

Exegetical Notes – 1 Samuel 19:1-10

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1 Samuel 19:1-10

Verses 1-3

¹ Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David ² and warned him, “My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. ³ I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I’ll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out.”

- Saul became jealous of David. His jealousy made him fear David. His fear caused him to act out and try to kill David by throwing his spear at David twice with the intention of killing him. Saul tried to put David in dangerous circumstances to have David killed. But all Saul’s attempts to kill David failed.
- This chapter opens with Saul giving his son Jonathan, and all those who attended him, a direct order to kill David. Saul wanted David dead. His order to kill David made his wishes clear and open.
- But Jonathan, the crown prince, Saul’s first born son, and David’s friend, warned David of his father’s intention. He told David to hide himself in a certain field where King Saul would be the next morning. He told David that he would speak to his father about the situation and then tell David how things went with the king. Jonathan’s hope was to be an intermediary between his father, the king, and his best friend, David.

Verses 4-7

⁴ Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly. ⁵ He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The LORD won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?”⁶ Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: “As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be put to death.”⁷ So Jonathan called David and

told him the whole conversation. He brought him to Saul, and David was with Saul as before.

- David hid in the field and Jonathan spoke to his father reminding him of all the good things David had done in the king's service. He pleaded with his father not to harm David.
- Saul listened to Jonathan and appeared to accept his son's argument. He swore an oath on YHWH's name that he would not kill David. His repentance was, or seemed, genuine.

Verses 8-10

⁸ Once more war broke out, and David went out and fought the Philistines. He struck them with such force that they fled before him.⁹ But an evil spirit from the LORD came on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the lyre,¹⁰ Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape.

- Sometime later, war broke out between Israel and the Philistines. David was sent out to lead Israel's troops, which he did successfully.
- The evil spirit which came on Saul before returned. He was again jealous of David's success and became fearful that David would seize the kingdom.
- Once again, while David was playing his harp to soothe the king, Saul tried to kill David by throwing his spear at him. The evil spirit returned and again Saul listened to the spirit's voice.
- That night, David decided that it was no longer safe for him to remain at Saul's court, so he left. Things are now broken between Saul and David.

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