

"The Wilderness"

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"When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, 'Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi...May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me upon you; but my hand shall not be upon you...May the Lord therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you, and see to it, and plead my cause, and deliver me from your hand.' (1 Samuel 24:1,12,15)

SUMMARY:

Beginning in Chapter 22 of First Samuel is that period in David's life when he hides in the caves and dens of the earth...literally 'the wilderness.' He is learning that the King's business does not require haste. God is schooling and training him as He has His other men. During these years when he hides from the presence of Saul who seeks to kill him, he is hunted and hounded. He is driven from pillar to post. He is forced to hide in the forests and caves of the earth to escape the king's wrath. During this time David describes himself in the following ways: (1) I am hunted like a partridge (1 Sam. 26:20); (2) I am like a pelican of the wilderness (Ps. 102:6); (3) I am like an owl of the desert (Ps. 102:6); (4) My soul is among lions (Ps. 57:4); and (5) They have prepared a net for my steps (Ps. 57:6) In Chapter 24, we see David in the wilderness of Engedi and more importantly in a cave! Wait till you see the strange twist of events to this story!

NOTES:

DISCUSSION POINTS:

*Recall a time in your life when you felt like you were dealt with 'unjustly' or 'for no cause' (1 Sam. 19:6) and didn't deserve the treatment that you were receiving...how did you respond? Share.

*Saul was vulnerable and entered the very cave where David and his men were hiding. David could have killed Saul but simply took a piece of the King's 'skirt'...and afterward it says, 'his heart smote him'...or he felt guilty (1 Sam. 24:5). Why did David feel that way?

*Have you ever had a time (relationally speaking) when you felt guilty for the way that you treated someone else who had wronged you? What did you do about it?

*Are there times in your life when you 'ran to a wilderness' to escape...maybe your job, spouse, debt, bungled relationships, etc.?

*David declared that he would not 'touch the Lord's anointed' (even though Saul was deranged. What did David tell him?--read 24:12-15 What does it take to deal with people on the 'level' or 'depth' that David dealt with Saul?

- *What was Saul's response to David? (read 24:16-17) Also read Romans 12:17-19...how difficult is it not to take things into your own hands and 'repay' someone who you felt wrongfully tried to harm you?

ON YOUR OWN...



SCRIPTURES:

1 Samuel 19-24, particularly chapter 24

Romans 12:17-19

Ephesians 4:31-32

James 4:12

2 Timothy 4:14