

1 Samuel (Sh'mu'el Alef)

Scripture quotations are taken from the Jubilee Bible (or Biblia del Jubileo), copyright © 2000, 2001, 2010, 2013 by LIFE SENTENCE Publishing, LLC. Used by permission of LIFE SENTENCE Publishing, LLC, Abbotsford, Wisconsin. All rights reserved. Study produced by Lanny Townsend.

Chapter 19

1 And Saul spoke to Jonathan, his son, and to all his slaves that they should kill David.¹

2 But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David, and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul, my father, seeks to kill thee: now, therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning and abide in a secret place and hide thyself.

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art,² and I will speak with my father of thee, and what I see, that I will tell thee.

4 And Jonathan spoke good of David unto Saul, his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his slave David, for he has not sinned against thee; on the other hand his works have been very good for thee,

5 for he put his soul in his hand and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel. Thou didst see it and rejoice. Why then wilt thou sin against innocent blood to slay David without a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, As the LORD lives, he shall not be slain.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past.

8 ¶ And there was war again, and David went out and fought with the Philistines and slew them with a great slaughter, and they fled from him.³

9 And the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand, and David played with his hand.

10 And Saul sought to smite David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, who smote the spear into the wall; and David fled and escaped that night.⁴

11 ¶ Saul also sent messengers unto David's house to watch him and to slay him in the morning.⁵ But Micha (Mikhal), David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be dead.⁶

¹ As Benson points out in his commentary, Saul thought that Jonathan's love for him would overcome his love for David and that he would carry out his orders. Also, it was supposed that Jonathan would want to protect his own claim to the throne. It was the providence of God that Saul thought this, as it alerted Jonathan to Saul's plans, whereby he could warn David of what was brewing.

² Jonathan knew that treachery was so far from David's heart that he had no qualms about instructing him to be in a place where David could have easily killed both him and Saul, if he was of that mind, as they would have been the only people there.

³ Jonathan pacified his father, but Saul's jealousy arose again when David accomplished a great victory. The public was lauding David's praises, and Saul's heart burned with envy that it was David whom they praised, instead of him, as in the past.

⁴ It wasn't enough, this time, to just get out of the room. David had to leave the palace. He knew that much, but he didn't want to believe that Saul was determined to kill him. He wanted to think that this was just another fit and the anger against him would wear off.

12 So Michal let David down through a window,⁷ and he went and fled and escaped.

13 Then Michal took an image⁸ and laid it in the bed and put a pillow of goats' hair at his head⁹ and covered it with a cloth.¹⁰

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.¹¹

⁵ God has put it into Saul's head to wait until morning to kill him. This gave him time to get away. One would think that a murderous king, in the throes of his hatred, would want to have David killed without any further delay.

⁶ David told Michal of her father's attempt to kill him, and she knew from his attempts to use her against David that he was serious about following through. It wasn't just a fit of madness that would wear off. Saul's children knew him best. It is too bad, though, that, of all Saul's children, only Jonathan and Michal were concerned enough about saving David's life to do something about it. He was a national hero, a righteous man, and their brother-in-law, but there is no record that they helped to preserve his life.

⁷ Saul probably thought that Michal would keep David at their house that night, regardless that she had resisted all his previous attempts to get her to set up traps for her husband. She very well could have prevented him from leaving. The servants were likely loyal to the king, not wanting to run afoul of he who had the power to arrest them. They would have supported Michal, the king's daughter, if she had told them to bind her husband.

There is no record that any of them left the house, to share David's troubles with him. Saul would not have overlooked interrogating them when David escaped. Michal had to put on an act for her servants that David was ill, and not involve any of them in the escape, not only to effect it, but also to prevent them from being implicated.

⁸ Michal is not of a woman who trusts God. She secretly kept images of idols to try to obtain blessing, as many do who occupy positions of power. They may ask prayer of Christians, to "harness their energy," but they seek to prosper through demonic lines of power, as well.

David probably did not know about her idols. He who stood up to Goliath was not likely to tolerate such things in his home, even if his wife was the king's daughter. Michal put this idol in his bed after he left the house.

She probably used it to create the shape of his form because of the power she thought was in it, thinking that it would grant her good success in saving her husband's life. God granted success, in spite of Michal's lack of faith in Him and her disobedience, because He wanted David to escape.

⁹ The pillow of goat's hair was probably supposed to resemble his beard, sticking out from beneath the cloth, so that it would look like he had a cold, wet cloth on his head to bring down a fever. The goat's hair would have been reddish in colour.

¹⁰ Michal would have had a pan of water sitting by the bed, probably bottles of ointment and potions, as well, to give the appearance of attending to a sick man. It would not be uncommon for a princess to attend to her husband alone, for women of rank tended to know a lot about herbs and how to make medicines. It was a hobby among them, as well as considered part of the duty of the lady of the house to know how to take care of her family and her servants when they were ill, though she would not have waited on servants as attentively as she would wait on her husband.

Also, people in the mideast tend to sleep with their heads covered, particularly if they are taking a nap out of doors, to shield themselves from the glare of the sun. Michal would have folded back the cloth to show Saul's messengers the hair of the goatskin cushion, in pretence of uncovering David's hair.

¹¹ The officers who came to arrest David must have peeked into the room and seen him apparently lying in bed. They did not think that the king's own daughter would lie to them. They probably supposed, from having observed her prior to this time, that her rank meant more to her than her husband. It did ultimately mean more to her than

15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed that I may slay him.¹²

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed with a pillow of goats' hair at his head.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so and sent away my enemy that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; if not, I shall kill thee.¹³

18 ¶ So David fled and escaped and came to Samuel in Ramah¹⁴ and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.¹⁵

19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.¹⁶

20 And Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.¹⁷

David did, for she stayed with her father, rather than escape and rejoin David, but, at this point, Michal may have thought that her father would cool down after a while and it would be safe for David to return.

¹² Saul was so vexed by David's success that he wanted to kill him by his own hand, regardless that he had no just cause for it and it would cause a great public outcry, as well as make him lose some of his valiant officers. He was so far gone in malice that he didn't care how it would cause many of the Israelites to turn against him, even more so if he were to kill a sick man who was lying helpless on a cot.

Saul wasn't totally stupid, though. In order to think that he could get away with this, he must have had his agents spreading lies about David, to change the public's opinion of David with false rumours.

¹³ Saul probably did not believe that David had threatened to kill Michal, but since that was her story, he could capitalize on it. He could act like he believed it, expressing outrage, and use it to blacken David's name, alleging that David abused his wife. He could push through a divorce for her daughter, saying that David beat her and threatened to kill her, and was not worthy to be part of his family. Michal chose to play along with it, as her father would otherwise charge her with sedition and aiding and abetting his enemy, and put her in prison, possibly even have her executed. At least, he would threaten to, and use that as bait to lure David into a trap.

It was through weakness that Michal told this lie. She was not a woman of faith. It put an unjust blot on David's character, which she should not have done, even to save her life. As it had been wrong for Abraham and Sarah to lie about Sarah's relationship to Abraham, Michal should have told the truth and trusted God.

¹⁴ Because the Lord was David's refuge, he sought advice and prayer from Samuel, a man of God.

¹⁵ This is probably when Samuel told David that he was chosen to be the next king. He undoubtedly mentored him in spiritual things during the time that they spent together.

¹⁶ Naioth was not a place. It means "dwellings" and refers to the buildings that housed the school of the prophets in a secluded place near Ramah. It may have had a hiding place in it, perhaps some tunnels or a secret chamber. Or it could be that Samuel and David hoped that the school's reputation as a respected and sacred place would discourage Saul from violating it and thus incurring the outrage of the public.

¹⁷ The messengers kept returning without David because, after the Spirit of God came upon them, they knew that they would be fighting against God, if they arrested David. I wonder if they prophesied that he would be king, and if they joined his band afterwards.

22 Then he also went to Ramah and came to a great well that is in Sechu (Sekhu), and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah.

23 And he went there to Naioth in Ramah, and the Spirit of God came upon him also, and he went on and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 And he stripped off his clothes also and prophesied before Samuel in like manner and lay down naked all that day and all that night.¹⁸ From here it was said, Is Saul also among the prophets?¹⁹

¹⁸ God can most certainly protect His people, even if the most evil baddie of them all comes to do their wicked deeds in person.

¹⁹ This idiom probably means that, just because someone does something good once, it doesn't mean that they do it all the time. It is not according to their character, so don't trust them, just because they did someone a good turn. It may be a little ray of light, some evidence of some goodness in them, that needs to be encouraged, or it may be that they had a selfish motive for doing a good deed or participating in a religious exercise. Caution needs to be exercised in both cases.