

THRU BIBLE

1 Samuel 22–24 | “David Is Still On the Run!”

I. DAVID ON THE RUN. (22)

ABDULLAM (v. 1-2)

A. (v. 1)

1. **“David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam:...”**

a. “Adullam”

1) This ancient town is in the Shephelah located¹ about 18 miles SW of Bethlehem. It is on a hilltop overlooking the Elah Valley, and the hilltop is mostly flat, with cisterns carved into the rock.

b. Since this place was near the Philistine border, it would be a good place to hide, right between the two rival nations.

1) **NOTE:** The refuge in *Abdullam* resulted in David writing two Psalms:

a) Cf. [Psalms 57 & 142](#)

2. **“...and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him.”**

a. “his brethren” = David’s 7 brothers and 2 sisters

b. “and all his father’s house”

1) David’s father Jesse, his 7 brothers, 2 sisters, and their family travelled about 18 miles from Bethlehem to get to *Adullam*.

¹ DMS 31° 39' 0" N, 35° 0' 9" E Decimal 31.65, 35.0025

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B. (v. 2)

1. **“And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt,...”**

- a. These were men that were stressed about how Saul is dealing with things, and there were those that may have been in danger of being sold into slavery.

2. **“...and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.”**

- a. “discontented” - Heb. “bitter; angry”

MOAB (v. 3-4)

C. (v. 3)

1. **“And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me.”**

- a. **Q** = Why would David go to *Moab* instead of another place like Edom or Ammon?...
 - 1) David had Moabite blood through his great-grandmother Ruth ([Ruth 4:13-22](#)), so there was a family connection with the Moabites.
- b. David’s parents, Jesse and his wife, were too old to travel like they needed to in escaping from Saul, so

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David looks after them by trying to find them protection for the time being.

- 1) It is good for children to take care of their parents as they get older!

THE FOREST OF HARETH (v. 5)

D. (v. 5)

1. **“...Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.”**
 - a. *“the forest of Hareth”*
 - 1) The ancient town of Hereth is identified with the modern town of Kharas², located about 7 1/2 miles NW of Hebron and about 3 miles SE of Abdullam.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE PRIESTS OF NOB (v. 6-23)

E. (v. 6)

1. **“When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;)”**
 - a. *“tree”* - Heb. lit. *“tamarisk tree”*
 - b. *“in Ramah”* - Heb. *baramah* - *“in a high place”*

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- 1) This is not the city of Ramah where Samuel lives (7:17), but should be translated according to its meaning — “a high place,” which was a *shrine* used for illicit worship.

F. (v. 7)

1. **“Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;”**

a. Saul was from the Tribe of Benjamin, and this verse shows that he used his position on the throne to benefit his own tribe over the other tribes of Israel.

- 1) **NOTE:** It is never a good thing for someone in office to use that office to benefit themselves or their families over the other citizens.

a) I often wonder how these politicians that make \$174,000 per year, can be in office for almost 50 years and become millionaires.

G. (v. 10)

1. **“And he enquired of the LORD for him...”**

a. To “*enquire of the LORD*” means that Ahimelech would have used the Urim and Thummim to discern the will of God (Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21).

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- b. Doeg the Edomite is telling Saul about what he saw, and he said that Ahimelech the priest “*enquired of the LORD*” for David.
 - 1) Either it just wasn’t recorded earlier in the account, and he really did see it.
 - 2) Or, Doeg is making this part up to make Ahimelech look even guiltier, which seems to be the case (v. 15).

H. (v. 13)

1. **“*And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?*”**

- a. Saul is making 3 ACCUSATIONS:
 - 1) Ahimelech has conspired with David against Saul.
 - 2) Ahimelech gave David bread and a sword.
 - 3) Ahimelech *enquired of God* for David.
 - a) This is not true (v. 15), but even it was true, it shows how illogical Saul has become.
 - i. If Ahimelech enquired of the LORD in directing David, then that would mean that God is against Saul. So, according to Saul’s logic, God is a coconspirator.

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- ii. Saul should realize that if David is against Saul at the command of God, then it is God Himself that is against Saul, so Saul should actually repent instead of trying to fight God!

I. (v. 17)

1. ***“And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.”***

a. “footmen” - Heb. “runners”

1) These were men who would *run* alongside the royal chariot as an escort (1 Sam. 8:11), and these *runners* were the official executioners (2 Kings 10:25).

a) So, these guys are like Saul’s Secret Service protection, as well as his Seal Team 6 assassins.

b. These executioners would not kill the priests because:

1) They knew the sentence was unjust.

2) They knew this would be a sacrilege killing the very priests of God Himself.

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J. (v. 18-19)

1. ***“And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.”***

- a. This is tragically in fulfillment of the judgment of Eli ([1 Sam. 2:31-36](#)).
- b. **NOTE:** There is an inconsistency with Saul. He spared some lives of the Amalekites ([1 Sam. 15](#)), the severe enemies of the Jews, yet he would not do the same for the priests of God as he wiped out every woman, child, and animal.
 - 1) That which he was supposed to do to the enemies of God, he is now doing to the servants of God.
- c. **KEY:** When someone is in sin, they will try and get rid of spiritual things!
- d. TWO OBSERVATIONS:
 - 1) There were 3 reasons the priesthood were slaughtered:
 - a) David’s lie endangered the priesthood ([1 Sam. 21:2-3, 7-8](#)).
 - b) Saul’s vengeance ([v. 16-18](#)).

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c) This is the fulfillment of the judgment of God on the house of Eli ([1 Sam. 2:31-36](#)).

2) It is at this point that David wrote [Psalm 52](#).

K. (v. 22)

1. ***“...I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house.”***

- a. David realized that his lies caused the death of those priests.
- b. However, on the other side of the coin, it does not excuse David's lies, but this worked out the plan of God.

L. (v. 23)

1. ***“Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.”***

- a. David and Abiathar have a common enemy in Saul, and David makes the promise that if Abiathar would just stick with David, he would be safe.
- b. I see some parallels here for us as Christians in the New Testament:
 - 1) When the descendant of David, the Messiah, would come, anyone that would abide in Him would be safe from their enemies.
 - a) Jesus told His disciples, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every*

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branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” (John 15:1-8)

- i. **NOTE:** Jesus is basically saying, “With Me, you shall be safe!”
 - ii. **KEY:** If you abide in Christ, and stick close to Him, you will be safe from: 1) the judgment of God; 2) the enemy, Satan and his demons.
- 2) The Apostle John wrote, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” (1 John 5:18)

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- a) “*toucheth*” - Gr. “*handleth; adhere to; clings to; lay hold of*”
 - i. Satan and his demons cannot *touch* the child of God!
 - ii. He can hassle you, tempt you, oppress you, and yell at you, but he can’t *touch* you!

II. DAVID STILL ON THE RUN. (23)

KEILAH (v. 1-13)

A. (v. 1)

1. **“Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors.”**

a. “Then they told David”

1) Word comes to David here and not Saul.

a) It seems that there were already pockets of people within the Land that were looking to David for leadership rather than Saul.

b. “Keilah”

1) It is now a ruin, known as *Kh. Qeila*, near the modern village of Qila, and is located³ in the Shephelah of Judah (**Josh. 15:44**) about 2 miles

³ DMS 31° 36' 58" N, 35° 0' 11" E Decimal 31.616111, 35.003056

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West of Kharas, which was where David hid in “the forest of Hereth” (1 Sam. 22:5).

B. (v. 2)

1. “Therefore David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.”

a. David would have “enquired of the LORD” by means of the Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21).

1) David now had access to the Urim and Thummim because Abiathar, the only surviving priest, was with David.

C. (v. 13)

1. “Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go...”

a. “six hundred”

1) David has gained 200 men since his battle with the Philistines, when he had only 400 men (1 Sam. 22:2).

b. “and went whithersoever they could go”

1) Sometimes you just have to get out of town!

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- 2) There are times the Lord delivers us by giving us only one way out!
 - a) Cf. **1 Corinthians 10:13** - *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*
 - i. **KEY:** Whenever there is a temptation that just seems overwhelming, or an addiction that is causing you to crave, there is always one route to get out of it! It might not be easy, but it is there. Sometimes you just literally have to run out of town!
 - ii. **NOTE:** There are certain places that you, as a child of God, have no business being. Just run out the door! Flee!

THE WILDERNESS OF ZIPH (v. 14-23)

D. (v. 14)

1. **“And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.”**
 - a. “Ziph”

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- 1) *Ziph* was originally built Mesha, the firstborn of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:42) and later fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron 11:8).
- 2) It was a town in the Judean Mountains (Josh. 15:55), about 4 miles South of Hebron where there is a rounded hill about 100 feet in height, which is called *Tell Zif*.⁴
- 3) It served as a key crossroads because to the North was the Hill Country, and to the South were the key cities of Carmel, Maon, and Beersheba.
- 4) At an elevation of about 2,900 feet, it made it easier to see troop movements, especially since it is a desert area with hardly any trees.

E. (v. 15)

1. **“And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.”**

a. “wood” - Heb. *choresh* - “forest; shroud”

- 1) Some scholars believe that this is a proper name, thus the place is called *Horesh*.

F. (v. 18)

1. **“And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.”**

⁴ DMS 31° 28' 47" N, 35° 7' 19" E Decimal 31.479722, 35.121944
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- a. David and Jonathan didn’t know this at the time, but this would be the last time that these two close friends would ever see each other. They will not see each other again on this side of eternity.

G. (v. 19)

1. ***“Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?”***

- a. This is the occasion in which David wrote [Psalm 54](#).

H. (v. 21)

1. ***“And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the LORD;...”***

- a. This is just spiritual talk for corrupt things!
 - 1) **Illust.** - This is like saying, “Praise the Lord! I robbed him!”
- b. It is sad when we can talk spiritual, yet be far from God.
 - 1) Cf. [Isaiah 29:13](#) - *“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:”*
 - 2) **KEY:** God does not just want lip service! He wants a heart that is obedient to Him.

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THE WILDERNESS OF MAON (v. 24-28)

I. (v. 24)

1. **“And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.”**

a. “Maon”

- 1) Town known today as Tell Maon⁵, at an elevation of 2,831 ft (Josh. 15:55; 1 Sam. 25:2), about 8 miles South of Hebron.

J. (v. 28)

1. **“Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Selahammahlekoth.”**

a. This shows the providential hand of God.

- 1) God has resources that we have no idea about.
 - a) Out of nowhere, this messenger shows up and says that the Philistines are attacking (v. 27).
- 2) If God has a calling on your life, He will make a way when it seems that there is no way.

b. “Selahammahlekoth” - Heb. “The Rock of Divisions”

⁵ DMS 31° 24' 34" N, 35° 8' 2" E Decimal 31.409444, 35.133889

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- 1) From 2 Hebrew words: *sela* (“rock; cliff; crag”) & *machaloqeth* (“division; escape”)



EIN GEDI (v. 29)

K. (v. 29)

1. **“And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at Engedi.”**
 - a. “Engedi” - Heb. “spring of a kid”
 - 1) Ein Gedi is an oasis and natural reserve, located⁶ West of the Dead Sea, near Masada and the Qumran Caves.

III. DAVID SPARES SAUL’S LIFE. (24)

A. (v. 3)

1. **“...and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.”**
 - a. When David fled from Saul into the cave, he wrote **Psalm 57**.

⁶ DMS 31° 27' 0" N, 35° 23' 0" E Decimal 31.45, 35.383333