

SERMON NOTES

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David... A Man After God's Own Heart

Character Studies on the Life of David

1 Samuel 22 & 24 - "David, the Cave Man"

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, David was destined to be a very successful man.

David the fugitive becomes, David the Cave Man!

I don't like caves but there are times when we need to have a *cave experience*.

God can meet us in our cave and teach us some important lessons,

David learned many lessons and many of them are contained in the Psalms.

Lessons from David, the Cave Man

I. David's trial in the cave (1 Samuel 22:1-2)

1 Samuel 22:1-2, "David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."

David's painful experience reminds us that: being a person after God's heart, doesn't mean we will never experience problems, or the darkness and despair of the cave.

Let's look together at one of David's cave Psalms, and see the condition of his soul:

Psalms 142:1-7, "I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,

then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me."

1. David was disoriented (vs. 3) – *"When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,..."*

Literally, it's the muffling of my spirit – his spirit was so wrapped up in his troubles and gloom, so muffled with woe, that his powers of judgment were weakened, he was so overwhelmed he became disoriented.

2. David felt deserted (vs. 4) – *"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."*

David had four hundred men with him but he felt that none cared for him, he felt alone.

3. David felt depressed (vs. 6) – *"...for I am brought very low:..."*

It's the Hebrew word for depression – to make an indentation.

Examples: Elijah, Jonah, Moses, Charles Spurgeon.

No doubt that David wanted to give up – perhaps you do too?

What did David do?

1. David looked up to God

(vs. 1) *"I cried unto the LORD..."*

(vs. 2) *"I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble."*

(vs. 5) *"I cried unto thee, O LORD..."*

2. David looked ahead (vs. 7)

Prayer and praise can open prison doors

Illustration: Acts 16

600 men in the cave praising God?

Are you being tested in a cave today – a dark cave of discouragement?

If so, cry out to the Lord – praise Him for His presence, promises and power and that He will deal bountiful with you.

II. David's temptation in the cave (1 Samuel 24:1-15)

What was David's temptation in the cave of Engedi?

Tempted to take revenge on Saul

This is a natural response which would tempt most of us.

If you were given an opportunity to take revenge on your enemy what would you do?

David gives us a powerful example to follow.

David does two things:

1. He refuses Revenge (vs. 1-7)

1 Samuel 24:1-7, "And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepecotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way."

- a) He refused revenge when circumstances seemed to allow for it (vs. 3) – this was David's golden opportunity.
- b) He refused revenge when others encouraged it. (vs. 4)

Picture the scene and what his men might have said.

Lessons:

1. Be careful how you interpret your circumstances.
2. Don't follow the crowd – stand your conviction

Social pressure can lead to devastating decisions.

Ask yourself what does God say in His word?

Romans 12:17-21 (NIV) - *"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody (David did the right thing). If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but (It's God's job) leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

Proverbs 24:29, *"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."*

Notice in the latter part of verse four that David, *"...cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily."*

But, in verse five, his *"...heart smote him..."*

Why?

He had a sensitive conscience – don't go against it!

It was an act of disrespect for the King – Saul was the Lord's anointed (respect authorities).

It was also a symbolic gesture – notice 1 Samuel 15

But David demonstrates that he will not live according to the ways of the world but instead, according to the ways of God. David will let God put him on the throne, in His way and His time.

2. He Risked Reconciliation (vs. 8-15)

If I am having a problem with someone Matthew 18 says it's my responsibility to go to them, to seek reconciliation.

It's risky!

Why?

For David:

- he risked the ridicule of his men
- he risked the retaliation of Saul

1 Samuel 24:8-15, *"David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.*

And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand."

III. David's triumph in the cave (1 Samuel 24:16-22)

1 Samuel 24:16-22, *"And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold."*

The key is found in verse 17, *And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*

There are three levels to live life:

1. The demonic level – where we return evil for good
2. The human level – where we return good for good, and evil for evil
3. The divine level – where we return good for evil

David had won many battles, but one of his greatest victories came in the cave.

How about you?

What level do you live on?

How can we live on the divine level?

Ye must be born again!