

The Life of David

David and God's Protection

1 Samuel 19:1-24

Rev. Freddy Fritz

June 16, 2019

David and God's Protection

Scripture

Because of Saul's disobedience to the Lord, God rejected him as king over Israel. God chose David instead, and the Prophet Samuel anointed David as the future king over Israel. Some time after this, David killed Goliath, and the armies of Israel routed the armies of the Philistines. Then, Saul's son, Jonathan, became a life-long friend of David, and basically abdicated his right of succession to his father's throne in favor of David. Meanwhile, Saul became extremely jealous of David, and for the rest of his life he tried to kill David. But God, in his marvelous providence, protected David from Saul's numerous attempts to kill him.

Let's read about God's protection of David in 1 Samuel 19:1-24:

¹And 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. ²And 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. ³And 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." ⁴And 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. ⁵For 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. ²¹When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. ²²Then 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.” ²³And 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. ²⁴And 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?” (1 Samuel 19:1-24)

Introduction

Question 11 of *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* asks, “What are God’s works of providence?” The answer given is: “God’s works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving, and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.”¹ If we have memorized this answer, or even if we are vaguely familiar with this answer, many of us struggle with the truth that God is in providential control over all things. Perhaps we have been duped by those who tell us that when we become Christians, then all our troubles will go away and life will be wonderful for us. But, if we have been a Christian for *any* length of time, we know that being a Christian does not mean a trouble-free life.

One day, young David was minding his own business

¹ *The Westminster Shorter Catechism: With Scripture Proofs*, 3rd edition. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996).

while watching his father's sheep on the outskirts of Bethlehem when he was summoned by the Prophet Samuel, who anointed him as the next king over Israel. A short time later, David was conscripted into King Saul's service. It was not long before Saul became insanely jealous of David and tried to have him killed on a multitude of occasions. Yet, through all his difficulties, David entrusted himself to God's providential care.

As mentioned earlier, God had rejected Saul as king over Israel, and had chosen David to become the future king over Israel. Nevertheless, Saul was still the reigning king and David had yet to begin his reign. By setting himself against God's anointed, Saul was in fact opposing God himself.

Lesson

1 Samuel 19:1-24 shows us how God providentially saved David from Saul's attacks.

Let's use the following outline:

1. David Was Saved from Saul by Jonathan (19:1-7)
2. David Was Saved from Saul by Elusion (19:8-10)
3. David Was Saved from Saul by Michal (19:11-17)
4. David Was Saved from Saul by the Spirit of God (19:18-24)

I. **David Was Saved from Saul by Jonathan (19:1-7)**

First, David was saved from Saul by Jonathan.

The last time we saw Jonathan, he essentially abdicated his right to rule as the next king over Israel, and had privately committed himself to David in bond of covenant friendship. That bond was about to be tested. Saul no longer secretly tried to have David killed. **Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to**

all his servants, that they should kill David (19:1a). However, Saul knew nothing of Jonathan's covenant friendship with David. In fact, **Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David** (19:1b). The friendship between Jonathan and David was deep, and took precedence over being **"Saul's son."**

But, instead of killing David, **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. 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"** (19:2-3). Jonathan volunteered to be a go-between between David and his father, Saul.

By going to Saul and speaking to him on David's behalf, Jonathan was doing something very risky. He did not know how Saul would react to a plea on David's behalf. But, he was willing to take that risk. Moreover, Jonathan had thought carefully about what he would say to Saul. **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. 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?"** (19:4-5). Jonathan courageously said that his father would **"sin"** if he killed David **"without cause."**

Surprisingly, **Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan.** In fact, **Saul swore, "As the Lord lives, David shall not be put to death"** (19:6). For the time, disaster had been averted.

So, **Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to him all these things** (19:7a). Then, **Jonathan brought David**

to Saul, and he was in his presence as before (19:7b).

God used Jonathan to spare David from Saul. Jonathan spoke boldly and clearly to Saul that what he wanted to do was sinful. Do we speak up when we notice sin or injustice?

II. David Was Saved from Saul by Elusion (19:8-10)

Second, David was saved from Saul by elusion.

We don't know how much time elapsed between verse 7 and verse 8. It could have been days, or it could have been months. Nevertheless, sooner or later, **there was war again.** David was Saul's go-to commander to win a victory over the enemies of Israel. **And David went out and fought with the Philistines and struck them with a great blow, so that they fled before him (19:8).** David then returned to Saul.

Then a harmful spirit from the Lord came upon Saul (19:9a). This is actually the third time that a harmful spirit from the Lord has afflicted Saul (see 16:14-23; 18:10-11). Since the Lord is not the author of evil, he simply permitted the harmful spirit to afflict Saul. This harmful spirit came upon Saul **as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand,** while **David was playing the lyre (19:9b).** Since Saul had previously tried to kill David with a spear, David was watching Saul very closely while playing the lyre. Then, **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 (19:10).** David never again returned to Saul's court. For the rest of his life, David would be on the run from Saul, eluding his murderous intentions and actions.

God providentially protected David by enabling him to elude the spear that Saul threw at him. We live in a culture where many who are opposed to God and the things of God.

Let us be aware of their opposition to God, and also of their evil intentions toward God and the people of God. For example, when someone wants you to do something that is clearly a violation of God's law, elude that invitation as David eluded the spear of Saul.

III. David Was Saved from Saul by Michal (19:11-17)

Third, David was saved from Saul by Michal.

After eluding Saul's spear and fleeing from him by escaping into the night, David went to his own home. But Saul was filled with murderous intention, and he **sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill him in the morning** (19:11a). We are not told why Saul did not send his soldiers in to the house to get David, but he did not. Perhaps he was concerned what people might think of him.

But Michal, David's wife, somehow knew what was going on and so she **told him, "If you do not escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed"** (19:11b). Maybe Saul had sent word to her, thinking that she would be loyal to him. Or maybe she knew what the watching messengers meant because she had grown up in Saul's house. Whatever, the case, **Michal let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped** (19:12). Then, **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** (19:13). The word that is translated as **"image"** really means "idol" or "household god." Apparently, David's marriage to Michal was mixed, in that she did not worship the Lord. A. W. Pink notes in his commentary, "From a natural viewpoint Michal's fidelity to her husband was commendable, but from a spiritual standpoint her deceit and falsehood was reprehensible." He goes on to

say, “The one who commits his cause and case unto the Lord, *trusting* also in Him to bring to pass His own wise purpose and that which shall be for his own highest good (Ps. 37:5), has no need to resort unto tricks and deceits.”² It is also worth noting that eventually David’s marriage to Michal failed, perhaps because Michal was not committed to the Lord as David.

The next morning Saul sent messengers to take David by force. But Michal said that he was sick. When the messengers reported this to Saul, he told them to bring David to him, bed and all! That is when the messengers discovered that they had been deceived with the image in the bed. Saul confronted Michal and asked her why she let David escape. She lied to her father that David threatened her with death, which, of course, David did not do (see 19:14-17).

This time God protected David from Saul by his daughter Michal. Even though she lied, God used even her lies to protect David. We think of Rahab lying to protect the spies. Even though lying is morally wrong, the Bible simply records the lies of people like Rahab and Michal. Had they told the truth, God would have found another way to protect the Israelites and David. Nevertheless, God used even their lies to protect them.

IV. David Was Saved from Saul by the Spirit of God (19:18-24)

And finally, David was saved from Saul by the Spirit of God.

Now David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him (19:18a). David went to Samuel because he knew that Samuel

² Arthur Walkington Pink, *The Life of David* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2005), 1 Sa 19.

was a man of God. Interestingly, Ramah was only about two miles from Saul's home in Gibeah. So, David did not go very far from Saul. **And David and Samuel went and lived at Naioth** (19:18b). We don't know the exact location of Naioth. Most likely, it was a suburb of Ramah, and was the name of the seminary similar to Elisha's school of the prophets.

What happened next is one of the strangest accounts of the Spirit of God in all of Scripture. Three times Saul sent messengers to take David captive, and three times the messengers **“prophesied”** (19:20-21). The nature of this “prophecy” seems to have been some kind of prophetic ecstasy produced by the Spirit of God. Finally, in frustration, Saul himself went to take David captive. **And the Spirit of God came upon him also, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah** (19:23b). Moreover, **he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night** (19:24a). Saul was utterly humiliated by this experience, as the people of Israel asked mockingly, **“Is Saul also among the prophets?”** (19:24b).

Normally, in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God came upon various individuals to equip them with power to perform or speak God's will. Here, however, in this instance, the Spirit of God did not give Saul and his messengers power but in fact robbed them of power.

In this way, God providentially protected David from Saul and the harm that he intended to cause David.

Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed 1 Samuel 19:1-24, we should trust God's providential care for us in every difficult circumstance we face.

King Saul had become fiercely jealous and murderously opposed to David. Few of us will ever face the kind of opposition that David faced.

Nevertheless, we all find ourselves in difficulty or trial or hardship from time to time. David modeled trust in God's providential care for him, even in the most difficult of circumstances. We would do much better in each difficulty if we really believed the answer given to *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* Question 11: "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving, and governing all his creatures, and all their actions."

In his book titled, *A Sweet and Bitter Providence*, John Piper writes this about God's providence:

Life is not a straight line leading from one blessing to the next and then finally to heaven. Life is a winding and troubled road. Switchback after switchback. And the point of biblical stories like Joseph and Job and Esther and Ruth is to help us feel in our bones (not just know in our heads) that God is for us in all these strange turns. God is not just showing up after the trouble and cleaning it up. He is plotting the course and managing the troubles with far-reaching purposes for our good and for the glory of Jesus Christ.³

Are you in a difficult place right now? Are you experience trials or hardships or pains or circumstances that are really difficult? Let me urge you to trust in God and his loving, providential care of you every moment of every day. Amen.

³ John Piper, *A Sweet and Bitter Providence* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books & Bibles, 2010), 101-102.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church
is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ
and membership in his church family,
develop them to Christlike maturity,
equip them for their ministry in the church
and life mission in the world,
in order to magnify God's name.*

Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can
be found at:

1. www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons.
2. www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp.
3. www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=Fred-dyFritz.

Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church (PCA)

Answers for Life!

Address: 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647

Telephone: (813) 973-2484

Fax: (813) 973-4673

Email: Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org

Web site: www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org