

## 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 as Saul watched David going out to fight the Philistine, he asked Abner, the general in command of the army, "Whose son is this young man, Abner?" Abner replied, "As surely as you live, O king, I don't know."

56 The king said, "Find out whose son this boy is!"

57 So when David returned from striking down the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul. He still had the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David replied, "I am the son of your servant Jesse in Bethlehem."

### Jonathan and David Become Close Friends

18:1 When David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan and David became bound together in close friendship. Jonathan loved David as much as he did his own life.

2 Saul retained David on that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

3 Jonathan made a covenant with David, for he loved him as much as he did his own life.

4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with the rest of his gear, including his sword, his bow, and even his belt.

### The Rift Between Saul and David Begins

5 On every mission on which Saul sent him, David achieved success. So Saul appointed him over the men of war. This pleased not only all the army, but also Saul's servants.

6 When the men arrived after David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women from all the cities of Israel came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul. They were happy as they played their tambourines and three-stringed instruments.

7 The women who were playing the music sang,

"Saul has struck down his thousands,  
but David his tens of thousands!"

8 This made Saul very angry. The statement displeased him and he thought, "They have attributed to David tens of thousands, but to me they have attributed only thousands. What does he lack, except the kingdom?"

9 So Saul was keeping an eye on David from that day onward.

### Saul Tries to Kill David

10 The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within his house. Now David was playing the lyre that day. There was a spear in Saul's hand,

11 and Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I'll nail David to the wall!" But David escaped from him on two different occasions.

12 So Saul feared David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

### God Gives David Success

13 Saul removed David from his presence and made him a commanding officer. David led the army out to battle and back.

14 Now David achieved success in all he did, for the LORD was with him.

15 When Saul saw how very successful he was, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he was the one leading them out to battle and back.

### Saul Schemes to Eliminate David

17 Then Saul said to David, "Here's my oldest daughter, Merab. I want to give her to you in marriage. Only be a brave warrior for me and fight the battles of the LORD." For Saul thought, "There's no need for me to raise my hand against him. Let it be the hand of the Philistines!"

18 David said to Saul, "Who am I? Who are my relatives or the clan of my father in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

19 When the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she instead was given in marriage to Adriel, who was from Meholah.

20 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul about this, it pleased him.

21 Saul said, "I will give her to him so that she may become a snare to him and the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Today is the second time for you to become my son-in-law."

22 Then Saul instructed his servants, "Tell David secretly, 'The king is pleased with you, and all his servants like you. So now become the king's son-in-law.'"

23 So Saul's servants spoke these words privately to David. David replied, "Is becoming the king's son-in-law something insignificant to you? I'm just a poor and lightly-esteemed man!"

24 When Saul's servants reported what David had said,

25 Saul replied, “Here is what you should say to David: ‘There is nothing that the king wants as a price for the bride except a hundred Philistine foreskins, so that he can be avenged of his enemies.’” (Now Saul was thinking that he could kill David by the hand of the Philistines.)

26 So his servants told David these things and David agreed to become the king’s son-in-law. Now the specified time had not yet expired

27 when David, along with his men, went out and struck down two hundred Philistine men. David brought their foreskins and presented all of them to the king so he could become the king’s son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

28 When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David,

29 Saul became even more afraid of him. Saul continued to be at odds with David from then on.

30 Then the leaders of the Philistines would march out, and as often as they did so, David achieved more success than all of Saul’s servants. His name was held in high esteem.

#### **Jonathan Persuades Saul to Stop Trying to Kill David**

19:1 Then Saul told his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Saul’s son Jonathan liked David very much.

2 So Jonathan told David, “My father Saul is trying to kill you. So be careful tomorrow morning. Find a hiding place and stay in seclusion.

3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are. I will speak about you to my father. When I find out what the problem is, I will let you know.”

4 So Jonathan spoke on David’s behalf to his father Saul. He said to him, “The king should not sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you. On the contrary, his actions have been very beneficial for you.

5 He risked his life when he struck down the Philistine and the LORD gave all Israel a great victory. When you saw it, you were happy. So why would you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death for no reason?”

6 Saul accepted Jonathan’s advice and took an oath, “As surely as the LORD lives, he will not be put to death.”

7 Then Jonathan called David and told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as he had done formerly.

#### **Saul Again Tries to Kill David**

8 Now once again there was war. So David went out to fight the Philistines. He defeated them thoroughly and they ran away from him.

9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul. He was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing the lyre.

10 Saul tried to nail David to the wall with the spear, but he escaped from Saul’s presence and the spear drove into the wall. David escaped quickly that night.

11a Saul sent messengers to David’s house to guard it and to kill him in the morning.

## **Deliver Me From My Enemies (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

Psalm 59

*For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;*

**A prayer of David, written when Saul sent men to surround his house and murder him.**

1 Deliver me from my enemies, my God!  
Protect me from those who attack me!

2 Deliver me from evildoers!  
Rescue me from violent men!

3 For look, they wait to ambush me;  
powerful men stalk me,  
but not because I have rebelled or sinned, O LORD.

4 Though I have done nothing wrong, they are anxious to attack.  
Spring into action and help me! Take notice of me!

5 You, O LORD God, the invincible warrior, the God of Israel,  
rouse yourself and punish all the nations!  
Have no mercy on any treacherous evildoers! (Selah)

6 They return in the evening;  
they growl like a dog  
and prowl around outside the city.

7 Look, they hurl insults at me  
and openly threaten to kill me,  
for they say, “Who hears?”

8 But you, O LORD, laugh in disgust at them;

- you taunt all the nations.
- 9 You are my source of strength! I will wait for you!  
For God is my refuge.
- 10 The God who loves me will help me;  
God will enable me to triumph over my enemies.
- 11 Do not strike them dead suddenly,  
because then my people might forget the lesson.  
Use your power to make them homeless vagabonds and then bring them down,  
O Lord who shields us!
- 12 They speak sinful words.  
So let them be trapped by their own pride  
and by the curses and lies they speak!
- 13 Angrily wipe them out! Wipe them out so they vanish!  
Let them know that God rules  
in Jacob and to the ends of the earth! (Selah)
- 14 They return in the evening;  
they growl like a dog  
and prowl around outside the city.
- 15 They wander around looking for something to eat;  
they refuse to sleep until they are full.
- 16 As for me, I will sing about your strength;  
I will praise your loyal love in the morning.  
For you are my refuge  
and my place of shelter when I face trouble.
- 17 You are my source of strength! I will sing praises to you!  
For God is my refuge, the God who loves me.

### 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 Then David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save yourself tonight, tomorrow you will be dead!"
- 12 So Michal lowered David through the window, and he ran away and escaped.
- 13 Then Michal took a household idol and put it on the bed. She put a quilt made of goat's hair over its head and then covered the idol with a garment.
- 14 When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, "He's sick."
- 15 Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed so I can kill him."
- 16 When the messengers came, they found only the idol on the bed and the quilt made of goat's hair at its head.
- 17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me this way by sending my enemy away? Now he has escaped!" Michal replied to Saul, "He said to me, 'Help me get away or else I will kill you!'"

#### David Flees to Samuel

- 18 Now David had run away and escaped. He went to Samuel in Ramah and told him everything that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth.
- 19 It was reported to Saul saying, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."
- 20 So Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw a company of prophets prophesying with Samuel standing there as their leader, the spirit of God came upon Saul's messengers, and they also prophesied.
- 21 When it was reported to Saul, he sent more messengers, but they prophesied too. So Saul sent messengers a third time, but they also prophesied.
- 22 Finally Saul himself went to Ramah. When he arrived at the large cistern that is in Secu, he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" They said, "At Naioth in Ramah."
- 23 So Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. The Spirit of God came upon him as well, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.
- 24 He even stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel. He lay there naked all that day and night. (For that reason it is asked, "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).