

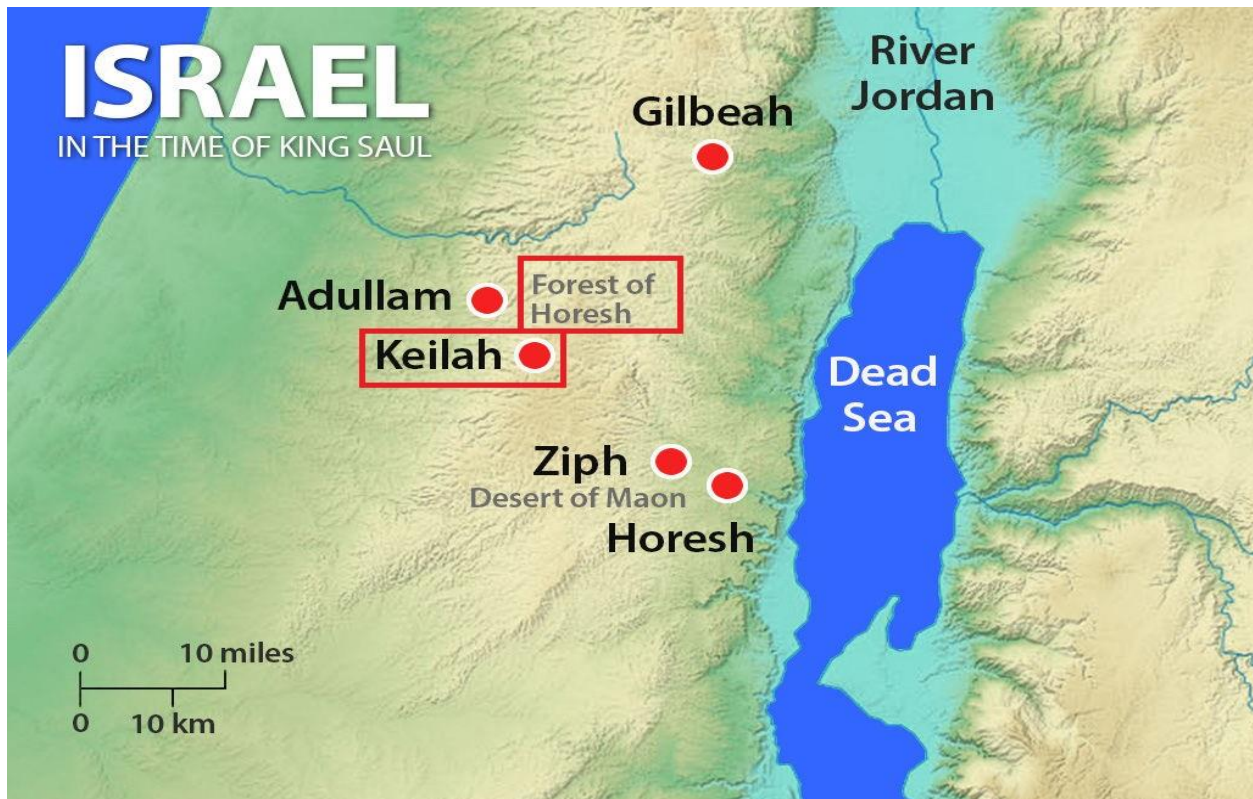
1st Samuel 23

Verses 1 - 5

Then they informed David, saying, “Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are plundering the threshing floors.” ² So David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” And the Lord said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” ³ But David’s men said to him, “Behold, we are fearful here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the ranks of the Philistines?” ⁴ So David inquired of the Lord once more. And the Lord answered him and said, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I am going to hand the Philistines over to you.” ⁵ Then David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines; and he drove away their livestock and struck them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

Then they informed David, saying, “Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are plundering the threshing floors.”

See Map 2305



Keilah was literally next door to the Forest of Horesh where David was staying.

The citizens of Keilah were harvesting their grain crops and the Philistines came up to rob the people of their grain.

² So David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” And the Lord said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah.”

Abiathar the High priest, who had come to stay with David, wore or had the ephod with the Urim & Thummin so David could inquire of The Lord whenever he needed to. This was one positive thing that came from Saul having all the priests of Nob put to death.

³ But David’s men said to him, “Behold, we are fearful here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the ranks of the Philistines?”

David’s men were afraid of facing two enemies, Saul & the Philistines. This group of men that first came to David were not the brave & heroic men that joined with him later.

⁴ So David inquired of the Lord once more. And the Lord answered him and said, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I am going to hand the Philistines over to you.”

David had already been told that he should go but his men were afraid so David took the time to inquire of the Lord hoping this might reassure his men.

The Judean hills, where David was hiding, were at a higher elevation than the town of Keilah so they had to “go down”.

⁵ Then David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines; and he drove away their livestock and struck them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

Three good things came out of this battle.

1. The inhabitants of Keilah were saved.
2. David had 600 hungry men to provide for and this was a substantial haul.
3. David’s men had seen victory over the Philistines which provided some proof that they could also protect themselves against the army of Saul.

Verses 6 - 14

⁶ Now it came about, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, *that* he came down *with* an ephod in his hand. ⁷ When it was reported to Saul that David had come to Keilah, Saul said, “God has handed him over to me, for he shut himself in by entering a city with double gates and bars.” ⁸ So Saul summoned all the people for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men. ⁹ But David knew that Saul was plotting evil against him; so he said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod here.” ¹⁰ Then David said, “Lord God of Israel, Your servant has heard for certain that Saul is seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city on my account. ¹¹ Will the citizens of Keilah hand me over to him? Will Saul come down just as Your servant has heard? Lord God of Israel, please, tell Your servant.” And the Lord said, “He will come down.” ¹² Then David said, “Will the citizens of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?” And the Lord said, “They will hand you over.” ¹³ Then David and his men, about six hundred, rose up and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they could go. When it was reported to Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the pursuit. ¹⁴ David stayed in the wilderness in the strongholds, and remained in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul searched for him every day, but God did not hand him over to him.

⁶ Now it came about, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, *that* he came down *with* an ephod in his hand.

David often sought the council of the Lord and this was a huge advantage in his decision making process.

⁷ When it was reported to Saul that David had come to Keilah, Saul said, “God has handed him over to me, for he shut himself in by entering a city with double gates and bars.

It's odd that Saul would think that God had delivered David over to him. Saul had already tried to kill David many times and failed.

1. He tried killing David with a spear from close range two times.
2. Saul told Jonathan & all his servants to kill David & it didn't happen
3. He sent messengers to David's house to capture him and they failed.
4. Saul sent 3 different groups of messengers to bring David back and they failed.

¹⁰ Then David said, “Lord God of Israel, Your servant has heard for certain that Saul is seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city on my account. ¹¹ Will the citizens of Keilah hand me over to him? Will Saul come down just as Your servant has heard? Lord God of Israel, please, tell Your servant.” And the Lord said, “He will come down.” ¹² Then David said, “Will the citizens of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?” And the Lord said, “They will hand you over.”

David asked God the following two questions:

1. Will Saul come down to Keilah as your servant has heard?
2. Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand?

The answer to both of these questions was yes.

¹³ Then David and his men, about six hundred, rose up and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they could go. When it was reported to Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the pursuit.

Back in chapter 22 David had 400 men, now it has grown to about 600.

It was better for David to leave so the town that they had just saved would not be attacked and possibly destroyed by Saul.

¹⁴ David stayed in the wilderness in the strongholds, and remained in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul searched for him every day, but God did not hand him over to him.

See Map 2310



Verses 15 - 18

¹⁵ Now David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph, at Horesh. ¹⁶ And Jonathan, Saul's son, set out and went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him in God. ¹⁷ He said to him, "Do not be afraid, because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel, and I will be second in command to you; and Saul my father knows that as well." ¹⁸ So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord; and David stayed at Horesh, while Jonathan went to his house.

¹⁵ Now David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph, at Horesh.

Saul continued his futile effort to kill David.

¹⁶ And Jonathan, Saul's son, set out and went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him in God.

We can see from this how God can open or close doors as He pleases.

1. David's family found him 1 Samuel 22:1
2. Abiathar the priest found David 1 Samuel 22:20
3. Jonathan found David and visited him in his hiding place Vs16

And yet Saul was unable to find David

¹⁷ He said to him, "Do not be afraid, because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel, and I will be second in command to you; and Saul my father knows that as well."

Jonathan hoped that he would be second in command to David but we know that never happened. He died in a war with the Philistines shortly before David became king.

David's success in battle and his escapes from danger may have convinced Saul that David would be his successor but that will not stop him from trying to hunt David down for the next 10 years.

Verses 19 - 23

¹⁹ Then Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is David not keeping himself hidden with us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon? ²⁰ Now then, O king, come down, since you fully desire to do so; and our part *shall be* to hand him over to the king.” ²¹ Saul said, “May you be blessed of the Lord, since you have had compassion on me. ²² Go now, be more persistent, and investigate and see his place where he is hiding, *and* who has seen him there; for I am told that he is very cunning. ²³ So look, and learn about all the hiding places where he keeps himself hidden, and return to me with certainty, and I will go with you; and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah.”

¹⁹ Then Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is David not keeping himself hidden with us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon?”

David was in the strongholds at Horesh, south east of Ziph.

See map 2315



²² **Go now, be more persistent, and investigate and see his place where he is hiding, *and* who has seen him there; for I am told that he is very cunning.**

The people wanted Saul to come right away but Saul instructed them to do some more reconnaissance and get back with him when they had more detailed information.

Verses 24 - 29

"Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. And Saul and his men went to seek him. And David was told; therefore he went down to the rock which is in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain; and David was making haste to get away from Saul, as Saul and his men were closing in on David to capture them, when a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Make haste and come; for the Philistines have made a raid upon the land." So Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines; therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape. And David went up from there, and dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi."

"Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon.

See map 2320



The Arabah is a desert area in the vicinity of the Dead Sea.

See pic 2325



If you would like to see more desert scenery watch the following video.

See video 2330 8.33 The Arabah

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.33.html>

David was making haste to get away from Saul, as Saul and his men were closing in on David to capture them, when a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Make haste and come; for the Philistines have made a raid upon the land."

Another example of God opening and closing doors.

Therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape. And David went up from there, and dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi."

See Pic 2335



The area around the Dead Sea is some of the most desolate country on earth but there was a freshwater spring at Engedi. This area is amazing for several reasons but we will discuss this in more detail in the next chapter.