

# **Psalm 63: desert song - Study and Note Guide**

***... finding God in the wilderness***

In Psalm 63, we find a deeper understanding of worship, prayer and faith. It is a “desert song” penned by David while he was in the wilderness of Judah. Traditionally, it has been known that the early church sang this psalm—recognizing their wilderness journey on earth. This psalm helped them, as it will us, to stay focused on God in the midst of life’s desert seasons—surrounded by the wilderness and loneliness of heart.

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## **Psalm 63... background – the journey to the wilderness**

The superscription for Psalm 63 states that David wrote this Psalm when he was in the wilderness of Judah (or desert of Judah).

There are two occasions that would correspond with this description:

One possibility was when David was fleeing from Absalom, his son, when Absalom revolted against him in 2 Samuel 15-17.

Commentators also link Psalm 63 to David’s refuge in the wilderness while running from Saul.

For the purpose of our study, we will focus on the later. We will focus our attention on David’s experience in the wilderness during the time he ran as a fugitive for his life from Saul beginning in 1 Samuel 19. You will find many insights when you trace the background and journey that lead him to the wilderness. What were the circumstances he faced when he penned Psalm 63?

### **providential moments**

1 Samuel 16 - Samuel anointed David as king.

1 Samuel 17 - David kills Goliath... the victory thrust him into enormous success and fame.

1 Samuel 18:7, 30 - He was very successful...

1 Samuel 19 - Everything changed... David fled for his life and became a fugitive.

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### **intentional choices**

What did he do when he hit such a crisis? What happen in the days after he fled as a fugitive running for his life? Was it a time of intense stress, panic and discouragement?

How can we apply these intentional choices to our own situations?

#### **1- he chose Ramah and found a place of refuge and trusted counsel.**

1 Samuel 19:18 - Ramah (a place of counsel)

Naoth (means dwellings)

There is a place to hear the voice of God – a place of sound counsel.

 Study Scriptures:  
Psalm 11:1 (ESV, AMP)  
In the Lord I take refuge..  
Psalm 7:1; 121:1  
  
Proverbs 11:14; 15:22;  
20:18; 24:6

## **2- he chose Nob and found help as he sought the presence of God**

1 Samuel 21:1-9 - Nob (the city of the priests, the tabernacle)  
Our first line of defense is the presence of God and His word –  
our greatest weapon is our past victories.

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 Study Scriptures:  
Psalm 105:4;  
Psalm 27:4  
Exodus 33:14

Psalm 23:5;  
56:3; 59:10

1 John 5:4;  
1 Corinthians 5:57

Matthew 7:24-27;  
Luke 11:28;  
2 John 1:6;  
John 14:15;  
James 1:22-25

Psalm 28:7; 29:11

## **3- he chose Gath and found a strategic alliance**

1 Samuel 21: 10-15 - Gath (birthplace or residence of Goliath)  
Out of the mouth of your enemies, God will remind you of your destiny.

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## **4- he chose Adullam and found a strategic location**

1 Samuel 22:1-2 - Adullam (over looks the valley of Elah where David defeated Goliath)  
Remind yourself of your victories.  
Your circumstance is your “now place” that God will use to position your next victory.

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## **5- he chose the Mizpeh of Moab and found safety and direction**

1 Samuel 22:3-5 - Mizpeh (watchtower or lookout)  
There are times when you receive a “now word” from the Lord. Your obedience will require great faith,  
especially when God is leading you to the wilderness. David chose to obey.

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## **6- he chose to seek direction from God and was attentive to His voice**

1 Samuel 23:2, 6 - Keilah (a place of practice – a place to learn the voice of God)  
David inquired of the Lord for direction. This was place that he trained others to hear and obey the  
voice of God. When you lead others out of their fear, God will give courage for your own.

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## **7- he chose the wilderness and found encouragement for his faith**

1 Samuel 23:15-18 - Wilderness of Ziph (means flowing – it is a place of hiding)  
God will bring encouragement to you... a friend to strengthen your hand in His.

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### **Psalm 63:1-11 (NASB)**

A Davidic Psalm in the wilderness of Judah...

1 O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You,  
In a dry and weary land where there is no water.

2 Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.

3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You.

4 So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.

5 My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.

6 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches,

7 For You have been my help, And in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.

8 My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me.

9 But those who seek my life to destroy it, Will go into the depths of the earth.

10 They will be delivered over to the power of the sword; They will be a prey for foxes.

11 But the king will rejoice in God; Everyone who swears by Him will glory, For the mouths of those  
who speak lies will be stopped.

❧ Memorize: Psalm 63:1 - 4

❧ Notes / Journal Thoughts:

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## What is the wilderness?

The wilderness is a lonely and solitary place,  
Matthew Henry describes it as: wanting and wandering and unsettled  
there's quite a loss of what to do for themselves

It is a place designed by God... for testing — training — and transition

### testing... the testing of Your Faith

*"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* James 1:2-3 ESV

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❧ Study Scriptures:  
1 Peter 1:6-9;  
Romans 12:2;  
Psalm 26:2-3

### training... the discipline of the Lord

*"No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields the fruit of peace and righteousness to those who have been trained by it."* Hebrews 12:11 HCSB

God uses circumstances in our lives to mold us into His character.

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❧ Study Scriptures:  
Hebrews 12:1-12;  
2 Corinthians 3:18;  
2 Corinthians 4:17-18;  
Proverbs 3:11-12

### transition... the leading of the Lord

*"You reveal the path of life to me..."* Psalm 16:11

The wilderness is a time of testing... training... a transition leading to God's timing and destiny for your life.

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❧ Study Scriptures:  
Jeremiah 29:11-13;  
Proverbs 4:26;  
Psalm 107

### ❧ Notes / Journal Thoughts:

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