

FIRST SAMUEL

Chapter 19

Saul Tries to Kill David

And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. 2 And Jonathan told David, "Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide yourself. 3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything I will tell you." 4 And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have brought good to you. 5 For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and the LORD worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?" 6 And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan. Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death." 7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before. 8 And there was war again. And David went out and fought with the Philistines and struck them with a great blow, so that they fled before him. 9 Then a harmful spirit from the LORD came upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing the lyre. 10 And Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night. 11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." 12 So Michal let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped. 13 Michal took an image and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goats' hair at its head and covered it with the clothes. 14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." 15 Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." 16 And when the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair at its head. 17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me thus and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go. Why should I kill you?'" 18 Now David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and lived at Naioth. 19 And it was told Saul, "Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah." 20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head 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. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. 22 Then he himself went to Ramah and came to the great well that is in Secu. And he asked, "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 as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

19:1 *to kill David.* Saul now abandons his indirect attempts on David's life (see 18:13, 17, 25) and adopts a more direct approach, leading to David's departure from the court and from service to Saul (see vv. 12, 18; 20:42). (CSB)

Saul's attendants, not Jonathan's. Saul plots to kill David. (TLSB)

delighted. Describes laughter, pleasure, and enjoyment. (TLSB)

19:2–7 Here we see the strength of Jonathan’s devotion to David, a friendship free of all selfish motives. (TLSB)

19:4 *Jonathan spoke well of David.* Jonathan does not let his own personal ambition distort his perception of David’s true theocratic spirit. (CSB)

True friends speak well of each other and put the best construction on the other’s actions, as Jonathan does concerning David to his father. (TLSB)

19:5 *the LORD worked.* Jonathan’s faith in God shines forth in the words of this verse. He saw the blessings God brought to all Israel through David’s victory over Goliath. (TLSB)

innocent blood. To kill an innocent person such as David is to be guilty of a terrible sin (Dt 21:8–9). (TLSB)

19:6 *As the LORD lives.* Saul makes another religious oath he has no intention of keeping (cf 14:24–44). (TLSB)

19:8–10 Repeats events of 18:10–11. (TLSB)

19:11 *messengers.* Sometimes assigned to do evil tasks, like assassinate a ruler’s rival. (TLSB)

morning. Ps 59 gives insight on how David felt at the time. Saul sought to kill David at dawn; God’s love preserved David in the morning (Ps 59:16). (TLSB)

Michal ... told him. Her first allegiance is to her husband, David, not to her father. (TLSB)

19:12 *through the window.* For similar escapes see Jos 2:15; Ac 9:25. (CSB)

19:13 *idol.* In this case, the image appears life-sized. (TLSB)

19:14 Michal engages in this deception so her husband cannot be caught by Saul’s henchmen. Her deception is reported matter-of-factly, without praise or censure. It is part of the drama of the story and does not endorse lying. (TLSB)

19:17 *enemy.* Saul has been employing an escalation of negative terms for David; first time he refers to him as his enemy. (TLSB)

19:18 David goes to Samuel for sanctuary, strength, and courage to face threats to his life. (TLSB)

Ramah. Samuel’s home. (CSB)

In Ephraim. (TLSB)

Naioth. Means “habitations” or “dwellings.” The term appears to designate a complex of houses in a certain section of Ramah where a company of prophets resided (see vv. 19–20, 22–23). (CSB)

Near Ramah, short distance north of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

19:20 *company of prophets.* Prophets often lodged together with fellow prophets. The Spirit of God protects David by causing Saul’s messengers to prophesy under a divinely induced trance. (TLSB)

19:22 *Secu.* C 3 mi N of Ramah. (TLSB)

19:23–24 *stripped off.* In contrast to his messengers (vv 20–21), Saul behaves esp strangely. He takes off his royal robes as though casting aside his royal office. He has lost all control of himself. (TLSB)

Is Saul also among the prophets? Demands a negative reply. To question Saul's behavior as a prophet is to question his legitimacy as king. (TLSB)

19:24 *He Inaked all that day.* Saul was so overwhelmed by the power of the Spirit of God that he was prevented from carrying out his intention to take David's life. His frustrated attempts to kill David—his own inability to harm David and the thwarting of his plans by Jonathan's loyalty, by Michal's deception and by David's own cleverness—all reach their climax here. (CSB)

Is Saul also among the prophets? This second occasion reinforced the first (see 10:11 and note). Its repetition underscores how alien Saul's spirit was from that of these zealous servants of the Lord. (CSB)

Ch 19 Saul's hatred for David results in his attempts to murder him, but the Lord intervenes through Saul's own children. "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1Jn 3:15). Ask God to remove hatred from your heart and cleanse it by His gift of forgiveness. "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Ps 32:1). • Thank You, Lord, that You forgive my sins and remember them no more. Amen. (TLSB)