

The Power of Petition

1 Samuel 22:17-20; 23:1-6,9-13

Introduction

When we face decisions, we can and should seek God's will and follow His guidance.

Adults live in a world in which society largely regards God's people and His Word as irrelevant. Sometimes following God's teachings lead to conflict with other family members and at work. We should be committed to continuing to follow God and his leadership.

Question: Has there been a time when you were put down for your belief in Jesus Christ?

Question: What was the outcome?

This lesson it is to help us seek and follow God's leadership regardless of outcome.

A cave is not an easy place to be. It's dark and discouraging. But Psalms 57 and 142 was written while David was in the cave at Adullam. These passages show a deep work going on in his soul.

Read Psalms 57:5-11

Read Psalms 142:3-7

We want to be comfortable – but God know our soul does not grow in time of comfort (Rom. 5:3-5) I can tell you from personal experience that the times I am closest to my Heavenly Father is in times of distress.

I can tell you today if you are in a cave..... you are in good company, because God does deep work in hard places.

Saul had a police state in which each citizen was to spy on the others and report to the king anybody who opposed his rule. Israel had asked for a king "like the other nations," and that's what they received!

SAUL'S PLOTS (1 SAM. 22:17-20)

Consumed with paranoia and jealousy, Saul ordered his servants to kill the priests because they had assisted David. To their eternal credit, the servants, courageously refused his order.

Doeg stepped in to commit this horrendous act of cruelty as the blood of 85 priest was shed.

One of Ahimelech's sons escapes and follows David.

I am not sure but David may be the last person I would want to be following right then...

In the second chapter of his book *Up from Slavery*, Booker T. Washington wrote, "I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed." Measured by this standard—and it's a valid one—David was a very successful man. For ten years he was considered an outlaw, yet he fought the Lord's battles and delivered Israel from her enemies. He lived with his faithful men in the forsaken places of the land and often had to flee for his life, yet he knew that the Lord would finally deliver him and give him the promised throne. David's coronation was not only important to the people of Israel; it was important to all the people of God of every age. For out of David's family the Redeemer would ultimately come, Jesus of Nazareth.

DAVID PLEADS (1 SAM. 23:1-5)

The spies of both David and Saul were active in the land, and David's spies reported that the Philistines were attacking Keilah. David paused to determine the will of God, a practice every leader needs to imitate, for it's easy for our own personal interests to get in the way of God's will.

You have to like David. He asked the Lord if he should go to battle on behalf of his countrymen. And the Lord said GO.

Vs. 3 – The army of David was 600 at this time, David's men said.... We have a big problem of our own. We can't fight for the men of Keilah because we are under attack ourselves.

Vs. 4 – David didn't berate his men for their lack of faith or compassion, he simply reaffirmed the God wanted him to fight for the men of Keilah.

David did what the Lord commanded him and God gave the victory.

God more than kept His promise because He not only helped David slaughter the invading Philistines but also take a great amount of spoil from them. David moved into Keilah, which was a walled city.

Saul's spies were at work and learned that David was now in Keilah, a walled city with gates. Saul told his troops they were going to Keilah to rescue the city, but his real purpose was to capture David, and he was certain that David could not escape.

Saul was not only willing to slaughter the priests of Nob, but he would have destroyed his own people in the city of Keilah just to lay hands on David.

People who are controlled by malice and hatred quickly lose their perspective and begin to abuse their authority.

GOD PROVIDES (1 SAM. 6, 9-13)

While serving on Saul's staff, David had dodged the king's spears, thwarted an attempted kidnapping, and escaped the intended violence of three companies of soldiers and of Saul himself.

Now that he was a fugitive with a price on his head and had over six hundred people to care for, David had to be very careful what he did and where he went. There might be another Doeg hiding in the shadows.

Vs. 6 - An ephod was the vest worn by the high priest. Attached to it were 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel.

Vs. 7 – Because David was trapped in the city, Saul mistakenly assumed that God was handing David over to him.

Vs. 9 – David called for the ephod in order to determine God's will.

Vs. 10-12 – David asked the Lord if the men of Keilah are going to betray me to Saul.

The Lord said Yes... The ones you risked your life for are going to turn you over to your enemy.

Question: Have you ever helped someone and later they betray you?

I wish all people we help would be appreciative always

Reality is that is often the people you care most about will be the ones that let you down.

WHY THEN HELP PEOPLE AT ALL??

I would like to suggest 3 reasons.

1 – Present Satisfaction - David's men fought and were often hungry but on this day they ate well.

Jesus said in Luke 6:38 – whatever measure we give out.... It will be given back to us.
Personal observation – the most satisfaction I ever get is helping someone else. Having things is temporary, but when we share in the work of the Lord then my faith grows.

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is in John 4 and the woman at the well. When Jesus talked she listened and was so excited that she left her water pots to go into the city to tell every one about Jesus.

The disciples returned with the food and said “AREN'T YOU HUNGRY?”

You know that Jesus had a big grin and said “I HAVE FOOD YOU KNOW NOT OF” Jesus also said my food is to do the will of Him who sent me.

2 – Eternal Reward – (Read Matthew 5:11-12) Jesus was saying that if you are put down for doing right, Jesus would say your reward will be great some day.

3 – Personal Situations – David was not upset with the men in the city of Keilah. Why? Because David had dropped the ball himself when he lied to Shimelech.

It is easy for us to forget about the people we have let down.
We are in the need of mercy. We have to extend mercy to others.

SUMMARY

Today we no longer have the priestly ephod to help us discern God's will.
God reveals himself to us in a variety of ways.

Question: HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF TO YOU?

For me personally

1 – God's Word

I believe the Bible is God's inspired, infallible Word. But it is not magical. It is a rare occasion that the Bible just falls open to just the right place to deliver His message. We need Bible study and insight to discover God's will through his word.

2 – Prayers

3 – Holy Spirit

4 – Personal Study of God's Word

5 – Wise council of other Christians

I believe by doing God's will that we know to do..... Bible Study – Attending Church with fellow believers – Going to God in Prayer - Giving to God's Work and Witnessing for Him
If we do these things then God's will is much more apparent to us. God may not speak audible but I have found that as my friend Ted Traylor says “HE SPEAKS MUCH LOUDER THAN THAT” though the still small voice of his spirit in us.