

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 2ND-3RD, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

THE PLOT AGAINST DAVID (1 SAMUEL 19:1-7)

Saul's envy and jealousy of David had so overtaken his heart that he wanted David dead.

- Saul had attempted to kill David himself twice with his own spear, and when that didn't succeed, he'd tried multiple times to send David into battle against the Philistines in hopes of seeing him killed in action.
 - Now Saul directly orders his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David (vs. 1).
- Jonathan had a lot to gain personally through David's death—with David gone, Jonathan would be the clear and undisputed heir to the throne of Israel.
- But Jonathan loved David and had made a covenant with him—a commitment and promise that isn't intended to be broken, even if it would personally benefit one to do so.
 - Jonathan seeks to intercede for David (vs. 2-3).
- Jonathan tells David to go into hiding and speaks well of David to his father Saul (vs. 4).
- Jonathan tried to reason with Saul by telling him that David was an innocent man not deserving of death and that David had served Saul faithfully by winning great victories against the enemies of Israel (vs. 4-5).
 - If Saul were to have David killed, he'd be guilty of shedding innocent blood.
- Saul was enjoying a clear-headed, sane moment (albeit a brief one), so he agreed with his son and even took an oath not to kill David (vs. 6).
- Saul was not one to keep oaths (14:24,44), so this oath he took didn't mean much at all and was very short-lived.
 - Often, our commitments in the modern age are very much the same way—we will honor them so long as we feel like it.

As soon as our commitments cost us something personally or interfere with what our flesh wants, many of us are willing to break our oaths and violate those covenants.

- We're to be people of covenant (Matthew 5:37).
- Saul was a liar, and his promises were meaningless, but his oath did open the way for David to return to the king's court (vs. 7).

AN ESCAPE BY NIGHT (1 SAMUEL 19:8-17)

When the Philistines attacked Israel again, David went out with his men and soundly defeated them (vs. 8).

- David's victory and success once again provoked Saul's envy, anger, and jealousy.
- For a third time, Saul flings his spear at David in hopes of killing him (vs. 9-10).
- David knew the time had come to save his life and flee from Saul's presence.

This marks the beginning of about ten years of exile for David, during which God will mold and fashion David's character into the king God desires him to be.

- Seasons of hardship, pain, persecution, adversity, and opposition are disorienting and confusing.
 - Sometimes, we wonder where God is in the midst of seasons like this—but God is with us and He's allowing it for our good and His glory.
- Saul sent his cronies to David's house by night to watch for him and kill him the very next morning (vs. 11).
- Michal, David's wife and Saul's daughter, urged David to escape, and he escapes under the cover of night via a window (vs. 12).
 - That night, David composed the words of Psalm 59, where he cries out to God in a prayer of deliverance and defense.
 - Psalm 59:1-4a ESV

That night, David cried out to God for deliverance, but Michal (like her father) hatched a deceitful scheme to try to get out of the situation (vs. 13-14).

- Apparently, Michal owned a household idol—she's married to the man after God's heart, but she is still trusting in an idol.
- You can't borrow your spouse's faith! It has to be real to you for it to count for anything.

Michal pulls a Ferris Bueller... she uses the household idol and goat hair to create a dummy that looks like David that she places in bed (vs. 13).

- When Saul's men come for David, she lies and tells them he's sick (vs. 14).
- Saul doesn't care, so he orders the men to bring David on his bed before him, at which point the disguise is uncovered (vs. 15-16).

"WHY DID YOU DECEIVE ME LIKE THIS?"

It's amazing that Saul—the deceptive schemer with a murderous heart—is so shocked and surprised that his daughter deceived him!

- Where do you think she learned the art of deception?
- Michal then lied and claimed that David had threatened to kill her if she didn't cooperate (vs. 17).

When adversity, opposition, or trouble comes our way, it reveals our faith, and we can either respond like David or Michal.

- When our back is against the wall, we can take the necessary action and trust in the Lord as our refuge and deliverer.
- Or we can panic and scheme and trust in our idols and lies—our own self-centered methods that leave God out of the equation entirely.

IS SAUL ALSO AMONG THE PROPHETS? (1 SAMUEL 19:18-24)

David ran to Samuel in Ramah, a godly mentor and authority figure in his life that he knew he could depend on for guidance (vs. 18).

- In Ramah, there was a place called Naioth—it comes from the word "residence," and it was probably some sort of a religious compound where a company of prophets resided.
 - This is where Samuel takes David—to a place of worship, prayer, and the activity of God's Spirit.
- Saul has an army, weapons, and lots of spies relentlessly searching for David.
- David's response is to get as close to God as he knows how and to seek the Lord's presence and guidance.
 - This is a response that doesn't seem to make a lot of sense through a worldly vantage point.
 - The strength of our faith is shown by what we do when we face helpless situations like this.

Saul finds out that David is with Samuel in Naioth, and three times, he sends his messengers to capture David (vs. 19-21).

- Each time Saul's messengers came to Naioth and saw Samuel and the prophets prophesying, the Spirit of God came upon them, and they began to prophesy!
 - To "prophesy" in this sense means to make an utterance under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- The Spirit of the Lord didn't turn Saul's soldiers into prophets; they only uttered words (declarations of truth, praise, and worship) inspired by the Spirit of God.

- This is an unusual work of the Holy Spirit: the fact that the Spirit of God came upon those who weren't seeking God and didn't long to be filled was a unique way of God protecting and proving his hand was on David.

With all of his warriors getting transformed by the Spirit into worshippers, Saul decides that he's going to take matters into his own hands and go to Naioth himself and kill David (vs. 22-23).

- But as Saul approaches Naioth, he is struck by the power of the Spirit of God and begins to prophesy as he walks along the road and enters the city (vs. 23).

Three times, the Holy Spirit had communicated to Saul that David was to be left alone and that Saul would never win his battle against Yahweh and His anointed servant, David.

- In his arrogance, pride, and self-reliance, Saul decided that he would go to the place where God's presence was manifesting and that he'd be stronger than Samuel, the prophets, and even God and kill David once and for all.

THE LORD "HUMBLES AND HE EXALTS..." (1 SAMUEL 2:7)

In the presence of God, the Holy Spirit overcomes Saul and causes him to remove his royal robes and collapse naked in Naioth for an entire day and night (vs. 24).

- This was God's way of stripping Saul's royalty and self-relying arrogance off of him in a dramatic fashion.
- God is humbling Saul and making him destitute.

The old saying from chapter 10:10-12 is said again about Saul, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

- It's an expression of astonishment when someone who is unspiritual suddenly steps out of character and behaves very spiritually.
- One would think that a person who had such a profound spiritual, supernatural experience of God's power and presence would be changed, but this only hardens Saul's heart further.

David is supernaturally delivered by the hand of the Lord in an unexpected, surprising way.

- God works in mysterious ways, and often, some of the most amazing works of deliverance and salvation in our lives come about through the most unusual set of circumstances.
- God is able and willing to protect and deliver His anointed—that's you if you've trusted in Jesus and have the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:20-22).
- Psalm 59:16-17 NIV

A FORTRESS AND REFUGE IN TIMES OF TROUBLE.

- Times of adversity, opposition, and persecution will come our way—we have a real enemy that hates us and seeks to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8-9).
- When the times of trouble come, where do we turn?
- If we're not exercising our faith by trusting in the Lord when it matters the most, our faith is only theoretical and quite unhelpful.

TRUSTING IN SCHEMES, LIES, AND IDOLS.

- Some trust in their own schemes—man-made, self-reliant plans to fix situations or solve problems on our strength.
- Some trust in their own lies—deceptive, manipulative schemes that we hatch for the purpose of self-preservation or protection.
- Some trust in their own idols—money, entertainment, pleasure, substance abuse, etc.

TRUSTING IN THE LORD'S GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION.

- When you don't know what to do, get as close to God as you know how and seek the Lord's presence and guidance (Matthew 6:33, Proverbs 3:5-6).
- It may not make sense from a worldly vantage point, but go to a godly mentor or spiritual leader in your life, spend time praying/fasting, worship the Lord, and spend time in God's word.
- God works in mysterious ways—do you trust Him?