

## A Closer look at the Cave of Adullam

There was a man named Saul who was King of Israel. Now this king had a son named Jonathan. Jonathan was very good friends with David. In fact, they were as close as brothers. This became a problem because David killed Goliath of Gath in the battle with the Philistines wherein he used his faith and his sling. David became very popular among the people and King Saul saw his position diminished. It got to the point where King Saul threatened David's life.

Let's look at some facts:

- Saul was angry at the song of the women in 1 Samuel 18:7,8
- Saul was angry at David in 1 Samuel 18:9
- Saul was angry at Jonathan for defending David in 1 Samuel 20:30
- Saul tried to kill David via Jonathan and his officers in 1 Samuel 19:2
- Saul tried to kill David himself with a spear in 1 Samuel 19:10
- Saul tried with men to kill David via others in 1 Samuel 19:11
- Saul ordered Jonathan to bring David to him in 1 Samuel 20:31
- Saul threw his spear at his own Son Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20:33
- Jonathan defended David to Saul in 1 Samuel 19:4 and in 20:32
- David married Saul's daughter Michal given to him by Saul. David is literally his Son-in-Law

Now after David's wife assisted his escape from King Saul, he met up with Jonathan. Jonathan told his friend David that he should flee, but they exchanged promises of friendship regardless of circumstance.

David set out from this meeting with his friend and became a wanderer. It would be pretty hard to find peace and settle anywhere in the kingdom if the King himself were out for your blood.

I would assert that he would have no peace as long as King Saul lived... this is significant so remember it.

David came upon a great cave called the cave of Adullam and he hid in it. Yet it did not isolate him. People from his tribe of Judah and others who were not content with the rule of King Saul sought him out.

Now Saul himself was appointed the first King of Israel, yet if we read the scripture we soon see that on two occasions Saul disobeyed God's clear instruction to him. Saul let his pride get between himself and God and followed his own will.

God sent to Saul the prophet Samuel who was instructed by the Lord that Saul was rejected by him as king and that he had chosen one of the sons of Jesse to be King.

Samuel anointed David as King...

Well... You can understand how that went over like a lead balloon with Saul. So here we have the king... He is rejected by God. Then when David defeats Goliath of Gath of the Philistine army, the women sang: "Saul has killed his thousands but David killed tens of thousands!" His pride was attacked and he was belittled.

Back to the Cave of Adullam...

It didn't take long for King Saul to hear that David with a band of followers was in hiding in the mountains of Judah. To add salt to his wounds he also heard that David was aided by certain priests.

Do you think that Saul considered that the priests were just men beneath him? Do you think that he considered that God had placed a call on their lives and called them to ministry and by attacking the priests he was not attacking mankind but God's servants? Do you think he considered the retribution that would come for his actions?

Well, the idea of the priests with David enraged King Saul, and he ordered his guards to kill all the priests. Note here the intelligence of the Guards....

The guards would not obey him, for they felt that it was a wicked thing to lay hands upon the priests of the Lord.

How often has someone who has had their pride injured or their position diminished attempted to attack the Lord's anointed? Far too often...

But Saul found one man whose name was Doeg, an Edomite, who was willing to obey him. And Doeg, the Edomite, killed eighty-five men who wore the priestly garments. In essence Saul had attacked the men of God placed into their callings by God. In short, Saul disagreed with God's will and so attacked God in his anger with David.

There are always severe consequences for coming against the Lord's anointed. Soon people had heard what Saul had done. People began to turn from Saul and look toward David as their hope to get their nation back on track with God. Saul in his arrogance, pride and temper literally moved himself from the will of God.

All through the land went the news of Saul's dreadful deed, and everywhere the people began to turn from Saul, and to look toward David as the only hope of the nation. See how the hearts have turned here?

1 Samuel 16:14 HCSB

*Now the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and an evil spirit sent from the LORD began to torment him,*

There is the whole bit in the cave of Adullam we are going to discuss next, but I think it very relevant to point out here that when Saul died, he was succeeded by David who loved God and was loved by the people. He had fought many battles with the Philistines and was nearly always victorious. He was a warrior king, but in this he was also a minstrel before the Lord and had played and worshiped God on his harp. He composed many of the psalms in the book by the same name.

Despite personal sacrifice his obedience to God's will and self- control lead him to favour with God. His reign was long, his people were happy and his sons and daughters were happy and plentiful.

So why if David loves God, did he suffer so initially?

I would say that a person who is disobedient to God might, in fact, consider a person who faithfully serves God as his or her enemy. People don't like to admit they need to change. We have seen this many times, especially if the message from God bruises ego or causes one to reflect upon their attitudes and actions and they don't like what they see.

How often I see that people will attack another rather than deal with what God is bringing to attention in their own lives.

David did nothing wrong to cause Saul to be his enemy as we see in 1 Samuel 18:29

So... Why do we see these attacks against God's chosen, against his called and his children so frequently?

For the answer here I turn to 2 Timothy and consider what Paul promised Timothy... Here this well.

2 Timothy 3:12

*Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*

### **The Cave of Adullam**

1 Samuel 21:10-14 CEV

*David kept on running from Saul that day until he came to Gath,[d] where he met with King Achish. The officers of King Achish were also there, and they asked Achish, "Isn't David a king back in his own country? Don't the Israelites dance and sing,*

*'Saul has killed  
a thousand enemies;  
David has killed  
ten thousand enemies?'"*

*David thought about what they were saying, and it made him afraid of Achish. So right there in front of everyone, he pretended to be insane. He acted confused and scratched up the doors of the town gate, while drooling in his beard.*

*"Look at him!" Achish said to his officers. "You can see he's crazy. Why did you bring him to me? I have enough crazy people without your bringing another one here. Keep him away from my palace!"*

## **1 Samuel 22**

*When David escaped from the town of Gath, he went to Adullam Cave. His brothers and the rest of his family found out where he was, and they followed him there. A lot of other people joined him too. Some were in trouble, others were angry or in debt, and David was soon the leader of four hundred men.*

*David left Adullam Cave and went to the town of Mizpeh in Moab, where he talked with the king of Moab. "Please," David said, "let my father and mother stay with you until I find out what God will do with me." So he brought his parents to the king of Moab, and they stayed with him while David was in hiding.*

*One day the prophet Gad told David, "Don't stay here! Go back to Judah." David then left and went to Hereth Forest.*

*Saul was sitting under a small tree on top of the hill at Gibeah when he heard that David and his men had been seen. Saul was holding his spear, and his officers were standing in front of him. He told them:*

*Listen to me! You belong to the Benjamin tribe, so if that son of Jesse ever becomes king, he won't give you fields or vineyards. He won't make you officers in charge of thousands or hundreds as I have done. But you're all plotting against me! Not one of you told me that my own son Jonathan had made an agreement with him. Not one of you cared enough to tell me that Jonathan had helped one of my officers rebel. Now that son of Jesse is trying to ambush me.*

### **--- Let's pause here from some introspective questions**

Do you see here how the one who feels his self diminished tried to bring others on side with his sin?

Do you see how his perspective is self-focused?

Do you see how he does not consider his own actions?

Do you see how he does not even attempt to get God's perspective?

Is it possible he already knows what God's perspective and puts his own above it?

Seems like a pretty reasonable excuse to kill the priests, doesn't it?

### **--- Back to the scripture**

*Doeg the Edomite was standing with the other officers and spoke up, "When I was in the town of Nob, I saw that son of Jesse. He was visiting the priest Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. Ahimelech talked to the Lord for him, then gave him food and the sword that had belonged to Goliath the Philistine."*

*Saul sent a message to Ahimelech and his whole family of priests at Nob, ordering them to come to him. When they came, Saul told them, "Listen to me, you son of Ahitub."*

*"Certainly, Your Majesty," Ahimelech answered.*

Saul demanded, "Why did you plot against me with that son of Jesse? You helped him rebel against me by giving him food and a sword, and by talking with God for him. Now he's trying to ambush me!" "Your Majesty, none of your officers is more loyal than David!" Ahimelech replied. "He's your son-in-law and the captain of your bodyguard. Everyone in your family respects him. This isn't the first time I've talked with God for David, and it's never made you angry before! Please don't accuse me or my family like this. I have no idea what's going on!"

"Ahimelech," Saul said, "you and your whole family are going to die."

Saul shouted to his bodyguards, "These priests of the Lord helped David! They knew he was running away, but they didn't tell me. Kill them!"

But the king's officers would not attack the priests of the Lord. Saul turned to Doeg, who was from Edom, and said, "Kill the priests!"

#### 1 Samuel 24:1-22

When Saul got back from fighting off the Philistines, he heard that David was in the desert around En-Gedi. Saul led three thousand of Israel's best soldiers out to look for David and his men near Wild Goat Rocks at En-Gedi. There were some sheep pens along the side of the road, and one of them was built around the entrance to a cave. Saul went into the cave to relieve himself.

David and his men were hiding at the back of the cave. They whispered to David, "The Lord told you he was going to let you defeat your enemies and do whatever you want with them. This must be the day the Lord was talking about."

David sneaked over and cut off a small piece of Saul's robe, but Saul didn't notice a thing. Afterwards, David was sorry that he had even done that, and he told his men, "Stop talking foolishly. We're not going to attack Saul. He's my king, and I pray that the Lord will keep me from doing anything to harm his chosen king."

Saul left the cave and started down the road. 8 Soon, David also got up and left the cave. "Your Majesty!" he shouted from a distance.

Saul turned around to look. David bowed down very low and said:

Your Majesty, why do you listen to people who say that I'm trying to harm you? You can see for yourself that the Lord gave me the chance to catch you in the cave today. Some of my men wanted to kill you, but I wouldn't let them do it. I told them, "I will not harm the Lord's chosen king!" Your Majesty, look at what I'm holding. You can see that it's a piece of your robe. If I could cut off a piece of your robe, I could have killed you. But I let you live, and that should prove I'm not trying to harm you or to rebel. I haven't done anything to you, and yet you keep trying to ambush and kill me.

I'll let the Lord decide which one of us has done right. I pray that the Lord will punish you for what you're doing to me, but I won't do anything to you. An old proverb says, "Only evil people do evil things," and so I won't harm you.

*Why should the king of Israel be out chasing me, anyway? I'm as worthless as a dead dog or a flea. I pray that the Lord will help me escape and show that I am in the right "David, my son—is that you?" Saul asked. Then he started crying and said:*

*David, you're a better person than I am. You treated me with kindness, even though I've been cruel to you. You've told me how you were kind enough not to kill me when the Lord gave you the chance. If you really were my enemy, you wouldn't have let me leave here alive. I pray that the Lord will give you a big reward for what you did today.*

*I realize now that you will be the next king, and a powerful king at that. Promise me with the Lord as your witness, that you won't wipe out my descendants. Let them live to keep my family name alive. So David promised, and Saul went home. David and his men returned to their hideout.*

How many of us today would never have let Saul, God's anointed, regardless of his actions walk forth from the Cave? Would we like David pray for the strength to endure or would we seeing an opportunity for ourselves kill him.

David trusted God.

David kept his heart right.

God protected David

God rewarded David with real friendship

God rewarded David with Authority and Power

We know that David made mistakes... Just as did Abraham and so many others, but David believed God and had the faith to trust him to bring his justice and his reward. David never allowed his personal advancement and glory to get in the way of his faith.