

39 En-gedi

Names (also known as)

Engedi, or Ein Gedi

Hazon-tamar

Etymology

עֵין גֵּדִי - *'êyn gedîy*- from Strong's H5869 and H1423; fountain of a kid.

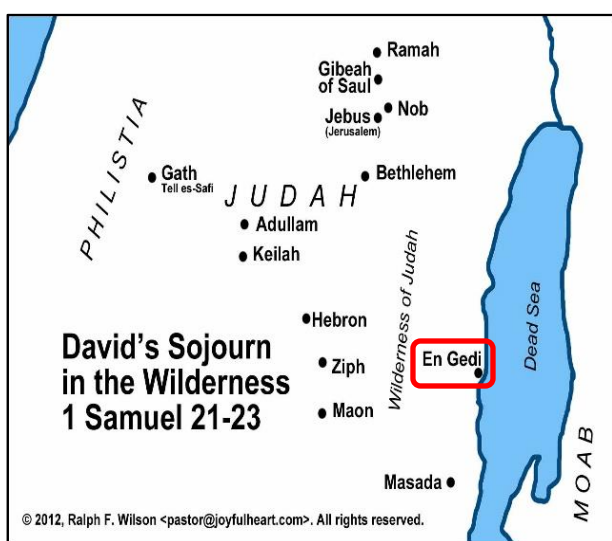
H5869 - *'ayin* - Probably a primitive word; an eye (literally or figuratively); by analogy a fountain (as the eye of the landscape).

H1423 - *g^edîy* - From the same as H1415; a young goat translated 'kid'.

Hazon-tamar = “dividing the date-palm” (BDB definition), ‘the cutting of the palm-trees’.

Location/Description

En-Gedi is an oasis in Israel, located west of the Dead Sea near Masada and the Qumran Caves. It was allotted to the tribe of Judah in Joshua 15:62.



Edersheim in his Bible History of the Old Testament says, “Through this town the army of Chedorlaomer had passed (Gen. 14:7). Quite close to the waters of the Dead Sea, a scene of tropical beauty and wealth stretched, such as is scarcely possible to describe. Bounded by two perennial streams between which the En-Gedi itself makes its way, it must of old have been a little paradise; the plain covered with palm trees, the slopes up the mountains with the choicest vineyards in Judaea, scented with camphire (Song 1:14).

But all above was ‘wilderness’, bare, round, limestone hills rising from two hundred to four hundred feet, burrowed by numberless caves, to which the entrance is sometimes almost inaccessible. These were the ‘rocks of the wild goats’ (1 Sam. 24:1-2) and here was the cave where David sought safety from the pursuit of the king of Israel.”



Scriptural references

Old Testament

Genesis 14:7; Joshua 15:62; 1 Samuel 23:29; 24:1-2, 2 Chron. 20:2; Song 1:14; Ezekiel 47:10

New Testament

None

Famous characters

David and Saul

The Lesson of En-gedi

1 Samuel 24 records the most significant event to happen at Engedi. Engedi is an oasis surrounded by harsh, barren, and waterless desert. It is to this place that David and the men that were with him sought refuge and sustenance from the pursuit of Saul. In the surrounding wilderness, God’s hand had provided a place that could sustain David’s life, and provide him safety from those who sought his life.

Engedi is a place where life and death are contrasted. The only life that exists in Engedi is that near the fountain of water placed there by God. It is a parable of this world as well. Outside the oasis that is the truth is a harsh and uninhabitable wilderness. It is only through knowledge of the word of God and its acceptance in our minds that we can have in

us ‘a well of water springing up into everlasting life.’



Saul did not comprehend this principle. David realised that his life was in the hand of his Heavenly Father, and that it was by God’s grace that his life was sustained. David not only realised this, but then extended the lesson to Saul by sparing his life in the cave. As David had been sustained by the grace of God, David showed to Saul the same Godly characteristic in his dealing with his enemy. David’s righteous character shown in this example condemned the wickedness of the king of Israel. David rejected the natural impulse to slay his enemy, instead by his example, he showed Saul a better way.

In our discipleship we should show forth this same characteristic in “all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works... that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” - Titus 2:7-8. David’s example shows us what it means to not render evil for evil or railing for railing. It is a rejection of that which comes natural to us and the adopting of the mind of the spirit.

Our Lord Jesus gave us the same instruction... “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and

persecute you; That ye may be **the children of your Father** which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” – Matt. 5:43-45).

The future of En-Gedi – Ezek. 47

“And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from **Engedi** even unto Eneglaim; 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.” – Ezek. 47:6-10.



Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ein_Gedi
Bible History of the Old Testament, Bk4,
Chap. 13, Alfred Edersheim.

Logos, April 1988, Vol 54 #7

(Compiler – Jeff Cooper)