

1 Samuel 23:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi.

Analysis

And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi.

David relocates to En-gedi, an oasis near the Dead Sea. The Hebrew 'metsadot' (strongholds) again describes natural fortifications—the area's caves and cliffs provided excellent defensive positions. En-gedi ('spring of the goat/kid') offered precious water in the wilderness, enabling extended habitation. This move to the Dead Sea region put greater distance between David and Saul's base in Benjamin. The phrase 'went up from thence' suggests strategic relocation rather than panicked flight. En-gedi would become the setting for David's famous sparing of Saul's life (chapter 24), demonstrating that God brought David to locations where his character would be tested and proved.

Historical Context

En-gedi remains an oasis today, with springs producing significant water flow in the arid wilderness. The numerous caves in its limestone cliffs provided hiding places. The ibex (wild goats) that gave the place its name still inhabit the area.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How has God led you to places of both refuge and character development?
2. What does David's movement to En-gedi teach about finding sustainable positions in long trials?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִיד מִשְׁמָרָה מִן־שְׁבָע בְּמִצְדָּה וְתַּחַת עַל
went up And David from thence and dwelt in strong holds H0
H5927 H1732 H8033 H3427 H4679

בְּעֵדָה אֶל־עֵדָה
at Engedi H5872

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 20:2 (Parallel theme): Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.

Joshua 15:62 (Parallel theme): And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi; six cities with their villages.

Ezekiel 47:10 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

Song of Solomon 1:14: My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.