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**SERIES: 1 Samuel, Part 2 (Who Are You Most Like – Saul or David?)**

**TITLE: Program 21 – In The Wilderness**

**MONDAY**

**OPEN**

Do you feel like life has become a wilderness? That everything is barren, everything is dry, everything is dead and there's no oasis in sight. There's no relief in sight. What are you going to do? O Beloved, listen, God is in the wilderness. He's right there with you and you're not going to remain in the wilderness if you will simply cling to His hand and walk according to His precepts for life.

**PART ONE**

Oh what a treasure we have in the Word of God. These are God's precepts for life. These are God's precepts that take us right through the wilderness and bring us out on the other side. We're gonna see that as we continue our study in 1 Samuel and as we look at David who now is in the wilderness and who is being pursued by Saul. God has taken David and encouraged him. God has encouraged him by sending Jonathan to him. And as Jonathan came

to David, Jonathan assured his friend in verse 17: “...**Do not be afraid because [of] the hand of [my father, Saul]....**” (1 Samuel 23:17) He says, “...**Don’t be afraid....**” And what I’m telling you today is you’re in the wilderness and God has sent this program and I’m sure others to encourage you and say, “...**Do not be afraid....**” Now he’s saying to David, “...**Do not be afraid because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel....**”(23:17a) There is a future for you. There is hope for you and I want you to persevere. I want you to know that through the Scriptures, you can find encouragement. Through the Scriptures, you can find hope. So let’s see the lessons that we can learn, the examples that God has for us in this blessed Old Testament that will help you and me and others get through the wilderness. Because if you’re not in a wilderness right now, I guarantee you, there’s someone in your life that is and you’re finding God’s precepts for life here in the Word of God. So it says, “...**I will be next to you....**” “...**You will be king over Israel and I will be next to you....**”(23:17b) Isn’t that wonderful? Here is going to be David and here Jonathan thinks he’s going to be sitting next to him. He doesn’t mind that David is king. He’s just going to be next to him. He’s going to be the next in power. He’s going to be the next in authority. And so it says, “...**And Saul my father knows that also.**”(23:17c) Saul knows this. So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord. They cut covenant. You know what “made a covenant” means by listening to the program now. And if this is your first time, then go to our website [preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com), that’s [preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com), and download the study guide. Because even though we’re already in 1 Samuel 24, you are going to learn so much and you’ll have all that background material so that you can study God’s Word on your own. That’s what this program is about: discovering truth for yourself so that you can stand firm. Well watch, he makes a covenant. Make, *karath*, means cut a covenant, *briyth*. And he makes a covenant before the Lord. You say, well what is he making a covenant about now? Well you know, it’s a little hard to

discern unless the covenant is, okay David, you're going to be on the throne and I'm going to be next to you. I'm going to be the next in power. So that's all I can conclude from this because when you go to 1 Samuel chapter 18, you find the making a covenant and Jonathan making that covenant with David and giving him his sword, his bow, his belt, his robe, saying, "Okay, I'm one with you; we're in this together; what happens to you happens to me; your enemies are my enemies; I'm going to be right there beside you." We know that he made another covenant in 1 Samuel chapter 20. And that covenant was not only between them, but it was between their houses so that whatever happened or if anything happened to Jonathan, David, by covenant was obligated to take care of any of Jonathan's seed, any of Jonathan's descendants. And the same for Jonathan, protecting David's seed. So all I can assume right now is, okay this is the covenant. ["You're gonna be king and I'm going to be beside you."] And David says, ["That's right, and we will cut a covenant on that. We will pass through the pieces and this is my bond to you. This is my word to you."] **"So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord..."** verse 18, **"...and David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house."** Now in 1 Samuel chapter 24, remember in verse 14 we have David in the wilderness, in the strongholds. And the strongholds were those caves where he could find security. And we find God delivering him from Saul who was continually pursuing him and yet Saul has been unable to find David because God has delivered him. And we wrote that in the margin next to verse 14. All right now, in verse 19, next to verse 17, this is what I want you to write in the margin and you're gonna appreciate it later. All right, David will be king. Now what is God doing? Here is David in the wilderness and here is David being pursued by Saul, here is God delivering him. But David needs a word of encouragement. And so the word of encouragement is, ["This wilderness is not gonna last forever, David. You will be king."] And I want you to know, Beloved, that the wilderness of this life that you're in, right now that seems so barren, will not

last forever. You will rule. You will become a kingdom of priests with God. Let me just give you a hint and a picture of that by taking you to Revelation chapter 1. And in Revelation chapter 1, he's talking about this revelation that has come from God the father, verse 5, **"And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood – and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and father – to Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."** (Revelation 1:5-6) He has made us to be a kingdom. Well you come over to Revelation and you look at Revelation chapter 5, and this is what you see. They're singing a song in heaven. And they're singing this song to Jesus. And it says: **"...Worthy are You to take the book and to break it seals...."** (Revelation 5:9) Now the book and the seals have to do with the final judgments on the earth before Jesus Christ comes to rule as king. And he says, **"...For You were slain, and [you] purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."** (Revelation 5:9) You know, wherever you are listening to these words from the Word of God, whatever nation you're in, whether you're in China, whether you're in Indonesia, whether you're in Australia, whether you're in Holland, whether you are in Romania, wherever you are on the face of this earth, God has people from every tribe and every tongue and every people and every nation. **"You..."**, Jesus, **"...have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God..."**, and listen to this, **"...and they will reign [on] the earth."** (Revelation 5:10) David is going to reign and you and I, Beloved, are going to reign also. We're going to reign on the earth. The wilderness is not going to last forever. Persevere, as we saw in our last program. Well verse 19: **"Then the Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, 'Is David not hiding with us in the strongholds at Horesh, [or] on the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? Now then, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to do so; and**

**our part [will] be to surrender him into the king's hand.” (1 Samuel 23:19-20)** Listen, we'll go get him. You come on down, and we'll give him to you. We know where your enemy, David, is. And **“Saul said, ‘May you be blessed of the Lord, for you have had compassion on me.’ (23:21)** You know what? These men are helping a man that is under the judgment of God and they think that they are doing right. They think David's in the wilderness. David's being pursued. He couldn't possibly be a man of God or have the blessing of God on Him. That's how you feel isn't it sometimes when you're in the wilderness. You feel like God has forsaken you, that God has not blessed you, you have friends like Job's friends that are saying, you know this is because of what you have done, this is because, this is because, this is because. And God is taking you through the wilderness, because He has a purpose for your life. God is taking you through the wilderness. Now listen carefully, God is taking you through the wilderness to prepare you to rule and to reign on the face of this earth. Don't waste your sorrows. Persevere in the wilderness and don't give up. And so Saul says, **“Go now, [and] make more sure, and investigate and see [this] place where his haunt is, and who has seen him there; for I am told that he is very [very] cunning. So look, and learn about all the hiding places where hides himself and return to me with certainty, and I will go [out] with you; and if [he's] in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah.” (1 Samuel 23:22-23)** I want you to know, I am the king. I want you to know you're gonna help me find him and I want you to know, if he's in that land, we will go through all the thousands of Judah and we will follow him. We will find him. We will get him. [“Blessed be you of the Lord,”] is what he has said. **“[And] then they arose and [they] went to Ziph before Saul....”** Now remember, you're underlining all these geographical locations because what we're doing, is we're following David in the wilderness. We're following Saul as he pursues him. And so he's in this wilderness and we're gonna find him in another wilderness and another

wilderness and you think he's never gonna get out of that wilderness. And that's the way you feel isn't it? Listen, David gets out of the wilderness. David becomes king. I'm telling you about what's gonna happen in the future because I've read the book. But David doesn't know that. David knows he's supposed to be king. God has told him that, but right now when you get in the wilderness, you wonder if it will ever come to pass and you wonder if it's a figment of your imagination. And so this is what happens. It says, **"Then they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon..."** and it says, **"...in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon."** (23:24) And that's where we're going to leave David for just a minute while you hear this very important announcement.

## **PART TWO**

Sometimes, Beloved, when we're in the wilderness, we feel like people are pursuing us and like they're out to just push us deeper and deeper into that wilderness or just bring an end to our hopes and our dreams and our ambitions. And this is what the Ziphites are trying to do. The Ziphites have gone to Saul and said, Okay, we know where he is. We'll find him. We'll turn him over to you. And Saul says, Good, I'll get him. But I want you to know that God is God. Watch God. Nobody's gonna get you in the wilderness except yourself. Have you got that? Nobody is going to get you in the wilderness except yourself. You're gonna be gotten in the wilderness, if you don't believe God, if you don't cling to God, if you don't trust God, watch David trust God and watch God move to deliver David. I love it. You're gonna write "God's deliverance" again in the margin in just a minute. So in verse 25, it says, **"When Saul and his men went to seek him, they told David, and he came down to the rock and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard it, he pursued David in the wilderness of Maon. [And] Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain...."** (23:25-26a) I

mean, you have seen movies like that when they're on one side of some obstacle and somebody's on the other side of the car and they're going this way and they're going that way. You've seen it in slapstick comedy, but in real life it is not slapstick comedy. I mean, they're pursuing him. And so here's Saul and here's David. Which way do they go around the mountain? And it's like David is trapped. And it says, **"...and David was hurrying to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to seize them."** It's like, okay, we know he's on the other side. You go this way; you go that way, and we will get him and we will seize him. And David is hurrying and can you hear the panic and can you hear the stress? Yes. You can, can't you. Because that's you. It may not be coming out verbally. It may be an inward panic. It may be an inward scream. But it is there and it is very very real. It keeps you awake at night or you dream about it at night and you wonder, Am I going to get out of this wilderness? Am I going to die in the wilderness? Am I never ever going to find an oasis in the wilderness? Now watch God. Wait upon God. I love it, verse 27, **"But a messenger came to Saul, saying, 'Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid on the land.'"**(23:27) *(laughs)* I mean he's pursuing David, he's about got him, and all of a sudden a messenger comes and says to Saul, "Hurry, hurry, the Philistines are making a raid on our land." And what does Saul do? **"So Saul returned from pursuing David and went to meet the Philistines; therefore they called that place the Rock of Escape."** (23:28) I mean, can't you see those men? Yes, yes. David, David, David, David, David! He did it! He did it! God delivered us! Take that rock. Take this mountain. Let's call it the "Rock of Escape." God delivered us. And God did deliver. And you know what? God promises you- Remember, at the beginning of this series of learning about God's deliverance in the wilderness, at the beginning of this series, what did we see? What did we learn? We learned 1 Corinthians 10:13. Have you memorized it yet? That's your assignment. You say I'm bad at memorizing. Let me tell you what to

do: write it on a 3x5 card and read it out loud three times in the morning out loud. Read it three times at lunch out loud. Read it three times at dinner at loud. And pretty soon, you will be able to quote the verse. Because when you say something out loud and when you repeat it three times and then repeat it three times during a day, eventually it's yours. Even if you have trouble memorizing you're gonna remember it because you're gonna hear it, okay? All right. So 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 13: ["There is no temptation. There is no trial. There is not test taken you but such as is common to man; ...God is faithful, He will not allow you to be tempted, tried, or tested, above what you are able to bear, but with that temptation, He will make a way of escape."] (Paraphrase) Well that's what He did for David. He made a way of escape. Do you know what He did? The Sovereign Ruler of all the universe stirred up the Philistines and started the Philistines toward Saul's people so that David could escape. God is able to move heaven and earth to take care of you, Beloved. And if you're in the wilderness, then God is there in the wilderness with you. It says, **"Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. [You prepare] a table [for] me in the presence of mine enemies."** (Psalm 23:4-5a KJV) Who wrote that Psalm? I think it was David. I think it's Psalm 23. And I think it's the Shepherd's Psalm. And it's a word to God's sheep. So listen to it carefully. So, in the margin of verse 27 now, you need to put your triangle again and then I put 's, 'cause the triangle is my symbol for God's deliverance. All right, it says, **"So Saul returned from pursuing David and [and he] went to meet the Philistines; therefore..."** term of conclusion, **"...they called that place the Rock of Escape. [And] David went from there and stayed in the strongholds of Engedi."** (1Samuel 23:28-29) Engedi is beautiful. It's absolutely beautiful. But once again, it is a wilderness. I mean you can see the mountain goats up there. You can see the little coneys running around. They're kind of like a big rat that's cute. And he's running around in that



dirt and looking at you and stuff like that and you're not afraid of him because he's cute. But anyway, that's where he was. He's not left the wilderness, but God has not left him. And you are still in the wilderness, but God has not left you. Don't think that God has abandoned you. Remember, if you're His child, it says in Hebrews chapter 13: ["For He has said, I will never never never,"] three negatives in the Greek, ["leave you nor never,"] two more that's five, ["forsake you. So that you can boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man will do unto me.'"] (Mostly paraphrased, Hebrews 13:5b-6) Well, in chapter 24 it says, **"Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, saying, 'Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.' Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men in [the] front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats."** (1 Samuel 24:1-2) Three thousand men are coming against David, searching him out in the wilderness. And all David has is 600 right now. What's going to happen? Well I will tell you. We will look at it in the next program. But I want you to know and I want you to understand that He is taking you through the trial because you are precious in His sight. And what I want you to understand is that so many times when we're in the wilderness, we think that God has abandoned us. We think that God doesn't care about us. We think that there's something wrong with us. God is making you like Jesus. Let Him have that time. Let Him do that work. Let Him accomplish His purpose for the wilderness. But know you are highly esteemed. God would not work with you and refine you in this way if you were not precious to him, if you were not highly esteemed. And so you are highly esteemed in the wilderness.