

23[1] And they declared to David, saying, “Behold, Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they are plundering the threshing floors.” [2] And David asked in Yehvah, saying, “Should I go and strike against these Philistines?” And Yehvah said to David, “Go and strike against the Philistines, and you shall save Keilah.” [3] And David's men said to him, “Behold, we are afraid here in Judah, and how much more when we go to Keilah to Philistines' battlelines!” [4] And David once again asked in Yehvah, and Yehvah answered and said, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give Philistines in your hand.” [5] And David and his men went to Keilah and fought against the Philistines and drove their cattle and struck them, a great slaughter. And David saved Keilah's inhabitants.

[6] And it was, when Abiathar, son of Ahimelech, fled to David to Keilah, he came down with a ephod in his hand. [7] And it was told to Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, “Gods, he has regarded¹ him in my hand, for he has been shut in by going in a city of doors and bar.”² [8] And Saul summoned all the people for war to go down to Keilah to besiege against David and against his men.

[9] And David knew that Saul plotted the bad against him, and said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring near the ephod.” [10] And David said, “Yehvah, Gods of Israel, hearing, your servant has heard that Saul seeks to come in to Keilah to destroy the city on account of me. [11] Will Keilah's lords deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down just as your servant has heard? Yehvah, Gods of Israel, please declare to your servant.” And Yehvah said, “He will come down.” [12] And David said, “Will Keilah's lords deliver me and my men into Saul's hand?” And Yehvah said, “They will deliver.” [13] And David and his men, about six hundred men,³ arose and went from Keilah and walked wherever they could walk. And it was declared to Saul that David escaped from Keilah, and he ceased to go out.

[14] And David dwelt in the wilderness in the strongholds, and he dwelt in the mountain in Ziph's wilderness. And Saul sought him all the days, and Gods, he did not give him into his hand. [15] And David saw that Saul went out to seek his soul, and David was in Ziph's wilderness in the forest.

[16] And Jonathan, son of Saul, arose and went to David to a forest and strengthened his hand in Gods. [17] And he said to him, “Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father will not find you. And you shall reign over Israel, and I will be to you second.⁴ And also Saul my father knows this.” [18] And the two of them cut a covenant before Yehvah. And David dwelt in the forest, and Jonathan went to his house.

[19] And Ziphites⁵ went up to Saul to the Hill, saying, “Is not David hiding with

1 נִכַּר (nikar) “regarded”; YLT “made . . . known”; NKJV, KJV, NAS “delivered”; Green “estranged” - same exact word, different context, e.g. in Job 34:19 “regard” (NKJV), root idea is “regard” or “recognize” (Job 21:29 NAS).

2 בְּרִיחַ (beriyach) “bar” YLT; “bars” KJV, NKJV, NAS, etc.. See Deuteronomy 3:5 and footnote.[5] All these were fortified cities, high wall, dual doors and bar, . . .”

בְּרִיחַ (beriyach) - “bar” YLT; “bars” KJV, NKJV, NAS, etc.. Singular as here with gate, see also 1 Samuel 23:7; Judges 16:3; 1 Kings 4:13; 2 Chronicles 8:5; Jeremiah 49:31; Ezekiel 38:11. For plural with gate, see 2 Chronicles 14:7(H6); Nehemiah 3:3, 6, 13-15; Lamentations 2:9; Nahum 3:13.

3 In 1 Samuel 22:2 four hundred came to David. His total now at this point is six hundred.

4 מִשְׁנֶה (mishneh) “second” YLT; “next” NKJV – when used in this kind of context = “second” in command, e.g. 2 Chronicles 28:7 (“second” to the king); Esther 10:3; 1 Chronicles 15:18; 16:5 (NAS); 2 Chronicles 31:12 (NAS).

us in the strongholds in the forest on the hill of Hachilah⁶ which is right⁷ of the wasteland? [20] And now, to all your soul's desire, the king to come down, come down, and ours is to deliver him into the king's hand.” [21] And Saul said, “Blessed are you to Yehvah, for you have had pity on me. [22] Please go, and make sure again, and know and see his place, where his foot is; who has seen him there. For it has been said to me, 'He is very crafty.' [23] And see and know from all the hideouts where he hides there. And return to me to be certain. And I will come with you, and it shall be, if he is there in the land, so I will search him out among all Judah's thousands.”

[24] And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul, and David and his men were in Dwelling's⁸ wilderness in the plain to the right of the wasteland. [25] And Saul and his men went to seek, and they told David. And he went down the rock and dwelt in Dwelling's wilderness. And Saul heard and pursued after David to Dwelling's wilderness.

[26] And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men were on this side of the mountain. And David made haste to go from before Saul. And Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to seize them. [27] And a messenger came to Saul, saying, “Hurry and come, for Philistines are raiding against the land.” [28] And Saul returned from pursuing after David and went to encounter Philistines. Therefore, they call that place, Rock of the Slips.⁹ [29H24:1] And David went up from there and dwelt in strongholds of Spring of Gedi.¹⁰

5 זִפְיִים (ziphiym) “Ziphites” - found also in 1 Samuel 26:1; Psalm 54:1.

6 חַכְחִילָה (chakhiylâh) “Hachilah” - found also in 1 Samuel 26:1, 3.

7 מִיְמִינָא (miymiyn) “right”; DRA, JUB “right hand”; GNV, WYC “right side”; YLT, NKJV, etc. “south” - evidently facing eastward, “right” is used for “south” on occasion, e.g. Psalm 89:12(H13); Ezekiel 16:46.

8 מְעוֹן (mâ'on) “Dwelling”; NKJV “Maon” - see footnote for Joshua 15:55.

9 מַחְלֵקוֹת (machleqot) “Slips” [plural]; “Slippery” ERV, NOG; “Escape” NKJV, NAS; “Selahammahlekoth” (transliteration of Rock and Slips) KJV; “Divisions” YLT - root verb has two basic ideas, “division” (e.g. Deuteronomy 4:19) or “slippery” or “smooth” (e.g. Psalm 55:21). Context favors slippery here.

10 עַיִן־גֵּדִי ('eyn-gediy) “Spring of Gedi”; NKJV “En Gedi”; KJV, NAS “Engedi” - see Joshua 15:62 and footnote.