

Beware of Despair (1 Samuel 27:1-7)

Up to this point, the LORD has:

- protected David from being pinned against the wall (three times) with Saul's spear (18:10-11; 19:10).
- brought David many victories against the Philistines as he went out against them (18:5; 14-15, 30).
- delivered David from death through Jonathan's advocacy before Saul (19:1-7).
- provided a way of escape through David's own window in Gibeah when Saul sought to arrest and kill him (19:12).
- caused the Spirit of God to come upon Saul, placing him in a trance so that David could escape from Ramah (19:18-24).
- brought encouragement to David through his brother-in-law Jonathan when he feared for his life (20:3).
- made a way of escape from Gath when David pretended to be insane before Achish (21:10-15).
- provided David fellowship and support when he took shelter in the Cave of Adullam (22:1-2).
- provided protection for David's father and mother in Moab (22:3-4).
- sent the prophet Gad, offering prophetic direction to David (v.5).
- responded to David's inquiries through prayer, despite the presence of the prophet, High Priest, and Urim or Thummim (23:1-4).
- sent Abiathar (High Priest) to David, along with the ephod (23: 6, 9-12).
- used the Philistine offensive to distract Saul and his men as they encroached upon David's position in the wilderness of Maon (23:25-28).
- demonstrated His favor toward David while in the Cave of Engedi by placing Saul's life into his hands (24:10).
- given Saul prophetic words acknowledging David's future kingship (24:20).
- sent Abigail to help curb David's unrighteous anger by pointing him to the justice and faithfulness of God, and his future kingship (25:23-42).
- allowed the successful entering of Saul's camp unnoticed (26:6-12), demonstrating another token to Saul that David is no threat (26:22).
- brought David to the point where he can say "my life is precious in the sight of the LORD, and He will deliver me out of all tribulation." (26:24).

David's:

1. Conglomeration (22:1-2; 23:13; 24:13; 25:13; 27:2)

There have been mounting and pressing concerns that have developed as David has wandered in the wilderness of Ziph:

- A. The size of his militia has grown: David began with 400 men (22:1-2) and now has 600 (24:13) to care for.
- B. The men have "households" with them: women, children, and belongings that were alluded to previously (25:13) are now confirmed. The size of David's following may be upwards of 3,000 people (men, women, and children).

C. David's wives: David now has Ahinoam and Abigail with him (25:43).

D. Weariness and discouragement: months of wandering as a fugitive, compounded with shepherding concerns has become a burden. Additionally, Saul has shown no evidence of restraint. David fears he will return (24:22; 26:1, 25), and consequently, there is no end in sight.

2. Conversation (v.1)

- David said, "in his heart." This was a conversation that he had either to himself, or with himself.
- David's fear was that "he will perish by the hand of Saul." Where did this come from? Where did these unwholesome, carnal thoughts come from? David reverts to his earlier days of being one step away from death (20:3).
- The combination of remaining in a habitual state of flight from Saul, together with the pressures of the men and their families, weakened David's propensity to think clearly and critically.
- During some point, perhaps after Saul returned to Gibeah for a second time, David's perspective changed. He no longer believes that the LORD will deliver him from all tribulation (26:24). His fearful imagination and God-less thought life has infiltrated his heart to where he believes he will "perish at the hand of Saul."

3. Calculation (v.2-4)

- David concludes that his only way of escape from the "hand" of Saul is to flee to the Philistine territory of Gath (21:10-15). His goal is simple: if he is outside of Israelite territory, Saul will not seek after him. He is correct.
- David brings his wives, Ahinoam and Abigail with him, along with his men and their households (v.2-3).
- While in Gath, David requested that a separate location be given to him and his followers. Achish agreed to this for several reasons:
 - He did not want to be responsible for providing food, shelter and clothing for all of David's followers.
 - David has 600 armed men with him.
 - Achish is going to use David to purge the Philistine enemies from the land. David is going to function as a raider or mercenary for Achish.

4. Consideration

- This chapter is a God-less text. There is no mention of God, or the LORD. There are no mentions of any covenant promises. There is no prayer. David does not seek the LORD's direction either through prayer (23:2), the Urim or Thummim (23:10), or High Priest. David does not consult anyone for wisdom (19:18; 20:1-3). Samuel is dead, but what of Gad? There is no word from the LORD, nor any comment from the narrator about anything spiritual.

5. Contribution (v.5-11)

6. Complication (v.12-28:1-2)