

1 Samuel 21:1-22:5

10-10-10

“David...Israel’s Most Wanted!”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. Back on Aug.5th a mine collapsed in Chile trapping 33 miners. Yesterday, day 66, the rescue shaft made it down to the miners. The families continue to wait at **Camp Hope**, till the **Escape Capsule** is able to retrieve the miners.
1. This morning we’ll watch on, in our own *Camp Hope*, as David finds himself temporally caught in a cave.

II. **DAVID...ISRAEL’S MOST WANTED!**

- A. **DESPERATE MAN AND DESPERATE MEASURES!** (1-9)
- B. David lived in exile for about 10 years.
1. And we reap wisdom from **Psalms 7,11,12,13,16,17,22,25,31,34,35,52,53,54,56,57,58,59,63,64,142,143** from what he learned during the 10 years of exile!
 2. From these encouraging Psalms God’s people throughout the generations, & still today, can find **strength & courage** in our own times of testings.
 - a) **Even Jesus** drew strength from them *on the cross!* **Ps.22:1; 31:5**
- C. **The bible never flatters its heroes.** It tells the **truth** about them no matter how unpleasant it may be. So we get to watch on as their **character is developed**, w/**all the facts** so we might study them. [Meet God’s man: in exile, running for his life, destitute of friends, begging bread, lying, pretending madness]
1. **We’ve all been in high altitude** & found ourselves out of breath from the thin air, the lack of oxygen.
 - a) **It isn’t easy** to walk w/God, for **the air at that height** is somewhat rare.
 - b) **It is pure**, but sometimes its hard to breathe, & **faith** almost gives up in the attempt to keep pace w/God’s way w/His child.
 2. **I’ve been** at the *lowest elevation* on earth’s surface. The Dead Sea(1200’ below sea level) It’s easy to breathe there. **Many flock there for Climatotherapy:** [i.e. treatment which exploits temperature, humidity, sunshine, barometric pressure]
 - a) It’s true to human experience, it’s easier to breathe/live in the depth of the **valleys** rather than in the **thin air** of the **mountain tops**.
- D. **Deception/lying - *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.*** Prov.12:22
1. It’s disappointing to see David depending on lies for protection.

- a) He lied to **Ahimelech** the priest. He lied to **Achish** the king of Gath.
2. Scripture commands us to **tell the truth & warns** about the consequences of lying
- a) Jesus is our example, *for there was **no deceit** in His mouth.* 1 Pet.2:22
- b) *Speak the **truth** in Love.* Eph.4:15
- c) If our telling the truth endangers others, **silence** is our best response!
- d) When David ran ahead of God, he found himself **in trouble & lied.**
- e) The safest thing is to *stay away from* those situations & to pray, *“Lead us not into temptation.”*¹
- E. **5 Loaves** - 12 loaves set out weekly for God on show-table. **Afterwards** priests would eat.
1. **Mt.12:3,4** disciples walking thru field on Sabbath, grabbed a handful of grain.
- a) The religious leaders had defined **Work** & classified it under 39 different headings. 4 of these headings were: *Reaping, Threshing, Winnowing, & Preparing a meal.*
[explain: pluck, rub, blow, eat] **They technically broke all 4 of these!**
2. **Ahimelech** gives the bread to David because of the “*higher law of Moses*”, the principle of **acting to sustain life.**
- a) Jesus referred to this incident as an illustration of **compassionate flexibility** in the application of the Torah’s rules.
- F. (7) **Beware, sin is expensive!** - (22:22) God may **forgive & restore** you, **but the consequences** of your sin may involve not only **you** but **others** who are innocent.
- G. Off David goes with 5 loaves of *God-bread*, & a dead giants *sword*.
- H. **CHANGED BEHAVIOR BUT FIXED HEART!** (10-15)
- I. **Fear of Saul** temporarily replaced **faith in the Lord!** **Fear is always the enemy of Faith!**
1. So David flees 23 miles to the enemy city of Gath.
2. Should be safe from Saul in Philistine area & maybe for friends back home.
3. But **Fear is always the enemy of Faith!** - To **believe** God, to **rest** in the Word, to **enjoy** the promises of God **is** to **conquer our fear.**
- a) No wonder when **fear** comes *in the door*, **faith** flies *out the window!*
4. **Here we have a good man in bad company!** - **Why did he go here?** I hate to admit but sometimes a persecuted Christian gets **better treatment** from the enemies of God’s people **than** from his own Christian friends. :(
- a) It was the **king of Judah** who imprisoned **Jeremiah** & the **king of Babylon** who set him free!

¹ Warren Wiersbe: With The Word; pg.174

b) We glory in our wonderful gospel of love & mercy for the **unsaved**, but we usually act as if we have *no gospel* for the **saint** who has been tripped by the devil!²

- J. Lets remember, at this particular point, **God had shot an arrow beyond him**. David was going through this situation not because of any *failure or sin*, but simply because of **God's purpose** in proving the reality of *David's love, devotion, & faith*.
1. Remember he was preparing him for his throne!
 2. This then is all **the will of God** to make him **the man of God**.
 3. It takes a **moment** to make a convert; it takes a **lifetime** to manufacture a saint!
- K. (11) **David the king - Some King?** He had no country, no queen, no subjects, no friends.
1. All he had left was his **self-respect...well**, until that was stripped away also when he faked insanity.
 - a) What an *undignified* moment in the life of a man who had been **anointed** by the **spirit of God!** How utterly unworthy of his calling was his behavior!
 - b) **But**, we can probably all think of a time where we *panicked in God's will* & found ourselves acting like a complete fool!
 2. From national hero to madman!
 - a) From *pats on the back*, to looking over his back, because of the fear of getting *stabbed in the back*. **Israel's Most Wanted!**
 3. Now his **enemies** discarded him. **Would God also abandon him?**
 4. **It's easy to lose 20-20 spiritual vision**. Its easy to develop a **spiritual squint**, to see things in the wrong perspective, & to start to panic.
- L. But I'm glad the bible turns the key & opens the door to the inner shrine of this man's life & shows us - **A changed behavior** but a **fixed heart** on God! - **Ps.34**
1. Don't just dismiss David as another missionary casualty. **We might be finished with him...but God sure hasn't!**
 2. Whatever happened to David in Gath caused him to **acknowledge the inadequacies of his own wisdom** & brought him to a place where he again placed his **confidence in the Lord**.
 3. **Ps.56** was his prayer for **God's help** - **Ps.34** was his hymn of **praise**.
 - a) **Ps.34** also shares that he did alot of praying while in Gath. **See 34:4,6,15b,17,18.**
 - (1) He learned that **the fear of the Lord conquers every other fear!**

² Alan Redpath; The Making of the Man of God; pg.72

- M. **NOAH'S DOVE AND HIS MOTLEY CREW!** (2:1-5)
- N. (1,2) David must have felt like *Noah's Dove* as is told in Gen.8:9, **But the dove could find no place to set its feet...; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark.**
1. David unable to find rest, tossed on a sea of trials, ready to drop into the helpless waves. **Then** the ark presents itself, **&** a hand graciously reaches out **&** rescues!
- O. **The Cave of Adullam** has been discovered about 2 miles south of the scene of David's triumph over Goliath. At this place is a hill some 500' high pierced with numerous honeycombed caverns. Some of these caves are large enough to hold 200-300 men.
1. At least now he's in friendly territory. 15 miles from Bethlehem(hometown).
- P. We learn that being *a person after God's own heart* **doesn't mean** never experiencing the darkness of the cave. **Rather** it means being able to **trust** that God's light is there & that He is *the God of all Hope*.
1. Here he composed **Ps.142**. **Read all w/intro** [note esp: vs.4 *No one cares for my soul*]
- Q. But what happens is that **this cave** becomes David's Holy Tabernacle where **faith** could find shelter under the wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies. **Ps.57:1**
1. What looked like a **cave** to others was a **divine sanctuary**.
 - a) David said in Ps.142:5 **"You are my refuge & my portion"**.
- R. **But...**as a **cave** can be a place of *respite*, we should not use it as an excuse of becoming *cave dwellers*, barricading the entrance to our lives & not letting anyone else inside!
1. **Q: Are you a cave dweller sometimes?**
 2. **Q: What threatening enemies usually force you into hiding?**
 3. **Q: Where do yo most often retreat? [When does a cave become a prison?]**
- S. God brought **family** to him:
1. The same brothers that stood ahead of David to receive Samuel's anointing, **now** lined up behind him, supporting him moment of his greatest need.
- T. God brought **people** to him: (his motley crew)
1. 400 men who looked to David for leadership. **His own little Tea Party Movement!**
 2. **Distress** - some were staggering under great pressures & stresses.
 - a) *Spiritually* no self-satisfied man ever comes to Christ. Matter of fact in Rev.3 Jesus stands outside the door of the church that saw themselves as *rich, increased w/ goods, & in need of nothing*. **It was** sheer **distress** that drove the prodigal son back to his father.

3. **Debt** - others were drowning in debt due to Saul's heavy taxation.
 - a) *Spiritually* we also are bankrupt wretched people, & apart from **grace** we find ourselves *bankrupt, insolvent, desperately in debt & helpless to meet God's judgment. Therefore*, our only hope is to fly to the wounded side of the Lord.
 4. **Discontented** - still others sought out the national hero who had been similarly abused.
 - a) *Spiritually* today many are *embittered, disappointed, frustrated, & restless* yet instead of running to Christ they gather around **the world's broken cisterns** trying to satisfy their thirst for they know not what. Yet, *if any man thirst, let him come to Jesus & drink, then out of his life shall flow rivers of cool living water.*
 - b) Well, David welcomed these men & provided the godly leadership they needed.
 - c) He said, *Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Ps.34:11
- U. God may not bring **400 people** to your doorstep, but he may bring someone who is in a similar situation to say, "I understand".
1. **As...Cancer patients** find a new reason to live by reaching out to other cancer patients; **Alcoholics**, the strength to stay sober by helping other recovering alcoholics; **Victims of abuse**, the hope to endure by ministering to other victims of abuse. (Swindoll)
- V. In David's *darkest hour*, God gave him a ministry of helping men like him who had been word down by **injustice!**
1. Their spirits could have easily soured like rotten milk, fermenting into calls for a violent revolution.
 2. **But** David kept his eyes on God & instilled *character & direction* in their lives. He trained them to be **mighty warriors**(1 Chron.11:10-47) & their # increased from 400 to 600 strong.
- W. **Wait!** How did this take place? - **From lonely desperation to God-entrusted leadership?**
1. **3 Psalms clue us in:** Ps.142,57,34 reveal the attitude that made change possible
- X. (3-5) **Moab?** - Remember David's *great-grandmother* was from there (Ruth the Moabitess).
1. **There the Moabite king grants asylum** to his parents.
- Y. **Key:** David is now undergoing a *most essential part of his training*, which will qualify him to pass on to *us cave dwellers...* "Oh, taste and see that **the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts/takes refuge in him.**"
1. **Maybe** you find yourself in **Camp Hope**, praying & hoping in God for a family member like our friends in Chile; **Maybe** you find yourself in **the Cave Adullam**; **Maybe** you find yourself in **Distress, or in debt, or discontent.** Oh, taste & see that **the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts/takes refuge in him.**