

I Samuel 21-25

“David in Exile – part one”

Introduction

- Tonight we continue in our study of I Samuel
 - And the content of I Samuel can be remembered by the fact that the book is really about 3 people, 3 main characters

The Book of I Samuel

Samuel – I Samuel 1-7

King Saul – I Samuel 8-15

David – I Samuel 16-31

- We have seen Samuel in his upbringing, Godly parents, but a really horrible culture and yet he was a light
- We have met King Saul who started out really great, but after about 2 years, the next 38 years of his kingship are a disaster
- Then last week we met David
 - from the sheepfold where his own dad didn't invite him to the feast for his sons, to the court of Saul
 - Where David not only handled the worship duties, but was Saul's general

And everything was going great, until the ladies got involved, those ladies

- they saw David and their little hearts went pitter patter
 - he wasn't tall like Saul, just a short, tanned face good looking guy with bright eyes
 - and they began to sing – Saul has slain his thousands (oh Saul liked that) – but David, his tens of thousands

Saul's jealousy begins to take over and you couple that with the fact that the Spirit of God had left Saul and now was on David and Saul was a mess

- 3 times he attempts to kill David by throwing a spear at his head
 - twice he tries to send him to the battle field to die
- And David endures all of this for about three to five years

And after all of this, Jonathan, Saul's son still believes his dad doesn't have it in for David

- but the two friends put old Saul to the test
 - David hides by the rock of Ezel, the Rock that shows the way
 - And Jonathan tells his dad when he wants to know why David wasn't at the feast, I let him go to his home city – how will Saul respond?
- When Saul threw a spear at Jonathan and cursed his mother, Jonathan knew – David was in danger, he needed to go
 - And the two friends swore a covenant to one another and David left – leaving the first part of his national life in the court of Saul, and entering the next part – exile in the wilderness

And for the next two weeks, including tonight we will be looking at the events in this 10 year period of time – David from age 20 to 30

- and tonight we see that this wilderness time, this time of exile was a time of trial in David's life
 - And he is going to experience trials on all fronts
 - And often I wonder – why do you do the things you do God?
- Wouldn't it be easier just to let Saul die in battle and let David have the Kingdom immediately
 - Why 10 years in the wilderness

And I have really sensed from the Lord this week that if God worked that way with David it would certainly be easier, but it would not be best

- at least 20 Psalms are penned in these years of trial in David's life
 - and that is one of the important reasons for going through this section – we get a ton of background information to why some of the Psalms were written
- and if we had time to go through them – we don't, but you would see the growth and the maturing that takes place in David's life
 - but that maturing and growing often doesn't happen when the pressures off, when life is easy
 - that refining happens in the fire
- And so there are many lessons David learns in this time
 - And they are lessons for us as well – let's tune in our brain, so maybe we can learn them without actually having to walk through them

David is going to experience trial tonight

- and if you are a note taker and like outlines – I do as you know

I Samuel 21-25 – David in Exile

#1 – Trials of Sin – I Samuel 21-22

#2 – Trials of Betrayal – I Samuel 23

#3 – Trials of Foolish Men – I Samuel 24-25

- let's consider these one at a time

I Samuel 21-25 – David in Exile

#1 – Trials of Sin – I Samuel 21-22

- read verses 1-6
- David first comes to Nob, which was a priestly city
 - In Numbers chapter 35 God provides 48 cities spread out over Israel given for the priests of Israel to live in

Now He did this first of all because the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe, had no land inheritance, but obviously they needed a place to live, so provision was made

- But the other reason was the worship of the Lord was to happen where the tabernacle was, which at this time was in Shiloh, not Jerusalem, because Jerusalem was in enemy hands
 - But because God understands the need to have a priest or we would say, a pastor nearby who can pray for you, who can share the Word with you
 - God spreads out 48 cities over Israel in order to insure that there would always be a man of God nearby God's people

The closest priestly city to Gibeah where Saul's headquarters were was the Levite City of Nob

- And so David goes to the priest of Nob and they are a little concerned he is all alone, meaning there was no royal entourage with him
 - So what does David do??? – He lies and says he is on a secret mission for the King
 - And I bet David thought this is no big deal, my lie will hurt no one and I will be safe – oh watch what happens...
 - **Verses 7-9**

There in the city however was Doeg,

- Doeg was not a priest, he wasn't even from Israel, he was an Edomite and he was the chief herdsman from King Saul – he took care of all of Saul's livestock
 - So Doeg is in there, listening, snooping around – it is where we get the term snoop Dog from – juts kidding
- But Doeg is snooping around and he hears this conversation and David's sin will have radical complication in the next chapter

But first David doesn't feel safe in the nation of Israel and so he heads into enemy territory in the area of the Philistines

- look with me at **verses 10-15**

Next then he flees the nation of Israel, he feels like there is no place for him with God's people and so he goes to God's enemy

- and he picks Gath
 - now I find this so interesting because Gath was the city Goliath was from
 - you remember Goliath – the other tall guy in this book who was evil – He was from Gath
- And around David's side was a sword, whose sword, Goliath's sword
 - David what are you thinking?
 - I know it has been around 5 years, but what are you thinking?

Some Bible teachers have suggested that David thought they would receive him in Gath because the King of Gath was not Goliath but Achish

- and to have such a warrior from your community, maybe there was a revival to the throne as it was normal the King would not just be the best politician like we have today, but the great warrior that could kill all his rivals
 - so Goliath may have been a threat to Achish's throne and David may have been counting on that
 - so David may have thought, "I know how that goes, my King would love to embrace someone who killed me his adversary
 - I will be so well received in Gath
- Now that maybe what was happening
 - In my opinion, sin just makes you stupid

You do dumb things, you do things you know and have told others are harmful

- And most of the time you go about having no real idea anything's wrong
 - I think of Samson with Delilah – tell me how to destroy you baby – tie my hands with new ropes, he wakes up the next day with new ropes – does he question the girl – no, he goes along another 3 times with that type of question – some say Samson was overwhelmed, I say he was blinded by his sin – be careful when you are not walking close to the Lord what you think is right and wrong

Nonetheless, David is wrong and those in Gath say, isn't that the guy the ladies in Israel are singing about killing 10 of thousands, ten of thousand of who? – oh yeah us, The Philistines

- And what is that sword you have David – some lady starts screaming – that is my baby's sword!
 - I wonder what Goliath's Mom looked like – she could have probably eaten David alive in his flesh, but anyway
- David's plan backfires and so they want to kill him, he pretends to be insane
 - Scholars teach us that in the ancient world they believed that insanity was a curse from the gods upon a person – but if you were cruel to someone who had mental problems, well the gods were then likely to focus on you and strike you with the same condition
 - So this could have been what David was hoping for – but how degrading
- Scratching at the walls - Spit running down his bread
 - How degrading – what a trial – but this is what sin produces, and it gets worse, [chapter 22](#)

David goes from the Cave of Adullam where not only his family who are obvious now in danger from King Saul, but 400 men also showed up who were stressed out, in debt, depressed

- and what so ministers to me about David, is he doesn't reject these guys, he doesn't rebuff them – he embraces them and begins to rub off on them
 - later in II Samuel we will learn of David's mighty men who were the best warriors in Israel, and you can think where did these guys come from

- they were these guys – who started out as rejects and people no one wanted
- When I started the church in Texas, I was used to working with the staff here at Calvary Chapel Vista – and think about it – our worship leaders at the time were Scott Cunningham, Evan Wickham, and Jeremy Camp. Our college pastor was at first Charlie Campbell – who now speaks all over the world on apologetics and the Bible, I was our high school pastor – Mark Orosco who is now the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Brandon Florida, was doing Junior High ministry, my assistant was Phil McKay who is now the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Villareal.
 - Besides the awesome guys that have been here forever like Eddie, Steve and Dave
 - That is a pretty amazing staff to be working with

And I leave that and my children's ministry, youth ministry, worship ministry, all run by pretty much new to the ministry volunteers

- and the problems I ran into early on are legendary, they make great stories

I remember at first I was thinking – Lord I have to teach everybody everything – I miss the staff I was a part of

- and the Lord reminded me of this story
 - when all those guys first showed up at Vista, they were not, especially me, the ministers they are today – they were indebt, depressed, inexperienced
 - and after being here, being around Eddie and Steve and Dave and Rob – and you guys, God shaped us into ministers
- And the Lord impressed on my heart – I am not sending you the Vista staff, I am sending you from the Vista staff to rub off on these guys and make them mighty men of God
 - And some of those guys we started with have gone on to start other Calvary Chapels – you know how Calvary Vista has grand fellowship, grandkid fellows, born out of churches that were born out of here
 - Some of guys are leading worship at huge churches today, some of them are on the mission field

And I just mention that to say – the people you are around, God calls you to disciple, to spend time with – sometime we think – why does God send me people that are always depressed and in debt and bummed out

- and God would say because it takes one to know one
 - that is where you were at, until God through His Word and people who cared, poured into you
 - so you do the same

God sends you people to serve with in ministry and serve with in the work place, not always because they are best the world has to offer but because God has a habit of taking the foolish things of the world and using them to bring Him glory

- so look for that, be ready for that
 - At the cave of Adullam David's family come to him and 400 worn out guys come to him and David ministers to them

To his family he takes them to Moab

- remember David has Moabite blood, his grandmother is a gal by the name of Ruth we studied a few weeks ago
 - so possible because of the family relation
 - maybe also because Saul had made Moab an enemy so, the enemy of Saul was the friend of the King of Moab
 - but in Moab David's family is safe

So David takes his family to where they will be safe and he and his men go to where he thinks they will be safe, 'the stronghold'

- Many believe this is the place we now call Masada which basically means "strong hold"

- Picture of Massada – the ruins you see are from the days of Herod, the one who killed all the babies at the time of the birth of Christ – but this rock, was there long before the first century - it is a place near the red sea that is a natural fortress Masada will play a huge role in Jewish history but that is a study for another time

Oh man the trials

- David has to leave his home, his wife
 - He thinks he will be safe in Gath, but has to act like an insane man to save himself – how embarrassing

But that could not compare to what must have happened in David's heart when he realized his lie caused the death of 85 men of God and their wives and their kids, even to the infants

- What a low moment, what a trial

But what I want you to notice, is this trial is not because someone is being a jerk to him, oh it is sort of, but the events of these two chapters are because David isn't trusting the Lord

- he is lying to the priests
 - He is leaving God's people and going to the enemy of Israel
 - And though I'm sure it was done with good intentions, I'm sure David thought this will all workout, it has now blown up in his face
- But when we will learn that this is what happens when we walk contrary to God's way
 - This is what happens when we sin
 - I have said it before, you will hear it again – Sin is not bad because it is forbidden, it is forbidden because it is bad – it is harmful for you, and the more we realize this the better

David sees that once again with these trials are due to his own sin

- But, here is what I want you to see, notice what David did next, verse 22-23
 - He has just acted like a fool in Gath
 - He has just heard that he caused the death of all these innocent priests and their families – no doubt his heart is broken
 - But notice what David does next
- David admits that he had done wrong, and then David moves forward
 - Now you contrast to what is our tendency – either we go into a week or two funk, into a total tailspin, or we give up all together on serving the Lord

David admits wrong – what I did was sin, it was not okay or acceptable – I did it

- David owes up and repents, and then he says to the young priest, now let's go, you will be safe with me
 - This was David's heart – this is a man after God's heart
 - David is not perfect – but he was a man who was quick to repent, to keep short lists with God, and a man who understood grace, not to sin more, but to get up and keep walking forward

And I think this is important to keep in mind

- sometime when we see a brother or sister in sin, when we catch them in a lie or we notice they have made a jaunt into enemy territory, they are acting like a fool and have hurt some people as David did
 - David lied and people died – that sounds like a political slogan I have heard before, but it was true with David

But when we see people in this place sometimes, it is right to discern what is sin – we are to try to lovingly correct our brothers and sisters who are straying

- **but we need to be careful not to step** into the place of God and make judgment calls on the state of their heart
 - what do I mean

- Well as much as these two chapters are about David having to deal with trials because of his own sin, we also have from this period a glimpse into David's heart and I think it will surprise you

Hold your place here in I Samuel 22 and turn with me to Psalm 34

- notice the inscription at the top – it tells us when David wrote this Psalm – it was during this season
 - and yet notice a heart after Gods

The point is just because we see a brother or sister acting like a fool, that doesn't mean we know they have no heart for God

- and our job is not to judge whether they really know and love God, but our job, if we are spiritual as Paul says in Galatians

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” – Galatians 6:1

- yet by the grace of God – we could all end up like David at any stage of his life
 - so we need to not judge another's heart
 - realize the best of men are men at best

David left because he felt like no one was for him in Israel

- and I wonder how many leave the church, leave the safety of purity because they feel the same way
 - what they don't need is more condemnation, they have enough of that from the enemy
 - but they need men and women who realize even people who are playing the fool, can still have a heart for God – if someone will just reach out and pull them back
 - just feel like that is a word for some of us tonight

I Samuel 21-25 – David in Exile

#1 – Trials of Sin – I Samuel 21-22

#2 – Trials of Betrayal – I Samuel 23 (read the chapter)

- We see the blessing of David not being in bondage to his own sin for long, but repenting and getting right – David has a choice and gets going
 - Because as seems to always be the case, there is something else to do other than just sitting there and being depressed over your sin

David finds out that Keilah, an Israeli town was being attacked by the Philistines

- And Saul who should have been there was of course too busy looking for David
 - So David, notice this, in the midst of his trials was busy about God's business
 - He was not crippled by these trials

And this brings up something we need to consider

- one of my favorite books to teach is James
 - but in the first chapter the bible seems to be almost contradictory
 - It speaks in the first few verses of God bringing trials in our lives to produce patience and so many other things
 - But then in verse 13 it says, God doesn't temp you – now that seems obvious, but if you read it in the original the words are the same
- God brings temptations, trials, and then it says He doesn't
 - Well when you dig a little deeper which is the case with every apparent contradiction in the scripture
 - You realize what really is going on is with the same set of circumstances God, wants to use them as a trial to shape you and mold you
 - But Satan wants to use them to cripple you and make you ineffective in your walk
- The same thing – two hearts toward it

And that is what we need to see for the tough circumstances in our lives today

- God wants to use them to try you, to refine you, to make you more like him
 - Satan wants to take the same tough circumstances and get you to fold, to be ineffective

And you are going to make the choice of which one it is going to be in your life

- David takes these trials and doesn't let them cripple him, shut him down
 - He fights through them, learns in them – and when an opportunity to minister to the city of Keilah arises – David is ready, not sitting in the corner somewhere complaining my life is hard

So David attacks the Philistines and frees the city of Keilah, and everything is great until he hears that Saul has found out – David has shut himself in a city

- so the priest Abiathar who was with David had brought an Ephod – how they asked the Lord questions in those days
 - But they inquire – and I'm sure David's heart was hopeful – we saved them, we risked our own lives without a reason to save them – they will not give me over to Saul
- But the Word of God came back – yes David that is exactly what they will do
 - And David realizes I am going to be betrayed

Now maybe you have been there

- you have done something kind for someone, you have gone out on a limb for them and they repay you by stabbing you in the back
 - I think all of us experience that from time to time
- Well just like there is a choice to how we respond to the trials that come about because of my sin
 - I can stay there in sin
 - Or I can fess up and repent and get going
- So there is a choice on how to respond to trials of betrayal
 - Someone has hurt you – what do you do?

David could have burnt that city to the ground – oh you are going to turn on me huh, well – here is what you deserve

- that is where my heart normally goes first
 - you did this to me – oh no you didn't, well get ready for my comeback
 - but David

David, a man after God's heart, gets his men and just leaves

- And I think he did that because he understood something, you and I must

David understands that even though he was betrayed he was blessed through the circumstances

- how was David blessed?
 - well you read in verse 5 that when David defeated the Philistines who were attacking Keilah, David and his men were blessed with their livestock
 - they had a big BBQ that they would not have enjoyed had they stayed in the wilderness and never gone to Keilah

And this is not just a David principal, it's a biblical principal

- Give and it shall be given to you – just pour in and be a blessing to people - now some of them will end up hurting you – for sure – happy Wednesday Night message – it's true
 - But you keep doing it for the reality is you are going to be blessed anyway – things you learned, memories you still have, experiences that were a real blessing – that is some great steak to chew on
- And you have a choice when you are hurt, betrayed – you can have a cow, or like David you can eat the steak – you will remember that!

If you look up, if you don't burro in and give up, you will see – God is using this trial of hurt and betrayal to bless me, for me even in this experience to learn things, to gain memories and experiences, God you are always good – even in the hard things

- Don't have a cow, have some steak

I Samuel 21-25 – David in Exile

#1 – Trials of Sin – I Samuel 21-22

#2 – Trials of Betrayal – I Samuel 23

#3 – Trials of Foolish Men – I Samuel 24-25

- the first foolish man is King Saul – [read chapter 24](#)

David flees to En Gedi

- now this is a beautiful spot in the desert
- It not only has waterfalls and vegetation, and food in the form of animals
 - But it also had deep caves for shelter

And Saul who will not leave David alone, is hunting David in this region

- and Saul goes into one of those caves in order to attend to his needs
 - now we are not told what those needs were
 - he could have napping – the need to sleep
 - he could have been going to the bathroom – that is also a need
- but the point of the story is Saul picked the wrong cave
 - this cave had David and his men all in the recesses of the cave
 - and David's men – say – This is it, this is the moment we have been praying for
- in fact look at verse 4 – the men make it sound so much like the Lord when they speak – the problem is search it out – God never said that – it just sounds like something God would say

And that is where we need to be careful precious men and women

- we need to learn to hear from the Lord
 - what I mean by that is, writing what concerns you – and then just walking with Him by reading His Word, being at church, filling your mind with podcasts and Christian music
 - as I do – I notice God answers what concerns me in many different ways
- And that is so important because if David just followed whatever sounded like the Lord, Saul would have died in the cave that day and it would have been a mark on David for the rest of his life

David cuts an edge of the garment that he will use to show Saul, you were in my grasp, but He does not kill Him, he does not remove what David calls, “The Lord's anointed”

- and I point that out because even though we don't live in the time of ancient Jewish kings, we still have God's anointed all around us
 - what are you saying – are you saying we can't criticize you, because you are God's anointed – yes that is exactly what I am saying – no
- What I am saying is God anoints situations in my life, people in my life, trials in my life
 - They are anointed by Him to work in my heart
 - And it seems to me, the more anointed, the more annoying
 - Because the deeper the work God is doing in my life, the more he has got to cut
- And wise is the woman and the man that says, Lord – that person, that situation, that trial – that is anointed by you to work in my life
 - So don't remove it or him or her or that
 - I will endure and let you work

The second fool that David has to deal with is Nabal

- [read chapter 25](#)

As we get to our last chapter tonight we will meet one more foolish man that is a trial to David.

- Nabal means fool, again hopefully this was a nickname that stuck over the years, not his name that his momma gave him, but you never know – that one is a fool

And “Fool” was married to a wise, godly and beautiful girl by the name of Abigail

- now how in the world did Nabal end up with such an amazing lady
 - The answer to that is I don’t know – how did you do it?
 - How did I do it – I ended up with a lady way out of my league in all categories
 - So I don’t know how – grace?

Now in all seriousness this was probably an arranged marriage

- Nabal is out of this world wealthy
 - If you had a handful of sheep or cattle in that day you were considered well to do
 - This man has thousands of all kinds of animals – he is super wealthy
- And no doubt some Dad thought – this guy’s money will protect my little girl
 - Be careful of that Dad – sometimes we think – is this guy they are with mature enough, have a good enough job, enough investments for my little baby – the real question, the only question – does he love Jesus!

Listen to Solomon - “Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble.” – Proverbs 15:16

- We need to be careful where we are pushing

David and his men had protected Nabal’s shepherds and livestock and now all they want is some basic supplies

- but Nabal plays the fool
 - so David decides this fool is going to die

But then Abigail is made aware of the situation

- and she steps in and prepares supplies, reasons with David
 - and David once again has a choice to make

People will deal foolishly with you

- and again you have a choice of how to respond to that trial
 - you can get back and get even
 - or you can forgive and let the Lord fight your battles
- One thing that helps me in this is to realize what a fool I have been
 - To the Lord
 - To others – you want something to do ask God to show you everyone you have offended, everyone you have dealt foolishly with
 - Better clear out an afternoon
 - As I realize this I can’t help but be forgiving

Abigail deals with the situation and then I love it in verse 31, she says when God does deal with Nabal - Remember me – hot stuff – she’s saying “save me from my toilet bowl marriage”

- well God deals with Nabal
 - And David and Abigail get married
 - And yes this is David’s third wife, but remember the order
- Michal is given to another after being married to David because David is in exile
 - He takes another bride in the wilderness to have as wife

And then makes a promise to this one, so, yes David is in sin, and there will be problems with this later

- But it is not like his son Solomon, anyway, that is not the point tonight

The point is trials

- two ways to respond
 - trials of your own sin

- give up, give in
 - or fess up and keep moving
- trials of betrayal, hurt
 - you can have a cow
 - or you can choose to eat steak – there will be blessings if you are looking
- trials of foolish people
 - you can act just like them
 - or you can remember how many foolish things God has forgiven you toward him and others and choose to let God work