance and tenderness. No, reasoned David, even a throne at that price is too dear. Faith will always wait upon God.

He waited eight years under Saul before being crowned king of Judea, then he had to wait seven more years before he gained the allegiance of all the tribes of Israel.

Matt. 4:8

"Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'All these things will I give you if you fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan, for it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and serve him only." ' "

John Herkus speaks to these verses, "Another characteristic of David is his tenderness. He is full of feeling and affection. Where in all history is there found a more touching episode than the story of his friendship with the chivalrous Jonathan. He is an attached son, a loving husband, a generous foe. There was nothing little in David's character. His qualities were great and strong for good or evil. Well was it for him that the circumstances of his life were such as to check and modify his natural propensities. His animal courage and self-reliance combined with the activity and dexterity of a practiced athlete might have led to arrogance and cruelty had they not been

controlled by the early piety which his training had inspired and the necessity of self-restraint imposed by outward events. Popular, beloved, the darling of the army, winning affection wherever he turned; he might have easily played the part of a demi-god, a usurper, a tyrant, but his religion proved his safety. The prophet's voice directed his course of action, and in patience he possessed his soul."

How magnanimous is his treatment of those who have deeply injured him. How willing is he to sacrifice himself for the good of others. How loathe to profit by their danger in which he has had no share. His passions are strong. He is prone to anger, hasty in determining on revenge. Yet is he open to reason and a firm sense of justice overbears the temporary emotion. He is contemplative, the man of prayer and meditation. His love of nature is intense. He has a passionate affection for his native country. Alone with his harp on a breezy upland, he sings of the beauties that surround his daily watch. He tells of the high hopes which fire his breast. His soul leans forth in fervent appeals to Jehovah, whose presence he feels, whose inspiration he acknowledges. He loves liberty. The hard life of the wilderness is more acceptable than the constraints of a tyrant's court. His own plans, his own conclusions he will not easily consent to relinquish. They who oppose them are no friends of his. Freedom of action is with him a passion, and he is generally right in vindicating it for himself. He would shower favors on the deserving and spend himself in their service. The grand aim which he hoped to reach encouraged all the finer qualities of his soul. It nerved his army, it controlled his passions, it dictated his policy, it brought him back to the right path in times of declension. It enabled him to bear affliction, delay, disappointment and to leave the guidance of events to God."

Palau speaks to this verse, "But why did David delay? 'Go get him!' they said through clenched teeth. Butcher him, cut him down! He's in your hand! The young sheperd crawled forward in the darkness and snipped off a piece of Saul's robe with his razor sharp dagger. He could just as easily have slipped it between Saul's ribs. David's men must have been stunned with their leader's reaction as he crept back into the depths of the cavern."

Krummacher says, "The tempation for David was great. A stroke of the sword and he would have delivered himself from his deadly foe. But all that was within him shuddered at the thought. The Lord forbid, replied he to his unasked advisors, that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord. But one thing he did not refrain from, Saul must at length, once for all, in an unmistakable way be convinced that his servant David bore no evil against him in his heart. Therefore, with gentle step, he approached him and cut off a corner from his royal mantle. But very probably he did this with

beating heart and trembling hand. He might perhaps already repent of it the moment after it was done. He probably deemed it like an act of high treason."

Getz points out, "There are two stories in the life of David that demonstrate dramatically his sensitivity toward both God and man. Both incidents involved encounters with Saul and both provided David with an unusual opportunity to take Saul's life. But in each instance David did what was right, even though he faced unusual temptation. With his actions he showed love to the man who hated him."

Wait for the day is breaking,
Though the dull night be long,
Wait, God is not forsaking,
Thy heart be strong, be strong.

Wait, 'tis the key to pleasure
And to the place of God.
O tarry thou his leisure
Thy soul shall bear no load."

F. B. Meyer points out, "We wait on the Lord by prayer and supplication, looking for the indication of his will. We wait for the Lord by patience and submission, looking for the interposition of his hand. It is very needful to learn this lesson of silence, patience, resignation. Surely it was out of such experiences as these that David wrote the 37th Psalm. The exhortations of this exquisite psalm to trust in the Lord, to delight in the Lord, to roll the way of life on the Lord, to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him, and especially the repeated injunction not to fret, are all bathed in new meaning when read in the light of these memorable incidents in David's life.

Pink points out, "O for grace to say at all times, it is the Lord. Let him do what seemeth him good. What a critical moment it was in David's history. Had he listened to the specious counselors who urged upon him to do what providence seemingly had put in his way, his life of faith would have come to an abrupt end. One stroke of his sword and he steps into a throne. Farewell poverty; farewell the life of a hunted goat. Reproaches, sneers, defeat would cease. Adulations, triumphs, riches would be his. But his at the sacrifice of faith, at the sacrifice of a humbled will, ever waiting on God's time; at the sacrifice of a thousand precious experiences to God's care, God's provision, God's guidance, God's tenderness. No, even a throne at that price is too dear. Faith will wait. We need to be exceedingly cautious how we interpret the events of providence and what conclusions we draw from them lest we mistake the opportunity of following our own inclinations, for God's approbation of our conduct."

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 him stab him in the back. Imagine how surprised they were to see him just cut off a piece of his robe.

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

As soon as David did this, the lights went out. The well dried up and his conscience began to really bother him. There must have been something in David's heart, something about his motives that troubled him. This act may have been a preliminary step to taking Saul's life. But David's sensitive conscience wouldn't let him pursue that line of action. Instead, he used the opportunity to achieve some other goals. David controlled himself, and what is even more remarkable, he also controlled his six hundred men who were with him, who wanted him to get rid of old Saul.

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."

Romans 12:17-21

"Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; and if he is thirsty give him a drink; for in so doing, you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

J. Vernon McGee points out, "Right away David regretted his act because it would be a sort of embarrassment to Saul. Imagine what would happen when Saul awakened, stood up, and found out he was wearing a mini-skirt."

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.

Gulston points out, "But for Saul there had to be a reckoning. At En Gedi, where the two certainly met at close quarters, there could have been but not in quite the way Saul wanted. While in the caves, Saul was completely at the mercy of the men whose life he sought. Had the positions been reversed, there is little doubt what would have happened. But it was not by chance that David was given an opportunity to kill Saul. The circumstances presented him with one of the most critical decisions of his life. Had David taken the law into his own hands, the action might have cost him the throne because it would have lowered him to the status of the man he was destined to succeed."

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.

Vos points out, "In calling Saul 'my father,' David expressed childlike reverence and affection, and he possibly alluded to the fact that Saul was his father-in-law."

With humility and deep respect for the king of Israel, he pleaded with Saul, demonstrating with the piece of Saul's robe that he was not trying to kill him. David decided to wait upon God. He knew it was better to wait God's time than to attempt to help him do something simply because the circumstances seem to indicate it. Though Saul was rejected by the Lord, yet he was still the Lord's anointed. David had learned what Jesus taught later in Matt. 5:44 -- 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that spitefully use you.'

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.

His hand will not perform the act because he is not an evildoer producing evil deeds.

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."

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

Saul's heart was temporarily troubled by David's actions. He knew his life had been spared. He knew that David with one stroke could have severed his head from his body. He was humbled. He wept before David and confessed his wickedness. He acknowledged that God had delivered him into David's hands and yet David had not killed him. Saul was overwhelmed with David's actions as far as we know. Saul confessed for the first time publicly that he knew David was going to be the king of Israel. He is deeply moved but his heart is unchanged. Badly as he has treated David, he does not hesitate to ask a favor of him, but he doesn't make any promises to David. Also, if he were truly repentant, he would have taken off his robe and given it to David right there on the spot, taken him to the palace and put him on the throne.

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.

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.

CONCLUSION:

There are several observations that we need to make before we try to center in on any particular lessons:

1. WE NEED TO LET GOD LEAD

David was not willing to take matters into his own hands to get rid of Saul.

2. WE NEED TO LET THE LORD JUDGE

David asked Saul to let God judge between the two of them. David knew that the Lord's judgment would be right.

3. OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD

David's goodness in sparing Saul's life overwhelmed Saul and caused him to realize that he had been wrong in trying to take his life.

I think it is good for us to think about what would have happened if David had succumbed to the temptation to kill Saul. It might have killed the poetry in his heart. It would have silenced his writing of the psalms, and he might have gone through his life with a bad conscience. His men would not have learned about patience, gentleness, and mercy. There is another thing too that Saul would never have been exposed face to face with the love and patience of God shining out through another man's life, and even if for a little while it melted Saul, he confessed his sin.

It is only the love of God shining through Christians that cause change and conviction in others, and help someone who is out of fellowship. Thousands have come to Christ at hearing the Savior's cry on Calvary, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." This is God's love revealed in power.

David acknowledged that God is ultimately responsible to inflict punishment on those whose hearts are hardened toward him. There is also another thing that we need to remember and that is, David didn't listen to public opinion. In this situation he changed the crowd; he didn't allow the crowd to change him.

David respected the office of king, although he may not have respected the man. It is the same with us. We respect our leadership whether it is our pastor or our president.

Alan Redpath says, "I'm fearful for the man who is not far from the kingdom of God who has often wept under the sound of the preaching of the gospel, who has often seen the reality of the love of God in Jesus Christ at the cross, who has often recognized his own sinful ways and said, 'I have played the fool,' but five minutes after the message is over he's outside the church, all conviction forgotten. He has silenced the holy emotion, has gone out to live in disobedience again, in spite of the stirring of the Holy Spirit in his heart."

What are the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

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

LESSON #2: Fear brings a snare but who so 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.

Psalm 37:3-5

"Trust in the Lord and do good, dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in him, and he will do it."

Psalm 37:7

"Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes."

Psalms 37:23,24

"The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and he delights in his way. When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong because the Lord is the one who holds his hand."