

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – July 31, 2022

Theme: Lessons from the Life of David Topic: Finding God in Loneliness

Main Text: 1 Samuel 22:1-10

Key verse: Psalm 142:3 *“When I am overwhelmed, You alone know the way I should turn. Wherever I go, my enemies have set traps for me.” (NLT)*

INTRODUCTION: With God’s hand on him, David succeeded in all endeavors he undertook - as a soldier, officer, courtier, musician. He displayed wisdom, skill, and courage. This triggered a deep and deadly envy from the king. King Saul’s murderous envy soon forced David to flee for his life, hiding in caves, deserts, and forests. These are lonely places. Dictionary.com defines ‘lonely’ as affected with, characterized by, or causing a depressing feeling of being alone, without company, remote from places of human habitation, desolate, bleak, isolated. Other related words include homeless, estranged, abandoned, destitute. How did David survive in such a place? What can we learn from this period of David’s trial in distress and loneliness?

1. (a) Let some participants share a time when they were estranged or forced into isolation from family or community, and how they coped. (b) Bible records suggest that David was in his late teens or early adulthood during this period of estrangement. How do you think it must have felt for one so young? What would be the most challenging aspect of this time in his life? (see 1 Samuel 21:1, 10-15; 22:1,3, 19) (c) How is this loneliness different from a personal alone time with God?

When David ran for his life, his first stop was Nob, the city of priests. And all Ahimelech the priest could do for him was give him some consecrated bread, and a sword. David even had to tell a lie to get the bread. It must have been for David a time of overwhelming powerlessness. David very likely experienced every possible pain in the scope of loneliness: the loneliness in not knowing what to do, or what God is doing (1 Samuel 22:3); the loneliness of leaving loved ones behind (1 Samuel 22:4); the loneliness of having to run for his life (1 Samuel 22:1, 4,5), and the loneliness of isolation, of having to hide in caves, and in forests. He must have also experienced the loneliness of loss and guilt – knowing that an entire city was annihilated because of him (1 Samuel 22:16-19), not to mention the pain of being separated from his closest friend, Jonathan. Regardless of who we are, everyone will face loneliness at one time or another —not just solitude, but loneliness.

2. (a) Considering that it was during this period of loneliness that David wrote most of the Psalms, what do you suppose is God’s purpose for allowing us times of loneliness? (b) In 1 Samuel 22:1-2, David’s family joined him in the cave, along with a bunch of men with odd and questionable characters. What lesson do you think God wanted David to learn in bringing these needy persons into his life at a time when he himself was needing help? (c) 1 Samuel 22:2 described David’s first army as consisting of the distressed, indebted, discontented. How do you think he was able to turn these renegades into the fierce fighting force they would later become?

Loneliness can be a time of great physical, mental, and emotional stress, resulting in a blurred perspective and poor decision making. Under such stress, one is prone to make decisions which have short term benefits but could be detrimental in the long run (1 Samuel 22:22). So, David, a young adult is thrust into a world of loneliness. But God did not leave him alone because, *“One day the prophet Gad told David, “Leave the stronghold and return to the land of Judah.” So, David went to the forest of Hereth.”* (1 Samuel 22:5). Before this time, there was no indication of any spiritual guidance in David’s movements! Our Lord Jesus showed this example also when He took a small group of His closest friends with Him in times of His distress.

3. (a) Read 1 Samuel 24:1-4, 12, 15; Psalm 63; 142:3. What would you say was David’s biggest lesson in his wilderness journey? (b) In what ways does this study change your attitude towards seasons of loneliness? (c) Which situation do you currently face for which you need to apply these lessons?

Prayer: *Our Dear Father, we so desire to be closer to You, yet afraid of the pains and stresses of loneliness. Please give us the grace to trust You when it is our time to enter the school of loneliness. Give us men like Gad, who will help us learn to listen to Your guidance. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.*