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SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 2000

DAVID, A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

THE FUGITIVE BECOMES KING

Speaker: Bro. David Pride

Study #2: Yahweh Judge between Me and Thee

Reading: 1 Samuel 24

Well, my dear brethren and sisters, what I would like to do to start off this morning, is just to retrace the movement, retrace the steps of David over the things that we discussed yesterday, just to bring us up to chapter 24, where our thoughts for today will commence. I felt that we, in some great haste yesterday, had kind of skipped through this area, and I don't know if you were content with that, but I was not, and as a consequence, I'd just like to take us through it again, just to see the steps of David and his men.

I'll go back, b&s, beyond where we began, back actually to 1 Samuel chapter 20, that's when the covenant meeting between Jonathan and David would take place. In chapter 21, David who is coming out of that meeting, would flee (and I'm going to just run through the route that David would take, and then I'll just go back and point these things out to you on the map very quickly) We would like to do this quickly and get right into 1 Samuel 24. But David flees alone to Nob in chapter 21 (we did just allude to that a bit) the city of the priests and we'll recall that our starting point, although it really isn't the starting point, if we're going to trace all these things, but it needs to be for us. So it begins in Nob the city of the priests; David goes there after meeting with Jonathan and he goes there alone. He has no group with him at this point, he goes there alone and Ahimelech the priest is quite concerned, why is he there alone and David has to then, relate to him the premise (I hesitate to use the word 'lie' but it is nonetheless, a concocted story that David presents to Ahimelech). He says he's there on secret business of the king and he's taken care of by the priests there, he's given the hallowed bread, the shewbread; when he asks about a weapon, the weapon of Goliath, the sword of Goliath is taken from where it's laid up alongside the ephod, and it's given to David. So now he's got the great sword of Goliath, but the problem is, b&s, there at Nob is one of Saul's chief men, Doeg the Edomite, and he's overseeing all these things that are taking place there in the city of Nob, the city of the priests. And he sees David and he sees the things that are done with David and for David. And David, of course, is concerned because he witnesses the fact that Doeg is there.

When we come to chapter 22, David has got to make his escape! What he's going to do, first of all, when he sees Doeg, b&s, is he's going to just run in a direction that David should have never run; and he does it twice, he's going to run over to Gath, the city of Achish, king of Gath, and he's going to spend some time there with Achish. It's a great problem because his reputation precedes him, and as a consequence, he must do something that must have been very, very demeaning for Yahweh's anointed, and that is 'to feign madness'. And if you read about the things that David went through on that occasion, you'll see that it's a very demeaning thing, and Achish as he viewed David (and David did a very good job of this) and Achish when he viewed David looked at him and said, 'what do I need madmen for?' and basically, expelled him from the city of Gath and then David would go down to the cave of Adullam. That's where chapter 22 begins, this is where the folks begin to come to David, the discontented, the malcontents, the outlaws themselves, those who were in debt, and they begin to join David and become part of his little band of men, his army. First, a group of 400 then it swells to a group of 600 and then finally there are the women and the children (the wives of these men join in) and it's quite a large group. But they come to the cave of Adullam, and it's from that point, it would seem that his parents had joined him as well, he's going to take his parents and bring them to the area of Moab and they're going to remain there all the time that David is in the hold. Now if that means the whole fugitive period or the time where he is staying at the cave of Adullam, we're not quite sure; but nonetheless, they're going to be separated in this area, apart from the area where Saul in his wandering is seeking out David, and they're going to be in the land of Moab.

He returns to the cave of Adullam, to the hold, the scripture tells us, this is all in chapter 22, it is there that the prophet Gad, the seer as he's called, directs David to go down into the land of Judah (it's as though he's in this tribal inheritance section of Benjamin) he's got to go down into the tribal inheritance of Judah and there find a place of hiding, in the forest of Hereth. This is just tracing the steps, if you've got your map, you'll see these places on your own map, but we'll point them out in a minute anyway. While this is going on, Doeg is uncovering Saul's ear, you remember that we saw yesterday, that Saul said there was no one to tell him what was going on, to uncover his ear, to whisper in his ear, and Doeg's willing to do this, he's going to be so influential, this evil man, as we know, and that terrible slaughter of the priest, 85, brethren, by the way, not 80 as I said yesterday. Thanks for that, and we'll get that number correct as well; so there were 85 of the priests that were slaughtered and one escapes, the man, Abiathar, and he comes down to David and he brings along with him, the priestly things; the thing that is mentioned is the ephod.

We come to chapter 23, and we see that the Philistines now are doing their thing, and they're invading Keilah, and David inquires of Yahweh should he go up and help the inhabitants of Keilah, and the answer that comes from Yahweh through the priest, is that he should go up, and he does this, b&s, and he frees the people of Keilah. He defeats the Philistines and for a time, moves into the city limits, a city with bars and gates, and he moves right into the city of Keilah. Now he's got to move quickly again,

he's inquiring of Yahweh all the time, as to the steps that he should take, but he's got to move quickly because Saul is coming; Saul gets the word and he's coming to Keilah, and David makes his move, and he goes into the wilderness of Ziph.

The scriptures say that Saul sought him every day; now if you could imagine this, b&s, you are a fugitive on the run, the person that's after you, there's not a day that goes by when his focus isn't upon where you are, what you're doing, and how he can get a hold on you and bring about your death. And this is Saul's perspective, and David knew it, Saul sought him every day. And Jonathan finds him there in the wilderness of Ziph, Jonathan finds him and does this wonderful thing, this great lesson for us, my dear brethren and sisters, one for another, he strengthens his hand in God. There is nothing else that we can do for one another that is better than this, my dear brethren and sisters, than to strengthen one another's hand in God. Well, the Ziphites know where David is, he's in their territory and they're more than willing to go to Saul, they're a kind of a cowardly, craven kind of people; they're willing to go up to Saul and to again, uncover his ear, let him know what's happening, to enter into a kind of bargain with Saul, because what they say is, 'our part is to deliver David to you', and I think what they meant by that was that Saul, 'you come down, you do the work, and we'll just point the finger as to where he is; and we'll be sure to keep an eye on him and tell you where he is, and that's our part'. And, of course, Saul would come down based on this; and David and his men will be forced to move once again. You see, moving, moving all the time, moving, b&s, you can imagine how difficult this was with this group now which is becoming sizeable, almost unwieldy to move around and to stay hidden. To stay ahead of Saul, but they're forced to move again and they go into the wilderness of Maon. They're going south all the time.

And they go into a mountain there, and that's where Saul finds him, and this is where Saul has him trapped; he's in the net, he's doomed for all intents and purposes, he's caught. But the divine hand is involved in this, in all of this, b&s, and right at the moment when David is to be taken in the net, the word comes 'the Philistines have invaded the land, and Saul does his thing, a kingly thing for a change for Saul, and he turns away from David and he goes to fight the Philistines, and David is free once again! The hand of providence, the ways of providence, so where we left David was at Maon, and I don't think we even mentioned that yesterday, but that's the place.

Now on your map I'll just trace this quickly, you can draw a line if you want, you can connect the dots and you'll have the route that David takes. As we said, it started in Nob (this is the city of the priests) and from there David is going to go down to Gath, to the city of Achish, this is a Philistine city, the five cities of the Philistines are right here in this little chain along the coast, it's Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath, and Gath seems to be the preeminent city amongst them and David goes there. Well, from Gath, of course, he's ushered out quickly by Achish because he's doing the part of a madman. From Gath he goes to the cave of Adullam, from the cave of Adullam he takes his parents now and makes a rather long trek to the land of Moab (over to this area, and it's called Mispah of Moab, and you'll see it on your little map) and that's the name that's

given to us. The route that he takes, I have no idea what it is, whether it's above the sea, whether it's south of the sea, but it's a considerable journey, and David takes his parents there, and they're there for the whole time that he is in the hold, this is what the scripture tells us. He makes his way back to the cave of Adullam, from that point he is instructed by the seer, by Gad, to go into the territory of Judah to the forest of Hereth which is here, it's there that he hears of the disturbance at Keilah, and he makes his move to Keilah; from that point he has to flee to the wilderness of Ziph and then down into the wilderness of Maon. And that's really where we left David, and we didn't quite, actually, b&s, finish off chapter 23.

You see, David's never really content with the fact that Saul is finished with him. Saul sought him every day, and David knew it. There's a great deliverance that he'd experience at that place that he and his men had named Sela-Hammahlekoth, the rock of escape, the rock of division; it's a grand deliverance and the hand of Yahweh had to be seen in this. His men would know it as well as he; they'd been trapped and now they're free, and now also, b&s, as I think would constantly be the case, there would be a state of exhaustion that would set into these men that would be almost overwhelming; they would need some sort of relief. And so they come to En-ge-di, this is the last verse of chapter 23, 'David went up from thence and dwelt in strongholds at En-ge-di'; so he's moving now from the wilderness of Mahon, a little bit to the north and quite close to the shore of the Dead Sea. You've got to bear in mind, that when it speaks of the wilderness of Ziph and the wilderness of Maon, 'Jeshimon' that term has to do with the wilderness or desert, those are the terms that are used; this is a barren, desolate area in here where the fugitives are hiding out, a terrible area, b&s, but this is where they are forced to go.

But En-ge-di is different, En-ge-di is one of the most beautiful places in all of Judah, and it's quite surprising because there's desolation all around, and it's just barely inland from the shore of the Dead Sea. It's a fertile place, a green place, kind of oasis, and even today it's a tourist attraction; there are hot springs there, that bring people to this area. The cliffs of En-ge-di rise some 670 feet above the Dead Sea, there are crystal clear springs there, waterfalls that cascade down the cliffs into clear pools, a place of great beauty, b&s. It would offer cool relief from the Jeshimon wilderness desert which David and his men were accustomed to as they fled from Saul.

But whether they enjoyed it or not, that's another thing. Somehow I just can't see David and his men splashing about in the pools of En-ge-di or standing under one of these waterfalls and getting that kind of relief. They may have gone there from time to time, but the scripture tells us that they were in the strongholds at En-ge-di. And the term 'strongholds' usually has to do with the caves, so they would have to seek out these caves which are also adjacent to the area, and it's not the lush oasis as we just described, but it was there, it was in the area, nonetheless. Sure we'd love to think of David shepherding his men in green pastures and beside still waters, and think of the great relief that we would feel, just reading through this record, b&s, which they so greatly and urgently desired. But we wonder if they ever got it? for during this whole

fugitive period, if there ever was that period of relief? If there was any respite during this period, it was very short lived, and we'll see that when we enter into the 24th chapter, it didn't last very long at all, because Saul's Philistine inconvenience, b&s, that being over, he could now focus his attention on what really mattered to Saul, and that was finding David and bringing about his death. That's #1 to Saul, that's his primary concern, and he sought him every day, and that shows how much he worried over David.

What happened to Saul was this bitterness, and b&s, if we've ever been there, then get rid of this spirit; it's the root of bitterness that grows up within us, and you can almost picture the roots finding their way into every aspect of their being. The word is 'jealousy' and jealousy had just taken over Saul; there was a song about Saul slaying his thousands and David his tens of thousands, now that just grated on his nerves when he'd hear that popular song of the day; and the scriptures tell us that 'jealousy is as cruel as the grave', the Song of Solomon chapter 8, or in the Proverbs, 'jealousy is as the rage of a man'. And that's what it was in Saul, he was feeling the cruelty like one who was walking dead because he couldn't be what he wanted to be as long as David was alive. And the rage just took over in Saul, he was a jealous, sick-minded man.

And the report comes to him about David; David's in the wilderness of En-gedi (we can almost imagine Saul saying) 'this time, this time I'll get him'. That's kept him going, that's what fueled the spirit of the man, was this evil purpose that he had. This time I'll get him, and he gets together an army of 3,000 men; they're the elite, he brings them together from all parts of Israel. They are chosen men, they are handpicked, they're the most skilled, we would say David's in trouble, wouldn't we? because he just has a band of renegades, the odds are 5 to 1 against David; it doesn't look good! but we've heard and it's been well said, b&s, 'one man with God on his side, is a majority', you've heard that saying I'm sure, and it's so true, isn't it? It's so true, and this is the history of Israel down through the ages; one man with God on his side, is a majority; and so it was with David.

So they come! Saul and his army to En-gedi, to 'the rocks of the wild goats', or 'the spring of the goat kids' as the scripture just opens out the name of this place to us. And in verse 3 of the 24th chapter we read this, 'That he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet, and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave'. There was a cave says the scripture, b&s, remarkable coincidence, isn't it? and you know it isn't coincidence at all! A cave, this was the cave, this was the cave where David and his men were; you know, there are psalms, b&s, that have to do with the time spent in the cave. Psalm 57, Psalm 142, the superscriptions of those psalms, teach us about this, about the time when David was in the cave of Adullam. We're not going to take the time right now to look at Psalm 57 (you can do this on your own, especially the first few verses) but I would like you to take a look at Psalm 142, because what we're looking at there is the mind and the perspective of this man after God's own heart, how wonderfully he thought about all these things under great stress, under great trial and pressure, and this is the mind of David in Psalm 142.

We'll just read through this, b&s, because I want you to feel, as I've said before, I want you to feel what's going on within this man. You know the stress, we've talked about the stress and the pressure; how do you relieve that, b&s, where do you turn? What's in your mind when you have situations that weigh heavily upon you? situations that, by the way, are no where near as serious, as the things that we're reading about of David! But look, we'll read it together; you see the superscription, 'A prayer when he was in the cave', a prayer, b&s. That's #1 (I think I said to you yesterday, perhaps it was to the young people, that there are 2 things that are essential for our spiritual well-being, for our lives in the truth, 1. is prayer and 2. the other is the Word) Either one of those things without the other doesn't work, b&s, you've got to have those two things as essential parts of your life in Christ Jesus. David is a man of prayer, David is a man obviously of the Word! 'I cried unto Yahweh with my voice; with my voice unto Yahweh did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before Him' (now this isn't like the complaint of Saul, the 'oh, woe is me' kind of a thing; you know, 'nobody's sorry for me', says Saul. It's not like that, b&s, this is the situation being laid out before the Father, what the whole situation is; he calls it a complaint but he turns in a direction that Saul never turns, and that's directly to Yahweh for help, and that's why this is a prayer). He said, 'I poured out my complaint before Him: I showed before Him my trouble'. (Good advice there, isn't it? When you have trouble, lay it out before the Father, b&s,; sometimes we have no idea, the scripture tells us this, we have no idea what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself, makes intercession for us with groanings that are hard to be uttered, Romans 8, and sometimes all we can do, all we can do is lay out the complaint, lay out the troubles before the Father, and He who knows all things will do right!

Verse 3, 'When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me. I looked on my right hand, and behold, there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto Thee, O Yahweh; I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I' (5 to 1 were the odds at En-gedi, b&s, yes, stronger than David, but Yahweh could deliver, and David knew that, and so he casts his burden upon Him). He says 'Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for Thou shalt deal bountifully with me'. That's the confidence, that's the mind of David, b&s, that we want to get hold of and make our own; it tells us the direction that we need to go, when the troubles beset us. Get a hold of the mind of that man, we've got to learn it, we've got to work to inculcate that into our own way of life. It doesn't come easily, b&s, it doesn't come easily but we need to do that.

Just go back to 1 Samuel 24, please. So the cave just happened, just happened to be there, b&s, just happened to be there. But we know better than that, of course, it's the cave where David and his men were, watching Saul all the way, don't you think? Seeing Saul coming from a long way off, and seeing him get closer and closer; and these men would be drawing back into the darkness of the cave. And Saul enters the cave, seemingly alone; perhaps he left guards at the entrance, but he's into the cave and

alone there; and David and his men, if we can get the scene, just try and picture this, they're just melting into the walls of the cave. Holding their breath, listening for the sound of their own breathe, they don't even want to hear that, it's just this silent breathing. So there's not a sound there; and Saul goes in to 'cover his feet' the scriptures say, and I'm going to try and open that out to you, b&s, you may feel one way or another about this but I just will say this. In some of the things that I've read about this, there is a delicacy , a dignity in the approach to it, that I frankly think that we're losing it a bit, I think we're losing it in our conversation and our presentation of things. We seem to think that while we're all adults here, we can just present what it is, and we've lost some of the refinement that was in existence years back. Just one of the commentaries spoke of it as 'the easing of nature' and I think there's a delicacy to that that we may have walked away from it for a bit. I'm saying it's a good thing to have that spirit, where we have respect to the things of the Word, respect to one another, and in the presentation of it, we do it in a way that is as least offensive as possible. But the scripture tells us that Saul 'went in to cover his feet', and it may be that it was just a cool and quiet place to find some rest from the desert area that he had come through.

We think he fell asleep there, b&s, although the scripture doesn't say so, in just those words, but it certainly would appear that if he did then history is going to repeat itself in just a short time, because he will fall asleep, and David and his men will literally 'stand over the sleeping Saul'. That may be happening here in the cave, they certainly were able to get so close to him that they could touch him; he's probably asleep! Saul had said at Keilah, 'God has delivered him into my hand', about David, in actual fact, God delivered not into Saul's hand, and the scripture makes that very clear. It's a matter of perspective, isn't it? Saul's perspective was I've got him and God has done it. He speaks about Yahweh in this offhand, loose way over and over again, does Saul. But look at verse 4, it says, 'The men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which Yahweh said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand; that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then, David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily'. Now, b&s, there's no record, there's no record, you won't find it of this being said, what those men said to David, you just can't find that! that there is a day when Yahweh would deliver Saul into his hand, and now you can do what you please with him; you can imagine that they would say that, that would be the outcome of the circumstances wouldn't it? I mean, here he is, he's at your mercy, why is he there? God brought him there; if God brought him there, then it must be alright to do with him what we will, and be done with him, once and for all, and that's the thinking of his men. That's the way they kind of saw the circumstances and came to a conclusion. They, I think, on this occasion, b&s, would have been disappointed in their leader; I mean, they'd lived with David, they knew David by now, they'd lived with him, they'd watched him, they knew he was a man of prayer, they knew he inquired of Yahweh before he did anything. They were men who had been taught to see Yahweh's hand in everything, never so evident as this day, why not come to that conclusion. Be done with Saul once and for all! they had the knowledge of David's anointing by Samuel, the assurances of Jonathan that David would be king, just think of the pressure now, just think of the pressure on David, b&s, to just conform with the flow of the thinking of his men. How he

could rationalize something like this; he didn't seek out Saul, Saul was as it were, handed to him. And obviously it was God's hand, much like the Lord Jesus, you'll remember in John 6, when they tried to take Him by force and make Him a king; you know, this is a great trial, b&s, because it's not of his own doing, it's just the circumstances and how they'd fallen, and if you believe that God's working in your life, every step of the way, you can say 'this is of God' and I'll do it.

But David is above that, my dear brethren and sisters, these men must have been very disillusioned in their leader, this hero in Israel. And now they look at him as though he's weak, but not take advantage of it, but b&s, we've got to look at this in the light of 'the man after God's own heart', seeing in this the incredible strength of character; incredible strength of character here, and great faith, that in God's good time; how does that work in your life? in God's good time, all the things that He wills, and all the things that He purposes, will come to pass? And David was willing to wait upon God, far from weakness, isn't it? in this great man after God's own heart. Far from weakness that he only cuts off a portion of Saul's garment, that he restrains himself from just doing away with the adversary once and for all. You know, as soon as he does this, as soon as he's cut off the skirt of the garment, Saul hasn't left the cave when this takes place, almost immediately he's overcome with remorse; he's struck in his heart that he's done something that he shouldn't have done. Just to cut the piece of the garment off, look at verse 5.

'And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt', his heart smote him, there's another occasion later on where the same words are used, and it's the time of the numbering you'll remember, later on in 2 Samuel chapter 24, when David does the numbering against the wishes of his own men, against Joab's words actually, strangely enough. David just proceeds along and numbers Israel and when he's finished with this his heart smote him says 2 Samuel 24, and he says, 'I've sinned', of course, this great pestilence that is directed by the hand of Yahweh Himself, begins to work its way among God's people, because of this sin. And David is saying basically the same thing here, when his heart smites him, we just wonder, don't we, b&s, how serious a thing this was? I mean, you think of what could have been with Saul, and then what actually happened, we just wonder how serious a thing it was? I mean, wasn't it a good way when you think about it, of sending Saul a good message here? Go home, Saul, I could have killed you, go home! and it had that effect, it actually accomplished that, Saul will ultimately draw back and go home. So, it seemed to serve its purpose, didn't it? Saul wasn't injured, there was nothing physical done to Saul, the only thing that happened to Saul was his royal dignity was damaged a bit, but that seemed to happen very easily to Saul, he felt that everyone was against him and his dignity was always being damaged. This was just another case of that!

I suppose if we think of this as a sin, my dear brethren and sisters, we would have to say that it ranks rather low on the list of serious sins. But David didn't think so, my dear brethren and sisters, David's mind should be ours when we think in terms of sin. I think it's a good thing to get a hold of the heart and mind of David in such a way, that if our heart smites us for sins we seem to think are smaller than others, that it means to us

that our consciences are alive and well (they haven't been seared with a hot iron) we're sensitive to the things of the Spirit, and this will keep us from going further and further and further. In verse 6, 'And he said unto his men, Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, Yahweh's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of Yahweh'. You see here where David's leaning, b&s, three times he mentions Yahweh, three times in that section; Yahweh forbid that I should do this, he's Yahweh's anointed, he's the anointed of Yahweh, he's teaching his men there alongside the body of Saul, after cutting off a bit of the skirt of the garment. The way that David looked at this, (this is the way I see this), b&s, the way David looked at this is in the cutting off of that portion of the garment, it was as though he touched the man himself. We say, 'clothes don't make the man' but scripturally oftentimes, the garments are the man! Are we not to put on Christ, like a garment of righteousness in our baptism and never lay that garment aside? The garments are the man; Jonathan and David covenanted together, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul, b&s, he stripped himself of his robe and his garments, his sword, his bow, he gave all these things to David and David in a sense became Jonathan; he became the man in rank and in relationship to being king, he became Jonathan. So the clothes are important and David would know this, and he would be well aware of that!

You know, in other places when you read in scripture about this word 'skirt', and in other translations of this passage, you'll see the word 'border' in its place, b&s. David had great sensitivity to Yahweh's Word and would be aware of the significance of garments. The word 'skirt' in the Hebrew is the word 'kanaph' (3671), it's a word that has to do with 'the extremity' often translated 'wings' or 'beams' in one place, and it's the extremity and sometimes 'borders'. It's the very same word that you find back in the book of Numbers in the Law; just take a look at Numbers chapter 15, I believe David would know this, he would be well aware of these things, great significance having to do with garments built right into the Law itself, there's nothing arbitrary here, this is an expression of the holiness of Yahweh, in these principles that are being laid down. So in Numbers 15 and going in at verse 38 we read this, 'Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments (same word that word 'borders' is the same word that you have back in 1 Samuel 24 as 'skirt', the skirt of Saul). 'Make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of Yahweh, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring'. That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am Yahweh your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am Yahweh your God'. Now that's the same word, that word 'borders' there in this part of the Law for every member of Israel, is the word that's used for 'skirt' in the situation with Saul.

I just wonder, b&s, I can't help but wonder when you connect scripture with scripture, if there isn't a connection with this reference in the book of Numbers, with the things of the Law, as far as Saul was concerned, if the smiting of David's heart, because of what he

was involved in and the magnitude of it on the basis of Numbers chapter 15; they were to attach to the fringe of the border a ribband of blue. The RSV says 'on the tassel a cord of blue', why? as a reminder, b&s, as a reminder. They would see the blue every day, they would touch the blue every day, they would be encircled in the blue every day; they would live their lives in the ambit of the blue every day; in the ambit of Yahweh and His Law, because that's what it was to remind them of, that's what they were to remember. 'Be ye holy unto your God', that's what was to be triggered in their minds, when they touched and lived their lives within the circle of blue.

The same word is used in other places in a remarkable way, we just wished we had time to just open up all the parts of this, I'll just give you a couple! Zechariah chapter 8, the things of the kingdom, verse 23 there (you'll be familiar with that) the kingdom period, when ten men out of every nation shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, and shall say, we will go with you because God is with you; 'God is with you', is Emmanuel, b&s, 'God is with us', and now He's with us in the kingdom period, and yes we can say, this is Israel. Yes, they are joining themselves or making an infinity with Israel as the favourite nation of the kingdom; they will be that, no doubt, but with the One who is Emmanuel, God with us, that they would reach forth, b&s, to take the skirt of His garment, the hem of His garment, because He is 'God with us'. And in Malachi chapter 4 you remember, 'the Sun of righteousness, verse 2, shall arise with healing in His beams' the beams is the same word, the Hebrew word 'kanaph'(3671) healing in the extremities, in His wings, that's the word used there in Malachi, it is wings, the extremities. Like the borders of the garment and it reminds us of that woman, doesn't it? in the New Testament, in the gospel of Mark and in the parallels to it (I take the gospel of Mark because it seems to be the most complete, Mark chapter 5); the poor woman with the issue of blood for 12 years, who had to make her way through a great crowd to get to Jesus. It's not always easy to get to Jesus, we have to work hard, b&s, to be with Jesus all the time. They were thronged around Him, they pressed on Him and this woman somehow made her way through that crowd of people with this one thought in her mind, if I can only take hold of His clothes, if I can only touch the hem of His garment I'll be healed. She put forth her hand and touched Him and was healed, and Jesus said, 'virtue or power has gone out of Me' in the healing. These are the thoughts that come to mind when I think of the skirt of Saul's garment, maybe it is kind of running with the thought but the words are the same! (except for the New Testament), of course, that Hebrew word 'kanaph' is used.

You know, b&s, we all need that healing, we all need to be reaching out through the crowd for the garment of the Master, b&s, if I can only get hold of that! I'll be healed. David did much more than touch the hem of Saul's garment, didn't he? Of course, Saul, long before this, long before this in a sense, had cut off the hem of his own garment. When you've refused and rejected the Word of Yahweh, and Samuel had to come to him and tell him, the kingdom would be taken from him. You know, there's great drama in these things, my dear brethren and sisters, great drama. It's not just things to be read, as I've said before, somehow we've got to get into the picture, we've got to be part of it. I just wonder what I would be saying if I was one of David's men? I wonder what you'd be

saying if you were there in that cave, and there was Saul before your eyes? and I can't help but be thinking that I would be saying the same thing that they were saying, 'Look, God has done this, let's be done with him once and for all!

Well, David reasoned with them; he reasoned with them out of the scripture, he reasoned with him as we see in this chapter. If you'll turn back to chapter 24, he reasoned with them on the basis of Yahweh's Word, verse 6, that's the reasoning, it's the things that Yahweh has set in His purpose. That's what David is teaching and bringing before his men, and they yielded, they yielded to David; they must have ached as they saw Saul begin to awake. They were pulled back from Saul and now he wakes from sleep and he rises up and he's going out from the cave and it could have been his grave, they're thinking. And he's going out again, out into the light of day, b&s, unaware, probably oblivious to how the fact that his life, life and death was hanging in the balance as to how this conversation would take place. And he's going to get a wake-up call now; the silence is going to be broken by a voice that he knows very well, and it's going to stop him in his tracks. You can picture him going down the valley away from the cave and as he goes up the other side (now there's some distance between the cave and Saul and David and his men and Saul. The voice cries out to him and he's stunned; he stops in his tracks and he's got to turn, he got to look and he's got to listen, and he's got to try and wipe the cobwebs from his sleepy eyes here, and figure out what's taking place. They're words from David, it's like the outpouring of the heart, on and on goes David in this, it's a heart in anguish, it's vexed by the whole situation, this unfounded jealousy of Saul. The rage of a man who's just caught up in himself, a man that David had faithfully served, had never done a disservice to Saul, and David's crying out in anguish across to this man that he calls 'his father'. This man who sometimes refers to David himself as 'his son', that was the relationship, he was the son-in-law; should have been his friend, Saul should have, must have been a strange sight for Saul, just turning and looking back when he hears that voice, and seeing David, with his face to the earth, before Yahweh's anointed.

It should have been the other way around, b&s, to be right; but it was right in Yahweh's scheme of things. And David's with his face to the earth and this long flow of emotion that just pours forth from David. We'll just look through it, we'll just take the verses and just think about what David is saying here; they're remarkable words! You know, if we just allow our minds to just rest on these, we'll see David's greater Son, my dear brethren and sisters, in all His beauty in these things. Take verse 9, 'David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? (he's crying out across the valley to Saul and saying to him, why are you listening to all these people around you? the likes of Doeg the Edomite? the cowards from Ziph? even the people of Keilah would turn me over to you gladly, if they could have. Why are you listening to these things instead of thinking on the things of God?) And he calls him 'my lord', adon, ruler, same word that we see back in verse 6, master, those are the terms of great respect that David uses for Saul, in this difficult time.

Verse 10 he says, 'Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that Yahweh had

delivered thee today, into mine hand', Yahweh hath delivered, Saul said that about David. He was wrong, of course, Yahweh's delivered Saul into David's hand. David is actually here, b&s, using the words of his men, he's recognizing the fact, that yes, Yahweh did deliver him into his hands, but at the same time he's recognizing the fact that it was not his to do with Saul as he would, because he still was Yahweh's anointed. He's saying in verse 10, 'Yahweh delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave and some bade me kill thee; but mine eyes spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is Yahweh's anointed'. Remarkable words, Yahweh hath delivered, not the first time it's been said, it's not going to be the last. There's great pressure on David, great pressure under those circumstances, and he's telling Saul that; (my men wanted me to kill you, Saul), all that pressure being brought to bear on him, b&s, and he resisted it; didn't go with the flow as we often tend to do, b&s, David's perspective is so much higher, his faith is so lovely. We're trying to get a hold of the mind of David, the spirit of David, b&s, take hold of these characteristics and make them your own. 'My eye hath spared thee', he says, this is the spirit of David, and he's not acting against what Yahweh has done, Yahweh has delivered him into my hands, he's acting because of it! because of what Yahweh's done, mine eye hath spared you. You're the anointed, you're 'adon', my master!

And then in verse 11, the greatest shock of all, b&s! 'Moreover, my father (just those terms!) 'my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not; know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it'. Greatest shock of all for Saul, because there's David holding up the skirt of his own garment. And he's saying, 'yea, see, see Saul, see what I have in my hand here! Saul sees the skirt of his and he looks down and he sees that it has been cut off his body while he was in that cave; it was the only time and it's as though he sees his whole life passing before his eyes, b&s; because he knows he was a dead man in the hand of David, and David's eye has spared him. It's a great shock to that man, it's going to bring him down, b&s, for the moment. It's going to bring him low for the moment, it's going to humble him for the moment, for the moment! not for long. It must have been a great trembling that would take place within the body of Saul, as this great body of flesh, there in the hand of the giant-killer, David, there in the hand of the man who had slain his tens of thousands, was Saul's own life. And Saul is going to be brought low.

It's a remarkable thing, b&s, that David even tries to reason with Saul. I don't know if you've ever tried to do this; there's just someone who's very obstinate, we would say they're hard and you try to reason with them and you just feel it's useless! Well, Saul was like that! David certainly knew it at this point in time, he knew the spirit of the man and yet he doesn't quit, he just keeps on and on and on, and tried to work with Saul and tried to bring him around, and tried to make him see the truth of what's happening. And he just reasons with him, just listen, this is a merciful approach that David takes to Saul; he spared him he says (this is all bound up in this little section of scripture here). He points out to Saul that he's his lord 'adon', that he has respect for Yahweh's anointed; he calls him 'father', he cites his own sinless approach toward him, that he has no evil in

him, no transgression, no sin when it comes to Saul, even appeals to the writings of the ancients and says, 'from the wicked proceedeth wickedness' (he says he's not going to do that) 'as for me I'm not going to lay my hand upon you', he says) And Saul was doing that very thing, 'from the wicked proceeds wickedness', and it was all being worked out in Saul, if he could only see it; but David wasn't going to do it.

And he speaks about his own 'littleness'; how often we forget that, b&s, especially if there is somebody that we're dealing with that has a particular problem. Somehow we feel we're able to deal with that from strength, well, David was dealing with the problem with Saul, from his own littleness. He says, 'Saul, you're the great king of Israel, and what you're wasting your time on here, is one who's like a dead dog, like a flea'; that's the littleness of David before Saul, the humility of the man is so marvellous, the loveliness of his character. And finally, b&s, oftentimes it comes to this, doesn't it? finally, we need to turn the matter over to God, because we just can't go any further. There's nothing else that can be said, and we turn the matter over to God. And that's what David is going to do, just give it to Yahweh. Reasoning with Saul was fruitless.

And so in verse 12, 'Yahweh judge between me and thee, and Yahweh avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee', and he reiterates that when he talks about that proverb from the ancients, and he says this again, the second time, verse 15. 'Yahweh therefore be judge and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand'. So it's all in the hand of God now, David has turned it over knowing that he can't reason with Saul, there is no reasoning with Saul. But now, Saul's going to respond, we say he's brought low by all of this, and he's going to respond to it; I think he does so in a very shaky fashion, I think he does so weakly, because he sort of cries out across the valley and I see this in great weakness, b&s. 'Is this thy voice, my son, David?' That's Saul crying out; he knows by this time it's David's voice, and then he just totally falls apart. He loses it, as we say, and he just falls into unrestrained weeping; the king of Israel before his own men, before David and his men, brought low, b&s, by the majestic character of the man who was just a short time before on his face in the dirt before him, (but taller than Saul would ever be), and now he's brought low himself and he's weeping.

Now just listen to Saul's words, b&s, verses 17 and 18, 'Then he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil'. He knew about the golden rule, didn't he? before the Master ever said the golden rule in the discourse on the Mount, Saul knew about this, because it's one of the eternal principles of God. Yes, Saul knew about it, b&s, and David lived it, that's the difference in those two men. A lot of things that we know as Christadelphians, as brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, a lot of things we know; but you know what, they don't mean a thing, b&s, unless we live them! And that's what David is doing, that's the marvel of that great man. He lived these things, and Saul just knew them. So in verse 18, 'Thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me', and his grace and mercy are bound up in the things of David and I don't see those things as the same; grace is God doing something for us that we don't deserve, and mercy is God not

doing something to us, that we do deserve, and that's what he receives from David. He says, 'Thou hast showed this day, how thou hast dealt well with me (that's the grace of David) he didn't give Saul what he deserved, and then 'when Yahweh hath delivered me into thy hand, thou killest me not' (and there is the mercy) you see. And David has it all, this man after God's own heart and Saul knows it, and Saul is stating it.

Saul's amazed at David, b&s, what David is doing is not at all what he would have done, and as he is spelling out these things, he's saying in effect this is what I would have done, but this is what you did David. I need to marvel at that! He knew he had behaved as David's enemy, that's the word he uses of himself; he knew what David did to his enemies, b&s, look at verse 19, 'For if a man find his enemy (he's just talking about the whole circumstances, the way he operated). He said, 'If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore Yahweh regard thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day'. Fine words aren't they? there's 'Yahweh' again on the lips of Saul, b&s, this troubles me, it troubles me a lot! It says, 'Yahweh reward thee good' as if he can direct anything along these lines; and Yahweh would reward David good, but it's got nothing to do with Saul wishing it, of course. He says in verse 20, 'And now behold, I know well' (there's the principle of responsibility, b&s, knowledge bringing responsibility, I know well says Saul, and he was responsible before God for that) 'that thou shalt surely be king; and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand' (Saul knows it; but you notice how quickly he becomes Saul again, my dear b&s) Can't get rid of the paranoia that is Saul, perhaps looking down at the robe and seeing it's minus the skirt. That it's been cut off and could have well been him or it may be his family still, as the days go on.

And so in verse 21 he says, 'Swear thou now therefore, by Yahweh' (there it is again, how he brings Yahweh into the scheme of things, so readily) 'Swear by Yahweh that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house' he says. Don't cut off my seed, why b&s? because Saul is Saul; it's me, me, me and it will continue right to the very end, the last scene of Saul you'll have me, me, me, as we will see. Don't destroy my name he says, and David swore unto Saul. And Saul went home but David and his men gat them up into the hold'. And so the chapter comes to its conclusion, with David swearing to Saul, the Hebrew word is 'shaba' (7650) it means 'to give a complete assurance regarding a matter, literally, that word means 'to seven, seven one's self', it's as though David is saying to Saul when he swears to Saul, I will do it, I will do it, I will do it, seven times he says it, and so it is complete and it's perfect. It will be done, and it was done in the life of David as far as the family of Saul was concerned, to the very end.

'And Saul went home to Gibeah, BUT David and his men went up into the hold' and David who gave Saul the hearing, never gave him the believing; and so this scene with David and his men ends, b&s, once again with them melting into the wooded hills, and into the caves of the earth.