

7-30-2025 – Journey with King David – Week 4 – The Wilderness

David's life: 1 Sam. 16 – 1 Kings 2. Journey started in **Bethlehem - Valley of Elah - Gibeah**, where King Saul lived. Now – the **Wilderness** experience.

He's left what he knows, to the unknown. Not a journey he wanted to take.

- It's an important time: Moses, 40 yrs to prepare... Jesus, 40 days.
- **W** always serve at least **2 purposes**: **(1)** Foundation/character building.
(2) Draw close to God, rely on Him. . . everything else is gone.

David goes 1st to **Nob**, sees Ahimelek (priest) – gets bread & Goliath's sword.

Goes to king of **Gath**... but becomes afraid... pretends to be insane.

1 Sam. 22 [NLT] – “So David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. Soon his brothers and all his other relatives joined him there. ² Then others began coming—men who were in trouble or in debt or who were just discontented—until David was the captain of about 400 men. ³ Later David went to Mizpeh in Moab, where he asked the king, “Please allow my father and mother to live here with you until I know what God is going to do for me.” ⁴ So David's parents stayed in Moab with the king during the entire time David was living in his stronghold. ⁵ One day the prophet Gad told David, “Leave the stronghold and return to the land of Judah.” So David went to the forest of Hereth.

Moving from place to place, nothing is permanent. Unsettled.

- **Moab**. Ruth (Grandma). Parents there, more for safety than comfort.

What David has is a **place to rest**. Interesting, we have to move to get rest.

Confuse the busy-ness of life with purpose. Busy isn't always better.

- We can fill life with so much, we leave no room for **God's voice**.

Would be easy to Q **God's voice**... everything started so well for David.

Anointed. Success. Palace. Wife/b.f. Commander. **On the run**

- Expect journey to be easy. It's not. Moving. Elements. Lack/food.
- Constant threat. Always moving/looking. Fear. Unknown destination.
- The **Wilderness** is David's **university**.
 - o D wouldn't learn to be **God's king in Saul's palace**.

End of **Ch. 22** - **Abiathar**, son of the priest, reports Saul had **85** priests killed. **Doeg** then went to **Nob**, the town of the priests – killed everything there.

David tells Abiathar to stay with him, he will protect him.

- Shows truth of the prophecy of Samuel – kingdom to a “better man.” Saul is killing his own people. David is saving them. Protecting.
 - **Wilderness** will make David a better king.

Ch. 23 of **1 Sam.** - we see a practice that will happen over and over.

“One day news came to David that the Philistines were at Keilah stealing grain from the threshing floors. ² David asked the LORD, “Should I go and attack them?” “Yes, go and save Keilah,” the LORD told him. But David’s men said, “We’re afraid even here in Judah. We certainly don’t want to go to Keilah to fight the whole Philistine army!” ⁴ So David asked the LORD again, and again the LORD replied, “Go down to Keilah, for I will help you conquer the Philistines.”

David **doesn’t** want to **pursue** what **God doesn’t have in store** for him.

Not usually us... we have wants & desires, pursue at all costs. Ignore signs.

Focus of our hearts isn’t always what’s best for us. \$ Power. Prestige.

- Don’t pursue anything God doesn’t ordain. **Let God open the door.**
- **Psalms 127:1** - “Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.”
 - If God isn’t in what we do, it won’t last. Won’t survive.
 - **1 Cor. 15:58** – “Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”
- **Flip of this:** don’t **let fear hold you back** either. They won. Gained.

David must move from place to place. Dealing w/ betrayal.

¹⁰ Then David prayed, “O Lord, God of Israel, I have heard that Saul is planning to come and destroy Keilah because I am here. ¹¹ Will the leaders of Keilah betray me to him? And will Saul

actually come as I have heard? O Lord, God of Israel, please tell me.” And the Lord said, “He will come.” ¹² Again David asked, “Will the leaders of Keilah betray me and my men to Saul?” And the Lord replied, “Yes, they will betray you.”

David Hides in the Wilderness

¹³ So David and his men—about 600 of them now—left Keilah and began roaming the countryside. Word soon reached Saul that David had escaped, so he didn’t go to Keilah after all. ¹⁴ David now stayed in the strongholds of the wilderness and in the hill country of Ziph. Saul hunted him day after day, but God didn’t let Saul find him.

W. experiences draw us **closer** to God. We rely on His protection, strength, direction. . . We **seek out** His voice. We pray. We question.

He uses our discomfort to draw us closer to Him... we lean on Him.

- When life is easy . . . we don’t. Don’t even say “thanks.”

Psalm 63 - A psalm of David. When he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

¹ You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you;

I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

² I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.

³ Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.

⁴ I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.

⁵ I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

⁶ On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.

⁷ Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.

⁸ I cling to you; your right hand upholds me. ⁹ Those who want to kill me will be destroyed; they will go down to the depths of the earth.

¹⁰ They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals.

¹¹ But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God will glory in him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced.”

That's what **Wilderness experiences** do for us – bring us to God.

We cling to Him . . . when He's all u got, find out He's all u need.

“I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.”

We have to live w/o to discover what we really have – God.

“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.” – **Psm. 23:1**

Notice – he's not complaining . . . He's praising.

God's love is **better** than **everything else** in life.

Most people chase other things in life. David is **satisfied**.

W. experiences bring us closer to God . . . the One who will never leave.

We go there b/c friends became enemies. Trust/ broken. Comfort/ gone.

Trouble teaches us to **trust**/God. Reminds us who we should depend on.

- God never promised us easy living. He promised to never leave.

Truth – Wilderness living is **Wisdom**. . . place to prepare us for our future.

And just when it gets really hard . . . **God sends us encouragement**.

¹⁵ One day near Horesh, David received the news that Saul was on the way to Ziph to search for him and kill him. ¹⁶ Jonathan went to find David and encouraged him to stay strong in his faith in God. ¹⁷ “Don’t be afraid,” Jonathan reassured him. “My father will never find you! You are going to be the king of Israel, and I will be next to you, as my father, Saul, is well aware.” ¹⁸ So the two of them renewed their solemn pact before the LORD. Then Jonathan returned home, while David stayed at Horesh.

Jonathan shows up... encourages David. God sends just the right people!

Right people . . . at the right time. But **not so they replace God**.

That's what we should be for each other – encouragement.