1 Samuel 23:1-29 **David saved Keilah from Philistines – Saul in hot pursuit**

Philistines attack City of Keilah
1 Then they told David, saying, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors."

David inquired of the Lord and saved Keilah
2 Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?"
And the Lord said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah."
3 But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" 4 Then David inquired of the Lord once again.
And the Lord answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand." 5 And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 Now it happened, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, that he went down with an ephod in his hand.

Saul attempted to catch David in Keilah
7 And Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." 8 Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men.

David inquired of the Lord and escaped from Keilah
9 When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." 10 Then David said, "O Lord God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah to destroy the city for my sake. 11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant."
And the Lord said, "He will come down."
12 Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?"
And the Lord said, "They will deliver you."
13 So David and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition.

David in Wilderness Strongholds – Saul sought David but could not find him
14 And David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in the mountains in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand. 15 So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest.

Jonathan had no trouble finding David and made a covenant with him
16 Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God. 17 And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that." 18 So the two

of them made a covenant before the Lord. And David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house.

The Ziphites sided with Saul against David

19 Then the Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is David not hiding with us in strongholds in the woods, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? 20 Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand."

21 And Saul said, "Blessed are you of the Lord, for you have compassion on me. 22 Please go and find out for sure, and see the place where his hideout is, and who has seen him there. For I am told he is very crafty. 23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hides; and come back to me with certainty, and I will go with you. And it shall be, if he is in the land, that I will search for him throughout all the clans of Judah."

24 So they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men were in the Wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. 25 When Saul and his men went to seek him, they told David. Therefore he went down to the rock, and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued David in the Wilderness of Maon. 26 Then Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. So David made haste to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men were encircling David and his men to take them.

The Lord helped David through the Philistines

27 But a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land!" 28 Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; so they called that place the Rock of Escape. 29 Then David went up from there and dwelt in strongholds at En Gedi.
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Facts Revealed:

Philistines attack City of Keilah

- ✿ God works in mysterious ways to perform His great will in the affairs of mankind.
  - ✧ Yahweh began to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines in the days of Samson. [Judges 13:1-5]
  - ✧ He continued to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines through Samuel, Jonathan & David. [1 Samuel 7:7-13, 14:1-46, 17:1-54]
  - ✧ Now David is fleeing from Saul for his life and is hiding in various strongholds in the wilderness of Judah. [1 Samuel 22:5]
- ✿ When David heard that the Philistines were fighting against Keilah, he inquired of Yahweh and the Lord told him to go and save Keilah. [1 Samuel 23:1-6]
  - ✧ David's men were anxious because there they would be exposed for Saul to come against them, but after the second inquiry of the Lord, and assurance from God, they went and won a great victory over the Philistines, saving Keilah.

Saul attempted to catch David in Keilah

- ✿ Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men. [1 Samuel 23:7-8]

- ◇ The blindness of a heart of one caught up in his evil intent is demonstrated by Saul, when he learned of the great victory over the Philistines his enemies, when he should have commended David for his help, instead Saul wants to take advantage of the situation to kill David.
- ◇ When God has given a person over to a reprobate mind for his willful sin, the person is unable to look at things realistically and do the right thing. [Romans 1:18-32]

David inquired of the Lord and escaped from Keilah

- ✿ When David learned of Saul's plan to capture him in Keilah, he inquired of the Lord and he and his men left Keilah and returned to hiding. [1 Samuel 23:9-13]
  - ◇ When Saul heard that David had left Keilah, he ended his expedition against the city.

David in Wilderness Strongholds – Saul sought David but could not find him [1 Samuel 23:14-15]

- ✿ David stayed in strongholds (caves) in the mountains of the wilderness of Ziph, in a forest.
- ✿ Saul sought David every day, but could not find him because God did not deliver him into Saul's hand.

Jonathan had no trouble finding David and made a covenant with him [1 Samuel 23:16-18]

- ✿ Saul's son Jonathan went to David and encouraged him in the Lord, saying, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that."
  - ◇ Here you see the basis of the covenant between Jonathan and David, Jonathan expected David to become king of Israel and saw himself as second in command in David's kingdom, and was content with that concept.
  - ◇ David stayed in the woods and Jonathan returned home.

The Ziphites sided with Saul against David [1 Samuel 23:19-26]

- ✿ Even with the help of the Ziphites, Saul could not catch David and his men.

Yahweh used the Philistines to help David [1 Samuel 23:27-29]

- ✿ At just the most critical time, the Lord intervened, and the Philistines invaded the land, so when Saul heard about the invasion, he broke off pursuing David and went against the Philistines.
- ✿ David and his men went to the strongholds (caves) of En Gedi overlooking the Dead Sea.