

## **Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 13, 1 Samuel 21-23**

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This is Dr. Bob Chisholm in his teaching on 1 and 2 Samuel. This is session 13, 1 Samuel 21-23. David on the Run, chapter 21, Saul on the Rampage, chapter 22, and The Lord Guides, Encourages, and Protects David, chapter 23.

In our next lesson, we're going to be starting in 1 Samuel chapter 21. We're going to look at chapters 21, 22, and 23. As we've seen, Saul is determined to murder David, and that's going to continue in these chapters.

Saul is going to persist in his efforts to track David down and kill him, but once again we're going to see the Lord intervene and protect David. Along the way, Saul is going to commit a horrible crime, and we'll read about that in chapter 22. Chapter 21, we could call David on the run.

I've actually preached a sermon on this passage in conjunction with 1 Samuel 17, and I call it When David became Goliath. You may think, huh? I thought David killed Goliath, but in this chapter, ironically, David is going to, in a sense, become Goliath, and we'll discover how. David, still on the run, remembers Saul had come to Ramah in an effort to track him down.

God had intervened, and turned Saul into a prophet, at least for a time, giving David an opportunity to get away. He goes to the town of Nobe, which is a priestly town. Priests live there.

He goes to, we would say in English, Ahimelech. In Hebrew, we would say Ahimelech, the priest. When Ahimelech, who probably has heard about the conflict between Saul and David, I mean this is close by, he trembles when he sees David, and he asks, why are you alone? Why is no one with you? Almost as if he suspects that David may be on the run.

The news certainly would have reached here. David comes up with an explanation. It's not a really good one, but he says to Ahimelech, the priest, the king sent me on a mission, and he said to me, no one is to know anything about the mission I am sending you on.

As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread or whatever you can find. So, David is looking for provisions.

He is claiming that he's on a mission from Saul, and he's also claiming that he has men who are meeting him in a certain place. That doesn't seem to be true, by the way. Men do show up later and meet David at Adullam, but there's no indication that any of that is going on at this point.

This is just David in isolation, running for his life, and trying to get some food. The priest says to David, well, I don't have any ordinary bread on hand. There is some consecrated bread here that I could give to you and to your men, provided the men have kept themselves from women.

In other words, if this is a military operation, these men need to have been consecrated for that, and so they can't have had marital relations during this time. As long as you can guarantee that they're consecrated in this way, I can give you the consecrated bread. We have to go to the law to understand what's going on here.

There are passages in Exodus and Leviticus that fill in the background. This is the so-called bread of the presence, which is placed before the Lord, and then it's replaced by fresh bread on the Sabbath day. Once that bread was removed and it's been replaced by fresh bread, the Aaronic priests were to eat it in a holy place.

David's in a desperate situation, and so Achimelech is willing to bend the rules a little bit, provided David and his men have kept themselves consecrated for battle by refraining from sexual contact. And so, David assures him, yes, everything is fine in that regard. David says, women have been kept from us, as usual, whenever I set out.

The men's bodies are holy, even on missions that are not holy, how much more so today. So, the priest gives David the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except that. So, David seems to be doing well down here at Nob, but then there is a problem in verse 7. Now one of Saul's servants was there that day, detained before the Lord.

He was Doeg the Edomite, Saul's chief shepherd. So, there is an enemy here, one of Saul's men. And later Israelite readers, I think, would be disturbed by the fact that he's an Edomite because as time goes on, and you can see this in the Old Testament prophets, the Edomites become really arch enemies of Israel.

And so, a later Israelite reader would, viewing Samuel in the larger context of history, Joshua through Kings, would see this in a very negative way, an Edomite, oh my, we can't trust him. And so, David saw him there. We know that he says so later.

David asked Achimelech, don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, which is kind of an odd statement to make. I mean, even if he's sent out quickly by Saul on an important mission that involves soldiers,

you would think that he would have at least grabbed a weapon. So, there's something fishy going on here.

When David goes into panic mode, he doesn't do really well with some of his stories. And we'll discover this in 2 Samuel 11 as well.

I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon because the king's mission was urgent. I just had to leave so quickly, I didn't have time to grab a weapon. Well, the priest says to David, the sword of Goliath, the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, it's almost like he intentionally reminds David of what he accomplished. I think he senses that David is in trouble and he's reminding David of how he won this great victory in the past.

David is being reminded by the Lord here of this. It's here. It's wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod.

If you want it, take it. There's no sword here but that one. We've got it here as a trophy.

It's the sword you took from Goliath, the Philistine. It wasn't able to keep him from being destroyed by you. You did use it to kill him.

And some people try to put a positive spin on this. David wants the sword. He says, there's none like it.

Give it to me. And some people say, well, David understands it's a symbol of the Lord's presence and power. I don't think that's the case here.

David is in panic mode and he just feels like he needs a weapon. And when Ahimelech tells him Goliath's sword is here, David says, oh, there's none like it. What a sword.

I've got the ultimate weapon now. He's trusting in that sword. And so maybe you can see why I'm calling this chapter when David became Goliath.

He is now armed with Goliath's weapon. And then it gets worse. Verse 10, that day David fled from Saul.

It's so ironic. Here he is. He has the sword of the Philistine champion that he killed.

And he's running from Saul, a guy who was terrified by Goliath. David, the one who had such bravery and faith that day, that's all gone. He's running.

And he went to Achish, the king of Gath. That's Goliath's hometown. So, get the picture.

David arrives on the scene with Goliath's sword and he is coming into Goliath's hometown. David has become Goliath, as it were. And the servants of Achish said to him, isn't this David, the king of the land? They know who David is.

Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances? Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands. And David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish, king of Gath. David understands now that the Philistines haven't forgotten.

I may have, but the Philistines have not forgotten. They know my destiny. I'm king and they know what I did.

I defeated their great warrior and I've defeated their armies. And he suddenly realizes they're going to view me as an enemy. And I've waltzed right into the enemy camp with the sword of their famous hero that I killed in battle.

This is not good. And it is very, very sad in many ways because it seems as if David had forgotten. But the Lord's getting his attention, ironically through the Philistines.

They know. And the Lord uses them to remind David. Remember when David went out onto the battlefield against Goliath? What did he do? He remembered.

He remembered what God had done for him. He remembered those times when the lions and the bears had come and the Lord had enabled him to defeat those lions and those bears. He remembered what God had done for him.

And he was very much aware of God's presence, God's powerful presence. He knew that God was with him that day on the field of battle. And he told Saul that.

And he told Goliath that. The Lord will give me the victory. David remembered what God had done and he was very much aware of God's powerful presence.

He's lost sight of all that here. He had forgotten, I think, that God, in a practical way, wasn't making any difference for him. And he really wasn't feeling as if God was with him.

And so, Ahimelech reminds him, I've got the sword of the warrior that you defeated that day. And the Philistines remind him. God's not going to let David run away like this without reminding him of his destiny and his history, his personal history.

But David's in a pickle. And when David gets in trouble, he's going to come up with some schemes. So, he pretended to be insane in their presence.

And while he was in their hands, he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate. Some will say that he spit on the gate. There's some debate as to what the verb means.

Making marks on the doors of the gate, letting saliva run down his beard. So, David is acting as if he's insane. This is probably going to work because the Philistines are probably thinking, why would anybody in his right mind, David being the king, why would the king of Israel, who has defeated Philistine forces, show up on our doorstep? Is anybody in their right mind? So, David pretends he's not in his right mind.

Achish said to his servants, verse 14, I find this one of the more humorous passages in the Old Testament. Look at the man. He's insane.

Why bring him to me? Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house? And I love it because Achish seems to be saying governments are filled, government bureaucracies are filled with madmen. Yes, then as now. And so, he just wants David gone.

And so, this scheme of David works. The Lord is watching over David. He is not letting him run away.

He's reminding him of his destiny. He's reminding him of his personal history. And he's not going to let David do this.

David left Gath and he escaped to the cave of Adullam. And then apparently the pressure that Saul is putting on David has maybe extended to his family. His brothers and his father's household hear about it and they go down there to him.

And then all those who were in distress or debt or discontented gathered around him and he became their commander. About 400 men were with him. So, a bunch of malcontents show up and become David's sort of private army, guys who were in debt or distress.

And this would sometimes happen. We read about this in the ancient Near East. These groups are sometimes called Habiru.

And we see other examples of this in the Old Testament where people who are discontented will band together and become kind of an outlaw army of sorts. And that's what David has now. He's not going to get away from leadership.

From there, David goes to Mizpah in Moab. And he says to the king of Moab, would you let my father and mother come and stay with you until I learn what God will do for me? And so, he leaves them there with the king of Moab in a place of safety. And you may be wondering why the Moabites? Well, let's remember David's ancestry.

Remember when Ruth came back, the Moabites, came back to Israel with Naomi and she met Boaz. And Boaz married her and Ruth wanted to raise up offspring for her deceased husband, Mahlon. And Boaz consents to this.

And Boaz and Ruth have a child. That child will be in Elimelech and Mahlon's family line, but he's also going to be in Boaz's family line. That's the way these situations work.

These Levirate type marriages. That's not exactly what's going on in Ruth, but it's similar to that. And so, Ruth, the Moabites, and Boaz have a child, Obed.

And from Obed's line comes Jesse and then David. So, David's got Moabite blood in his ancestry. Maybe that explains what he's doing here.

At any rate, in verse five of chapter 22, the prophet Gad says to David, do not stay in the stronghold. Go into the land of Judah. And so, David does that.

So, it's as if the Lord is saying through the prophet Gad, I don't want you in foreign territory. I don't want you in Philistine territory. I don't want you in Moabite territory.

I want you back where you belong, in Judah. Remember what the Philistines said, is this not the king of the land? And so, David goes back home, even though it's really not a safe place. Now, the scene is going to shift a little bit and Saul is going to become the primary focus of the author.

Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul was seated in chapter 22, verse 6, spear in hand. I find that a bit ominous.

It's one of those details in the story where you ask, why did the narrator have to tell us that? And when I read Old Testament narrative literature, I always ask, why is that detail there? Sometimes it's not a profound reason. It's just filling in the scene so we can picture it better. In many cases, the people were familiar with some of these places, and so the author is simply orienting us.

Sometimes these things are just like props on a stage, like under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah. But spear in hand, I find that more than just an incidental detail to

help us envision what's going on. Saul's used that spear a couple of times, or he's used a spear.

Twice he tried to kill David with a spear. He also tried to kill his son Jonathan with a spear. And so, we're being reminded, I think, Saul's dangerous.

We're being reminded of the past hostility of Saul that's going to continue. He's a dangerous man. He's on a mission to murder David, and you better watch out.

And all of his officials are standing around, and he appeals to them as the men of Benjamin. He's going to make a tribal thing out of it here. God has been working to unify his people, and Saul is going to be talking in tribal terms.

Men of Benjamin, is the son of Jesse, and when Saul refers to David as the son of Jesse, it's viewed as derogatory. He won't call David by name.

When he calls him the son of Jesse, it usually has a negative connotation. Will the son of Jesse give you all of these fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? He's promising them special status under his authority as king, and who is he sounding like here? If you go back to 1 Samuel chapter 8, when Israel asked for a king, and Samuel was told, to warn them about what kingship will mean. And Samuel makes the point that this king that you want, like all the nations, what's he going to do? He's going to take things from you, and he's going to give them to his servants, and that's basically the kind of king that Saul is being described as here.

He's going to give his men fields and vineyards, and he's going to make them commanders, and he's looking a lot like that typical king like the nations here. It's not a good thing. And then he accuses them of conspiring against him.

No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie and wait for me as he does today. Everybody's against me, Saul says.

But then, Doeg the Edomite, remember him, he happened to be down at Nove when David arrived, and he's here standing with Saul's officials. I think he probably sees an opportunity. Saul's reaming out his fellow Benjaminites because he says that they have not been completely loyal to him.

Doeg sees an opportunity here, I think, to get in good with Saul. And he says, I saw the son of Jesse, uses Saul's term for him, come to Achimelech, son of Achitub at Nove, and Achimelech inquired of the Lord for him. David asked for information from the Lord and Achimelech inquired of the Lord for him.

This is what priests do. We weren't told this particular detail earlier in the story, but Achimelech admits that he did it in the following account, so it must have happened. He also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

So, Doeg reports what he has seen. And then the king sent for the priest Achimelech, son of Achitub, and all the men of his family who were the priests at Nove, and they all come to the king. And Saul says, listen now, son of Achitub.

Yes, my Lord, he answered. Saul said to him, why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me as he does today? And Achimelech is going to defend himself here. He answered the king, who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king's son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard, and highly respected in your household? So, his first self-defense here is, you're talking about David the wrong way.

You're making it sound as if he's a rebel when in reality, he's the most loyal servant you have. So, what's wrong with helping him? In helping your loyal servant David, I am in essence helping you. So, he tries to show that David is with Saul, not against him.

Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not. I've been inquiring of God for David for some time now. This isn't the first time I've done that.

It was never a problem before. So let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father's family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair. David, as far as I'm concerned, is loyal to you.

As one of your loyal servants, David has come to me before and I have inquired of the Lord for him, so if I'm missing something, don't be accusing me of any wrongdoing. I don't know anything about underlying tensions or anything like that, but the king said, you will surely die, Achimelech, you and your whole family, verse 16. Then the king ordered the guards at his side, to turn and kill the priests of the Lord.

I find it very very interesting that Saul calls them the priests of the Lord. He basically admits that he's going to kill the servants of the Lord, the consecrated servants of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.

Well, the king's officials understand the implications of this, and so we're told in the second half of verse 17 that the king's officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord, and the narrator here calls them that as well. Later, David is going to refuse to raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, against Saul. David realizes when the Lord chooses someone as his servant, you respect that, and



even though Saul is disobeying the Lord and Saul is rebelling against the Lord still, he's the one whom the Lord anointed, and David respects that.

But Saul doesn't respect that kind of thing. Even though they're the priests of the Lord, Saul feels as if he has the right to murder them, because they're disloyal to him. It's almost as if Saul is saying, loyalty to me trumps anything, even service to the Lord.

So, the king then ordered Doeg, but his officials refused to do this, the king then ordered Doeg, you turn and strike down the priests. So, Doeg, the Edomite, turned and struck them down. Later readers would not find this surprising at all.

An Edomite, I would expect as much. This doesn't look good. Saul has aligned himself with an Edomite of all people, against the priests of the Lord.

I mean, this is powerful stuff if you're developing the apology of David. David never did anything like this. That day he killed 85 men who wore the linen ephod.

He also put to the sword Nove, the town of the priests. So not only do they kill the priests, they go down to the town of the priests with its men and women, its children and infants, its cattle, donkeys, and sheep. Do you find this ironic? Why did Saul forfeit his throne? What did he do? When the Lord told him to wipe out the Amalekites, man, woman, child, and animals, did Saul do it? No.

He left the king alive and he left the best of the animals alive. He did not obey the Lord. He rejected the word of the Lord, as the way Samuel put it.

But ironically, through Doeg, the Edomite, he's doing to the priests of the Lord and their families and their possessions what he failed to do completely to the Amalekites. There's something very, very wrong here. But there is one survivor.

One son of Ahimelech, son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to join David. And he told David that Saul had killed the priest of the Lord. And David now lets us know, I saw Doeg there.

That day when Doeg, the Edomite, was there, I knew he'd be sure to tell Saul, I'm responsible for the death of your whole family. I'm not so sure that's true. David simply found himself in a difficult place.

Circumstances were kind of against him that day. But to his credit, he's sensitive and he feels responsible for what has happened. I think he realizes, that if I hadn't gone there, this wouldn't have happened to them.

And so, there's some ambiguity. As we hear David's words, we are forced to ask ourselves, is he right on this? Maybe he's partially correct. It's just a difficult question.

But he says to Abiathar, stay with me. Don't be afraid. The man who wants to kill you is trying to kill me too.

We're in this together. We're both wanted. We both got wanted posters out on us.

Let's come together. And you'll be safe with me. So, to David's credit, he does the next best thing.

He realizes that he didn't intend it this way, but he has brought a horrible, horrible situation to pass by going to Nove. But he's going to do what he can now. He's going to care for Abiathar.

At this point, there's a little bit of a flashback because we realize that Abiathar shows up on David's doorstep, as it were when David is at Keilah. The first few verses of chapter 23 are going to inform us that David went to Keilah. David is told a little bit before this, look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors.

And so, he inquires of the Lord saying, shall I go and attack these Philistines? And the Lord answered him, go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah. What we see here is the Lord gives David guidance. In chapter 23, in fact, I've entitled it, the Lord guides David in part, and he's also going to encourage him and protect him.

So, in chapter 23, the Lord guides, encourages, and protects David. Chapter 22, by the way, I called Saul on the rampage. So, we have David on the run in chapter 21, Saul on the rampage in chapter 22, and Saul persists in chasing David in chapter 23, but the Lord is going to guide and encourage and protect David in this chapter.

And we see that here. The Lord, David is asking the Lord, what should I do? And the Lord is responding. David's men said to him, here in Judah, we're afraid.

How much more than if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces? So, David senses his men are afraid. They're vulnerable. They realize Saul is after them.

But once again, David inquired of the Lord and the Lord answered him, go to Keilah for I'm going to give the Philistines into your hand. See what's happening here? David is back in Judah. He's back in Israel and he is delivering his own people from their enemies.

This is what Saul should be doing. David is delivering his people, the Israelites, from these Philistines who were attacking. Saul should be doing this, but what is Saul doing? He's killing the priests of the Lord.

While David is fighting the enemies of the Lord, Saul is killing the priests of the Lord whom he views as his enemies and he's pursuing David. So once again, this is powerful stuff for the apology for David. Look at David.

He's doing what God's will. Look at Saul. He's not.

So, David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines, and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah. David is Israel's savior, while Saul is the murderer of Israel's priests.

Now Abiathar, son of Achimelech, had brought the ephod down with him when he fled to David at Keilah. So, he arrived at David when David was at Keilah. Saul was told that David had gone to and he said, And Saul called up all his forces for battle to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men.

David has saved an Israelite town. That doesn't signify with Saul. He sees it as an opportunity and he has so warped in his thinking at this point.

And it's difficult to believe this. Having just murdered the priests of the Lord, he is now still viewing himself as the agent of God. He thinks God is on his side.

Good grief! God has told him earlier, God has told him your throne is forfeited. Why is he seeing himself as God's agent? God has delivered him into my hands for David has imprisoned himself. This is what sin will do.

Saul is just getting worse and worse and he has actually deluded himself into thinking that God is on his side against his enemy, David. And apparently he has deluded himself into thinking it's okay to kill priests if they're not loyal to me. So Saul is ready to attack.

And this next section is very interesting because we learn something about the omniscience of God. When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, bring the ephod. So, God in his providence has brought Abiathar, that lone priest who escaped to David.

And through Abiathar, the Lord is going to communicate the truth to David. He's continuing to guide him through this. And David said, Lord God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me.

Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? Lord God of Israel, tell your servant. David wants to know. He wants to know, is Saul really going to come as I've heard the report? And if he does, will the citizens of Keilah, in spite of what I've done for them, he doesn't say that here, but it's kind of implied, surrender me to him.

How will this play out? And the Lord said he will. In other words, Saul will come. And David asked, well, in that case, will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul? And the Lord said they will.

So, David doesn't sit there and say, oh, he's not deterministic. He's not a fatalist. Oh, I'm doomed.

Saul's going to come and they're going to hand me over to him. No, David leaves. David and his men, now about 600 in number, leave Keilah and they kept moving from place to place.

They decided to stay on the move. And Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah. Think of the implications of this passage for our understanding of the omniscience of God.

We would affirm that God knows everything that has happened. God knows everything that is true, even as we speak in the presence. And God knows everything that will happen in the future.

Everything. That doesn't mean that he's endorsing everything that happens. It doesn't mean that he's causing everything to happen, but he knows what will happen in the future.

But in addition to what will happen, what has happened, is happening, will happen, God knows what the philosophers, I think, call the counterfactuals. He knows what would happen under certain conditions. He knows the hypothetical future, as it were.

And so, when David asks the Lord, if I stay here, will Saul come? Yeah, he will. And if I stay here and Saul comes, will they hand me over? Yeah, they will. And so David leaves.

This information from the Lord is valuable, and he decides to leave. And David stays, in verse 14, in the wilderness strongholds and in the hills of the desert of Zeph, and he's moving around, and Saul is searching for him day after day. But God did not give David into his hands.

So, the narrator here is countering what Saul said earlier. God has delivered him into my hands, for David has imprisoned himself. And the narrator is telling us at this point, no, no, God did not give David into his hands.

So, God is guiding David. When David is in the desert of Zeph, he learns that Saul had come out to take his life, and Saul's son, Jonathan, comes to David, interestingly enough. So, God is guiding David.

Now he's going to encourage him through Jonathan. And notice when Jonathan comes, Jonathan helps David find his strength in God. This is what good friends do for one another.

They point one another to the Lord. And he says, don't be afraid. My father Saul will not lay a hand on you.

You will be king over Israel. And this is kind of sad. I will be second to you.

Jonathan envisions a day when he will be David's second in command. He's perfectly loyal to David, and he would have made a great second in command. But what we're going to discover is that Saul's sin is going to have serious repercussions for his entire family.

And that's never going to happen. Jonathan's not going to get to be second in command. Even my father Saul knows this.

The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. It seems like whenever Jonathan and David get together, covenants are being made or confirmed, reaffirmed, and that happens here. So how kind of God and of Jonathan to go to David and strengthen him in the Lord and assure him, that my father is not going to succeed in this business and reaffirm his loyalty to David.

The Ziphites are not as loyal. They went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, is not David hiding among us in the strongholds? Now your majesty, come down whenever it pleases you to do so, and we will be responsible for giving him into your hands. So the Ziphites say, you come down and we'll give David to you.

Saul, verse 21, is still thinking in terms of himself as the Lord's servant and agent. The Lord bless you for your concern for me. See what's happening here? This sounds so pious.

If you just look at it in isolation, Saul called a blessing down upon the Ziphites because they showed concern for him. Well, not all blessings are the same. Not all prayers are the same.

This is bogus. The Lord is not going to bless them for what they're doing. Collaborating with Saul against the Lord's anointed David.

Saul has no right to be calling upon the Lord to bless anybody, having just murdered the Lord's priests. He says, go and get more information, find out where he is. They tell me he's very crafty, so get the information for me and I'll track him down.

So, this is not looking good. The Lord has been guiding David. The Lord has been encouraging David.

Will the Lord protect David? Jonathan said he would. Saul begins to track David down. In verse 25, they begin the search.

David goes down to the rock and stays in the desert of Maon. Saul follows him there. And verse 26, Saul was going along one side of the mountain and David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away from Saul.

Saul is hot on his tail as Saul and his forces are closing in on David and his men to capture them. It's not looking good. Saul seems to have tracked him down.

A messenger shows up and the messenger comes to Saul and says, come quickly, the Philistines are raiding the land. And so, Saul, after all, he's the king of Israel, he can't let the Philistines invade his land. And so, he breaks off the pursuit of David and he goes to meet the Philistines.

And David is protected by the Lord. The Lord guides, encourages, and protects. And look how he's working providentially.

He controls the movements of the Philistines and he has been using the Philistines in this story today. He used them to remind David of who he was and what the Lord had accomplished through him. And now he is using the Philistines to deliver David, as it were.

They show up at just the right time. And the messenger comes and says, the Philistines are coming, you've got to come back. And Saul leaves.

We'll continue in lesson 24, things are going to kind of come to chapter 24, our next lesson, things are going to kind of come to a head because David is going to confront Saul about what he's doing. And so, we'll look at that in our next episode, as it were.

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