

Bible Stories

DAVID & SAUL

1 Samuel 18:6-7

November 19, 2022

After David defeated Goliath, Saul did not allow David to return home – because David did not swear loyalty to him. Even so, there's no doubt that Saul felt some gratitude toward David. After all, David was Saul's favorite musician and he had taken care of the "*Goliath Problem*," but Saul's gratitude lasted about a minute. The reason? Overnight David became the hero of the story and more popular than Saul - listen:

- **1 Samuel 18:6-7** - And 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 And the women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands."

David was now a threat – not only to Saul personally, but more importantly, to Saul's monarchy ---- remember the words of Samuel:

- **1 Samuel 15:28** - The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you.

Was David **THAT** neighbor? Was David **BETTER** than Saul?

The truth was David posed no threat to Saul. He was content to let Yahweh work out the details of what He had promised.

However, as David's popularity increased, the more afraid and paranoid Saul became. Paranoid people look for problems where none exist, and that's exactly what Saul did.

- **1 Samuel 18:8-9** - 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 And Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

Saul recognized that Yahweh was now with David and from that time until his death, Saul would seek to kill David:

- While David played his harp during one of Saul's violent episodes – Saul threw his spear hoping to pin David to the wall – David escaped.
- Saul promoted David to a commander in the army in charge of 1000 men – simply to get him out of the house – but this backfired because, "**David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD was with him. When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly, he dreaded him. But all Israel and Judah loved David....**" 1 Samuel 18:14-16
- Hoping that the Philistines would do his "*wet*" work for him, Saul offered David his eldest daughter (Merab) in marriage if he would go out and "*valiantly*" fight the Philistines – David declined, thinking himself not worthy enough to be the king's son-in-law. Saul then used the knowledge that his youngest daughter, Michal, loved David, to suggest that David marry her instead – again David humbly declined – so Saul sweetened the deal. "**I won't ask for a dowry.**" Saul said, "**Just bring me 100 Philistine foreskins.**" Once again hoping the Philistines would take care of his "*David Problem*." David thought this was a great idea – He and his men brought back **200** Philistine foreskins!!!

Foiled again!! What is it going to take to kill this guy?!

Still looking for someone to do his dirty work, Saul went to Jonathan and told him to kill David.

This order put Jonathan in a difficult position.

He loved his father, and as the heir-apparent, he should have done everything in his power to protect his own future, but David was his best friend. And if that wasn't reason enough to protect David, the fact that Jonathan had made a covenant with and sworn loyalty to David....

- **1 Samuel 18:3-4** - Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his *own* soul. ⁴ Jonathan stripped off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his fighting attire, and even his sword, his bow, and his belt.

.... made it impossible for him to carry out his father's wishes. So, instead of killing him, Jonathan told David to hide, while he attempted to make intercession on his behalf. Jonathan went to Saul:

- **1 Samuel 19:4-5** – "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?"

Jonathan was successful. Saul changed his mind - swore that David would not be killed - and restored him to his former position as court musician.

All good things must come to an end, however, and so it was that the peace between Saul and David ended when war broke out between Israel and the Philistines.

- **1 Samuel 19:8-18** - David went out and fought with the Philistines, and defeated them with great slaughter, so that they fled before him.

This is not going to end well..... for David.

Saul was in a torment once again, but it was more than that. Anger and fear and paranoia boiled over in Saul's heart. So, while David played his harp, Saul contemplated the dark thoughts creeping into his mind as he toyed with the spear in his hand. Maybe this time.....

Saul threw the spear, hoping to pin David to the wall, but he missed – again – and the spear hit the wall instead. David escaped and ran out into the night.

There was no going back this time. Saul had slipped off the cliff and David would never be safe , not even in his own home.

Saul instructed messengers to go to David's home to ensure that he remained at there until the morning, at which time Saul would have David killed.

However, Michal, David's wife – and Saul's daughter, told David, **"If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death."**

Michal helped David escape out an upper floor window. He ran out into the night and went to Samuel at Ramah.

Meanwhile..... Michal took the household idol, put it in the bed, placed some goat hair on its head, and covered it with David's clothes.

When Saul's messengers pounded on the door the next morning, Michal told them David was sick and couldn't be disturbed. Saul sent more men and told them to bring David – bed and all – to him **IMMEDIATELY** because David must die.

All they found was an idol wearing a goat's hair wig.....

Saul: *Daughter, why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go?*

Michal: *It was his idea, father. He said, 'let me go – why should I be put to death?'*

David arrived at Ramah and told Samuel everything that had happened. Knowing that Ramah was no longer safe for either of them, Samuel and David went to Naioth.

What do we do with this story?

I think what we see is the unmistakable contrast between Saul and David and how choices led them in opposite directions.

Saul's choices led him down a very dark path that brought only fear, anger and paranoia. Saul saw David as a threat because it was so obvious that Yahweh was blessing David and even though Yahweh had declared that Saul's kingdom would not last, Saul was determined to keep the crown even if it meant murder.

David, on the other hand, sought the heart of God and left the details up to Him. David chose loyalty to God first and served Saul to the best of his ability even when it was not in his best interest to do so – even putting his life in danger rather than taking matters into his own hands.