

*1 Now it came about when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, saying, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." 2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats.* Rocky hills where Ibex & Conies live.

*Came about*, just so happened, God's providence, His hand in every event of life to prove and improve us.

God providentially, last ch, delivered David when Saul w/drew go fight Philistines. Now more determined w/ 3K elite, Special forces, Delta, Rangers, Seals in pursuit. Whenever some relief from trials another greater more aggressive attack comes.

David & men hiding in Oasis area of **Engedi** W of Dead Sea--just when get comfortable & relaxing the enemy pursues w/ new attack. **1Pet 5:8 NIV Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour**

*3 And he came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave.*

*Sheepfolds* area shepherds bring sheep to graze, water, shade of caves. Ancient historian 30,000 sought refuge in cave during heavy storm. Caves w/ cavities connected by complex passages from one part to the other.

**Story Dead Sea scroll**, Mohammed, a shepherd threw rock in cave scare a sheep & heard potter shatter, investigated & found scrolls in large pottery vessels

*Relieve* *euphemism for evacuating the bowels*, W/ 3K noisy soldiers outside muffle any inside noise of David's men—cave w/ inner connected chambers would be undetected.

Providence of God always tests & proves the kind of person we are by our conscious as the umpire.

*4 And the men of David said to him, "Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly. 5 And it came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe.*

David's men decided circumstances were God's voice & will to kill Saul.

People see what they want to see & hear what they want to hear for their own benefit, comfort & agreement w/ what they want--not necessarily what God wants. *Pr 20:12 'hearing ear & seeing eye God has made both* --we are to align ours w/ His so we see & hear what He wants. **These tests always prove & improve us. Brinks drops money. 11,000 mother of 4; ATM 135,000 19 yr old.** God didn't say to David what his men pretend God to say.

Majority opinion is not God's opinion, mob rule is dangerous. David didn't consider Saul his enemy.

*Conscience bothered—Rom 2:15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,* Still small voice of Lord not man. Conscience is the compass of the soul. **Immanuel Kant** wrote, "Two things fill my mind with wonder and awe, the starry heavens above and the moral law of God in my soul called conscience". **Milton** wrote in *paradise lost*, "Conscience is God's umpire within the heart of a man".

***Amp Col 3:15 And let the peace (soul harmony which comes) from Christ rule (act as umpire continually) in your hearts [deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds, in that peaceful state] to which as [members of Christ's] one body you were also called [to live]. And be thankful (appreciative), [giving praise to God always].***

Test of David's trust in God who promised throne or take matters into own hands & act as 600 men who desperately want relief. Leader can't give in to whim of people. ***'Not from east nor west nor desert comes exaltation but god is judge He puts down one and exalts another Ps 75:6,7***

*6 So he said to his men, “Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD’s anointed.” 7 And David persuaded his men with these words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul arose, left the cave, and went on his way.*

*Far be it from me* Always two paths, what I want to do, others pushing me to do or what God wants me to do. Jesus said *Jn 5:19,20 the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. 20 “For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing;...*

First God then others, Saul in this case who is David’s lord, king that God put in charge, *anointed*—honor the office even when man corrupts the office. David, a man in waiting *‘man after God’s own heart’*. Will not kill Saul

David persuaded his men, sharply rebuked his men, stopped, *‘let him who leads, lead w/ diligence’*—get out in front, no such thing as leading from behind in a passive role. *Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision (w/o leadership), the people are uncontrolled; but he who keeps the law will be happy.*

Saul finished his business and left the cave some distance away w/ his 3K

*8 Now afterward David arose and went out of the cave and called after Saul, saying, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. 9 And David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, ‘Behold, David seeks to harm you’? 10 “Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD had given you today into my hand in the cave, and some said to kill you, but my eye had pity on you; and I said, ‘I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD’s anointed.’ 11 “Now, my father, see! Indeed, see the edge of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the edge of your robe and did not kill you, know and perceive that there is no evil or rebellion in my hands, and I have not sinned against you, though you are lying in wait for my life to take it.*

*Pr 25:21,22 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For you will heap burning coals on his head, And the LORD will reward you. Elisha 2Ki 6:23.... And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel.*

David humbles himself, *a soft answer turns away wrath*. Says his servants slander and incite Saul w/ lies.

God gave you into my hand, I could have killed you, some of my men said kill him, but I pitied you because you are the Lords anointed and not my enemy. You lie in wait for me to kill me but there is no evil or rebellion in me. Then David turns Saul over to the Lord--scary thing for backslider

David lets the Lord defend him. If we let God defend us He will but if we choose to defend ourselves God will let us.

*12 "May the LORD judge between you and me, and may the LORD avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you. 13 "As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'; but my hand shall not be against you. 14 "After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog, a single flea? 15 "The LORD therefore be judge and decide between you and me; and may He see and plead my cause, and deliver me from your hand."*

*It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of a living God so David turns Saul over to God for justice & vengeance (I will repay) Dt 32:35 'Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.'*

There is a kind of rest we have when we leave thing in the hands of the Lord. Sometimes our trust in Him can be so strong others think we don't care because we are not worried or stressed. What are you going to do? Well, I'm just waiting on the Lord & trusting him. **Well do something?**

David quotes a proverb before Solomon's time. Solomon adds **21:10** *'The soul of the wicked desires evil, his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes'* How David saw himself in light of who God is & position God gave Saul.

*16 Now it came about when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Then Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17 And he said to David, "You are more righteous than I; for you have dealt well with me, while I have dealt wickedly with you. 18 "And you have declared today that you have done good to me, that the LORD delivered me into your hand and yet you did not kill me. 19 "For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safely? May the LORD therefore reward you with good in return for what you have done to me this day. 20 "And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 "So now swear 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 household." 22 And David swore to Saul. And Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.*

Two faced, erratic personality is dangerous when put in power ***Pr 29:9 When a wise man has a controversy with a foolish man, The foolish man either rages or laughs, and there is no rest.***

***Pr 10:11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.***

Saul knew he was doing wrong yet he chose to do it. No one forces anyone to act ungodly. Our sin nature has an evil default mechanism unless we chose to walk in will of God. ***'Walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the deeds of the flesh'***

Saul had a reality check after realizing he could have died, yet lives because of David's mercy. He tells the truth of why he in pursuit of David who was to be king & fighting against God. Ascending king wipe out family of previous monarch so no rivals...David swore he'd not do that.

Saul went home humiliated and exposed before himself and his men but it didn't bring repentance. Soon goes after David again

***2Cor 7:10 For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.***

David saw right thru Saul's tears and went to his stronghold...we are to be wise as serpents, gentle as doves ***Pr 22:3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the naive go on, and are punished for it.***

Don't play the fool and trust the untrustworthy. Trust is earned not blindly given. Living life of integrity not spoken but seen.