

1st Samuel 24

Verses 1

Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, it was reported to him, saying, “Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.”

Soon after Saul had chased the Philistines out of Israel he resumed his efforts to hunt down kill David.

Engedi is on the western shore of the Dead Sea.

See pic 2405



The abundance of trees is due to an oasis in the town of Engedi.

See pics 2407 and 2408



The people of Engedi had a great view of the Dead Sea because the surface of the Dead Sea is over 1,300 feet below sea level and Engedi was 600 feet above sea level.

The Dead Sea has no marine life and plants around the lake are few and of limited quantity and kinds but the lake does have some natural beauty to it.

See pics 2410 thru 2413





Verse 2

² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to search for David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Mountain Goats.

This is a reference to the cliffs of Engedi where wild goats climb the rocky cliffs.

The pics below are not of the cliffs of Engedi but rather an example of the ability of mountain goats to climb nearly vertical cliffs.

See pics 2420 - 2422

1. A mountain goat perches inside the Grand Canyon of the Stikine River in northern British Columbia. These goats, which live only in the canyon, use almost invisible paths along the walls to avoid predators.



4. **Alpine ibex goats** live at high altitudes in the Alps, and are capable of scaling sheer cliffs...or this Italian dam, where dozens of them marched back and forth across the 160ft wall, licking the salt off the stone.



The next pic is a close up of the goats on the dam.



See Video 2425 goats climbing the dam.

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.34.html>

Verses 3 – 7

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. ⁴ Then David's men said to him, "Behold, *this is* the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold; I am about to hand your enemy over to you, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David got up and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly. ⁵ But it came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe. ⁶ So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the Lord that I would do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to reach out with my hand against him, since he is the Lord's anointed." ⁷ And David rebuked his men with *these* words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul got up, left the cave, and went on *his way*.

³ And he came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself.

There are hundreds of caves in that area. There is a cave at Engedi that is so large the Arabs say that at one time 30,000 people hid themselves in it.

See Pic 2430



Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave. ⁴ Then David's men said to him, "Behold, *this is* the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold; I am about to hand your enemy over to you, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David got up and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly.

What the men quoted here is not found in the Bible. Where they got this idea is any body's guess.

How David could see Saul without himself being seen is hard to explain. If something like this can't be explained by a natural explanation then it was likely a miracle.

⁵ But it came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's *robe*.

David's great respect for "the Lord's anointed" resulted in his conscience being pricked.

On the other hand, we have a "religious party" today who refuse to accept the outcome of an election when their guy doesn't win. And then when he tried various illegal means to overturn the results of the election they defended his actions. How do you think this "religious party" would have reacted if the situation was reversed?

⁶ So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the Lord that I would do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to reach out with my hand against him, since he is the Lord's anointed."

This tells us that there was no word from God as David's men had claimed.

⁷ And David rebuked his men with *these* words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul got up, left the cave, and went on *his* way.

David's men were anxious to see the death of Saul. In contrast David saw Saul as the Lord's anointed.

In their attitude David's men were enemies of the state because they desired to overthrow the legitimate king of Israel. David left this up to the Lord.

David wrote Psalms 57 about this situation. Again it would be almost impossible to know what event prompted this Psalm if the Superscription (title or heading) was not provided.

Verses 8 - 15

⁸ Afterward, however, David got up 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 who say, ‘Behold, David is seeking to harm you’? ¹⁰ Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the Lord had handed you over to me today in the cave, and *someone* said to kill you, but I spared you; and I said, ‘I will not reach out with my hand against my lord, because he is the Lord’s anointed.’ ¹¹ So, my father, look! Indeed, look at the edge of your robe in my hand! For by *the fact* that I cut off the edge of your robe but did not kill you, know and understand 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. ¹² May the Lord judge between you and me, and may the Lord take vengeance on you for me; but my hand shall not be against you. ¹³ As the proverb of the ancients says, ‘Out of the wicked comes wickedness’; but my hand shall not be against you. ¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel gone out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog, a single flea? ¹⁵ May the Lord therefore be judge and decide between you and me; and may He see and plead my cause and save me from your hand.”

⁸ Afterward, however, David got up 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.

David was not a rebel, he acknowledged Saul's authority, and would not raise his hand against the king.

⁹ And David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Behold, David is seeking to harm you’? ¹⁰ Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the Lord had handed you over to me today in the cave, and *someone* said to kill you, but I spared you; and I said, ‘I will not reach out with my hand against my lord, because he is the Lord’s anointed.’

Saul was being influenced by men who knew what Saul wanted to hear. This kind of behavior often wins the day but in the long run it becomes the biggest loser.

David was suffering for doing the right thing, or as Christians of our time would say he was suffering for the sake of righteousness.

¹¹ So, my father, look! Indeed, look at the edge of your robe in my hand! For by *the fact* that I cut off the edge of your robe but did not kill you, know and understand 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.

The king was David's father-in-law so he called him father.

When bosses treat good employees bad and bad employees good the company will eventually falter. In the end this will cost Saul his life.

¹² May the Lord judge between you and me, and may the Lord take vengeance on you for me; but my hand shall not be against you.

Vengeance is mine says The Lord.

¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel gone out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog, a single flea?

The king had numerous enemies (nations) that he needed to deal with and David was a dead dog or a single flea in comparison. So why was Saul spending so much of his time and energy on David?

Verses 16 - 22

¹⁶ When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Then Saul raised 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 maliciously with you. ¹⁸ You have declared today that you have done good to me, that the Lord handed me over to you and yet you did not kill me. ¹⁹ Though if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away unharmed? May the Lord therefore reward you with good in return for what you have done to me this day. ²⁰ Now, behold, I know that you will certainly be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will 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 eliminate my name from my father's household." ²² And David swore *an oath* to Saul. Then Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

¹⁶ When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, “Is this your voice, my son David?” Then Saul raised 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 maliciously with you.

Saul had a moment of clarity and genuine sorrow because of his evil actions against David who had done him no harm. However, this temporary sense of remorse will not last long.

²⁰ Now, behold, I know that you will certainly be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will 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 eliminate my name from my father’s household.”

Saul was not aware that David had already made a promise to Jonathan to treat the descendants of Saul with kindness.

²² And David swore *an oath* to Saul. Then Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

David perceived that the softening of Saul's heart was only temporary so he returned to the stronghold. Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.