

"Wilderness Experiences"

1 Samuel 21-23

Introduction: The narratives of these three chapters point to a New Testament truth. *"If God is for us, who can be against us?"* (Romans 8:31b)

Three interesting Characters - 21

The Risks of being with David - 22

The character of Saul and David contrasted - 23

1 Samuel 21 - Three Characters - Ahimelech the priest; Doeg the Edomite, Saul's primary herdsman; and Achish the king of Gath.

Summary: These three characters give us three categories of people who will be around David.

1 Samuel 22 - Real Risks

Concept: 1 Samuel 22:2 says, *"and everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him."* (1 Corinthians 1:25-31)

Precept: This story highlights the nature of twisted loyalty.

1 Samuel 23 - Contrasting Leaders - David wars for what is right and Saul wars for what it can bring to his reputation.

Precept: David did not take any revenge on the people of Keilah when God instructed him that they would turn David over to Saul (23:12b).

Precept: The best way to truly encourage someone is to help them see their circumstances from God's point of view.

Summary: While Saul pursued; David protected Keilah and then escaped their treachery. While Saul refused to give up, David was encouraged by Jonathan with a universal truth, 'strengthening his hand in God'.

Conclusion: Loyalty is a strange characteristic when it is activated in the human heart and God is not it's central focus. It can result in twisted evil.

We should notice that David makes a series of decisions that are closely connected to finding the will of God while Saul is working off of his hatred for David and manipulating a distorted sense of loyalty. David is not perfect but Saul is not someone we should follow.

Like our Lord, David left revenge to the Lord. Psalm 54 celebrates this godly response.

David's story presents like a king who comes through the wilderness of trials and battles to emerge as the King of Israel and his shepherd-like leadership points to the Son of God, our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ. (Psalm 22, 34, 56 reflect this reality poetically.)