**Desperation to Restoration**

R. Giglio 10/7/21

David was a fugitive, running from Saul. He had gone to the priestly city of Nob and lied to them, saying that he was on a mission from Saul. They believed him and gave him the sacred bread and a sword. As a result, when Saul found out, he had all the inhabitants of the city slaughtered.

When we last saw David, tried to secretly hide and find refuge in the Philistine city of Achish, but when he was identified and exposed, he pretended to be insane so they wouldn’t try to kill him. Instead, they wanted nothing to do with him.

**1st Sam 21:10**That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. **11**But the servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one they sing about in their dances:

“‘Saul has slain his thousands,
    and David his tens of thousands’?”

**12**David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. **13**So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

**14**Achish said to his servants, “Look at the man! He is insane! Why bring him to me? **15**Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?”

### *That’s how chapter 21 ends. David acting like a madman, rejected and alone.*

**1st Samuel 22:1 “**David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam.”

This is one of the lowest points in David’s life. He went from “national champion”, “anointed next king”, living in a palace with his best friend and experiencing the presence of God regularly; to a desperate, humiliated, defeated, fugitive, hungry, alone and afraid in a dark cave.

Think about where he was, in the lonely darkness of that cave, and what he must have felt…

Much like Jonah after running from God, found himself in the belly of a whale,

He could do nothing except; “Cry Out To God!”

And that’s exactly what he did.

How do we know? He wrote exactly *what he was feeling* and *exactly what he did* in a prayer set to music. We call it Psalm 142.

**Psalm 142 -** A *maskil* of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.

**1**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, “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.

The Lord heard his cry and answered his prayer. Soon his family came to him to encourage him. Others who were in distress and discontent gathered around him and vowed to follow him.

The Lord answered his prayer and rescued and restored him. All because he humbled himself before the Lord, and cried out to God, *instead of operating in pride and deception like he did before.*

Continuing verse 1 of Chapter 22;

1st Samuel 22:1b-5 …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.

**3**From there David went to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king of Moab, “Would you let my father and mother come and stay with you *until I learn what God will do* for me?” **4**So he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him as long as David was in the stronghold.

**5**But the prophet Gad said to David, “Do not stay in the stronghold. Go into the land of Judah.” So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

### *Saul Kills the Priests of Nob (verses 6-18)*

###  *“6 Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul was seated, spear in hand, under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing at his side. 7 He said to them, “Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? 8 Is that why you have all conspired against me? No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today.”9 But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul’s officials, said, “I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelek son of Ahitub at Nob. 10 Ahimelek inquired of the Lord for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.”11 Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all the men of his family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. 12 Saul said, “Listen now, son of Ahitub.”“Yes, my lord,” he answered.13 Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?”14 Ahimelek answered the king, “Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king’s son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? 15 Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father’s family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair.”16 But the king said, “You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and your whole family.”17 Then the king ordered the guards at his side: “Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.”But the king’s officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord.18 The king then ordered Doeg, “You turn and strike down the priests.” So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. 19 He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep.*

**1st Samuel 22:20“**But one son of Ahimelek son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to join David. **21**He told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. **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. **23**Stay with me; don’t be afraid. The man who wants to kill you is trying to kill me too. You will be safe with me.”

David had gone from a *refugee to a rescuer*. He was now offering safety and refuge to others who were like him, distressed and afraid.

When we began this chapter, he was desperate and alone in a cave crying out to God.

Soon God provided companions and followers for David. But they were not the *elite personnel* that King Saul surrounded himself with,

They were;

**1st Samuel 22:2** “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.”

These were his followers? those who were in distress or in debt or discontented

* *Those in distress.  We are not told what these people were in distress about.  Perhaps they were in distress over the state of their nation; perhaps they were in distress because they, like David, were being oppressed by the king.   Whatever their problem was, they came to David out of sheer necessity; they believed he could help them; they sensed in him a kindred spirit*
* *Those in debt.  In David’s time, if a man got in over his head, he could lose all he owned; there was no protection for those in debt.  There was under the Mosaic law, but under Saul, the Mosaic law was ignored.  These people came to David out of desperation because he, like them, had lost everything as he fled from Saul.*
* *The discontented.  These are people who were suffering under their oppression and wanted relief. “Discontented” refers to a kind of “bitterness of soul*

 Now he is no longer alone, he has an army of about 400 desperate and needy men, and also has just added Abiathar the priest who became very important to David.

*(Abiathar remained with David, and became priest of the party of which he was the leader. He was of great service to David, especially at the time of the rebellion of David’s son Absalom who tried to kill him.*

*When David ascended the throne of Judah, Abiathar was appointed High Priestand the "king's counselor".)*

The Lord was with David and blessing him now, *because* David was seeking the Lord and no longer taking matters into his own hands.

At the start of 1st Samuel 23, he had a small but very committed army, he also had a spiritual covering and the *favor of the Lord.*

**Chapter 23**

**1st Sam 23**:**1-5** 1When 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?”

The Lord answered him, “Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah.”

**3**But David’s men said to him, “Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!”

**4**Once again David inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him, “Go down to Keilah, for *I am going to give the Philistines into your hand*.” **5**So David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah.

This is the early beginning of the reign of David, Israel’s greatest King. His ascent from the *Cave to the Crown* was marked with many times of seeking and inquiring of the Lord, crying out to God and humbling himself in prayer and worship.

*Unlike Saul*, he learned from his mistakes quickly and was quick to admit his faults and repent when he sinned. God blessed David and anointed his kingdom.

In fact, the Kingdom of Israel has long been called the “Throne of David”,

and Jesus was called “*Son of David”* 17 times in the New Testament.

Let’s look back at what just transpired here,

After defeating Goliath and Successfully fighting the Philistines,

* David lost his position in Saul’s household
* He was treated unfairly and unjustly and was forced to relocate
* He was desperate for provision (food and a sword) and tried to acquire these things through dishonest means
* He then sought refuge by trying to hide in enemy territory.
* The results were that he had to resort to *feigned insanity* and found himself alone and desolate in a cave.
* It wasn’t until after being humbled by God, and crying our to him, that David was restored and given success.

Have you ever felt this way?

* Maybe you lost your job, your home, your marriage or something else.
* You were treated unjustly and unfairly by those you trusted.
* You were forced to move or relocate.
* You’d become desperate for provision and worried how you would make ends meet.
* You even considered finding comfort and relief by going “outside the camp”, perhaps in worldly people and places.
* Have you ever felt that God had forsaken or forgotten you, or that you made so many mistakes that He might as well have, and you feel like you’re all alone in a “cave”?

If any of these apply, you’re in good company, you’re just like the rest of us, and very much like King David.

David soon rose to prominence and became King. His army grew and grew and soon became the most powerful force in all the land. He was surrounded by the wisest and most skilled people ever to serve any king, and his Kingdom flourished and prospered until he himself rose to a level of greatness that few other Bible characters ever achieved.

But he did not start out like that.

He started out alone, crying out to God.

He started out surrounded by a group of distressed, in debt and discontented misfits who were as aware of their dire need for God’s favor as David was.

Maybe that’s you;

* Distressed - because you’ve lost something or someone important in your life,
* In debt – because you have a mortgage, bills, and other material needs that you are unable to pay for.
* Discontented - because of wrong things that were done to you, or even by you, or good things you did not receive and it’s lead to deep unhappiness.

If you feel like you are in the “Cave of Adullam” in your life, and you’re alone and afraid,

… then you’re in a really good place.

**Psalm 46:1** God is our refuge and strength,
    an ever-present help in trouble.

Just be careful not to try to find your way out by yourself, rely on your own abilities, or desperately pursue resources to take care of yourself instead of trusting in God.

Remember the prayer of “*Dave in the Cave”* and pray it to the Lord for yourself.

**Psalm 142:**

**1**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…

**5**I cry to you, Lord;
“You are my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.”

No matter how difficult things are now, or how hard they become.

Never lose heart,

never lose hope.

*Cry out to God;*

He will become your refuge,

your portion,

your strength,
    and an ever-present help

in times of trouble,

 right here in the land of the living.