

Commentary on 1st Samuel 23, by Chuck Smith 11.17.21

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November memory verse, Romans 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

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Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they're robbing their threshingfloors. So David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said to David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. And David's men said unto him, Behold, we're afraid here in Judah: how much worse if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines ([1Sa 23:1-3](#))?

Now David didn't have a very brave army at this point, these guys said, "Hey, man we're afraid here. It's even worse if we go to the Philistines."

So David inquired of the Lord again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah: for I will deliver the Philistines into your hand. So David and his men went to Keilah, and they fought with the Philistines, and they brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. Now it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech had fled to David that he came down with a ephod in his hand. [Now it was through the ephod that they inquired of the Lord.] And so it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God has delivered him into my hand; because he is gone into a walled city, now we can surround him, and capture him. So Saul called all of the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. And David knew that Saul was on his way down. So David inquired of the Lord, and he said, Lord will the men of Keilah deliver me into the hands of Saul ([1Sa 23:4-11](#))?

Now David had delivered the city from the Philistines. But yet the men weren't really faithful to David.

and the Lord answered and said, Yes the men of Keilah will deliver you into the hands of Saul. So David and now his band had grown to about six

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hundred men, they fled from Keilah, and they fled to the area of the wilderness in the strong holds, that were in the mountains, the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into Saul's hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness in a wood. And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David in the wood, and he strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knows ([1Sa 23:12-17](#)).

Now Saul was becoming aware of the fact that God's anointing was off of his life, and Saul knew that David was going to be the king. What he's trying to do is hold onto the kingdom that he knows is not his.

Now Jonathan his son recognized that David was gonna be king also. Jonathan said, "I'll be your right hand man." Jonathan is actually taking a very beautiful attitude towards David. His love was so great that he was willing to let David be exalted. He was willing to just be a helper, a right hand man to David. He was willing to abdicate the throne for David's sake, to step down to let David rule. "I know you're gonna be king. I'll be your right hand man, don't be afraid. My dad won't catch you. He won't find you because this is what God has in mind." Jonathan was expressing these things to David.

So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord: and David stayed in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house. Then the Ziphites came to Saul in Gibeah, saying, David's hiding with us in the strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hichilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul; come down to our part and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hands. So Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me ([1Sa 23:18-21](#)).

What a phony character, using spiritual language in such evil things. You know it's possible to just get sort of a spiritual jargon going and you don't have enough discernment to know when to use it. You use it even for corrupt things.

"Praise the Lord. I really ripped him off." It's horrible the way people can use spiritual language for such corrupt things.

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"Oh blessed be ye of the Lord. You've shown compassion on me." Oh. Not all who say, "Lord, Lord" are gonna enter into the kingdom of heaven. Lot of people use the right jargon, spiritual jargon but they're just not gonna make it. It's not what you say, it's not what comes out of a man's mouth that defiles him-or it's actually it is which comes out of the mouth, but this dullness out of the mouth with blessings out of the same fountain proceeds bitter and sweet water, blessings and curses. Such things should not be.

So here's the blessing, but soon curses.

Go, I pray you, and prepare, and know and find out the place where he's hiding, and who has seen him: and be careful because this guy is very subtle. Take all knowledge of all of the lurking places where he hides himself, and come and tell me of certainty, and I'll go with you: and it will come to pass, if he's in the land, I'll search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah. And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. And so Saul also with all of his men went to seek him. And it was told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other mountain: and David made haste for fear of Saul; and Saul and his men had circled David and his men had encompassed him to take them ([1Sa 23:22-26](#)).

So David had been surrounded by Saul's men. Looks like he's had it.

But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing David, went after the Philistines: wherefore they called the place Selahammahlekoth. [Which is the crag of divisions.] And David went up from there, and he dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi ([1Sa 23:27-29](#)).

David now headed again down towards the wilderness area of the Dead Sea. Engedi is about twenty miles probably from where the Jordan comes into the Dead Sea on the West Bank of the Dead Sea. Engedi is a beautiful spot. The word Engedi means, "wild goats." It is a place where there are still a lot of the ibex, the wild goats of Israel. But the neat thing about Engedi, the Dead Sea there is about twelve hundred and eighty-two feet below sea level. Because you are so low, there are springs, because you're

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at a thousand feet below sea level. Actually, the spring of Engedi is at about, oh eight hundred feet, seven hundred feet below sea level. It just springs out there from the pressure of the underground water and all. There's a beautiful spring and there's the neatest waterfalls, and fern canyons, and wild fig trees growing up the sides of the canyons, and all kinds of caves around there. Just a beautiful place to hide out as far as just, you know, you've got your water, you've got your wild goat to eat, and it's just an excellent place to hide out. A very beautiful little valley in the midst of a vast wilderness. That whole Dead Sea area is just a vast wilderness. But Engedi is a beautiful oasis, and of course because of the heat, it stays warm down there year round. It's very fertile around Engedi, a lot of date palms. They grow excellent watermelons in wintertime and it's just a neat place. That's where David was now hiding out from Saul, there in the strong holds at Engedi.