

David's Trust Wavers

Life of David—part 4

February 17, 2019

DAY 1: David begins to trust himself and his instincts

1. David became a fugitive from King Saul. He fled for his life to the town of Nob, to meet the Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech knew something bad had happened.

2. David lied to the priest, telling him a false story. Did he panic? Was he trying to protect the king? David then asked the priest for food.

1 Samuel 21:3 "Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find." ⁴ But the priest answered David, "I don't have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here--provided the men have kept themselves from women."

3. Ahimelech has no food, except for the bread of the Presence, bread consecrated for religious purposes.

1 Samuel 21:8 David asked Ahimelech, "Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king's business was urgent."

⁹ The priest replied, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, is here; it is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want it, take it; there is no sword here but that one." David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."

4. Whereas, David once faced Goliath with a sling and a smooth stone, his confidence in God is forgotten. He thinks like any pagan, believing, incredibly that Goliath's great sword, with which David cut off Goliath's head, will be his new salvation.

5. David flees again and displays a continuing descent into foolishness and trusting himself.

1 Samuel 21:10 That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. ¹¹ But the servants of Achish said to him, "Isn't this David, the king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances: "'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?'" ¹² David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. ¹³ So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard. ¹⁴ Achish said to his servants, "Look at the man! He is insane! Why bring him to me? ¹⁵ Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?"

6. Apparently, David forgot Goliath was from Gath! David was positively identified! What strikes you about David's thinking? His actions?

DAY 2: David's faltering faith in God and increased faith in himself.

1. David flees to the cave of Adullam.

1 Samuel 22:2 All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him.

2. These men become the beginnings of David's fighting men. Underline how they are characterized.

3. David then fears for the lives of his family.

1 Samuel 22:3 From there David went to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king of Moab, "Would you let my father and mother come and stay with you until I learn what God will do for me?"

⁴ So he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him as long as David was in the stronghold.

4. You may wonder why in the world David would entrust his family to the Moabites! Any ideas? (If you don't know, show up Sunday or tune in to our Facebook Live, Sunday, 9:30)

1 Samuel 22:9 But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's officials, said, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelech son of Ahitub at Nob. ¹⁰ Ahimelech inquired of the LORD for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

5. Doeg was present when David showed up to get bread from the priest. Now, Doeg tells Saul he saw the whole thing but withholds some info that would exonerate the priest. Instead, what Doeg says, though true in itself, implicates the priest in treason. What he does is despicable.

6. Saul jumps to the worst of conclusions.

1 Samuel 22:13 Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?"

7. Ahimelech pled innocent to lying charges, and reminds him that David is true-blue loyal.

*1 Samuel 22:16 But the king said, "You will surely die, Ahimelech, you **and your father's whole family**." ¹⁷ Then the king ordered the guards at his side: "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me."*

But the king's officials were not willing to raise a hand to strike the priests of the LORD.

1 Samuel 22:18 The king then ordered Doeg, "You turn and strike down the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep.

7. Only one of the eighty-five family members survives. He flees and joins David.

8. King Saul's rebellion from God, and his determination to see life his way and not God's way continues to send Saul into a precipitous fall.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Doing what is right; getting kicked in the teeth

1 Samuel 23:1 When David was told, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors,"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."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!"

1. David does the right thing to seek God for this decision. His men object. What would you have done if you were David?

1 Samuel 23:4 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."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.

2. What were the specific results from David's victory?

3. David saves the town of Keilah, saves their way of life, made it less likely for a future attack, and fed his band of men.

4. Not surprisingly, instead of King Saul thanking God for David's victory, and protecting one of his own towns, Saul sees "opportunity" to kill David!

5. David must make a decision as to what to do next.

1 Samuel 23:10 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."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."¹² Again David asked, "Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will."

6. What big questions does David ask?

7. What answers does God give him?

8. After saving the town of Keilah, how would you have felt when you heard that the people you just saved would sell you out?

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: David's big test!

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

1. David is outnumbered 3,000 to 600. He and his men are trapped in the back of a giant cave. They are unnoticed. What would you have done if you were David?

2. David's men had an idea ...

1 Samuel 24:4a The men said, "This is the 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.'"

3. What do they think David should do?

4. On what basis do David's men appeal to David?

1 Samuel 24:b ...Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

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

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."*

5. David sneaks up in the darkness, and cuts a small corner off the end of Saul's robe that he had removed in order to "relieve himself."

6. Initially, David believes he did a good thing. But his conscience is stricken. Why? (v. 6)

1 Samuel 24:7 With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

7. What do you like about what David did and why he did it?

8. Would you have done anything differently?

DAY 5: David's courage and the gifts of mercy and grace!

1. We pick up yesterday's story right where we left off. Imagine Saul walking down the hill back into the valley to his 3,000 men. As he nears the bottom of the hill, David, until now unnoticed, emerges from the cave. He calls out to King Saul.

1 Samuel 24:8 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.⁹ He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you'?"

2. What strikes you about David's attitude toward Saul?

3. David now makes his appeal. Underneath each verse write down the basis of each appeal.

1 Samuel 24:10 "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.'

1 Samuel 24:11 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.

1 Samuel 24:12 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.¹³ As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you.

1 Samuel 24:14 "Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea?"

1 Samuel 24:15 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."

1 Samuel 24:16 When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud.¹⁷ "You are more righteous than I," he said. "You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly.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.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.²⁰ I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.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."²² So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

4. What stands out to you about David in this story?