Saul and David (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)
1 Samuel 17:55–19:11a

David's Heroism Brings Him to Saul's Attention

17:55 Now when Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?" And Abner said, "By your life, O king, I do not know."

56 The king said, "You inquire whose son the youth is."

57 So when David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand.

58 Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "*I am* the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

Jonathan and David Become Close Friends

18:1 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.

2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

4 Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.

The Rift Between Saul and David Begins

5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* prospered; and Saul set him over the men of war. And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

6 It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments.

7 The women sang as they played, and said,

> "Saul has slain his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands."

8 Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?"

9 Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

Saul Tries to Kill David

10 Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was playing *the harp* with his hand, as usual; and a spear *was* in Saul's hand.

11 Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice.

12 Now Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

God Gives David Success

13 Therefore Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him as his commander of a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

14 David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD *was* with him.

15 When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly, he dreaded him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, and he went out and came in before them.

Saul Schemes to Eliminate David

17 Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife, only be a valiant man for me and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "My hand shall not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

18 But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my life *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?"

19 So it came about at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.

20 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul, the thing was agreeable to him.

21 Saul thought, "I will give her to him that she may become a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David, "For a second time you may be my son-in-law today."

22 Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David secretly, saying, 'Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'"

23 So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. But David said, "Is it trivial in your sight to become the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man and lightly esteemed?"

24 The servants of Saul reported to him according to these words *which* David spoke.

25 Saul then said, "Thus you shall say to David, 'The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.'" Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

26 When his servants told David these words, it pleased David to become the king's son-in-law. Before the days had expired

27 David rose up and went, he and his men, and struck down two hundred men among the Philistines. Then David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter for a wife.

28 When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him,

29 then Saul was even more afraid of David. Thus Saul was David's enemy continually.

30 Then the commanders of the Philistines went out *to battle*, and it happened as often as they went out, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul. So his name was highly esteemed.

Jonathan Persuades Saul to Stop Trying to Kill David

19:1 Now Saul told Jonathan his son and all his servants to put David to death. But Jonathan, Saul's son, greatly delighted in David.

2 So Jonathan told David saying, "Saul my father is seeking to put you to death. Now therefore, please be on guard in the morning, and stay in a secret place and hide yourself.

3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you; if I find out anything, then I will tell you."

4 Then Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Do not let the king sin against his servant David, since he has not sinned against you, and since his deeds *have been* very beneficial to you.

5 For he took his life in his hand and struck the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great deliverance for all Israel; you saw *it* and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death without a cause?"

6 Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul vowed, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."

7 Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these words. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as formerly.

Saul Again Tries to Kill David

8 When there was war again, David went out and fought with the Philistines and defeated them with great slaughter, so that they fled before him.

9 Now there was an evil spirit from the LORD on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing *the harp* with *his* hand.

10 Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, so that he stuck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night.

11a Then Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, in order to put him to death in the morning.

Deliver Me From My Enemies (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)
Psalm 59

For the choir director; set to *Al-tashheth.*

A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent *men* and they watched the house in order to kill him.

1   Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
     Set me *securely* on high away from those who rise up against me.

2   Deliver me from those who do iniquity
     And save me from men of bloodshed.

3   For behold, they have set an ambush for my life;
     Fierce men launch an attack against me,
     Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O LORD,

4   For no guilt of *mine*, they run and set themselves against me.
     Arouse Yourself to help me, and see!

5   You, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel,
     Awake to punish all the nations;
     Do not be gracious to any *who are* treacherous in iniquity. *Selah*.

6   They return at evening, they howl like a dog,
     And go around the city.

7   Behold, they belch forth with their mouth;
     Swords are in their lips,
     For, *they say*, "Who hears?"

8   But You, O LORD, laugh at them;

	You scoff at all the nations.
9	*Because of* his strength I will watch for You,
	For God is my stronghold.
10	My God in His lovingkindness will meet me;
	God will let me look *triumphantly* upon my foes.
11	Do not slay them, or my people will forget;
	Scatter them by Your power, and bring them down,
	O Lord, our shield.
12	*On account of* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips,
	Let them even be caught in their pride,
	And on account of curses and lies which they utter.
13	Destroy *them* in wrath, destroy *them* that they may be no more;
	That *men* may know that God rules in Jacob
	To the ends of the earth. *Selah*.
14	They return at evening, they howl like a dog,
	And go around the city.
15	They wander about for food
	And growl if they are not satisfied.
16	But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength;
	Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning,
	For You have been my stronghold
	And a refuge in the day of my distress.
17	O my strength, I will sing praises to You;
	For God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness.

David On the Run (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)
1 Samuel 19:11b–24

David's Wife Michal (Saul's Youngest Daughter) Helps Him Escape

11b But Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death."

12 So Michal let David down through a window, and he went out and fled and escaped.

13 Michal took the household idol and laid *it* on the bed, and put a quilt of goats' *hair* at its head, and covered *it* with clothes.

14 When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

15 Then Saul sent messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed, that I may put him to death."

16 When the messengers entered, behold, the household idol *was* on the bed with the quilt of goats' *hair* at its head.

17 So Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" And Michal said to Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I put you to death?'"

David Flees to Samuel

18 Now David fled and escaped and came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth.

19 It was told Saul, saying, "Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah."

20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David, but when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing *and* presiding over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul; and they also prophesied.

21 When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. So Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied.

22 Then he himself went to Ramah and came as far as the large well that is in Secu; and he asked and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And *someone* said, "Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah."

23 He proceeded there to Naioth in Ramah; and the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he went along prophesying continually until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 He also stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Chronological Notes

1) Several of the Psalms written by David have headings or titles that link them to a specific event in David's life. These Psalms have been included in the reading in their respective contexts. In chronological order, these Psalms are:

   - Psalm 59—when Saul sent men to watch David's house in order to kill him.
   - Psalm 56—when the Philistines captured him in Gath.
   - Psalm 34—when David pretended to be insane before Abimelech.
   - Psalm 142—when David was "in the cave" (assumed to be the Cave of Adullam mentioned in 1 Sam 22:1–2).
   - Psalm 52—when Doeg the Edomite betrayed David to Saul.
   - Psalm 54—after David was betrayed by the Ziphites.
   - Psalm 57—when David fled from Saul "into the cave" (assumed to be the caves of En Gedi in 1 Sam 23:26–24:2).
   - Psalm 51—when Nathan confronted David about his affair with Bathsheba.
   - Psalm 60—when David fought against Aram Naharaim, Aram Zobah and Edom (2 Sam 8:1–14; 10:16; 1 Chr 18:1–13).
   - Psalm 18—when God had rescued David from the power of all his enemies, including Saul (placed after David's wars).
   - Psalm 63—when David was in the Judean wilderness (assumed to be David's flight toward the Jordan during Absalom's revolt).
   - Psalm 3—when David fled from his son Absalom.

2) The following Psalms also having headings that link them to a specific event in David's life—however, there is not enough data to ensure certainty on a date:

   - Psalm 7—concerning a Benjaminite named Cush.
   - Psalm 30—a psalm which was used at the dedication of the "house" (often assumed to refer to the temple).