

God is My Hiding Place

Scriptures: 1 Samuel 23, 24, 26, Psalm 54, 32;7

When you are with God, God is with you. This does not mean that nothing bad will happen to you while you are on earth.....we learned about that last week. In Psalm 32:7, David penned these words:

“You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.”

In today’s lesson, we will see how God helped to hide David from Saul, and how David continued to strive to be obedient to God, even though he was encouraged not to be.

David rescues a town in Israel: David was told the Philistines were fighting against the city of Keilah and were robbing their grain. David asked God if he should attack the Philistines and save Keilah. God told him “Yes”. But David’s men were afraid. Going to save this town exposes them to Saul. God reassures them and told them He would give the Philistines into their hands. So they obeyed God and saved Keilah.

(6-1) When Saul found out they were at Keilah, he summoned all the people to go to Keilah and surround David and his men. David asked God if Keilah would surrender David into Saul’s hands. God said they would. So David, with his 600 men, escaped from Keilah and Saul gave up coming to attack David.

David in the wilderness: David stayed in a safe, fortified—called a stronghold-- place in the wilderness and Saul searched for him every day, but God did not give David into Saul’s hand. Interestingly though, Jonathan found David in the wilderness and they made a covenant before God there.

(6-2) While David was in the wilderness of Ziph, the Ziphites went to Saul and told Saul David was hiding there. If the king would come there, the Ziphites would surrender David into Saul’s hand. Saul wanted them to spy on David and to find out all of his hiding places.

David went to the wilderness of Maon. Saul and his men went after him. (6-3) Saul was on one side of the mountain and David and his men were on the other side. David was hurrying to get away from Saul. (6-4) As Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them, a messenger came and told Saul the Philistines were raiding their land. So Saul stopped chasing David to go after the Philistines. That place was called the Rock of Escape.

David’s first chance to kill Saul: When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told that David was in the wilderness of Engedi. (6-5) Saul took 3000 men to seek David. When they came to a cave, Saul was probably resting in the cool of the cave, (6-6) but David and his men were deeper within the cave. David’s men wanted David to kill Saul. (6-7) David arose and stealthily cut off the corner of Saul’s robe, but he would NOT kill the Lord’s anointed, even though David’s men wanted to kill Saul.

Saul left the cave. David left afterwards and called to Saul. Saul, looked behind him and (6-8) David bowed down and said, “Why do you listen to the lie that I am trying to harm you? I had a chance to kill you in the cave and some encouraged me to do that, but I spared you. I will not kill the Lord’s anointed. See the corner of your robe in my hand? I could have killed you, but I spared you.”

(6-9) When Saul saw this, he wept and said, “You have repaid me with good, whereas I have repaid you with evil. I know you will surely be king. (6-10) Promise me you will not cut off my offspring and destroy my name.” And David swore to him. Saul went home and David went to the stronghold.

(6-11) It was during this time that Samuel died, and all of Israel mourned for him.

David’s second chance to kill Saul: Again, the Ziphites came and told Saul where David was hiding. So Saul took 3000 men and went to seek David. That night, Saul was camped in the middle with his army encamped around him. David and his nephew Abishai snuck down to the army by night. They went to where Saul was sleeping. Abishai begged David to let him pin Saul to the earth with one stroke of his spear. But David would not allow him to. They took Saul’s spear and the jar of water that was by Saul’s head and went away. God was helping them by causing a deep sleep to fall on the army.

When David got far away and there was a great space between them, David called to Abner (Saul’s commander), “Why have you not kept watch over your king? Someone came in to destroy the king. You have not kept watch over your king! See where the spear and jar of water were?”

Saul recognized David’s voice and asked, “Is that you David?” “Yes, it is,” David answered, “Why do you keep pursuing me? What have I done?”

Saul said, “I have sinned. Return and I will not harm you, for you valued my life. I have acted foolishly and made a great mistake.”

David promised not to kill the Lord’s anointed and had one of Saul’s men to come and get his spear. Saul returned to his place and David went away.

Do you see how God protected David? He did not take David’s battles away. Battles helped David become more brave and courageous, and helped his men too. David’s men were put in a vulnerable position to rescue Keilah, but when they stepped out in faith to be obedient to God, God helped them and protected them. God helped David see where He would protect him, and where others would hand him over to Saul so that he could take cover. God was their hiding place.

Why do you think Jonathan was able to find David, but Saul was not?

David could have killed Saul two times. He could have become king (Samuel had already anointed him), but he waited on God’s timing instead of pushing himself into that position.