

1 SAMUEL CHAPTER 26

¹ And the Ziphites came out of the dry country to Saul to the hill, saying, "Behold, David hides himself with us in the hill Hachilah, opposite Jeshimon." ² And Saul arose, and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, and with him went three thousand men chosen out of Israel, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. ³ And Saul encamped in the hill of Hachilah in front of Jeshimon, by the way, and David dwelt in the wilderness. And David saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. ⁴ And David sent spies, and ascertained that Saul had come prepared out of Keila.

⁵ And David arose secretly, and went into the place where Saul was sleeping. And Abner the son of Ner was there, the captain of his army. And Saul was sleeping in a chariot, and the people had encamped along around him. ⁶ And David answered and spoke to Abimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, saying, "Who will go in with me to Saul into the camp?" And Abishai said, "I will go in with you." ⁷ So David and Abishai went in among the people by night. And behold, Saul was fast asleep in the chariot, and his spear was stuck in the ground near his head, and Abner and his people slept round about him. ⁸ And Abishai said to David, "The Lord has delivered your enemy into your hands this day, and now I will strike him to the earth with this spear, once *for all*, and I will not have to strike him again." ⁹ And David said to Abishai, "Do not kill him, for who shall lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?" ¹⁰ And David said, "As the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come and he die, or he shall go down to battle and be added *to his fathers*." ¹¹ The Lord forbid that I should lift up my hand against the Lord's anointed. And now take the spear from before his head, and the pitcher of water, and let us return home." ¹² So David took the spear, and the pitcher of water, and they went home. And there was no one that saw, and no one that knew, and there was no one that awoke, they were all asleep, for a stupor from the Lord had fallen upon them.

¹³ So David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off, and there was a good distance between them. ¹⁴ And David called to the people and spoke to Abner, saying, "Will you not answer, Abner?" And Abner answered and said, "Who are you that calls?" ¹⁵ And David said to Abner, "Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel? Why then do you not guard your lord the king? For one out of the people went in to destroy your lord the king. ¹⁶ And this thing is not good which you have done. As the Lord lives, you are worthy of death, you who guard your lord the king, the Lord's anointed. And now behold, the spear of the king, and the jug of water—where are the articles that should be at his head?"

¹⁷ And Saul recognized the voice of David, and said, "Is this your voice, *my son David*?" And David said, "I am your servant, my lord, O king." ¹⁸ And he said, "Why does my lord thus pursue after his servant? For in what *manner* have I sinned? And what unrighteousness has been found in me?" ¹⁹ And now, let my lord the king hear the word of his servant: if God stirs you up against me, let your offering be acceptable; but if *it is* the children of men, *may* they be cursed before the Lord, for they have cast me out this day, that I should not be

established in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' ²⁰ And now let not my blood fall to the ground before the Lord, for the king of Israel has come forth to seek your life, as the night hawk pursues its *prey* in the mountains."

²¹ And Saul said, "I have sinned: turn, *my son* David, for I will not hurt you, because my life was precious in your eyes; and today I have been foolish and I have erred exceedingly." ²² And David answered and said, "Behold, the spear of the king. Let one of the servants come over and take it. ²³ And the Lord shall recompense each according to his righteousness and his truth, since the Lord delivered you this day into my hands, and I would not lift my hand against the Lord's anointed. ²⁴ And behold, as your life has been precious this very day in my eyes, so let my life be precious before the Lord, and may He protect me, and deliver me out of all affliction." ²⁵ And Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, my son; and you shall surely do valiantly, and *shall* surely prevail." And David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.