

The Kingdom of David
1 Samuel 23
4/25/10

Overview

- 1. David rescues Zeilah**
- 2. The city's treachery**
- 3. David in the wilderness**
- 4. Applications**

David rescues Zeilah

Now they told David, "Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors." Therefore David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah." But David's men said to him, "Behold, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" Then David inquired of the LORD again. And the LORD answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand." And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their livestock and struck them with a great blow. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

1. *Now they told David, "Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors."*
 - A. Keilah thought to be a city in the same region of Adullam and the forest of Hereth
 - B. Robbing the harvest was apparently a common problem - [Jdg 6:1-5](#)
 - i. A result of Israel's sin - [Lev 26:16](#), [Dt 28:33](#), [51](#)
 - C. Contrast *told David* to v 27 (told Saul)
2. *Therefore David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?"*
 - A. *inquired of the Lord*
 - i. Initial mention of this is when God tells Moses to commission Joshua as the leader who will succeed Moses - [Nu 27:12-21](#)
 - a. Process involved the Urim - [Ex 28:30](#)
 - i. The nature and the use of Urim and Thummim unknown
 - ii. Their use was still described in post-exiled Israel - [Ezr 2:63](#); [Ne 7:65](#)
 - ii. Multiple instances of David 'inquiring of the Lord'
 - B. *Shall I go and attack these Philistines?*
 - C. In making inquiry, a specific question had to be asked, perhaps one at a time (see [1 Sam 23:10-12](#))

- D. *And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah."*
 - i. God's answer affirmative
- 3. *But David's men said to him, "Behold, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?"*
 - A. David's men a skeptical, not surprising, given their description earlier as ne'r-do-wells.
- 4. *Then David inquired of the LORD again. And the LORD answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand."*
 - A. *Then David inquired of the LORD again.*
 - i. Interesting on 2 accounts
 - a. The influence of the men on the godly leader
 - b. The patience of God toward the men and David - See [Jdg 6:36-40](#) (God's answer to Gideon)
 - B. *"Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand."*
 - i. Given this answer, perhaps the questions (which is not stated) was more specific.
 - ii. God's answer was as follows
 - a. Go and attack the Philistines
 - b. Save Keilah
 - c. I will give the Philistines into your hands
- 5. *And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their livestock and struck them with a great blow. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.*
 - A. The result (not surprisingly) was complete victory over the Philistines and relief for the city of Keilah.

The city's treachery

When Abiathar the son of Ahim-elech had fled to David to Keilah, he had come down with an ephod in his hand. Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." And Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him. And he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." Then said David, "O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account. Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O LORD, the God of Israel, please tell your servant." And the LORD said, "He will come down." Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will surrender you." Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the expedition. And David remained in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country of the Wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

1. *When Abiathar the son of Ahim-elech had fled to David to Keilah, he had come down with an ephod in his hand.*
 - A. An aside
 - B. The ephod is present with David
 - i. Perhaps the method of inquiry used by David prior to going to Keilah
2. *Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." And Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.*
 - A. How the king finds out where David is not stated
 - B. He thinks that David is perhaps going to remain within the walls of the city, thus the plan to besiege him.
3. *David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him. And he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." Then said David, "O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account. Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O LORD, the God of Israel, please tell your servant." And the LORD said, "He will come down." Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will surrender you."*
 - A. David tells the Lord what he has heard
 - i. *O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account.*
 - B. He then makes 2 inquiries
 - i. *Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand?*
 - ii. *Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard?*
 - C. God only answers 1 - *"He [Saul] will come down."*
 - D. David repeats the first inquiry - *"Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?"*
 - i. Adds *and my men* to the inquiry (contrasted to the initial one)
 - ii. The Lord answers in the affirmative - *"They will surrender you."*
4. *Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the expedition. And David remained in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country of the Wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.*
 - A. David's force has now increased to 600 men - *his men, who were about six hundred*
 - B. The escape deters Saul - *he gave up the expedition.*
 - C. He now remains in the wilderness, protected by God.
 - i. This wilderness is call the Wilderness of Ziph
 - a. In the hill country of Judah, south east of Keilah
 - b. Very rugged territory
 - D. Saul is persistent (*Saul sought him every day*) but God is faithful (*God did not give him into his hand*)

David in the wilderness

David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Saul my father also knows this." And the two of them made a covenant before the LORD. David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home. Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon? Now come down, O king, according to all your heart's desire to come down, and our part shall be to surrender him into the king's hand." And Saul said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me. Go, make yet more sure. Know and see the place where his foot is, and who has seen him there, for it is told me that he is very cunning. See therefore and take note of all the lurking places where he hides, and come back to me with sure information. Then I will go with you. And if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah." And they arose and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. And Saul and his men went to seek him. And David was told, so he went down to the rock and lived in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. And David was hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them, a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid against the land." So Saul returned from pursuing after David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape. And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of Engedi.

1. *David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Saul my father also knows this." And the two of them made a covenant before the LORD. David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.*
 - A. Jonathan comes to David
 - i. *strengthened his hand in God* - [Pr 17:17](#); [18:24](#)
 - ii. Specific encouragement
 - a. *Do not fear*
 - b. *the hand of Saul my father shall not find you*
 - c. *You shall be king over Israel*
 - i. *Saul my father also knows this* - [1 Sa 20:31](#); [24:20](#)
 - iii. Made a covenant - this is the third mention of a covenant between them ([1 Sa 18:3](#); [20:12-17](#))
 - a. [1 Sa 20:42](#) gives the essence of the covenant

2. *Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon? Now come down, O king, according to all your heart's desire to come down, and our part shall be to surrender him into the king's hand." And Saul said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me. Go, make yet more sure. Know and see the place where his foot is, and who has seen him there, for it is told me that he is very cunning. See therefore and take note of all the lurking places where he hides, and come back to me with sure information. Then I will go with you. And if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah." And they arose and went to Ziph ahead of Saul.*
 - A. The Ziphites betray David
 - i. [Ps 54](#) written about this event.
 - B. Saul asks the Ziphites to locate him and bring back *sure information*.
 - i. Similar to Herod and the wise men - [Mt 2:1-12](#)
3. *Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. And Saul and his men went to seek him. And David was told, so he went down to the rock and lived in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. And David was hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them, a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid against the land." So Saul returned from pursuing after David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape. And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of Engedi.*
 - A. David leaves the region of Ziph and goes further south to the region of Maon.
 - B. Saul is in hot pursuit, but again, David is saved by a Philistine raid that forces Saul to divert his attention away from David.
 - C. David then goes to Engedi.

Applications

1. The godly will be betrayed
2. Do not take revenge
3. Wilderness experiences