

Lonely and Learning

We continue our study of the life of David. We see an anointed King, (after God's own heart) in a land where there is already a King...Saul. Despite a close relationship with Jonathan Saul's son and David's heroics on the battlefield, Saul would become very jealous and would try to kill David.

So why do we study David's life, besides the historical benefits and an interesting life lived? Because all of the scripture teaches us about Jesus and King David's life will point us to the ultimate King of Kings.

“David went to Nob, to Ahimelek the priest. Ahimelek trembled when he met him, and asked, “Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?”

2 David answered Ahimelek the priest, “The king sent me on a mission and said to me, ‘No one is to know anything about the mission I am sending you on.’ As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. 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.” 5 David replied, “Indeed women have been kept from us, as usual whenever I set out. The men's bodies are holy even on missions that are not holy. How much more so today!” 6 So the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the Lord and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away. 7 Now one of Saul's servants was there that day, detained before the Lord; he was Doeg the Edomite, Saul's chief shepherd.”

(1 Samuel 21:1-7)

This was like the President of the United States showing up at your door alone, no secret service, etc. Then David lies to the Priest, which was so unlike him and he runs to a foreign king. All of this was being observed by one of Saul's men that would result in a terrible revengeful act on the priests and the City of Nob.

- 1. Take responsibility for your actions:** *Bad decisions lead to bad consequences; seek to make things right.*

“Then David said to Abiathar, “That day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, I knew he would be sure to tell Saul. I am responsible for the death of your whole family.” (1 Samuel 22:22)

Then David said to Abiathar, "That day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, I knew he would be sure to tell Saul. I am responsible for the death of your whole family." (1 Samuel 22:22)

For us this means coming to the cross and turning; a change of mind but it starts with taking responsibility. David would eventually take responsibility; he didn't blame Doeg the Edomite or anyone else. Before we are too hard on David, we all have had times when we felt we needed to take control of a situation. But when he lied, there were consequences: devastation. He/we forget that it is God that has walked with us giving us what is needed during our life journey. We see this wreckage in people's lives when they take matters into their own hands, but it's not only destruction in their lives but others lives as well.

We are being told that there is an epidemic of loneliness and isolation in our culture today. God's answer is to put us in family, God's family, those who encourage us, protect us, and love us. Connection to the family of God is powerful in so many ways.

2. Learn to trust in the dark: David was *prepared* in a pasture but *trained* in a cave.

"David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam..."
(1 Samuel 22:1)

When we come to faith in Christ we are saved in a moment, then it is a lifetime of working that out. The truth of it is, we are "projects" that will take our be for our entire live to complete. For David three things will happen in the cave:

• **It was in the cave where David gathered with others.**

When his brothers and his father's household heard about it, they went down to him there. 2 All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their commander. About four hundred men were with him." (1 Samuel 22:1-2)

David becomes surrounded by a lot of people that you wouldn't normally build a group or team with. Yet in the end they will be men of strength, courage and renown...but it started in this cave.

• **It was in the cave where David pressed back into God.**

*"I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy.
2 I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.
3 When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who watch over my way. In the path where I walk people have hidden a snare for me.
4 Look and see, there is no one at my right hand; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. 5 I cry to you, Lord; I say,*

4 Look and see, there is no one at my right hand; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. 5 I cry to you, Lord; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." 6 Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me. 7 Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me." (Psalm 142)

This is the cry of a lonely person who feels like they are on his or her own. He poured out his heart to God and eventually came full circle back to God.

- **It was in the cave where God got back on the throne of David's life.**

"My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music. 8 Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. 10 For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth."
(Psalm 57:7-10)

It's in this cave, he came to a place where he knew the only person he couldn't live without is God. There will be many things that will try to be our refuge; David through a time of praise and worship will realize only God can be his refuge.

3. **Learn the lesson well:** *Never waste a failure; never repeat the same mistakes over and over again.*

"David asked Ahimelek, "Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king's mission 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."
(1 Samuel 21:8-9)

This is a powerful moment where God pushes the pause button and reminds David what a teenager in the middle of an impossible situation could accomplish when God was with him. He needed to go back and inquire of the Lord again.

"Goliath's sword was a reminder that a teenager with God on his side could overcome a seasoned warrior. The sword was a reminder that, even though no one else is with you, you are not alone"

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God is saying to David, remember your finest hour was because you placed your faith in me and I intervened. Why would we place our faith in anything or anyone else?

“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?” (1 Samuel 23:1)

“Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. ¹⁵ You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message. ¹⁶ At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth.” (1 Timothy 4:14-16)

“The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” (John 8:29)

This is a wonderful promise to us when like David we feel alone or isolated. When he is our God we are never alone, in fact in our “caves of loneliness” is where God does some of his best work training us!

Discussion Questions

- 1) David has found himself in a very difficult situation that has been going on for some time. He feels lonely and isolated and decides to do it his own way, lying to the priest. The first thing the scripture challenges with is *take responsibility for our own actions*. Please discuss what this means in our story on this side of the cross as well as in David’s life. Secondly please discuss: *“Bad decisions lead to bad consequences; seek to make things right”* (Page 2)
- 2) Our second point is to “learn to trust (God) in the dark”; what does this mean to you? Also in a practical way what is the difference between: “David was *prepared* in a pasture, but *trained* in a cave”? (Page 2)
- 3) The next point in our notes is: “It was in the cave where David gathered with others”. Who were these people and what was unique about them? Many of these people would become the most loyal soldiers and companions David would have and would end up doing great exploits. What does this say to us about the importance of gathering and growing together through difficulties? (Pages 2-3)
- 4) Sorry to get a little emotional about this one, but have you experienced those times in your cave where you are feeling alone, defeated, questioning whether we were even called to this? But as

experienced those times in your cave where you are feeling alone, defeated, questioning whether we were even called to this? But as difficult as those times are these are also opportunities because: “It was in the cave where David pressed back into God” and “It was in the cave where God got back on the throne of David’s life”. Maybe someone in the group is there now or you have experienced what Randy was teaching us. Feel free to share your experience or to pray and encourage one another.

(Pages 3-4)

- 5) Have you ever had God “push the pause button” like he did with David? Finish this study by discussing this quote: *“Goliath’s sword was a reminder that a teenager with God on his side could overcome a seasoned warrior. The sword was a reminder that, even though no one else is with you, you are not alone”*