

Day 289 - MONDAY: November 20th

1 Samuel 24

1 Samuel 24:1-22 NKJV

Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi." Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs. (David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.) Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.' " And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. And he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul got up from the cave and went on his way. David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. And David said to Saul: "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Indeed David seeks your harm'? Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and someone urged me to kill you. But my eye spared you, and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.' Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of

your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you hunt my life to take it. Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you. After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A flea? Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand." So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. Then he said to David: "You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me; for when the LORD delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him get away safely? Therefore may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. And now I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Therefore swear now to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house." So David swore to Saul. And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "David and his men are hiding out in En Gedi, a lush oasis with rugged cliffs, canyons and caves near the Dead Sea. As soon as Saul finishes with the Philistines, he receives word that David is hiding out here and returns to seek him. David and his men are taking refuge in a particular cave (1 Samuel 24:3). What must have been going through David's mind as he once again appears hopelessly

trapped? The answer is Psalm 57. David pleads with God to be protected from his enemies.

In answering David's plea, God must have been driving the point home to him: "I will protect you and save you—I will always be there for you." And what an answer it is! While hidden deep within their cave, David and his men are astounded to see Saul choose this particular cave for a restroom. David's men tell him, "This is the day we've been waiting for—God has delivered your enemy for you to do whatever you like" (compare 1 Samuel 24:4). Indeed, David could have easily killed Saul and assumed the royal throne—particularly since it was clear that this must have been from God. But David's heart isn't like that. Instead, he evidently sees what God is doing here as a test. David has the faith to realize that since God had established Saul, only God should remove him. David trusted God to handle the problem in His own time and way. Again, David sets an example of godly leadership, resisting bad advice. However, David can't resist the temptation to cut a piece from Saul's robe, demonstrating that he could have easily killed him. Some even see the cutting of the hem as symbolic of taking the emblem of royalty. But David would not be the one to take Saul out. He immediately regrets shaming the king in the eyes of his 3,000 soldiers (verse 5). The men with David would take matters into their own hands so David has to restrain them from killing Saul (verse 7). David explains to his men, and then to Saul, that he will not lift his hand to harm God's anointed king (verses 6, 10). "Isn't this proof that I've never sought, nor ever will seek, to harm you or take your throne?" David asks Saul (compare verses 8-14).

Verse 15 explains what has been going on since Saul set out to destroy David. God had already delivered David out of Saul's hand time and again. Indeed, what has just happened in the opportunity to spare Saul is itself an amazing deliverance—as Saul responds gratefully to it, even

acknowledging David as the successor to the throne (verse 20). But even with Saul's public display of remorse and sorrow, David knows that he can't count on Saul keeping his word, so he continues to keep his distance from the unstable king (verse 22).” [END]

Verse 3 – The NKJV of the bible says that Saul went in “to attend to his needs.” The literal translation of the Hebrew words says “to cover his feet”. John Gill’s commentary discusses the possible meanings: “the Targum is, to do his necessaries; and so Josephus; and the Jewish commentators generally understand it of easing nature; and as the eastern people used to wear long and loose garments, these, when they performed such an action, they used in modesty to gather them close about them, that no part of the body, their feet, and especially the parts of nature which should be concealed, might be seen; but the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "and there he lay" or "slept"; which suggest, that his going into the cave was in order to take some sleep and rest, when it was usual to cover the feet, both to prevent taking cold, and the private parts of the body being exposed to view; and this accounts better for Saul not hearing David's men in the cave, and for his being insensible of David's cuttings off the skirt of his garment, and best agrees with the use of the phrase in Jdg 3:24; the only place besides this in which it is used;” [END]

In verse 7, we will see that Saul “rose up” (“got up”) which would seem to align with the view that Saul took a nap in the cave.

Verse 8 – Notice the great respect that David still shows Saul’s position, even when Saul dishonored that position. This is a tremendous example for us all.

Verse 16 – David is Saul’s son-in-law, and David’s words have a temporary impact on Saul’s heart. Instead of calling David, “Son of

Jesse” (compare 1 Samuel 20:27), here Saul acknowledges David as his son and weeps.