

They were betrayed by an informant, on February 28th, 1944. That night the Gestapo knocked on the Haarlem door of the ten Boom home, in the Netherlands.

One of the great stories of courage and sacrifice is of the ten Boom and the hiding place in Corrie's bedroom on the third floor.

During WWII, the architect said, 'You want your hiding place as high as possible ... (it) gives you the best chance to reach it while the search is on below.'¹

Here is a picture of the ten Boom hiding place. One crawled into the space through the closet on the left. The wall has been opened to show the small size of the room. During WWII, 800 people travelled through that hiding place to refuge.



The Gestapo's knock was for the arrest of the ten Boom family and all the other friends who were there. The Jews in the hiding place were not discovered during the search and they later escaped with help from the Dutch resistance.

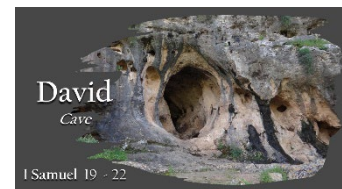
In the Bible, the hiding place is a place of refuge, it is like a cave.

- Caves are where you flee to in times of severe trouble.
- We feel safe there because of its strength or its secrecy.
- Caves can be a turning point, if it changes you.

We are looking at the life of David and learning from his example.

- Last Sunday, David we looked at Saul's jealousy of David. Saul desires to kill David despite his loyalty.
- Today, David hits the lowest point of his life: he flees to a cave as his refuge.

David Cave



David's biographer gives us a series of stories that reveal loss.

- One by one David loses his support and everything that he received from Saul.

¹ Corrie ten Boom, *The Hiding Place, 35th Anniversary Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2006), p. 102.

- Eventually, he has no place to run.

We pick up the story from last week when 'fled and escaped into the night (1Sa 19:10 NLT)' from Saul's palace.

David runs home to his wife, Michal, Saul's daughter. She was publicly given to him as a reward for killing Goliath, but privately, Saul was using her to undermine David.

1. Michal.

'Then Saul sent troops to watch David's house. They were told to kill David when he came out the next morning. But Michal, 'David's wife, warned him, "If you don't escape tonight, you will be dead by morning."¹² So she helped him climb out through a window, and he fled and escaped.¹³ Then she took an idol and put it in his bed, covered it with blankets, and put a cushion of goat's hair at its head (1Sa 19:11-13 NLT).'

The army found a large idol instead of David – wow. Idolatry is so close to David.

- Saul is angry and turns on his own daughter – that is what insecurity and paranoia will do.
- To defend herself she turns on David and lies to her father, "I had to," Michal replied. "He threatened to kill me if I didn't help him (1Sa 19:17 NLT)."

This action ended their love. She warned him and saved his life, but she could not stand up to her father. She is an interesting character to study

- Twice the story has reported that Michal loved David (1Sa 18:20, 28).
- But when David was fully established as king, it says 'she despised him in her heart (2Sa 6:16 NLT).'

Perhaps 'familiarity breeds contempt.' Regardless, the point of the story is that David has now lost his wife.

Next, David loses his friend Jonathan.

2. Jonathan.

David knew Saul better than his own son did.

- David said that king Saul wants to kill me: 'I am only a step away from death (1Sa 20:3 NLT)!'
 - Jonathan did not believe it, saying my father 'consults me on everything.'
 - David said, 'because of our friendship he has not told you his plans.'

- They came up with a test. There was a multiday festival and David's absence would be noticed. If Saul gets angry with David's absence, then Jonathan will believe that Saul really intends to kill David.

Then they made a vow: 'May the Lord be with you as he used to be with my father. ¹⁴ And may you treat me with the faithful love of the Lord as long as I live. But if I die, ¹⁵ treat my family with this faithful love, even when the Lord destroys all your enemies from the face of the earth.' ¹⁶ So Jonathan made a solemn pact with David (1Sa 20:13-16 NLT). Great example of friendship.

David proved to be correct. At the festival, 'Saul boiled with rage at Jonathan ... "Do you think I don't know that you want him to be king in your place, shaming yourself and your mother? ³¹ As long as that son of Jesse is alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!" ³² "But why should he be put to death?" Jonathan asked his father. "What has he done?" ³³ Then Saul hurled his spear at Jonathan, intending to kill him. So at last Jonathan realized that his father was really determined to kill David (1Sa 20:30-33 NLT).'

- There is a love-hate thing going on. 'The involvement of Saul's children ... intensifies the love-hate relationship'² Saul has with David.

According to their plan, Jonathan met David in a field and confirmed Saul's plan to kill David. 'Both of them were in tears as they embraced each other and said good-bye, especially David. ⁴² At last Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for we have sworn loyalty to each other in the Lord's name. The Lord is the witness of a bond between us and our children forever." Then David left, and Jonathan returned to the town (1Sa 20:40-42 NLT)!'"

- They would see each other only once more (at Horesh, 1Sa 23:16,18). Then Jonathan will tell David, 'You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you (1Sa 23:17 NLT).'
- If Satan cannot destroy us, he will derail us, cause us to lose our purpose.
- The biographer's point is that he has lost daily contact with his friend and supporter.

Next, David realizes that he has lost his position and his army.

3. Alone.

'David went to the town of Nob to see Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech trembled when he saw him. "Why are you alone?" he asked. "Why is no one with you?" ² "The king has sent me on a private matter," David said. "He told me not to tell anyone why I am here. I have told my men where to meet me later (1Sa 21:1-2 NLT).'

² David Toshio Tsumura, *NICOT The First Book of Samuel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), p. 495.

- David is alone. He has no army to command. He has no job or place to be. He is on the run. Even this priest in this remote place questions why David is all alone.
- One of Satan's tactics is to cut us off from others. During Israel's exodus from Egypt, the Amalekites attacked those Israelites who 'lagged behind' in the desert (Dt 25:18). When you are tired or discouraged, don't step away from church. Don't give Satan a clean shot at you.
- David's presence at Nob will end with all the priests being killed by Saul (1Sa 22:6-23).³

The priest gives David some food. 'David asked Ahimelech, "Do you have a spear or sword? The king's business was so urgent that I didn't even have time to grab a weapon!"⁹ "I only have the sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the valley of Elah," the priest replied. "It is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. Take that if you want it, for there is nothing else here." "There is nothing like it!" David replied. "Give it to me (1Sa 21:8-9 NLT)!"'

- He eats, grabs Goliath's sword and moves quickly on.
- David has lost his wife, his daily contact with a friend, and now he has lost his army.

David has not hit rock bottom yet, but he is close.

4. Gath.

'So David escaped from Saul and went to King Achish of Gath (1Sa 21:10 NLT).'

Where is Gath? We have heard of that city before.

- Goliath was from Gath. 'A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp (1Sa 17:4 NLT).' Gath 'was the headquarters, the Washington D.C. of the Philistines.'⁴
- Why did David go to Gath? Geographically, it was all downhill and the opposite direction from Saul. Humans tend to run downhill when running from trouble. Or perhaps he thought he could become a mercenary.⁵
- David goes to the enemy for protection. This is where David loses his self-worth.

³ Tsumura points out that David is not a skilled liar. There was no time to get a weapon, but there had been time for the men to purify themselves, Tsumura, *First Samuel*, p. 533.

⁴ Charles R. Swindoll, *David: A Story of Passion & Destiny* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing, 1997), p. 65.

⁵ Tsumura, *First Samuel*, p. 533.

'But the officers of Achish were unhappy about his being there. "Isn't this David, the king of the land?" they asked. "Isn't he the one the people honor with dances, singing, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands (1Sa 21:11 NLT)'?"'

- David was probably wearing a disguise.
- I don't know what he did with the large sword, perhaps hid it outside of the city.

But they recognized him. 'David heard these comments and was very afraid of what King Achish of Gath might do to him. ¹³So he pretended to be insane, scratching on doors and drooling down his beard. ¹⁴Finally, King Achish said to his men, "Must you bring me a madman? ¹⁵We already have enough of them around here! Why should I let someone like this be my guest (1Sa 19:1 NLT)'?"'

- There is a lot more history between David and the Philistines (1Sa 27, 29), but for now, his only means of survival was pretending to be crazy.
- He has lost all dignity and self-respect.

Often, God must take away all our options ...

- He must crush us to rebuild us for the future.
- We must surrender to His will to move forward.
- We must carry the cross before we wear the crown.

God's perspective is different than ours. What we view as suffering might be on the job training. During my first year of graduate school, I could not find a job for 11 months. It was crazy. Even McDonalds laughed at me and refused to give me an application. We learned to trust God during that period. People left groceries on our doorstep. It was God training me to trust Him.

Now that David is at his lowest, God can finally start to use him.

5. Cave.

'So David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam (1Sa 22:1a NLT).'

This is rock bottom. All support has been removed. He just has his memories and a large sword – a memorial to past victories.

There are three Psalms that were written while David was in the cave.

(1 – Ps 142) 'I cry out loudly to God ...

"As I sink in despair, my spirit ebbing away,
you know how I'm feeling,
Know the danger I'm in,

the traps hidden in my path ...
there's not a soul who cares what happens.
I'm up against it, with no exit –
bereft, left alone (Ps 142:11-4 MSG).'

This sounds like someone who has hit rock bottom.

'Then I pray to you, O Lord.
I say, "You are my place of refuge.
You are all I really want in life (Ps 142:5 NLT)."'

- But even in the darkest cave, we see David's faith in God.
- Our destiny is not determined by seeking refuge in a cave, but by how we come out of the cave.
- Caves can become turning points.
- David knows that God still answers prayer.
- More than a wife, a friend, an army, or even dignity, he wants God.

David's attitude is a turning point – he trusts God and wants God. God hears David's cry, and help comes from an unexpected source.

'Soon his brothers and all his other relatives joined him there.

In the second of the Psalms David wrote from the cave he sings ...

(2 – Ps 57) 'Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
let your glory be over all the earth ...
⁹I will praise you, Lord, among the nations;
I will sing of you among the peoples.
¹⁰For great is your love, reaching to the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the skies.
¹¹Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
let your glory be over all the earth (Ps 57:5, 9-11 NIV).'

- How can you see the sky or heavens from a cave?
- David reminds God of his faithfulness, it 'reaches to the skies.'
- David looking through eyes of faith to the heavens.

This pleases God, and more help arrived.

'Then others began coming—men who were in trouble or in debt or who were just discontented—until David was the captain of about 400 men (1Sa 22:2 NLT).'

- ‘Discouraged people don’t need critics ... they need encouragement.’⁶
- These 400 men changed by being with David. They could have thought ‘I am trapped by my history. I will always be in trouble, in debt, and discontented.’
- The cave was a turning point for all of them.
- The cave was no longer an escape – a refuge, it became a launching pad for the future.
- Their destiny was not determined by seeking refuge in a cave, but how they come out of the cave.

1. These men became David’s mighty men of valor.

- These men trained daily and became experts with swords and other weapons. Can you imagine 400 men fighting with swords in a cave? The smells and noise alone.
- One of them killed 300 with a sword, another faced the entire Philistine army, one went into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion (2Sa 23).
- They became disciplined – they did not steal from Nabal.
- They were inspired by David, and he gained their loyalty (2Sa 23:15-17).
- David came to love these men.

2. Later ‘they would become his cabinet when he took office.’⁷

Through David’s story today, I have been giving you some insights into overcoming discouragement. Let’s list them.

When discouraged ...

- You are not alone. God is with you and is your helper, He 13:5.
- God has a purpose for you, 1Co 10:31.
- God’s perspective is different than ours, Col 3:2.
- God’s grace offers us a fresh start, 2Co 5:17. We are not trapped by our past.
- God answers prayer, Ja 1:5.

⁶ Swindoll, *David*, p. 81.

⁷ Swindoll, *David*, p. 75.

One of the men who impacted my life wrote, 'The facts of our life never change. But God can help us change the way we view the facts. And more importantly, God can help us change the way we feel about the facts.' – Dr. Richard Dobbins⁸

David could have given up in that cave and never lived up to God's plan for his life. Instead, we see David's heart after God coming through clearly. In the third Psalm written while he was in the cave, he wrote

(3 – Ps 34) 'I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

²I will glory in the Lord;

let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

³Glorify the Lord with me;

let us exalt his name together. Note the plural. David is no longer alone.

⁴I sought the Lord, and he answered me;

he delivered me from all my fears ...

⁶This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; David has nothing to offer these men, but they stay and train.

he saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.

⁸Taste and see that the Lord is good;

blessed is the one who takes refuge in him (Ps 34:1-4, 6-8 NIV).'

Running to the cave made sense. There are times when we may need a refuge.

Conclusion.

The only issue with a cave, or hiding place, is that as safe or secret as it might be, it can only be a temporary place. At some point you need to exit the cave and live.

One of our parishioners in Connecticut had a small bomb shelter in his basement. It was only large enough to hold four people sitting up for a short period of time. When he showed it to me, he said, 'It was built during the threat of a nuclear attack around the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis (10/62). But what are you going to do if you survive the

⁸ Richard Dobbins, *The Doctor Is In* (??), p. 38.

big blast?' He started to laugh. 'At some point you need to eat and use the restroom. So, you exit the room and die slowly of radiation exposure.'⁹

- Does the cave change you? Are you stronger, braver, or have more faith in God?
- Or does it affirm your worst fears and hold you so tight you cannot move on?

David sang, 'You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance (Ps 32:7 NIV).'

Pray.

⁹ Sidebar: he was a pilot, and his regular flight hit the tower on 9-11. The night before, a pilot friend wanted to swap. He flew to Paris and survived, while his friend died. He retired shortly afterwards never quite the same.