



**The Half Shekel Journals of 2022** by Pastor Ed Rice  
**#07 Wed 2 Nov Good Samaritan, En Gedi**

Pastor Chalie, on the summit overlooking the rugged terrain of the Jericho Road took us to the very scene of Jesus' Good Samaritan Parable. The austere loneliness of the wilderness road set the stage for how a "certain man" could be wounded and robbed and left half dead. The narrow rocky path we came up on had set us up for visualizing how tough it might be to pass by on the other side of such a misfortune. The day we spent walking Via Dolorosa streets with black robed "priests", supposing themselves to be somebodies, helped us to see the priest pass by, and then the Levite, neither were willing, or able, to help the fallen.

All we had seen made Pastor's job pretty easy, but his impassioned handling of the Bible text moved us to revisit Luke 10, the certain lawyer, and the certain man. The certain man was for illustrative purposes but the certain lawyer was real enough. He was there to trip up the Lord Jesus Christ with words (Luke 10:25). That's what lawyers do,



and he asked Jesus two questions.

Jesus made the Levitical lawyer answer his own first question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus confirmed his answer to be correct, just be perfect and never sin, ... "This do, and thou shalt live" (Verse 27-28). At this point in time Jesus was dealing with mankind under the dispensation, or the stewardship rules, of keeping the law. The lawyer had answered right, because if man could keep the law he



could indeed stand before a holy and righteous God and live. We know now the ending of that dispensation of law, the final verdict being, "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one; ... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10, 23). That verdict is final, there is no going back into that dispensation and giving it another shot; no matter what Ellen White tried to teach her Seventh Day Adventists. So in that dispensation of law, Pharisees, Scribes, and Lawyers, spent their time trying to justify themselves.



Again, Luke 18:9-14 clarifies how one is justified in this dispensation of law; the Pharisee “trusted in himself that he was righteous” but the publican, “smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” Of him Jesus said, “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other” (verse 14).

Back to this Luke 10 lawyer, the Bible says, “but he willing to justify himself ...” asked his second question, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan who came across the certain man that thieves left half dead thoroughly addresses the lawyers second question, but, don't miss here how Jesus addresses the lawyer's first question in the parable that he gives.

Consider that mankind has fallen to thieves and is left helpless, hopeless, and half dead. The Aaronic priesthood, which



God set up so Israelites could have their sins atoned for, passes by on the other side of the road. Salvation is not found in priesthood, nor priest, nor priest craft. The Levite, like the lawyer who started this conversation, also passed by on the other side. Salvation is not found in the law. That dispensation has ended. The salvation for this certain man came from an outsider who had compassion on him. Such a story parallels John 3:16-18, Jesus being the outsider.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned*

*already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him (Jn.3:16-18,36).*



Religions promote priestcraft and Levitical law keeping, but Bible salvation is by faith, not by works of righteousness which we have done (Ephesians 2:8-9). This parable has both tremendous depth and richness. “*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*” (Rom.11:33).

We sat beside the Jericho Road. Pastor Chalie walked us through this tremendous

parable that Jesus unfolded on the same road. It makes you think deep thoughts. Does my “Neighbor” know about the saving grace of my Lord Jesus Christ? Does he know the ultimate Good Samaritan?

With a good taste of this wilderness in our mouth, we boarded the bus and headed out toward Ein Gedi. When David fled from the threatening king Saul, he dwelt in south Jeshimon, a wilderness area west of the Dead Sea.

*And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood. And Jonathan Saul’s son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth. And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house (1Sam.23:15-18).*



When the Ziphites agreed to deliver David over to King Saul, he moved from the woods to the plain in the south of Jeshimon, in the wilderness of Maon (verse 24–25). There Saul and his men compassed him in, and would have captured David and his men, but God intervened (Verse 27–28).

*And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at Engedi. And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from*

*following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats (1Sam.23:29-24:2).*

Ein Gedi is about 12 miles east of Maon, but every mile one moves from the mountainous wilderness of Maon, gets even more treacherous and steep until it drops off into the Dead Sea. Just after crossing the 1949 Armistice Agreement Line we turned off Highway 90, which goes down the west edge of the sea and headed up to the Ein Gedi Reserve.

Engedi means (Strong's #05872, עֵינַיִם 'Eyn Gedy) "fount of the kid." Here water springs from the mountains to the west, and made glamorous springs that watered a wilderness and ran down to the shores of the Dead Sea. It was a very rugged cave filled, spring fed, wilderness area, that could easily hide and support David and his 600 men.

All of us hiked up past some caves and then up to the first spring. The more able hiked past more springs, more caves, and made their way to the top of the Ein Gedi Reserve. The rugged wilderness here was vast. With the enthused instruction of our Guide Joe, and the insightful Bible accounts read and depicted by Pastor Chalie, we visualized Saul's advance into the middle of David's new found territory. David had 400 to 600 men surrounding him here, they were settling in, and getting comfortable in the area when Saul invaded with his 3,000 chosen men.

Here Saul, seeking David, pulled aside into a shepherds cave to take a nap. Lo, David and some of his men were there before him in the sides of the cave. The story unfolds in the first verses of 1Samuel 24. In these rugged, canyon laden hills, we could clearly visualize:

*So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself (1Sam.24:7-8).*

It was pretty easy, after being at the Ein Gedi Reserve, to see how David could address King Saul, and still be well out of his reach. For a keener insight into this wilderness use google maps' topographical view to plot the 64 km route from Arad Israel to Ein Gedi Reserve, via Route 31 and Route 90, and look at that it wilderness it avoided, that is the Ein Gedi Wilderness which hid David and his men. We only explored the eastern tip of the wilderness of Ein Gedi, but our minds went deep into its recesses, and even deeper into the resources of God's Holy Bible.



Engedi Ed  
Ein Gedi, Israel  
2 Nov 2022



**The Half Shekel Journals of 2022** by Pastor Ed Rice  
**#08 Wed 2 Nov Masada, and the Dead Sea.**  
Masada, in Hebrew Metsada,

