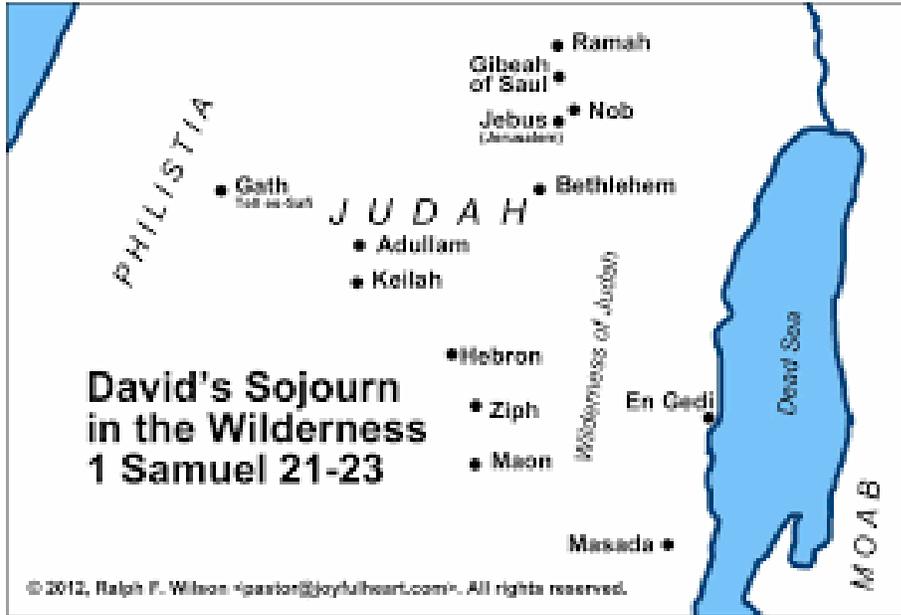


I Samuel 23 Handout

Last week we saw David's continued flight to stay ahead of Saul and his men who were trying to kill him. He had nowhere to go, so he was on the run. At one point, he sought refuge in a cave. We learned that being a person after God's own heart doesn't mean we will never experience the darkness of a cave. What it does mean is that we are able to trust that God's light is there with us in the cave. Even though David was at a low point, he continued to hold on to God in the midst of his despair. He found God to be his true hiding place.



Verse 1

David is informed that the Philistines are doing something. What are they doing?

The city of Keilah was located in the hills between Judah and Philistia which made it susceptible to various raids which is what is happening in this verse. Threshing floors were places where the Israelites kept their stores of grain after it was threshed. The Philistines were coming and taking the grain that was stored here.

Verse 2

What is the first thing David does after hearing this news? _____

What does he want to know? _____

The Lord tells David that he should go attack and save Keilah.

Who should be coming to the aid of these people? _____

Verse 3

How do David's men feel about going out to fight? _____

Verse 4

What are we told David does a second time? _____

The Lord again tells him to go and fight, but this time the Lord adds more information.

What does He add this time? _____

Verse 5

What happens? _____

Verse 6

This verse is taking us back a step and giving some information.

We are told that when Abiathar fled to David, he brought something with him. What was it? _____

An ephod was a part of the ceremonial dress of the high priest. It was a linen apron.

The presence of the ephod made it possible for David to continue to obtain guidance from the Lord in answer to his prayers.

This information is brought in here to show us that David used Abiathar the priest to discern the Lord's will concerning whether or not to go Keilah and fight the Philistines.

The phrase "inquired of the Lord" in Hebrew is literally "ask of Yaweh". This phrase is a technical expression for inquiring of an oracle of God when looking for a simple yes or no answer.

All of this is saying that David's inquiries are answered by means of the sacred lots Urim and Thummim stored in the ephod (Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21) These were evidently two stones or similar objects, one being light and the other dark in color. The high priest would carry them in the pocket on the front of his ephod (apron). He would find out for certain God's will by drawing one out after mentally assigning a meaning to each. Evidently, Abiathar interpreted the will of God for David this way.

Verse 7-8

What does Saul think when he finds out that David is at Keilah?

Saul is blinded to his own condition and the reality of his situation.

What makes him think this? _____

It seems that Keilah only had one gate that people could enter and exit the city. This made Saul feel confident that he could trap David. We are told that Saul summons all the people for war (to besiege David and his men).

Verses 9-12

What are we told that David knows? _____

He calls for Abiathar to bring the ephod.

What two things does David want to know?

The Lord tells him “yes” to both questions.

How does David describe God here? _____

How does he describe himself? _____

Even in the midst of what must be major stress, David is still humble when approaching the Lord.

What had David just done for the people of Keilah? _____

Yet they are willing to hand David over to Saul to be killed.

Was this because of what had just happened in Nob with the killing of all the priests because they harbored David? We don't know, but that could have definitely been their reasoning.

Verses 13

How many men does David now have with him? _____

We are told they leave Keilah. **Where do they go?** _____

We are told that when Saul finds out they left, he gave up pursuit.

Verses 14

Where are we told David stayed? _____

A stronghold is a fortified place; a place of security.

What are we told about Saul? _____

But what? _____

Verses 15-18

We are told that David knows about Saul's plan to kill him.

Who goes to David? _____

What are we told he does? _____

What does Jonathan say at the end of this verse? _____

What are we told the two of them made? _____

We are told that David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house

Verses 19-21

What do the Ziphites say they will do? _____

Saul replies by saying “May you be blessed by the Lord” - What is the reason he gives for the blessing? _____

Saul could talk like a believer, but he didn't live that out in his life. Do you think Saul thought that everything was okay between himself and God? He sure talks like it, doesn't he?

Verses 22-23

What does Saul want the people to do? _____

What does he say about David at the end of verse 22? _____

What does he want them to do when they have learned about all of David's hiding places?

Return to Saul with certainty

He goes on to say that if David is in the land he will search him out among thousands of Judah.

Verses 24-25

We are told the search is on.

We are told that David is in the wilderness of Maon. (look at the map)

It seems that some men sympathized with David and therefore told him that Saul was approaching with soldiers.

We are told that David went down to the rock. It seems this was a large rock that David and his men sought to hide behind.

What does Saul do? _____

Verses 26-29

David's hurrying to get away from Saul.

Saul and his men are surrounding David and his men to catch them.

What happens when Saul and his men are about to apprehend them? _____

What message does he bring? _____

Saul turns from pursuing David to go and confront the Philistines.

Therefore, what is this place called? _____

Where are we told that David goes? _____

What do we learn about God and His character in this passage?

God's plans will always be accomplished. No one and nothing can thwart it. This should give us a steady confidence in the Lord. We do not need to be dismayed or even worried about our circumstances. Fear and worry are the opposites of faith. God is bigger. God is stronger than whatever difficulties we face.

Prayer for Defense against Enemies.

For the music director; on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is David not keeping himself hidden among us?"

Psalm 54

1 Save me, God, by Your name,
And vindicate me by Your power.
2 Hear my prayer, God;
Listen to the words of my mouth.
3 For strangers have risen against me
And violent men have sought my life;
They have not set God before them. *Selah*
4 Behold, God is my helper;
The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.
5 He will pay back the evil to my enemies;
Destroy them in Your faithfulness.
6 Willingly I will sacrifice to You;
I will praise Your name, Lord, for it is good.
7 For He has saved me from all trouble,
And my eye has looked *with satisfaction* upon my enemies.

Some things we can take away from this chapter:

- Be bold - trust in God's promises (vs.1-6)
- Be wise - avoid unnecessary danger (vs.7-13)
- Have faith in God - persevere through hard times (vs.14)
- Have fellowship with believers - encourage each other (vs.15-18)
- Be alert - the enemy seeks to destroy us (vs.19-23)
- Be at peace - God is in control (vs.24-29)