

231115-4 1Sa 24, Saul & David at the Cave of Engedi—CThurman

The Philistines had come against the inhabitants of the city of Keilah, a city that might have been close to where David was in hiding from Saul, if he was around the cave of Adullam. Then David inquired of the LORD whether he should smite the Philistines, recover the spoils and restore them back to Keilah. And the LORD said, yes, go smite them. But it seems that the men of war that were with David had some reservations about becoming involved in this conflict. They were already in fear of their lives, and how much more if they went against the Philistines? (And I'd insert here that this is something that king Saul should have done for the inhabitants of Keilah, but didn't.) So, again David went to enquire of the LORD again, not for himself, but for the others, and the LORD gave the same answer. Therefore, they all went against the Philistines, smote them with a great slaughter and recovered for Keilah all of the stuff that the Philistines had taken. But in the meantime, Saul received word that David was at Keilah, a city with gates and bars. If so, Saul could besiege the city and take David. However, David also knew that Saul scheming an evil plan to take him. For this reason, David had Abiathar the high priest to bring the ephod to discern the will of the LORD. David asked the LORD whether Saul would come down to Keilah. And the LORD answered yes that Saul would come down. Then David asked whether the inhabitants of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul or not. And the LORD answered that they would deliver him up. So, David and his men left Keilah and came into the wilderness of Ziph. But there were some of Ziph that came to Saul telling him that David was with them. But when the Ziphites went up to Saul David fled to a great rock in the wilderness of Maon. Saul came very close to finding David. While David and his men were on one side of the mountain, Saul and his men were on the other. And when Saul had David hemmed in on every side a messenger came to Saul telling him that the Philistines had invaded the land, probably meaning that the Philistines had particularly come against the tribe of Benjamin. At this Saul was forced to abandon his search for David at this time. From here David came to the strongholds at Engedi (pronounced, En-jee'-dye) These strongholds are very likely a network of caves that afforded David and his men a place to hide and defend themselves if necessary. In all of this God provided for David and his men a means to escape from Saul at every turn. Chapter 23.14b, tells us why Saul was never able to apprehend David, ... *but God delivered him not into his hand*. The 24th chapter begins by showing that Saul had

resolved the Philistine problem at the moment and that once again he is hot on David's trail at Engedi.

מֵאַחֲרָי

1 ¶ And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines,
lit. from after

that it was told him, saying, Behold, David [is] in the wilderness of Engedi.
desert En-jee'-dye

wilderness, מִדְּבָר, a masc. noun tss. also *desert, the south.*
(1Sa.23.14, 15, 24, 25; 24.1; 25.1, 4, 14, 21; 26.2, 3)

Engedi: The elevation of the land ranges from the level of the Dead Sea at 423 meters (1,388 ft) below sea level to the plateau of the Judean Desert at 200 meters (656 ft) above sea level. A difference in height of 2,044 ft.

Here are the famous Qumran caves where the Qumran Cave Scrolls were discovered, otherwise called the Dead Sea Scrolls which contain all of the OT scriptures except for the Book of Esther. These scrolls date back to the 3rd century BCE.

Everywhere that David went it seems that there was always someone watching and willing to give him up. It was so for David. It was so for Christ. And will be so for us. Someone is always watching for an opportunity to catch us in some fault or some moment of weakness. But keep that in mind. Don't make things any more difficult than they already are by adding fuel to the fire by overlooking some of the little things.

2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek

עַל-פְּנֵי

צוּר

David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.
(face of the) stones

3,000 of Saul's men against 600 of David's. (5-1 ratio)

Saul searched in the most difficult of places in an attempt to find David,
upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where [was] a cave;
sheepfolds

-cotes, גִּדְרֹה, a fem. noun tss. *fold, (sheep)cotes, hedges, wall; a pen or shelter for the sheep.*

cave, מְעֵרָה, fem. noun tss. *cave, hole, den; 1Sa.24.3, 7, 8, 10.*

**and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained
in the sides of the cave.**

recesses (Inter. Bible, J. P. Green, Sr.)

sides, יַרְכָה, a fem. noun tss. *border, side, coasts, quarters.*

Evidently there were caves that shepherds could resort to shelter their flocks from the heat of the day or storms. Some of these caves were very large, deep and dark. So, Saul came to one of these caves, not knowing that David and his men were inside, to rest.

4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said

נָתַן

**unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest
give**

do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.

in your eyes

cut off, Qal fut. of the verb כָּרַת, tss. to make, to cut, to cut down, to cut off, to make a league, to hew, to destroy, to make a covenant, to chew, to perish, to free, to fail; 1Sa.24.5, Qal pret., cut off; 1Sa.22.8, Qal infin., hath made a league, 1Sa.24.11, cut off; 1Sa.23.18, Qal fut., made, 24.4; 31.9, cut off; 1Sa.28.9, Hiphil pret., hath cut off; 1Sa.24.21, Hiphil fut., wilt ... cut off.

There is nothing suggesting any kind of a revelation from the LORD that Saul would be delivered into the hands of David to be slain. This notion was something that the men interpreted due to the present circumstance. And perhaps David might have been momentarily inclined to hear them, but he directly contradicts the idea in the 6th verse by saying that *the LORD forbid that he should do this thing unto His master ...*

1Sa 24:6 And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he [is] the anointed of the LORD.

Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.
edge, skirting secretly

skirt, קַנָּף, a noun tss. border, quarter, skirt, end, feathered, wing, uttermost part, overspreading, sort, corner, flying, wing.

robe, מְעֵיל, a masc. noun tss. robe, coat, mantle.

privily, לְטַח, adj. tss. enchant, softly, secretly, privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.
נִכָּח, Hiphil fut. caused him to be smitten

Not another man felt the sense of guilt but David. To them it was nothing to cut off just a small piece of Saul's robe, but David's heart smote him, slew him for doing this thing. The closer we are to the LORD the more sensible to error we will be. To most perhaps it's no big deal, but to us it was a devastating act. Our conscience was shocked that we did this thing.

6 And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my

God forbid, הֲלֵי לֵי, an interjection, also tss. be far, be it far, far be it, forbid. (1Sa.2.30; 12.23; 14.45; 20.2, 9; 22.15; 24.6)

שָׁלַח

**master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing
send, put
he [is] the anointed of the LORD.**

*Nu.3.9 (KJV) And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they [are] wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.
10 And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.*

*Nu.3.9 (LXX) And thou shalt give the Levites to Aaron, and to his sons the priests; they are given for a gift to me of the children of Israel.
10 And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons over the tabernacle of witness; and they shall keep their charge of priesthood, and all things belonging to the altar, and within the veil; and the stranger that touches them shall die.*

**7 So David stayed his servants with these words,
clave, rent (from their purpose)
(marg. 'cut off')**

stayed, Piel fut. of the verb שָׁסַע, tss. to cleave, to rent, to stay.

נָתַן

**and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave,
gave**

cave, מְעָרָה, fem. noun tss. cave, hole, den; 1Sa.24.3, 7, 8, 10.

and went on [his] way.

8 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with

and when ... looked, Hiphil fut. of the verb נָבַט, tss. to consider, to have respect, to regard, to look, to behold, to see.

his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

bowed himself, Hithpael (reflexive act.) fut. of the verb שָׁחָה, tss. to worship, to stoop, to crouch, to humble, to bow down, to do obeisance, to revere.

David's speech is careful to honor the king.

Ex 22:28 Thou shalt not revile the gods (אֱלֹהִים, judges), nor curse (LXX, speak ill of) the ruler (נָשִׂיא, prince, captain) of thy people.

אֱלֹהִים, Elohim, many times refers to princes or rulers of the people. (cf. Ex.12.12; 21.6, *judges*; 22.8, 9, *judges*; Deu.10.17; Jos.22.22; 1Sa.2.25, *judge*; 6.5; 28.13; 2Chr.2.5; Ps.82.1, 6; 95.3; 97.9; 135.5; 136.2)

Ac 23:5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

Ec 10:20 Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

The speech we use concerning those in authority over us should give honor to them for the offices they hold. Let's take our complaints to the Lord, rather than airing them before others.

Also, consider how David's speech disarms a very volatile situation.

Pr 25:15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

The wisdom of David that turned away Saul from his wicked purpose to kill him was on a level with that which our Lord Jesus showed when he turned away His enemies.

Joh 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

...

9 And they which heard [it], being convicted by [their own] conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, [even] unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Mk.12.17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

...

*26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I [am] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?
27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.*

**9 ¶ And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?
to do you evil**

Saul was certainly troubled by an evil spirit. But, we don't know who they are, but evidently some men exploited Saul's unstable condition and plied it to be against David.

1Sa.26.19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if [they be] the children of men (that have stirred thee up against me), cursed [be] they before the LORD; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.

Why would anyone do something like this, to turn Saul against David? One big motivation would be to retain their prominent position in Saul's administration.

נָתַן

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee
given

to day into mine hand in the cave: and [some] bade [me] kill thee: but [mine

(אָדוֹן) בְּאֵדְנִי

eye] spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord;
pitied master

spared, Qal fut. of the verb סָוָה, tss. to pity, to spare, to regard.

כִּי־מָשִׁיחַ יְהוָה הוּא

for he [is] the LORD'S anointed.

11 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand:
edge, skirting

for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that [there is] neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

huntest, Qal part. Poel of the verb הָצַד, tss. to lie in wait (1), to hunt (1), to destroy (1).

12 The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee:
make a ruling

judge, Qal fut. of the verb שָׁפַט, tss. to judge, to defend, to deliver, to make a 'ruling', to give a reason, to plead, to contend; vss. 12, 15, judge; 15, deliver.

avenge, Qal pret. of the verb נָקַם, tss. to avenge, to take vengeance, to revenge, to punish.

but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

As if to say, if something is to happen to you the LORD must do it because I will not touch you to do you harm. David states the same in the 26th chapter.

1Sa 26:10 David said furthermore, [As] the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth
comparison

proverb, מִשְׁלַּל, a masc. noun tss. parable, proverb, like, byword; the verb מִשַּׁל, is tss. to make a proverb, to speak I proverbs, to become like, to compare.

ancients, קִדְמוֹנִי, an adj. tss. ancients, went before, things of old, east, former.

wickedness, רָשָׁע, masc. noun tss. wicked, wickedness, iniquity.

from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

from the wicked, רָשָׁע, adj., tss. wicked, wrong-doer, guilty, ungodly, condemned.

**14 After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue?
after a dead dog, after a flea.**
(less than a dog)

flea, פְּרָעַשׁ, a masc. noun, twice in the OT, tss. flea. (1Sa.24.14; 26.20).

15 The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee,
for a judge make a ruling, v.12

judge, שֹׁפֵט, a masc. noun only twice in the OT (1Sa.24.15, *judge* (lit. 'for a judge'); Ps.68.5, *and a judge of*).

and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.
debate controversy rule

plead, Qal fut. of the verb שָׁפַט, tss. *to strive, to plead, to complain, to contend, to debate, to rebuke.*

my cause, שֹׁפֵט, masc. noun tss. *strife, controversy, cause, suit, pleading, contend, adversary.*

David, in his innocence, trusted the LORD to settle the matter by a show of His continued providential care over him.

16 ¶ *And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these*

when ... had made an end, Piel infin. of the verb כָּלַף, tss. *to determine, to finish, to spend, to accomplish, etc.*

words unto Saul, that Saul said, [Is] this thy voice, my son David?

The distance between the two may have hindered the king from recognizing that it was David, but the voice was certainly David's.

And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

wept, Qal fut. of the verb בָּכָה, tss. *to weep, to mourn, to bewail.*
1.10; 30.4, Qal infin.; 1.7, 8, 10; 11.4, 5; 20.41; 24.16; 30.4, Qal fut.

The king of Israel wept. David proved himself to be a man that would do the right thing even when he was terribly wronged by his king.

17 *And he said to David, Thou [art] more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*

hast rewarded, have rewarded, Qal pret. of the verb גָּמַל, tss. to do, to wean, to reward, to deal bountifully, to bestow, to yield, to recompense, to ripen.

18 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me:
declared, professed

hast shewed, Hiphil (causative act.) pret. of the verb נָגַד, tss. to tell, to shew, to profess, to denounce, to declare, to utter, to report.

forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand,
enclosed

shut in, Niphal (simple pass.) pret. of the verb סָגַר, tss. to shut, to shut up, to shut out, to repair, to enclose, to deliver (1Sa.23.7, Niphal pret., vss.11, 12 [to deliver up], Hiphil fut.; v.20, Hiphil infin.; 1Sa.24.18; 26.8, Piel pret.), to give up.

thou killedst me not.

19 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

restore

reward thee, Piel (intensive act.) fut. of the verb שָׁלַם, tss. to be ended, to be at peace, to finish, to prosper, to reward, to requite, to restore, to perform, to make restitution, to make good, to make, amends.

Mt.5.43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

20 And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

reign

21 Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed

swear, Niphal (simple pass.) imper. of the verb **שָׁבַע**, tss. *to swear, to adjure, to charge, to change with an oath*; **1Sa.24.21; 30.15, Swear; 1Sa.24.22; 28.10, and swear.**

wilt ...cut off, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of the verb **כָּרַת**, tss. *to make, to cut, to cut down, to cut off, to make a league, to hew, to destroy, to make a covenant, to chew, to perish, to free, to fail*; **1Sa.24.5, Qal pret., cut off; 1Sa.22.8, Qal infin., hath made a league, 1Sa.24.11, cut off; 1Sa.23.18, Qal fut., made, 24.4; 31.9, cut off; 1Sa.28.9, Hiphil pret., hath cut off; 1Sa.24.21, Hiphil fut., wilt ... cut off.**

after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

wilt ... destroy, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of the verb **שָׁמַד**, tss. *to destroy, to perish, to overthrow, to bring to nought, to bring to destruction.*

22 And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home;
to his house (at Gibeah)

but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

hold, **מִצְוֹדָה**, a fem. noun tss. *hold, strong hold, fort, fortress, castle, strong place, a defense, net, snare, hunted.*

David and his men gat them up unto the hold – very likely in the defensible places somewhere in the wilderness of Ziph. (cf. 1Sa.26.1) David had no reason to think that Saul would do any differently than he ever has. So he will continue to hide from Saul. And soon enough Saul would again try to find David in order that he might kill him.