

Seeking God's Direction

1 Samuel 23

August 9, 2026

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 23:2

Therefore David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah."

1 Samuel 23:4

Then David inquired of the LORD again. And the LORD answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand."

1 Samuel 23:14

And Saul sought him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

1 Samuel 23:16

And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God.

1 Samuel 23:28

So Saul returned from pursuing after David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape.

MAIN THEME

David's life in 1 Samuel 23 is still filled with danger, pressure, uncertainty, and betrayal. Saul is hunting him, the Philistines are threatening Israel, and even the people David rescues are willing to hand him over to Saul. Yet in the wilderness, David repeatedly does something wise: he seeks the Lord's direction.

David does not merely react to fear, pressure, or opportunity. He inquires of the Lord. When his men are afraid, he seeks God again. When Saul is plotting against him, he asks the Lord for wisdom. And again and again, God guides, protects, strengthens, and delivers him.

This chapter reminds us that seeking God is not only for quiet seasons of life. It is especially needed in the wilderness. When we feel afraid, confused, pressured, or unsure what to do next, God invites us to come to him for direction. He may guide us through his Word, prayer, wise counsel, the encouragement of other believers, and his providential care.

The call for us is simple but deeply important: Make seeking God's direction a way of life. Go "ALL IN" by learning to ask, listen, obey, and trust him with the next step.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Seek God Before You Act

1 Samuel 23:1–5; Proverbs 3:5–6; James 1:5

- Why was it significant that David inquired of the Lord before going to Keilah?
- What are some ways people make decisions without seeking God?
- How can prayer and Scripture shape the decisions you make this week?
- What decision or situation in your life do you need to bring before the Lord?

2. Seek God Again When Fear Rises

1 Samuel 23:3–4; Psalm 56:3–4; Philippians 4:6–7

- Why do you think David inquired of the Lord a second time?
- How did fear affect David's men?
- What fears make it difficult for you to obey God?
- How can seeking God again strengthen your faith when fear returns?

3. Trust God's Protection in the Wilderness

1 Samuel 23:7–14, 24–29; Psalm 46:1; Romans 8:31

- How did Saul misunderstand what God was doing?
- What does verse 14 teach us about God's protection of David?
- How does God's providence appear in David's escape at the "Rock of Escape"?
- When have you seen God protect, redirect, or provide a way forward in a difficult season?

4. Strengthen One Another in God

1 Samuel 23:15–18; Hebrews 10:24–25; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

- What did Jonathan do for David in the wilderness?
- What does it mean to strengthen someone's hand in God?
- Who has encouraged you to trust God during a difficult time?
- Who might God be calling you to encourage this week?

PRAY

Dear Father, thank you for inviting us to seek your direction. Forgive us for the times we rush ahead, react in fear, or depend only on our own understanding. Teach us to come to you first and to come to you again when fear rises. Thank you for guiding David in the wilderness, protecting him from Saul, and strengthening him through Jonathan. Help us trust you with our next step. Make us people who seek your will, obey your Word, and encourage others to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For Further Study:

- Proverbs 3:5–6
- Psalm 46:1
- Psalm 56:3–4

- James 1:5
- Philippians 4:6–7
- Hebrews 10:24–25

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

1 Samuel 24

David refuses to take matters into his own hands and trusts God's timing.