

**I SAMUEL 20-21**

Please turn in your Bibles to I Samuel chapter 20 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

We have seen in our study of I Samuel that Saul is going to fight to keep his position as King even though the Lord, through the prophet Samuel, told him that the kingdom is going to be removed from him because of his disobedience to the Lord.

Samuel said to King Saul back in I Samuel 15:26, “**... ‘The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.’**”

And we saw that as Samuel anointed David as King, this young boy, that it was only David and Samuel who knew this as Samuel, as he poured the oil over David’s head, said in his ear, “*David, you are the next King in Israel*” and Samuel turned and walked away.

And God is raising David up, but it will be some 20 years before he ascends to the throne in Israel.

And King Saul is seeing that the people are drawn to David and thus, he wants to kill David so that he can keep his position as King.

David was a threat to him and last week we saw that Saul tried to spear David and David fled to Samuel in Naioth in Ramah and stayed there until Saul came to kill him there.

And God intervened and saved David from the hands of Saul.

Did David fear King Saul?

You bet he did, and this fear was not bad, it helped David be prepared so that Saul would not catch him. And during this time, we will also see fear cause David to do things that were not good. Thus, fear can be good or bad. Let me show you what I mean.

We are told,

What do you fear?

We may not like to admit it, but fear motivates many things we do. Certainly fear is not the only motivation for many of our actions, but it is at least part of the motivation for much in our lives.

We work, at least partly, because we fear poverty. We exercise because we fear poor health. We even make friends, in part, because we fear loneliness.

What do you fear?

Put like this, it is clear that fear is not necessarily a bad thing. To refrain from smoking because of a fear of lung cancer is wise . . . a person who feared nothing and no one (if such were to exist) would be both a fool and a danger to others.

Fear is an important, even valuable human experience.

What do you fear?

Of course, there are unhealthy fears. Psychiatrists and counselors are kept in business by our harmful fears. These fears may be unnecessary – the thing feared is imagined or exaggerated, as when a teenager is terrified that everyone secretly dislikes him.

They may be fears that instead of motivating wise and good behavior paralyze us or arouse inappropriate actions, as when a student's fear of exams makes him unable to concentrate and study . . .

David feared Saul. And who could blame him? Saul was the king.

Three times he had tried to thrust his spear through David (1Samuel 18:11 [twice!]; 19:10)

Twice he had tried to send David on such a dangerous mission that the Philistines would kill him (1 Samuel 18:17, 25).

Three times he had enlisted his servants in various plots to do away with David (1 Samuel 19:1, 11, 20).

The fact that so far none of these schemes had succeeded and even the apparently divine intervention to protect David on the last occasion did not allay [alleviate] David's fear of Saul.

The first half of 1 Samuel 20 brings us to a remarkable conversation between David and Jonathan, the son of Saul . . . David's fear of Saul was only the starting point for this dramatic conversation.

- John Woodhouse, 1 Samuel – Looking for a Leader, pp. 385-386

That is where we will pick up our study this evening as David is going to speak with Saul's son, Jonathan and basically ask him, "*What is up with your dad?*"

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in I Samuel chapter 20, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

## **I SAMUEL 20**

### **VERSE 1**

Keep in mind that God provided a way for David to escape from King Saul and now he fled from Nainoth to Ramah, just several miles away.

And as David meets up with Jonathan, he asks him why his father is after him. Why does his father want to kill him. He did nothing wrong.

In fact, David loved King Saul, he fought for him, did whatever Saul asked him to do. Thus, he did not deserve this.

And David in no way was trying to usurp the throne away from Saul, not at all!

But Saul was a man who was unstable, he knew what Samuel told him and thus, he was trying to hold onto this position.

Also keep in mind that Jonathan, Saul's son, at least in Saul's mind, it would be his son Jonathan who was to be the next King and not David.

But Jonathan, who was a godly man, understood that the next King in Israel was to be David, and he surrendered himself to that. There was no competition between him and David for the throne!

How does that apply to our own lives?

Are there ever times when people will come against the work we are doing, try to kill our character?

Absolutely, but don't let that stop you.

It doesn't mean we try to usurp a position from another or fight for something to help God out, but if God has called us, then He will take care of it.

We are to be faithful in what we are doing, and He will be the One to raise us up.

#### VERSES 2-4

Remember back in I Samuel 19:2 we saw Jonathan tell David, “**. . . My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide.**”

Now it seems like Jonathan is telling David that his father does not want to kill him. Why is there this change of heart here?

I don't think Jonathan changed his mind about his father. What we see here is that Jonathan tells David that his dad, King Saul, would not hide anything from him, even this issue about killing David.

I think Jonathan thought that he could protect David and if his dad said that he was going to kill David, then Jonathan would intervene.

And David understands what Jonathan said but he does have a concern. You see, David tells Jonathan that Saul knows that there is a friendship between his son and David and thus, he will not tell him what he desires, to have David put to death!

Was David a little down, discouraged here?

Was David a little fearful here?

I think so for he says, “... ‘But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death.’”

It seems that David felt that it didn't matter what he did. Saul still wanted him dead.

Now, I love what Jonathan doesn't do. He doesn't say, “*Hey bro', where is your faith? Why are you not trusting in the Lord? You know, all things work out for good to those who love God!*”

Instead, we see that Jonathan tells David, “... ‘Whatever you yourself desire, I will do it for you.’”

Jonathan was trying to encourage David by telling him, “*I am with you David, let me know what I can do to help you.*”

That truly is a friend. Yes, what Jonathan could have said would have been true, but that is not what David needed at that point. He needed a friend to love him because he already knew that he needed to trust the Lord. That was not the issue, he just needed the encouragement of a friend. What a lesson for us!

#### VERSES 5-8

Jonathan told David that he would do whatever David wants and thus, here is David's plan.

David was expected at the monthly feast that Saul had for those high officials of Saul and David wants Jonathan to see Saul's reaction to why David was not there.

The sad thing here is that David wants Jonathan to lie about why he is not there. He wants Jonathan to tell his father that David is in Bethlehem for the yearly sacrifices of his family.

Now, if Saul is satisfied with that then things are well, but if he becomes angry, then it is true, he wants David dead!

Did David need to come up with this lie to figure out that Saul wanted him dead?

I know that he did not because the Bible tells us that Satan is the father of lies and thus, this is not of God.

Then why did he do it?

Because David let fear guide him and God is teaching him that he needs to learn to trust in the Lord no matter how difficult the situation is. He did not have to come up with an evil plan to figure this out. The Lord would have shown him and Jonathan.

But David is still growing and learning and for the next 20 years or so the Lord will be preparing him for the throne!

As we read on, it is possible that Jonathan did not lie, but we will see that in a few minutes.

But for David, he really is not going to a feast with his father, he may and go and visit him, but I don't think there is a feast that he is going to. So I tend to see David lying here.

David also tells Jonathan that if he has done anything wrong, if there is iniquity in him, then Jonathan should kill him himself instead of bringing him to his father to have his father kill him.

And maybe David is just not sure about Jonathan, if his loyalty to his father was more than the loyalty he had towards David.

And yet, everything we have seen about this man indicates that Jonathan was a man of God who loved David and saw that God was preparing him for the throne.

Remember what took place back in I Samuel 16, **“And it was so, when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul . . . Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.”** I Samuel 16:1, 3-4.

Jonathan gave David the robes that were to be his because he recognized that David was the next King.

And maybe David is a little paranoid here, but it is hard to fault him with that because of what is taking place.

What is interesting is the friendship that these two had. Jonathan did not just get mad at David and walk away as happens so often with friendships because many times they are built upon what we can get out of them instead of the Lord.

If a friendship is built upon the Lord, then nothing will cause it to crumble. But if it is built upon our own selfish desires, our emotions, when things go wrong, the relationship will crumble and fall apart!

And listen to what Jonathan says to David in the next verse.

### VERSE 9

Notice that Jonathan does not get mad at David, he does not walk away in disgust saying, ***“This relationship is over!”***

No, Jonathan tells David that if he knew of any plan of his father’s that was meant to harm David, he would have told him.

He did not know that his father, Saul, was going to throw a spear at David. He did not know that his father was going to kill David in his own home. And he did not know that his father was going to Naioth to kill David. If he did, he would have told David!

What Jonathan is trying to do is to encourage David. You see, David is a little unsure of what is going on.

That truly is a friend!

### VERSES 10-17

David is still not sure, and Jonathan tells him again that he will find out and he will let David know if the situation is good with his father and he can stay or if his father really wants him dead and he needs to flee.

But in either case, the Lord is with David and that will never change.

What a great friend Jonathan was as he keeps pointing David back to the Lord!



I see Jonathan as this great man of faith. Why do I say that?

Like I have said, because Jonathan knew that David was the next King. He does not fight against what God was doing.

Also, and this may seem strange to us, but Jonathan wants David to make a vow that he will not destroy his family but treat them kindly when he becomes King.

Why would he do that?

The reason is simple. When a new King took the throne, they would often kill the family of the previous King so that they could not rise up and try to usurp that position.

And David will remember this vow he made with Jonathan and will deal kindly with the family of Jonathan. (II Samuel 9:1-8, 21:7)

### VERSES 18-23

Here is the plan to let David know if Saul wants him dead or if it is okay for David to return.

When Jonathan attends this feast, he will find out what his father wants to do with David.

And once he does, he will come back and let David know through this signal.

Jonathan will do some target practice you might say, and if the arrows land on this side of the stone, in front of where David is hiding out, then things are well between him and Saul.

But, if the arrows land on the other side of this rock, beyond David, then he needs to flee for his life because Saul wants to kill him!

Look at this for a minute, what David has to do.

All David could do was to wait by this rock to see what he was to do and, folks, what a lesson for us.

There are many times all we can do in a given situation is wait by *THE ROCK*, Jesus Christ and see which way the arrows will fly you might say!

It is as we are told in Isaiah 40:31, **“But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”**

And in Isaiah 41:10, **“Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”**

That is what we need to do, wait upon Him and know that we do not have to fear because He will be there to strengthen us in the situation we are in. He will guide us in what we need to do!

Look at how this is going to play out.

#### VERSES 24-29

David is hiding out in this field and Jonathan attends this feast and it says in verse 25, **“Jonathan arose”** and that seems strange, was he leaving?

Please understand that it does not mean he stood up, but it means to abide in the Hebrew and thus, he remained at this feast, he was not leaving.

And when King Saul sees David missing that first night, he came to the conclusion that he must be unclean but when it happened the next day, he still could not be unclean, that would only last one day and thus, he inquired of his son why David was not there.

Now does Jonathan lie to his father by telling him that David is with his family in Bethlehem and that is why he could not come to the feast?

I like the explanation that Poole gives to us. He wrote, *“It seems probable that he went first to Bethlehem, as he bade Jonathan to tell his father, verse 6, and thence returned to the field, when the occasion required; else we must charge him with a downright lie, which ought not to be imagined (without any apparent cause) concerning so good a man.”*

That may be the case!

Does Saul buy this?

Let's read on and see!

#### VERSES 30-34

To put this mildly, Saul loses it here. I see smoke coming out of his ears!

Saul knew that his son was not telling him the whole truth and it made him furious!

Saul basically says that others will think that your mother was a whore and thus, you are a bastard if you don't take the throne, and you give it to David. That there must not be any royal blood in his veins and thus, he does not have any right to the throne.

In other words, he was not only making himself look bad but also his mother and Saul!

Saul knew very well that David would be King, and that God had placed David in that position. And yet, Saul is fighting against what God was doing, and he is trying to win, and he is losing!

The solution to this problem is to kill David and the problem would be solved. If he doesn't kill David the kingdom would be taken away from him and his son, Jonathan!

I think Jonathan had hope that his dad would come to his senses and see that David loved Saul and this hatred would go away. But, as we can see, it hasn't, and it won't!

And Jonathan, he just can't understand this, how his dad can be so mad and want to kill David.

In fact, he asks his father why he wants David dead, what has he done that brings you to this decision?

And Saul is so mad, he is so out of control he picks up a spear and throws it at his own son to kill him!

And it says, "**Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David.**"

Do you think!

I will just apologize for this before I say it. But here it goes. I guess you can say,

***Jonathan gets the point!***

Make no mistake about it, Saul's jealousy is out of control. He claims to care about Jonathan's right to the throne - then tries to end it himself at the end of a spear.

His dad is deranged and this will continue on, this hatred and wanting David dead until Saul himself is killed in battle!

#### VERSES 35-40

How hard this must have been for Jonathan. I can just feel how heartbroken he was with all that has taken place.

And we see that as he shoots this arrow, he tells this lad to go and fetch it, that it is farther out and that is the signal to David that Saul does want to kill him. Not only that, but he tells this lad, and really David, "**Make haste, hurry, do not delay!**" (I Samuel 20:38)

In other words, "***David, you need to get out of town, and you need to go quickly!***"

Think about this for a minute.

No longer would David be welcome in Saul's army, in Saul's presence, and he could not even return home for fear of Saul finding him there and killing him and his family!

There are times when we find ourselves in situations like this. We have done nothing wrong; we have obeyed the Lord and yet, the arrow flies and we must go.

It is as Meyer wrote, ***“You have hoped against hope; you have tried to keep your position; you have done your duty, pleaded your cause, sought the intercession of your friends, prayed, wept, agonized. But it is all in vain; the arrows' flight proves you must go wither you may.”***

That is where we must trust in the Lord because we know that all things are working for good. We may not see it, we may not feel it, but we do **KNOW** and that should be a comfort to our lives!

One more point here and that is the faithfulness of Jonathan.

He was in a difficult situation. If his dad found out what he was doing, he would surely kill him. In fact, he has already tried.

And yet, David's friendship, his obedience to the Lord was more important than anything else.

Again, Meyer wrote, ***“But there is something still nobler - when one dares in any company to avow [declare] his loyalty to the Lord Jesus. Like David, he is now in obscurity and disrepute; his name is not popular; his gospel is misrepresented; his followers are subjected to rebuke and scorn. These are days when to stand up for anything more than mere conventional religion must cost something; and for this reason let us never flinch.”***

That is so true today. That we need to stand up for what is right no matter who may come against us or what we may lose!

VERSES 41-42

I Remember when Julie and I came up here from Calvary Chapel of Elk Grove and the tears that were shed when we left our church family down there, it was hard. We loved them very much and they loved us.

But here with Jonathan and David, their departure was the result of Saul wanting to kill David and they will only see each other one more time before Jonathan is killed.

And they wept over this situation and David more, why?

Because David was now an outcast, a wanted man and he will be on the run for a long time before he becomes King.

He lost much but was willing to sacrifice his life for the Lord because the Lord had appointed him as King. It just was not time!

Now, as some look at this they may wonder, ***“Is David in the Lord’s will here? It doesn’t seem like it with all that is happening. He must have done something wrong, right?”***

No, not at all! David did nothing wrong for Saul to come after him and try to kill him!

Then how could God do this to David?

Because God was going to teach David some lessons of faith through these trials he was going through and will be going through.

Yes, Satan will try to tempt him, but God is trying to grow him in the faith, as He will in our own lives.

If David was to be King, he needed to learn to submit to the Lord and understand that his defense is the Lord and no one else. He was not to trust anyone but the Lord!

It is as Redpath wrote, *“Let God empty you out that He may save you from becoming spiritually stale, and lead you ever onward. He is always calling us to pass beyond the thing we know into the unknown. A throne is God’s purpose for you; a cross is God’s path for you; faith is God’s plan for you.”*

We don’t always see it that way, but God does have a purpose and to get to glory there is the cross!

May we not lose sight of that!

## I SAMUEL 21

### VERSE 1

After David departs from Jonathan he heads to Nob, which was about 12 miles northeast of Jerusalem and this is the place where Ahimelech the priest was located.

In other words, David comes to the house of God as he was traveling on this dark and uncertain road of life, and he is at the place where he needed to be.

That is true for us. Instead of trying to be the Lone Ranger, go into the house of God, seek His peace, His direction as you go through those dark times as David was doing.

Now we are not sure why, but Ahimelech is a little uncertain about the reason David is there, and there is no big army with him.

Maybe he knew Saul and his behavior, but he did not know that Saul wanted to kill David.

All Ahimelech could do was look at the situation that David was in, that he was alone, and he thought something must have happened and he was on the run!

How was David going to ease the fear of this priest and explain the situation?

Let's read on and see how this man of God handles this situation.

### VERSES 2-6

It seems that David is also unsure of where Ahimelech's loyalties were since his brother, Ahijah, was the spiritual advisor for King Saul after Samuel withdrew from him.

And David, to put it bluntly, comes up with this lie to save him in this situation instead of relying on the Lord!

Many don't see this as a big deal, but it is.

Why do I say that?

Well, yes, Satan is the father of lies, that is not good.

But also, we need to remember that there are consequences to our sin and many times it not only affects us but those around us as David will soon find out!

I realize that some say that David did not sin by lying here, but it is hard to justify this as Trapp tells us, ***“Some go about to excuse David's lying here: but that cannot be. The consequences of it were very sad . . . and afterward made his soul melt for very heaviness, whilst he bewailed it, and begged pardoning and prevailing grace (Psalm 119:28-29).”***

Also, we see that David talks about the men that were with him on this supposed mission but there is no indication here in I Samuel that anyone was traveling with him. I think there were some men with him. I will show you why in a minute.

Keep in mind that David was a military leader and thus, when he traveled it was with a lot of men.



But now there are just a few with him and maybe that is why Ahimelech was a little suspicious of David and what he was doing.

How can I be so sure that there were other men with David?

Because, in Matthew chapter 12, which we will read in a minute, Jesus does tell us that there were other men with him, we just don't know how many. But like I have said, it was probably just a few.

We see here that David, being on the run, was hungry, there was no place to get food, and he asks Ahimelech to give him and his men some food, five loaves of bread.

But all this priest had was the showbread.

If you remember, the Table of Showbread stood on the right side of the Tabernacle just before the Holy of Holies and the Seven Branched Oil Burning Lamp was on the left side with the Altar of Incense in the middle as you looked inward.

On this Table of Showbread were twelve loaves of bread representing the twelve tribes of Israel and each week a new set would be put out and the priests would partake of the twelve loaves that were removed.

And the priest asks David if he and his men have kept themselves from women, if their bodies are holy and David says they were.

Thus, they should be able to partake of it. The reality is the priest were the ones who could partake but Ahimelech saw the need of David and was willing to give them this bread as long as they were holy.

This incident here is expounded on by Jesus in Matthew 12:1-8, **“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, ‘Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!’ But He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”** (Also, in Mark 2:23-28)

You see, the Pharisees were upset with the disciples of Jesus, for they were plucking and then eating grain on the Sabbath, and everyone knew that it is unlawful to do any work on the Sabbath.

And Jesus points them back to this incident in which their King, David, actually went against the Law and ate the Showbread.

And Jesus is saying that human need always supersedes ceremonial law.

Remember, the Law was given to help mankind, not hurt him. And when the letter of the Law contradicts the intent of the Law, then the spirit of the Law takes precedent.

We need to be sensitive to human need, just as Jesus was.

VERSES 7-9

Doeg, this Edomite, is in Nob and he overhears this conversation between Ahimelech and David.

Now, since he is working for Saul, he has inside information about where David is and that is not going to be a good thing.

The name “**Doeg**” means one who acts with unrestraint or one that can’t rest, one that is restless.

Does that remind you of anyone?

It does to me. You see, Peter tells us to, “**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.**” I Peter 5:8.

Satan is restless, he is looking for someone to devour and that is the heart of Doeg, as we will see!

David has no weapon, at least in his mind and he asks the priest if he has a sword or spear that he can give to him since he is involved with the Kings business, which was another lie.

Now think about that one. He was in such a hurry he did not bring his weapons for war! That is a hard one to swallow. If you are a military leader and you have to go so quickly that you don’t have time for your weapons, well, you better make sure your organ donor card is filled out, you will need it!

And Ahimelech says that the only thing he has on hand is the sword of Goliath, the giant that David killed, and David takes it.

Now you may be wondering how David can use this giant’s sword. Well, it is possible that David took Goliath’s dagger, which would have been like a sword to David. You see, the Hebrew word that is used for “**sword**” is not specific.

Now this is sad. You see, I am sure that David had his sling with him, but now he is not trusting in the Lord, he is lying, and thus, he needs these other physical weapons to defeat his enemies. And as we will see, he is not even going to use it, he does something else to get out of the situation that he will place himself in.

This is truly a tragic picture here as one writer tells us as he wrote, ***“It is painful to the last degree to see one whose faith towered to such a lofty height in the encounter with Goliath, coming down from that noble elevation, to find him resorting for self-protection to the lies and artifices of an impostor.”*** (Balikie).

What a lesson for us to learn, the one that David will have to learn before he is King!

And if you still think David is not in the wrong, look at verse 10.

#### VERSE 10

David is now trying to figure this out. He is using human reasoning and wisdom and thus, he goes to Gath, a Philistine city and the hometown of Goliath!

Why would he run and hide among the enemies of Israel?

Did David really think that carrying the sword of the Philistine giant that he killed was a great idea? Think about it. He is going to Goliath’s hometown!

What is he thinking?

Maybe he thought he would be safe from Saul there.

Maybe he thought they would not recognize him.

No matter what he thought, it was foolish!

As you read this one verse and see the actions of David, what didn’t David do?

He did not bring it to the Lord!

He did not seek direction from the Lord!

Before we are too harsh on David, how many Christians, when they are in trouble, try to hide away amongst the enemies of God?

In other words, you try to blend into the world so no one will recognize you are a Christian!

How many times do we come up with our own plans to get out of a situation instead of bringing them to the Lord for direction?

Folk's, it is not going to work with David, and it won't work with us. God will expose our sin because He wants us to look to Him to be the strength of our life!

#### VERSE 11

Busted! They recognized David, they heard that top 10 hit, "**Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands.**"

They must have thought, "*What in the world is this giant killer doing here with us?*"

In fact, think about this, they recognized David as the "**king of the land**" and yet, he was not acting that way now as you will see!

How would David respond in this situation?

I mean, he was a man after God's own heart, right?

That is what the Bible tells us.

So what will he do?

Let's read on and see.

VERSE 12

When David found out that his cover was exposed, he was afraid. Think about it. They in no way would let this giant killer go! And Psalm 56 helps us to understand what was going on here for David wrote of this incident when he was captured, and we get some insight into what went on that we don't get here in I Samuel.

Let's look at this Psalm to get a picture of what went on with David, as the introduction of what this Psalm is about tells us, "*A Michtam of David when the Philistines captured him in Gath.*"

And I tend to think this was written after David was removed from this situation and he is looking back on what was taking place.

We are told, **"Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up; Fighting all day he oppresses me. My enemies would hound me all day, For there are many who fight against me, O Most High. Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me? All day they twist my words; All their thoughts are against me for evil. They gather together, They hide, they mark my steps, When they lie in wait for my life. Shall they escape by iniquity? In anger cast down the peoples, O God! You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book? When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God is for me. In God (I will praise His word), In the Lord (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You, For You have delivered my soul from death. Have You not kept my feet from falling, That I may walk before God In the light of the living?"** Psalm 56:1-13.

In other words, David is learning again to trust in the Lord, he is not trusting in what he can do but what the Lord has done and as we will see, there were some tough lessons.

The key for us is the Word of God, trusting in the promises of God that He has made to us, and then just walk by faith. We don't have to lie, cheat or steal, we just need to walk and see the salvation that the Lord will bring to the situation we are in.

If we don't trust in God's Word, we will find dangerous roads before us.

In 1998 a crew of five Navy fliers were killed in California's Sequoia National Forest when their helicopter smashed into power lines. How can something like this happen?

Three years earlier, a crash involving the same power lines had killed two people.

In 1999, NATO forces bombed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese journalists and injuring 20 others.

As you read this it is hard to imagine such tragic loss of life.

What was the problem?

Each of these tragedies had the same cause: *faulty maps*.

Investigators say that the National Imagery and Mapping Agency and its predecessor organization have played a role in at least a dozen accidents since 1985, some involving fatalities and loss of military aircraft.

If you don't have the right map, you will get into trouble.

God's Word is the map for our lives.

So, when David says, "**I will praise His word**", he is back in touch with the essential road map for his life.

How about you?

Are you back in touch with the essential road map for your life, the Word of God?

You need to be!

Remember that Psalm 56 was written after this event, so David is still learning here.

Now, notice his solution to this problem, and keep in mind that he will be the next King in Israel!

### VERSE 13

Notice the solution that David has to this problem, he pretends to be mad, he fakes being crazy, he acts like a nut case!

He is scratching on doors; he lets saliva drip down from his mouth.

A much different picture than we saw earlier on where Samuel anointed David as King and the oil flowed down his face, the empowering of God's Spirit was the picture!

And this was dishonoring to God, this was the next King of Israel and this is the way he was acting!

Why was David doing this?

Because David took his eyes off the Lord and was trying to figure out a way out of this mess that he was in.

Some argue that David humiliated himself and thus, this is the way to get out of this situation and God approved of it. I disagree.

You see, when David fought Goliath, it was foolish for him to have a sling and a stone to fight against this giant who had all this battle armor on and this huge sword in his hand, and yet God used the foolishness of man to defeat the proud giant.

Don't you think God could have delivered David out of this situation without pretending to be crazy?



Absolutely He could have.

David looked at the situation and was fearful and those fears lead him to this behavior!

It is as Proverbs 29:25 says, **“The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.”**

What a lesson here. When we begin to fear what man can do to us, we can resort to all kinds of ungodly behavior. But when we learn to just trust in the Lord, we will be safe, He will take care of us!

It is easy to come down on David for his behavior, but how many of us do the same?

I don't mean that we go around scratching on doors or letting saliva drip down from our mouth, but that our Christian values change when we are around the unsaved so we won't be recognized.

Or if they know we are Christians, they won't bother us because we have the most bizarre behavior, and no one wants to be around us.

May we stand strong in the faith and have a boldness that is grounded in the love of Christ. May we walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh!

One more point here and Psalm 34 also deals with this incident in Achish. We are told, **“I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”** Psalm 34:4. We will look more at this Psalm as we read on.

#### VERSES 14-15

Achish wants nothing to do with David in this condition.

He is basically saying to his men, ***“If he is out of his mind then don't bring him near me, into my house. Isn't there enough crazy people in town. Get him out of here!”***

And as much as some try to justify the behavior of David, deceit and hypocrisy can never be pleasing in the sight of God.

Did God deliver David from this?

Yes, He did but God did not need David's help, and he should have never gone down to the camp of the Philistines for safety in the first place!

And next time, as chapter 22 opens up, we are told, **“David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.”** I Samuel 22:1-2.

David is on the run from Saul, he is running for his life and in that trial, God is teaching him to trust in the Lord while Satan is trying to tempt him to sin!

As I have said, David wrote many Psalms out of his experiences on the run from Saul.

Here in regard to Achish letting him go free, David wrote Psalm 34, and the introduction gives us insight to this fact as it tells us, *“A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.”*

Keep in mind that Abimelech is the title, but his name is Achish.

And thus, David wrote:

**I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man who desires life, And loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all. He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.**” Psalm 34:1-22.

Notice the focus we see in this Psalm. It is the **LORD!**

And David is praising God for his deliverance, that he was brought to safety, and it was not his might or strength or plan, it was the Lord!

The Lord delivered David in spite of his plans!

Did David make some mistakes here?

You bet he did.

The remarkable thing is that he learned from these mistakes, and they caused him to draw close to the Lord. That does not mean that his lessons are over, in fact, they are just beginning.

The same is true for us. We will fail, but God is not done. Thus, don't beat yourself up, repent, get right and walk with the Lord and learn from those failures, those mistakes, those sins and grow in the Lord, learn to trust Him more and more!

You see, faith needs to not only have legs to walk, but those legs then need to walk.

We have heard the Words of God. We know all the facts, the question is, ***“Do you believe?”***

William Booth put it like this as he said, ***“Faith and works should travel side by side, step answering to step, like the legs of men walking. First faith, and then works; and then faith again, and then works again - until they can scarcely distinguish which is the one and which is the other.”*** (William Booth in The Founder's Messages to Soldiers, Christianity Today, October 5, 1992, p. 48).

May we learn to walk by faith and not by sight, trusting in the Lord!

May we take the Words of God and apply them to our lives as we walk by faith!

For David, he is especially joyful because the **LORD** got him out of a mess that David himself made.

God's amazing goodness is shown when He delivers us when we don't really deserve it.