

## **SLIDE FIRST SUNDAY PRAYER NIGHT**

TONIGHT 6pm. Sign up for childcare at [fathomchurch.org/pray](http://fathomchurch.org/pray)

## **SLIDE INTRODUCE**

Well, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to 1 Samuel chapter 21.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to 1 Samuel 21,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
  - under every single chair.
  - You'll find 1 Samuel 21 on page **242**.

## **INTRODUCTION: POOL**

Hey, I don't know about you, but I'm starting to get excited for the pool.

- And yeah, I know this is only March...
- and yeah, I know we're getting more snow...

But I'm starting to feel it! Just let me get excited!

But I reminisced about four summers ago...

- we went through this season,
- where we were trying to convince our 3-year-old daughter
- that the swimming pool is awesome, ok?

So, Harper would stand scared on the side of the pool,

- and I say, "*Come here. Jump to me. I'll catch you.*"

And Harper was like, "*No...come closer.*"

- So, I scoot in a bit.

"*Closer!*" She said.

- So, I come in a bit more.

And she was like, "*Dada...scoot closer!*"

Now, at this point my man thighs are like touching the side!

- It's flesh on tile, yo...
- There is no closer!

So, I'm trying to rationalize with her...

which always works well with 3-year-olds...

- *"Girl, the pool is awesome!*
- *You're going to love this.*
  - *There's going to be a day*
  - *I'm not going to be able to get you out of here*
  - *without threat.*
- *So, just trust me.*
- *Jump to me."*

But she's worried...

- *"Am I going to sink?*
- *Could I get hurt?*
- *Can I really trust that this guy will catch me?"*

Which is crazy!

- *Because if I really wanted to do some damage,*
- *the public pool isn't the smartest place to do so...*

But my 3-year-old was in a state of DESPERATION.

## **EXPLAIN: CONTEXT**

And I think it is safe to say, that's where we are in David's life.

David is in a state of **SLIDE DESPERATION**

Oh, how things have taken a turn for the worst.

- Back in chapter 17...
  - David killed Goliath,
  - and won fame and fortune...
- This young man, David, was on the up and up.
- Out of the pasture, and into the palace.

But in chapters 18-20 King Saul becomes envious of David.

- And that envy grows and grows and grows.
  - And he tries to have David killed in battles.
  - And he makes unreasonable requests of him.
- And finally, when all else fails,
  - he openly attempts to murder David multiple times.

So, yeah...David is DESPERATE.

- The King wants him dead.
- He had to run from his home and his new bride, Michal.
- He had to run from his best friend, Jonathan.
  - He is on the run...
  - He is very much on his own.
  - Where can he go?
  - What can he do?

## TRANSITION

You see, in times of DESPERATION, we can often ask,

- *“Is anything going right?”*
- *“Where are you, God?”*

But our text today shows us that

- Even in our most DESPERATE times...
- God never lets us go!

And our four points today I straight-up stole...

- from Dale Ralph Davis' commentary on 1 Samuel,
- but they were too good to pass up...
  - they all start with the letter P...
  - and, you know I love that alliteration!

So, let's get after it. 1 Samuel 21, starting in verse 1.

**BLANK SLIDE**

### 1 SAMUEL 21:1

[1] Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David, trembling, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?"

### EXPLAIN

So, David runs to Nob, where the Tabernacle was at this time.

And Ahimelech, the priest is like, "*why are you here...alone?*"

My guess is:

- he knows there's SOME rift between the king and David...
  - but David is beloved in Israel!
- So, he's like, "*What are you doing here?*"

### 1 SAMUEL 21:2

[2] And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, 'Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place.

## EXPLAIN

So, David lies.

- He makes up a story.
- He probably doesn't know whether he can trust Ahimelech.

Or perhaps...

- David is trying to protect Ahimelech by spinning this tale,
  - so that if asked,
  - Ahimelech wouldn't have to cover for David.

But in his DESPERATION,

- David makes up this story,
- and it will have terrible consequences,
  - which we'll see next week.

## 1 SAMUEL 21:3-6

[3] Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." [4] And the priest answered David, "I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women." [5] And David answered the priest, "Truly women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?" [6] So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the LORD, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

## EXPLAIN: BREAD

So, in David's DESPERATE attempt to flee from Saul, he hasn't even brought bread.

- And he asks Ahimelech for food.
- But the only bread the priest has on hand
- is the bread of the Presence,
  - also known as showbread.

Now, the bread of the presence, according to Leviticus 24,

- were 12 loaves of bread
  - that were placed in the Tabernacle every week.
- And when the old bread was removed
  - It would be eaten by the priests.

Now, David and his men obviously would not qualify to eat this bread,

- but Ahimelech bends the rules a bit...
- probably because of David's reputation.

## POINT 1

And it's here we can make our first point.

In David's DESPERATION, we see God's **SLIDE PROVISION**  
God literally provides his DAILY BREAD!

You're like, *"Well, that seems like Ahimelech providing...not God."*

But follow with me:

- It wasn't unusual in ancient times
  - for bread to be given to a deity like this.
- We have pagan records of this very thing...
  - but the Hebrew version was much different.

The bread offered to pagan gods was literally to feed the gods.

- They thought that the idol or whatever...
- required the bread to feed the god.

Not so with the Israelites.

- The bread wasn't food FOR Yahweh.
- The bread represented Yahweh's provision for HIS people.
  - That's why it went to feed the priests.
    - God provides for his people...
    - the people don't provide for God.

This is also why Paul says these words in his sermon in Acts 17:24-25

### **SLIDE ACTS 17:24-25**

[24] The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, [25] nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

In DESPERATION we see God's **SLIDE PROVISION**

Now, look at verse 7:

### **1 SAMUEL 21:7**

[7] Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen.

- Another reason why David might have lied
- is because one of Saul's goons,
  - Doeg the Edomite,
- is just hanging out there.

Verse 8:

### 1 SAMUEL 21:8-9

[8] Then David said to Ahimelech, "Then have you not here a spear or a sword at hand? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." [9] And the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take it, for there is none but that here." And David said, "There is none like that; give it to me."

### PROVISION PT. 2

Not only is there PROVISION in terms of literal daily bread, but there is also PROVISION of a means of protection.

David doesn't even bring his means of self-defense.

- But Ahimelech happens to have one sword on hand,
- and that sword is the sword of Goliath,
  - who David, himself, killed.
- That sword, by right, is actually his.

Again, it's a small thing...a seemingly coincidental thing...

but it's God's PROVISION in David's DESPERATION.



## APPLICATION

And how many of you have experienced something like this?

- No, you're not in the exact same position of David.
  - But, maybe you're near DESPAIR.
  - Or maybe you're pressed on all sides.
  - Or maybe you're buried beneath a pile of troubles.

And if you are, you must ask yourself the question:

- Where is God still PROVIDING for me?

In the midst of my big problems...

- where can I see God's, even small, PROVISIONS?
  - Some bread.
  - A sword.
    - A text message at just the right time.
    - Someone helping you out in your time of need.

You see, sometimes God will allow DESPERATION in our lives

- because God never wants us to forget that,
- ultimately, we depend on him for PROVISION.

## TRANSITION

So, there's God's PROVISION.

But there's more. Verse 10:

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## 1 SAMUEL 21:10

[10] And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath.

Now, this is a CRAZY move for David!

- He must be CRAZY DESPERATE at this point,
- because Gath is a Philistine city!
  - That means that Achish is a Philistine king!
- Oh, and what's more...
  - do you remember who was from Gath?

### **SLIDE 1 SAMUEL 17:4a**

[4] And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath...

- So, David goes to a Philistine king...
- in a Philistine city...
- the hometown to a Philistine warrior...
- who David had killed.
  - Oh, and now he's carrying that dude's sword!
- What is David thinking?

This...is a DUMB move!

Verse 11:

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### **1 SAMUEL 21:11-15**

[11] And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?"

[12] And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. [13] So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard. [14] Then Achish said to his servants, "Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? [15] Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

## EXPLAIN

So, they recognize and capture David,

- and when David realizes they know him as their enemy,
  - he becomes afraid,
  - and pretends he's out of his mind.

And the king says, "*I don't need any more madmen in my house.*"

And David will be able to escape.

## POINT 2

Now, what in the world could the application for this little section be?

Is David just being a moron here?

Going to Goliath's home town!?!

Well, yeah, kinda!

- But it's not in what's said in THIS passage,
  - but what comes OUT of it...
- that's important.

You see, in David's DESPERATION...

- he actually wrote
- two of the Psalms
- that we know and love.

And it's our second point for this morning.

We see in David's DESPERATION, God's **SLIDE PRAISE**

- David PRAISES God...
- as the one who rescues him from Gath...
  - from his seemingly dumb decision to go there!

In Psalm 34, we read this heading:

### **SLIDE PSALM 34**

Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

- Now, scholars think that Abimelech...
  - is the throne name of Achish.

So, this is a song about this bizarre little experience!

And then in Psalm 56 we find this heading:

### **SLIDE PSALM 56**

A Miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

So, David writes two worship songs about THIS VERY event!

Weird, right?

- And both of these Psalms,
- are about trusting in God
- in the midst of DESPERATE times.

Like, listen to these words from Psalm 34:

**SLIDE PSALM 34:4, 6**

[4] I sought the LORD, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.

[6] This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him  
and saved him out of all his troubles.

And so, he sings this in verse 3:

**SLIDE PSALM 34:3**

[3] Oh, magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!

- Birthed from the time he acted crazy...
- to escape his own foolishness!

David's testimony is:

- *"look how good God was...*
- *even in my stupidity!"*

Hey...

You ever do something dumb...that you needed God to rescue you from?

He sings **SLIDE PRAISE**, even in the midst of his DESPERATION.

## ILLUSTRATION: ME

I used to be a worship leader.

- And when we left our previous church to plant Fathom
- one gal came up to me to say some kind words,
  - and she mentioned one Sunday when I led
  - as being specifically impactful for her.

See, only a few months after I started working there, my wife got sick.

- And after a few years of getting nowhere with doctors,
- we got to the point where they started throwing around
  - the scary words you never want to hear
  - when you go to the doctors:
    - disorders...
    - tumors...
    - Cancer.

And they started testing her for all these things.

- All the while I was working at the church,
- encouraging our congregation to PRAISE the Lord.

Well, on the Sunday this gal was referring to...

- it was only days after we had been at the hospital
- for an MRI to check for a brain tumor.
  - And we were still awaiting the results.

It was a season of great DESPERATION for us...

So, I'm waiting to find out if my 25-year-old wife has a brain tumor...

- But I had to lead worship that Sunday...
  - and listen, I was a wreck...
    - as you can imagine.

And at the start of that service, I told the church,

- *“Hey, there are times when it feels so good*
  - *to come together to worship God.*
- *And then there are those times*
  - *where you just don’t want to.*
  - *And it’s been one of those weeks for me.*
- *But God is ALWAYS worthy of praise.”*

And as I led that day,

- I had tears all over my face and could barely sing.
- I had nothing to give.
- It sounded terrible.
  - Seriously, from a musical perspective
  - it was probably the worst worship I ever led.

But this gal said it was one of her most powerful moments with God.

## TRANSITION

- Sometimes God gives us our best PRAISE...
- in the times of our darkest DESPERATION.

The third point comes in chapter 22, starting in verse 1:

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## 1 SAMUEL 22:1-2

[1] David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father’s house heard it, they went down there to him. [2] And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him. And he

became commander over them. And there were with him about four hundred men.

So, David escapes to a cave,

- and his family come to him,
  - probably to escape Saul's wrath.

Verse 3:

### 1 SAMUEL 22:3-4

[3] And David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. And he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother stay with you, till I know what God will do for me." [4] And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

### EXPLAIN

But from the cave of Adullam,

- David goes to the country of Moab.
- And he asks a favor of the king of Moab:
  - *"please let my aging parents stay with you."*
- And apparently, the king agrees,
- and David's parents stay and are protected.

Now, these are not Israelites.

- They are not Philistines.
- They're Moabites.
  - Moab was born out of Lot's
  - drunken and incestuous relations with his daughter...
- You remember that gem of a story from Genesis 19?



They are Israel's enemy!

So, why would the king of Moab do David this favor?

### **ILLUSTRATION: COLORADO NATIVE**

So, real quick in here...

- by a show of hands,
- how many of you are Colorado natives?
  - You were born in Colorado?

Ok, any of you got one of those Colorado Native bumper stickers?

- Just sticking it to the transplants
- from California and Texas?

Yeah man...that'll show 'em!

Alright! I am not a native.

- I moved here when I was two...
  - and my wife still lets me know all the time...
  - that I am from the East Coast!
- Even though I've lived here for more than 35 years!
  - And I married a native...
  - and I'm raising a native...
  - but apparently that's not good enough!

### **EXPLAIN: LINEAGE**

Now, do you remember that little genealogy of David...

- at the end of the book of Ruth,
  - the book found right before 1 Samuel?

- Who was David's daddy? Jesse.
- And who was Jesse's daddy? Obed.
- And who was Obed's daddy? Boaz.
- And do you remember his wife's name?
  - Yeah, Ruth.
- And was Ruth an Israelite? No.

I'll give you three guesses as to where Ruth was from...

- Yeah. She was a Moabitess.
- AND she was David's great-grandmother.

So, what had happened...over a century earlier,

- In another DESPERATE situation...
  - with a woman named Naomi,
  - and the tragic deaths of her husband and sons,
  - and the steadfast faithfulness of one daughter-in-law,
    - and in their struggles,
    - and poverty,
    - and troubles...
- THEY set up the leverage that David would need
- to protect his parents in his DESPERATION.

Now, this isn't explicit in the text...

- but I think David says to king of Moab...
- *"Do you know who my great-grandmother was?"*

And it's point 3:

### **POINT 3**

Church, in David's DESPERATION, we see God's **SLIDE PROVIDENCE**

- Who could have conjured this kind of thing up?
  - Coincidence?
  - I think not.
- No, it's God's invisible hand of PROVIDENCE
  - at work again.

There is PROVIDENCE in DESPERATION.

But there's one more in our last verse, verse 5:

### 1 SAMUEL 22:5

[5] Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

### POINT 4

Now where the heck did Gad come from?

This Prophet of God just shows up?

But it's here we see our last point.

We see, in David's DESPERATION, God's **SLIDE PROPHECY**

- God gives David direction
  - and special guidance
- through a prophet.

In his great DESPERATION,

- David is NOT left on his own,
- to figure things OUT on his own.

No, God's word is given to him by God's prophet.

## EXPLAIN: SCRIPTURES

Now, we as New Testament believers do not have the exact same guidance that David had. Ok?

- We don't have a Prophet...
- showing up out of nowhere...
- to tell us exactly where to go next...

Because we don't need that!

We have the tapes!

- If you're under 25...
- there used to be these things called cassette tapes...
  - it was audio...
  - recorded on miles and miles
  - of durable analog tape...
  - which you would often find in bushes.
  - or strewn about in gutters.

We've got the book, y'all!

- The scriptures.
- God's written words!
- From the Apostles AND the Prophets!

And this book gives us all the light we really need...

to find the way through the darkness of our DESPERATION!

## ILLUSTRATION: VIETNAM

One pastor I heard tells the story of a Vietnamese Christian

- who did some translating for the Americans
- and assisted missionaries during the Vietnam War.

Well, this guy disappeared, and no one knew what became of this man until many years later.

- He had been arrested for helping the Americans,
- and put in a prison camp.

And in this camp he was cut off from reading anything in English... he was restricted to only communist propaganda in Vietnamese.

- So, he got a daily dose of brainwashing,
- and over time it began to take its effect on him,
- and he began to doubt,
  - *"Maybe God doesn't exist.*
  - *Maybe the West has deceived me."*

And one night, he finally made the decision:

- that the next day he wouldn't pray any more
- and he would renounce his faith.

Well, the next morning he was assigned to clean out the latrine.

- And as he cleaned out a tin can
- that was overflowing with used toilet paper,
- his eye caught some English printed on paper.

So, he quickly washed it off, and snuck it into his pocket.

And that night,

- once his bunkmates had fallen asleep,
- he pulled that single piece of paper out,
- and used a small flashlight to read at the top of that paper:

It said Romans chapter 8.

And he trembled as he read:

- And we know that in all things...
  - God works for the good of those who love him..
- If God is for us, who can be against us?
- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
  - Shall trouble or hardship
  - or persecution or famine
  - or nakedness or danger or sword?

And he wept in his bunk that night...crying out to God...asking forgiveness

The next day he requested the duty of cleaning the latrine.

- And he kept at this chore for days on end...
  - because he realized that some official
  - was using an English Bible as toilet paper.
- And the translator would clean it off
- and use it for his nightly devotional reading.

And thus God's Word...kept him.

## CONCLUSION

Church, it's in our **SLIDE W/PADS DESPERATION**

- That we see his PROVISION...
- We can PRAISE him...
- We are sustained by his PROVIDENCE...
- And we are guided by PROPHECY...God's very Word.

Are you in a place of DESPERATION? I have been...multiple times!

And I quoted this verse to you just two weeks ago, but I'll do it again.

Another Psalm of David... one you're probably familiar with. Psalm 23:

**SLIDE PSALM 23:4**

[4] Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

But we're nervous...

- like a kid standing on the side of the pool...
- and Jesus is saying,
  - *"Come on in.*
  - *I've got you!*
  - *Jump to me!*
  - *All you desire,*
  - *all you hope for,*
  - *is this way."*

So, jump!

Are you in a place of DESPERATION today?

Take heart, oh Christian, God is WITH YOU in it.

Even in our most DESPERATE times, God never lets us go!

Let's pray.

## RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – [fathomchurch.org/give](http://fathomchurch.org/give)
- PRAYER - [fathomchurch.org/prayer](http://fathomchurch.org/prayer)
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.



## RESOURCES CONSULTED:

- Davis, Dale Ralph. Focus on the Bible. 1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *A Geography of Despair*.
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The First Book of Samuel.