### 1 Samuel

## Chapter 23

1Then this report came to David:  
  
 ‘{Look!} The Philistines have attacked KeiLah and they’re destroying all the barns there!’  
  
2So David asked Jehovah:  
  
 ‘Should I go and fight these Philistines?’  
  
And Jehovah replied:  
  
 ‘Go fight the Philistines, and you’ll save KeiLah!’  
  
3However, the men who were there with David said:  
  
 ‘Look, we’re already afraid and we’re still here in Judea; so, how can we be of any [help to those in] KeiLah?  
  
 ‘Do we want to add ourselves to the Philistine’s spoils of war?’  
  
4So David went and asked Jehovah once again, and Jehovah replied:  
  
 ‘Go down to KeiLah, for I’m giving the Philistines into your hands!’  
  
5As a result, David went to KeiLah with his men, and they fought the Philistines and routed them. It was a great victory, and they took the Philistine’s cattle and saved the people in KeiLah.  
  
6Then, after the [Philistines] retreated, AbiAthar (son of AhiMelech) went to David at KeiLah, carrying his sacred vest in his hands.  
  
  
7Meanwhile, when Saul heard that David had gone to KeiLah, he said:  
  
 ‘God has sold him into my hands, for now he’s locked inside a city of gates and bars!’  
  
8So Saul told his people to go and attack David and his band of men there at KeiLah.  
  
9Well, David realized that Saul would soon hear [that he was in KeiLah], and that he would plan to do something evil.  
  
So David said to AbiAthar the Priest:  
  
 ‘Bring the sacred vest!’  
  
10Then David prayed:  
  
 ‘O Jehovah, God of IsraEl,  
  
 ‘Please hear Your servant. For Saul is planning to attack me in KeiLah, and he’ll destroy the whole city because of me. 11So, should we lock it up? For Saul will surely come here, now that he has heard your servant is in this place.  
  
 ‘O Lord God of IsraEl,  
  
 ‘Please tell your servant what to do!’  
  
And Jehovah replied:  
  
 ‘Lock it up!’  
  
12Then David asked:  
  
 ‘But, won’t the people of KeiLah hand me and my men over to Saul?’  
  
And Jehovah replied:  
  
 ‘Yes they will, in order to save themselves.’ [spurious text]  
  
13Therefore, David took his men (about 800 of them) and left KeiLah, and when Saul heard that David had gone, he spared that city.  
  
14Well from there, David traveled into the desert where he lived in narrow passes in the Ziph Desert. And although Saul kept searching for him for quite some time, Jehovah kept him out of Saul’s hands.  
  
  
15Now, David knew that Saul would keep on looking for him, so he stayed in New City in the Ziph Desert. 16And then Saul’s son JoNathan came to David in New City, which strengthened his trust in Jehovah.  
  
17For [JoNathan] told him:  
  
 ‘Don’t be afraid, because my father Saul will never find you!  
  
 ‘[Soon] you’ll become the ruler over IsraEl, with me as your second in command… And my father knows that.’  
  
18Then they [once again] made a treaty there in the presence of Jehovah.  
  
Well, David stayed in New City, and JoNathan went back home.  
  
  
19But thereafter, people from the Ziph Desert went to Saul [in GibeAh] and said:  
  
 ‘Look, David is hiding among us in New City, down in the narrows next to the hill of HachiLah, just to the right of JeshiMon. 20Therefore, every desire of the inner person of the king is here among us!  
  
 ‘And now that everything has been revealed to the king, you should come down to us.’  
  
21And Saul replied:  
  
 ‘May Jehovah bless you for coming to me!  
  
 22‘Quickly go back and see if he’s still there and that he hasn’t tricked you. 23Search all the places where he can hide and come back and tell me… Then I’ll be ready to go there with you.  
  
 ‘For if he’s somewhere in that land, I’ll send thousands of soldiers from Judah to search for him!’  
  
24And at that, the Ziphites left the presence of Saul.  
  
  
Well, David and his men were in the MaOn Desert at the time, which is to the west and the right of JeshiMon. 25And when Saul sent his men to search for David, David heard about it. So he retreated to Petra, which was in the MaOn Desert.  
  
But Saul also heard where he’d gone and he followed David into the desert.  
  
26Well, Saul had camped his men on one side of the mountain, and David had camped his men on the other side. But although David was trying to hide from Saul, Saul had camped his men close to David so he could catch him.  
  
27Then a messenger came to Saul saying:  
  
 ‘Hurry and come, because the Philistines are attacking our land!’  
  
28So Saul had to break off his chase of David and go back to fight the Philistines. And that’s why that mountain is now called, ‘Slippery Rock.’  
  
29Well from there, David went and settled in the EnGedi Narrows.