

The Jewish Kingdom - Lesson 23

David in the Wilderness

David is still hiding from Saul, but is directed by God to come to the aid of besieged city. Saul continues to hunt him as he seeks refuge in the wilderness of Judah.

60. David rescues Keilah - I Samuel 23:1-6

- Keith means “fortress or citadel” and was located southeast of Adullam.
- vs. 1 - threshing floors - usually located on a hill, it was a place where harvested grain was tossed in the air to separate it from the chaff.
- vs. 2 - it is interesting that David seeks God’s guidance in meeting the Philistine threat. His precarious situation must have caused this.
- Urim and Thummim - we are given very few details about these instruments that God would use divulge His will to the Jewish people. They are mentioned in Exodus 28:30 and Leviticus 8:8 as part of the High Priest’s uniform. Our best guess is that these were two stones answered “yes” or “no” possibly by the proper stone glowing brightly. I think vs. 6 is telling us that these were present with David at this time.
- vs. 5 - “brought away their cattle” - the spoiler became the spoiled. I doubt the Philistines brought cattle on their military expeditions so this must mean David routed them back into their own territory.

61. Saul tries to catch David at Keilah - I Samuel 23:7-12

- Saul has been upstaged by David again, this time as David rescues a besieged town from the Philistines. His murderous hatred must have been raging.
- vs. 8-9 - It appears that Saul’s intent was not publicly known. He called out the army to go to Keilah but may not have told them it was to catch David and not to fight the Philistines. Note the word in verse 9 of “secretly practiced mischief”.
- vs. 10-12 - David inquires again of the Lord, but note that battling Saul was never considered. He asks if Saul is coming and then if the people would turn him over to Saul.

62. David escapes Keilah - I Samuel 23:13-15

- David’s followers have grown from 400 in 22:2 to 600 here, and that is after a battle with the Philistines.
- vs. 13 - Not knowing where David has fled, Saul stops heading to Keilah and begin searching for David.
- Ziph - a small town in the hill country of Judah. Wilderness would mean the uninhabited areas around it, which country would be too rough for agriculture or settlement.
- vs. 14 - only through God’s providence was David spared from Saul during this time.

62. Jonathan meets David - I Samuel 23:16-18

- So, if Saul can't find David how can Jonathan? Possibly through secret communications?
- vs. 17 - this is quite an insight into Jonathan's character.
- The covenant was probably similar to the one in 20:16
- This will be the last time David and Jonathan meet.

63. Saul's pursuit of David- I Samuel 23:19-29

- Saul had returned home from his earlier pursuit of David. Gibeah was maybe 25 miles north from Ziph,
- I think the Ziphites were acting out of fear of Saul in what they do. Note that they do not capture David themselves, only tell Saul where he is.'
- David writes Psalm 54 at this time.
- Hachilah means "darksome hill" and Jeshimon means "waste". The names illustrate how desolate the area is.
- vs. 22-23 - Saul commands the people of Ziph to spy for him and find David hiding spots.
- Maon - means "habitation or dwelling", a small town south of Ziph.
- vs. 26 - David's and Saul's force were separated only by a mountain with Saul working to envelope David possibly by splitting his forces to go around either side of the mountain.
- vs. 27 - The enemies of Israel have taken advantage of the situation to invade Israel. This threat in all probability was directed toward Benjamin and Saul's home. Interestingly, the Jews believe this messenger to be an angel.
- Sela-hammahlekoth - "rock or cliff of division"
- En-gedi - a large oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea.