**A WORK OF HEART IN THE WILDERNESS**

**1 Samuel 22:1-2**

**En Gedi Wilderness – Pictures**

**WILDERNESS IS:**

 **a dangerous and unpredictable place**

 **an “out of control” place**

 **a place in which you can feel trapped**

 **a place full of questions and mystery**

**\*\*\*\*IT’S ALSO A PLACE WHERE THE BEST “WORKS OF HEART” ARE MADE**

**1 Samuel 24:1-12**

1. **WILDERNESS IS A PLACE OF TESTING AND TEMPTING**

**1 Samuel 24:4-5**

**Numbers 6:22-27**

1. **A WORK OF HEART HAPPENS IN THE WILDERNESS AND WE SEE BEAUTY, ANOINTING AND GOD-CHOSENESS**

**1 Samuel 24:6**

1. **THE WILDERNESS IS WHERE WE FIND OUR TRUE “REFUGE”**

**Psalm 57:1**

**Psalm 57:9-10**

1. **YOU ESCAPE TO THE WILDERNESS ALONE AND YOU FIND THAT YOU NEED OTHERS**

**1 Samuel 22:1-2**

**WILDERNESS, IN ITSELF, MAKES NOTHING HAPPEN**

**OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE TO GOD – IN THE WILDERNESS – WILL CREATE HIS BEST WORK IN OUR HEARTS**

 **Receive Communion in Community**

 **Receive Prayer**

 **Give God Praise**

**A Work of Heart in the Wilderness**

Intro: David and a work of heart. Kevin spoke about the ranting’s of Saul and the friendship of Jonathan. Jonathan and David begin to wonder if it is safe to stay in the palace. They put together a test and find that yes – he wants to kill you.

Group therapy session (Counseling scene.) Clr “What is the problem here?” Jonathan “My dad wants to kill my best friend.” Clr “Well you don’t really mean kill him – that’s just a figure of speech” Saul “No yes – I do want to kill him….sometimes I want to kill my son as well.” David’s just nodding.

1 Samuel 22:1-2

Adullam – cave. David has been living in the palace – getting celebrity treatment by the ladies. Enjoying success on the battlefield. Rock Star status – now he’s living in a cave.

He moved around

Caves and Wilderness. Wilderness of Ziph, Maon, En Gedi and Paran

En Gedi Wilderness – Pictures

Wilderness living – environment and life.

My story of being in the wilderness at En Gedi “spring of the young goat” was an important oasis, with fresh water and hot springs on the west shore of the Dead Sea south of Jericho and about 18 miles southeast of Hebron

We hiked here for a day, getting a feel for what David survived during his years hiding from King Saul.

It’s quiet, unfamiliar, austere yet strangely beautiful.

Went to a spring and splashed in the water.

You get settled and centred when you hike in the wilderness. In spirituality is it so much a part of our traditions.

**“Environment” Wilderness and “Life” Wilderness**

David didn’t start in the wilderness and he didn’t end up in the wilderness but he did spend some years on the wilderness – about 10 years

Everybody – at least everybody who has anything to do with God – spends some time in the wilderness, so it’s important to know what can take place there.

David didn’t choose to enter the wilderness; he was chased there. He didn’t go to the wilderness to take photographs of the wild goats and draw pictures of the flowers but to escape from the crazy king who was out to murder him. David was in the wilderness because he was a fugitive running for his life.

I would live in the wilderness every summer for months and would kinda get called back to it every summer. We can only know some things about us when we are in the wilderness. Nancy Newhall writes “The wilderness holds answers to questions man’s not yet learned to ask.” When we are in the wilderness, we are not in control and we have no assignment or appointments to keep. We just have to survive and so in some way when we are there we feel our lives getting more simple and deeper. You feel less distracted and hurried and crazy. People who are not very spiritual start talking about God when they are in the wilderness.

Wilderness is beautiful but also can be scary. It’s unpredictable and dangerous. Wild animals and dangerous currents in the water and different ways to die. So we make things tame and live in climate controlled houses and keep our doors locked and have running water and electricity and shopping malls. We get civilized.

There are times where no matter how civilized we get, we are thrown into the wilderness. Not a geographical one but a circumstantial wilderness.

“Everything is going along fine: we ‘ve learned the language of the country, gotten a job, decorated the house, signed up for car payments, made out a schedule that imposes some order on the chaos of time, accepted responsibilities that define our significance, heard people speak our name and determined that we are identifiable. And then suddenly we are beside ourselves; we don’t know what’s going on within us or in another who is important to u; feeling erupt in us that call into question what we’ve never questioned before. There’s a radical change in our bodies, or our emotions, or our thinking, or our friends, or our job. We’re out of control. We’re in the wilderness.

Life wilderness is a terrible, frightening and dangerous place: but it is also a place of beauty. There are things that can be seen, heard and experienced in this wilderness that can be seen, heard and experienced nowhere else. When we find ourselves in the wilderness, we are going to find ourselves frightened and we will be alert and wide eyed. We are thrown into danger and death but we can, if we let ourselves be finding ourselves in the great mystery of God and the amazing preciousness of life.

There is something so alluring about the wilderness and inviting about the wilderness yet also so crazy and makes you long for civilization.

**WILDERNESS IS:**

 **a dangerous and unpredictable place**

You never know when there may be a wild animal behind a bush. The weather may turn.

 **an “out of control” place**

I don’t have my normal systems and organizational methods. I can’t call for help. Cell phone coverage

 **a place in which you can feel trapped**

I want out of this place and I don’t know how to get out – I don’t even know what out looks like.

 **a place full of questions and mystery**

Illustration: Kananaskis and Burns Loop. There is something incredibly beautiful and inviting about the wilderness. So important to have wilderness areas. Living in Calgary we had the kananaskis country wilderness. I had to leave the city and the flatlands to go there regularly.

Kananaskis Country – wilderness before Banff-

Backcountry biking in the Canadian Rockies guide Book. Burns Loop A ride you will not soon forget, this extended cycling trip is not for the faint-of-heart or the weak-of-leg. You might call it the "Ironman" route of the backcountry biking in the Canadian Rockies. It is a very long and difficult ride suitable for strong, well-prepared cyclists. It’s about 70 k’s and starts at around 5000 ft. elevation and goes up to close to 7000 ft. and up and down again and again and ends up at the place you started

70 k’s of up and down on single track and old logging roads. 10 hours – getting dark, no food and water, lowlands now, hadn’t planned for this. First 50 k’s were great – last 20 k’s we could feel our legs tighten up. Had to get back to the highway where we parked the car. Would we have to sleep out in the wilderness? Grizzlies – had experienced one another time when we camped in that area. September gets cold in Alberta at that elevation. Got to the top of a rise and caught sight of civilization – a paved highway

**\*\*\*\* IT’S ALSO A PLACE WHERE THE BEST “WORKS OF HEART” ARE MADE**

We find a deeper and richer life in the great mystery of God. We escape to it and we can choose to embrace it.

**1 Samuel 24:1-12**

**After Saul returned from fighting the Philistines, he was told that David had gone into the wilderness of En-gedi. 2So Saul chose 3,000 elite troops from all Israel and went to search for David and his men near the rocks of the wild goats.**

**3At the place where the road passes some sheepfolds, Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. But as it happened, David and his men were hiding farther back in that very cave!**

**4“Now’s your opportunity!” David’s men whispered to him. “Today the Lord is telling you, ‘I will certainly put your enemy into your power, to do with as you wish.’” So David crept forward and cut off a piece of the hem of Saul’s robe.**

**5But then David’s conscience began bothering him because he had cut Saul’s robe. 6He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do this to my lord the king. I shouldn’t attack the Lord’s anointed one, for the Lord himself has chosen him.” 7So David restrained his men and did not let them kill Saul.**

**After Saul had left the cave and gone on his way, 8David came out and shouted after him, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked around, David bowed low before him.**

**9Then he shouted to Saul, “Why do you listen to the people who say I am trying to harm you? 10This very day you can see with your own eyes it isn’t true. For the Lord placed you at my mercy back there in the cave. Some of my men told me to kill you, but I spared you. For I said, ‘I will never harm the king—he is the Lord’s anointed one.’ 11Look, my father, at what I have in my hand. It is a piece of the hem of your robe! I cut it off, but I didn’t kill you. This proves that I am not trying to harm you and that I have not sinned against you, even though you have been hunting for me to kill me.**

**12“May the Lord judge between us. Perhaps the Lord will punish you for what you are trying to do to me, but I will never harm you**

David cannot believe it, the king, by himself comes into a dark cave. Squinting to see from the bright sun to the darkness of the cave, he doesn’t see that David himself is at the back of the cave.

He takes of his outer robe and leaves it on the ground a little distance from himself.

King with his back to David and his men, on his throne, taking a dump

David is forced with a test – will he do the thing that is savage and base or choose the honorable thing.

There is the cave he chooses life.

1. **WILDERNESS IS A PLACE OF TESTING AND TEMPTING**

**1 Samuel 24:4-5**

15 wilderness stories of David. Bible is full of wilderness stories. This David wilderness story is kinda bracketed by two other wilderness stories: there is Moses and the people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years and Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days. Each of these wilderness stories influence the other.

Moses and the people in the Sinai desert. Moses and the people being tested – will they trust God.

Jesus story Jesus being tempted – will he choose just being a helper, or advisor or entertainer. Or will he be our saviour.

It’s wild and – “wild”erness. Never seen that or thought about that.

David is being hated and hunted – heard Kevin last week.

David was tested and tempted. Would he choose to live separate from God and become a little more savage or become more holy? A life of savageness or a life of prayer.

It’s where you deal with God. The more you deal with God, the more human you become.

Prayer is dealing with God. We are forced to deal with the basics in the wilderness. Basic God. The confrontation is a test, a temptation. Do we deal with God or not? We take the test and become more, or less. We grow up or we regress. David became more. David grew up.

Mysterious, wild, unpredictable God.

Desert texts – Deuteronomy 8 God says this is what the desert experience is about. Theology of the desert. You will not think that you did it.

Luke 4:14 he emerges out of the desert filled with the power of the Spirit. Desert is a formative thing. It releases the power of the Spirit.

Satan comes in deserts and gardens we are stronger in deserts gardens make us more vulnerable entitlement

People who have affairs are not leaving the person they are with but trying to leave the person they have become. Affairs are not about the sex – it is about the desire.

After Absalom, David has a cave experience and opens his arms again. For a time.

**Numbers 6:22-2722Then the Lord said to Moses, 23“Tell Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel with this special blessing: 24‘May the Lord bless you
    and protect you.25May the Lord smile on you
    and be gracious to you.26May the Lord show you his favor
    and give you his peace.’27Whenever Aaron and his sons bless the people of Israel in my name, I myself will bless them.”**

It wasn’t right of the start. Initially he bowed to a portion of the whispers of the men – cut of his tahleet. This was the sacred part of the outer robe that signified this. You are not the God guy. You are

Saul was relieving himself and took of his outer garment – taleet

Inner garment is call a haluuk Tie a tzeet They used the outer garment as a prayer closet. Susanne Wesley used to pull her apron over hher head to pray. She would take her shawl – tzeet tzeet

When David cut the taleet or tzeet tzeet off he was saying “you are a lousy king and not a God a guy.”

Numbers 6:22-27 is a benediction Taleet is held over a new bride by the women - your first house.

“a covering” is given We cover as leaders those under our care. We throw rocks on the other side of the sheep and create a ruckus – “don’t go there”

“Knoff” same word as wings. Priest walks among them with numbers 6:22-27 “wings” covering them.

Benediction Communion.

2. **A WORK OF HEART HAPPENS IN THE WILDERNESS AND WE SEE BEAUTY, ANOINTING AND GOD-CHOSENESS**

**1 Samuel 24:66He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do this to my lord the king. I shouldn’t attack the Lord’s anointed one, for the Lord himself has chosen him.”**

In a wilderness trained heart, we see beauty everywhere. We see the preciousness of life and we see what could be and what has been and we give it reverence and respect.

**Read “A Tale of Three Kings” by Gene Edwards - Picture**

**3. THE WILDERNESS IS WHERE WE FIND OUR TRUE “REFUGE”**

**Psalm 57 For the director of music. To the tune of “Do Not Destroy.” Of David. A *miktam.* When he had fled from Saul into the cave.**

**1Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me,
    for in you I take refuge.
I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings
    until the disaster has passed.**

At the same time as finding beauty and anointing and God-choseness, David found something called refuge. The books of Samuel give the story of David from the outside. The Psalms give the story from the inside.

Illustration: Wildlife refuge. Bird refuge.

David in the court is naïve and brash in his faith. 200 foreskins and fighting goliath. In the desert it is a shrewd and desperate faith. It is very different. The politic of court can make or break you. It is in the wadis and caves that David is formed. Saul is naïve and becomes cynical. David comes out with Psalm 42…I just need you where before it was “Lets just go out and kill that giant.” If the school of wilderness is the only way to leadership. Hebrews talks about the suffering of Christ. Only way to get from cocky and naïve to shrewd and desperate. What are the boundary lines on shrewdness? David became way too shrewd.

**Psalm 57:9-10 I 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.**

Third Day – Your Love Oh Lord – Psalm 36 and 57

Testimony of Jeff and Heidi Coleman

**4. YOU ESCAPE TO THE WILDERNESS ALONE AND YOU FIND THAT YOU NEED OTHERS**

**1 Samuel 22:1-2**

People you serve will hurt you. Ziklag turns on him. What will you do now? Stop serving? Keep serving? What do you do Jesus? Sometimes our best creativity comes out of pain.

Sometimes the toxicity means that you go and live out in Ziklag.

**CONCLUSION: WILDERNESS, IN ITSELF, MAKES NOTHING HAPPEN**

Wilderness in itself, makes nothing happen. Saul and David were both in the wilderness. Saul was running after David, obsessed with hunting him down, his life narrowed to a murderous squint. Meanwhile, David was running to God and finding himself in his God-refuge praying, wide-eyed in wonder, taking in the glory, awake and ready for God’s generous love, for the God who makes good on his word.

We can’t be naïve about the wilderness; it’s a dangerous place. But we must never avoid the wilderness; it’s a wonderful place.

**OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE TO GOD – IN THE WILDERNESS – WILL CREATE HIS BEST WORK IN OUR HEARTS**

 **Receive Communion in Community**

 **Receive Prayer – Numbers 6:22-27**

 **Give God Praise – Psalm 57**

Psalm 57

For the director of music. To the tune of “Do Not Destroy.” Of David. A *miktam.* When he had fled from Saul into the cave.

**1**Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me,
    for in you I take refuge.
I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings
    until the disaster has passed.

**2**I cry out to God Most High,
    to God, who vindicates me.
**3**He sends from heaven and saves me,
    rebuking those who hotly pursue me—
    God sends forth his love and his faithfulness.

**4**I am in the midst of lions;
    I am forced to dwell among ravenous beasts—
men whose teeth are spears and arrows,
    whose tongues are sharp swords.

**5**Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
    let your glory be over all the earth.

**6**They spread a net for my feet—
    I was bowed down in distress.
They dug a pit in my path—
    but they have fallen into it themselves.

**7**My heart, O God, is steadfast,
    my heart is steadfast;
    I will sing and make music.
**8**Awake, my soul!
    Awake, harp and lyre!
    I will awaken the dawn.

**9**I will praise you, Lord, among the nations;
    I will sing of you among the peoples.
**10**For great is your love, reaching to the heavens;
    your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

**11**Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
    let your glory be over all the earth.