

# 1 Samuel 19 Commentary

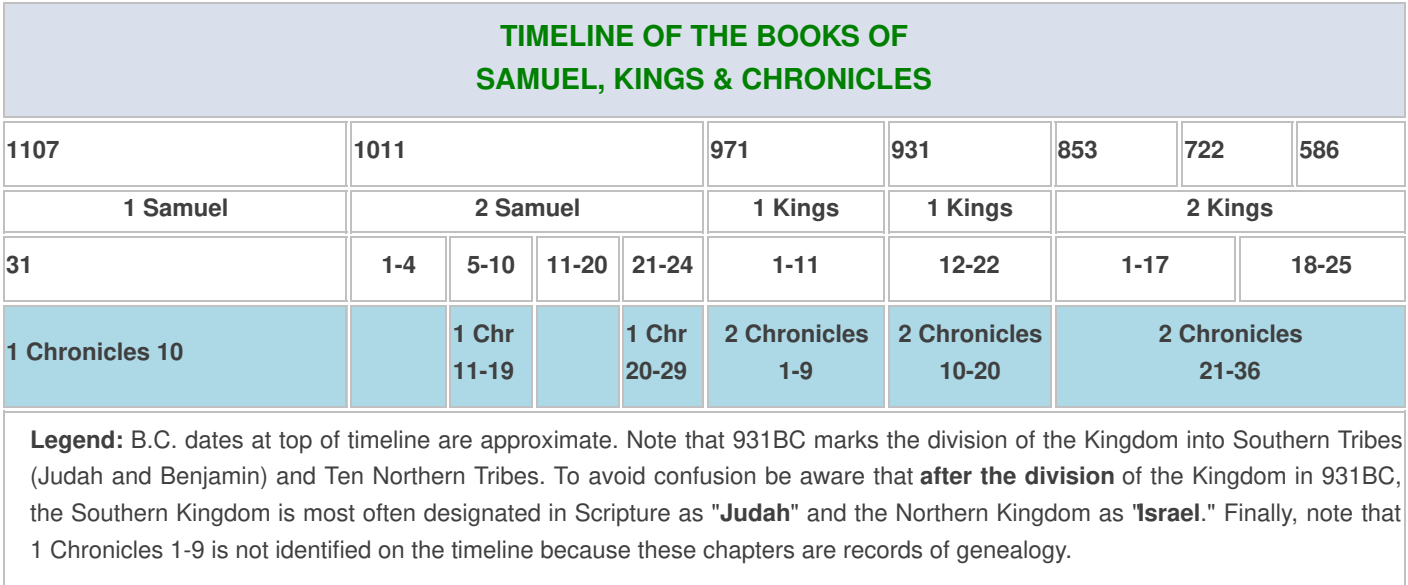
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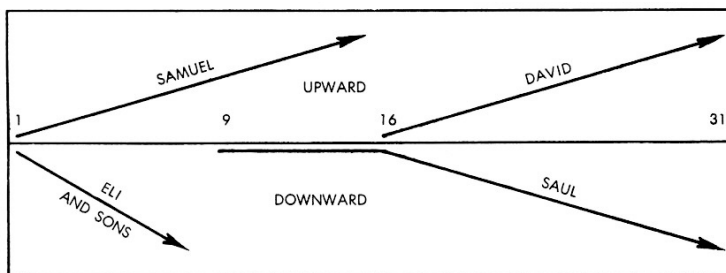
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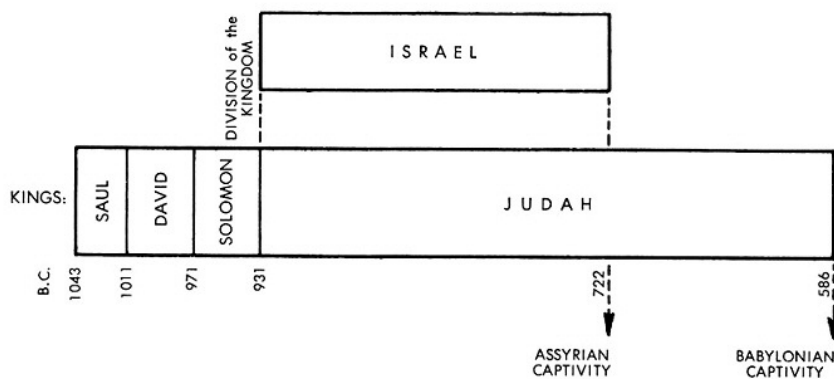
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1 Samuel Chart from Charles Swindoll



Map on Left [ESV Global Study Bible](#), on right [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#)  
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Overlappings in 1 Samuel



First Three Kings of Israel

1	9	16	31
SAMUEL —prophet, priest, judge	SAUL —man after man's heart	DAVID —man after God's heart	
—birth —childhood —judgeship	—choice —reign —rejection	—anointing —pursuit —exile	

Main Characters in 1 Samuel

**1 Samuel 19:1 Now Saul told Jonathan his son and all his servants to put David to death. But Jonathan, Saul's son, greatly delighted in David.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:1 κα λησεν Σαουλ πρς Ιωναθαν τν υ ν α το κα πρς πντας το ς πα δας α το θανατσαι τν Δαυιδ κα Ιωναθαν υ ς Σαουλ ρε το τν Δαυιδ σφ δρα

LXE 1 Samuel 19:1 And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, to slay David.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:1 And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

NET 1 Samuel 19:1 Then Saul told his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Saul's son Jonathan liked David very much.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul ordered his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Saul's son Jonathan liked David very much,

ESV 1 Samuel 19:1 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan was very fond

of David

NLT 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul now urged his servants and his son Jonathan to assassinate David. But Jonathan, because of his close friendship with David,

NRS 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul spoke with his son Jonathan and with all his servants about killing David. But Saul's son Jonathan took great delight in David.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul let his son Jonathan and all his servants know of his intention to kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, held David in great affection;

NAB 1 Samuel 19:1 Saul discussed his intention of killing David with his son Jonathan and with all his servants. But Saul's son Jonathan, who was very fond of David,

YLT 1 Samuel 19:1 And Saul speaketh unto Jonathan his son, and unto all his servants, to put David to death,

- **Now Saul:** 1Sa 18:8,9 Pr 27:4 Ec 9:3 Jer 9:3 2Ti 3:13
- **delighted:** 1Sa 18:1-3 Ps 16:3 Joh 15:17-19 1Jn 3:12-14
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 18:1-3 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. 2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. 3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

### SAUL CROSSES THE LINE

**There is a fascinating outline in this chapter - (1) Jonathan protects David (1Sa 19:1-10); (2) Michal protects David (1Sa 19:11-17); (3) Samuel protects David (1Sa 19:18-24).** Of course, the reality is that the Spirit of God was clearly the [Protector of David's soul](#) in the case of Samuel and surely also involved in the protection afforded by Jonathan and Michal.

**THOUGHT-** Do you realize that the same Holy Spirit of God is the [Protector of your soul](#) beloved? He is! (read Ps 41:1-3; Ps 121:7-8+; Ps 146:9) Now, pause for a moment of worship and praise, as you sing to Him "[The Protector of My Soul](#)." And if you would like to worship a few minutes longer (in preparation of an eternity of worship!) then "[Sing Hallelujah to the LORD](#)." May your soul rest in this wonderful truth in Christ. Amen

[Brian Bell](#) - We have in this chapter a gathering cloud in David's life. Clouds are brought on by pressure! (ED: WATCH THE PRESSURE IN THIS CHAPTER!) If a high pressure zone moves in from the south, the weather is usually warm and clear in the summer. However, a high pressure zone originating from the north will usually bring cold weather in the winter months. 2. God often places us in pressure situations. Clouds building over our lives. a) Pressures of criticism; Pressures of financial problems; Pressures of a 1000-n-1 details Maybe pressures in your home life; work life; ministry. 3. How real is the pressure of a gathering cloud? a) Pretty real when we see a cloud getting darker & darker until its black & ominous & we find ourselves right in the path of a hurricane. 4. What do we do?-Well let's watch David, so we might triumph in such a situation. And, it may help us to understand why God allows clouds to come at all. a) Remember, Long ago in a covenant of mercy to His people & to the world, God said to Noah, "I have set my rainbow in the clouds". (1) Never do you find it in the blue sky; you find the mercy of God in the very thick of the cloud!

**Now Saul told Jonathan his son and all his servants to put David to death** - NLT = "Saul now urged his servants and his son Jonathan to assassinate David. Saul will no longer resort to deception to get rid of his rival. He now openly expresses his desire to see David dead. This is the nature of sin which begins small but eventually fully controls the person who will not confess and repent. Not only was Jonathan compromised but so were the servants for in 1Sa 18:5 we read David was pleasing "in the sight of Saul's servants."

**THOUGHT-** " Note Saul's request demonstrates the invariable downward spiral of sin! No sin is a little sin, because in this sin is the seed for a bigger and uglier sin! The moral? Confess sin quickly because it gives birth to baby monsters even more evil and destructive (cf James 1:13-15+)!

**Rod Mattoon** - Thomas Beecher could not bear deceit in any form. Finding a clock in his church was constantly too fast or too slow, he hung a sign on the wall above it which read, "Don't blame my hands. The trouble lies deeper." Such is the case with Saul... the trouble lies within his heart. Behind every sinful tragedy, there is a process of wicked thinking. The progression of evil starts from

within and works outward. 1st—Saul's heart was filled with envy. 2nd—His envy progresses to hate. 3rd—He attempts to kill David himself. 4th—He tries to involve others in his sin.

Spurgeon - He was now worse than ever, or he would not have spoken to others to aid him in a dastardly murder. When God leaves a man, the devil comes to him.

Saul is not the first parent that tempted his child to do evil. Rebekah influenced Jacob to deceive Isaac and steal Esau's blessing (Ge 27:6-17). Athaliah counseled king Ahaziah to do wickedly. (2 Chronicles 22:2-4). Herodias instructs her daughter to get the head of John the Baptist. (Matthew 14:8)

**THOUGHT** - What example, model or "template" are you giving your children?

**TSK** - Saul's enmity now burst forth, in the avowed purpose of putting David to death; and nothing less than the especial interposition of Providence could have saved David's life, when every officer about the king's person, and every soldier, had positive orders to dispatch him.

**But** - Praise God for this **'but'** for at least we know that David has a covenant friend in high places.

**Jonathan, Saul's son, greatly delighted in David** - Jonathan's friendship with godly David was stronger than his loyalty to his ungodly father.

**MacArthur** - God, in His mercy, made sure that David had sympathetic ears within Saul's court to inform him of Saul's evil plans (e.g., 1Sa 19:7; 1Sa 20:2). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Arthur Pink** - How vivid and how solemn is the contrast presented between the last sentence of the preceding chapter (1Sa 18:30) and the opening one of this! And yet perhaps the spiritually minded would hardly expect anything else. When the "name" of the "Beloved" (for that is what "David" signifies) is "much set by," we are prepared to see the immediate raging of the enemy—personified here by Saul. Yes, the picture here presented to our view is true to life. Nothing is more calculated to call into action the enmity of the Serpent against the woman's Seed than the extolling of His "name," with all that scripturally includes. It was thus in the days of the apostles. When they announced that "There is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), the Jewish leaders "commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus" (v. 18); and because they heeded not, the apostle's were "beaten" and again commanded "not to speak in the name of Jesus" (Acts 5:40).

**1 Samuel 19:2 So Jonathan told David saying, "Saul my father is seeking to put you to death. Now therefore, please be on guard in the morning, and stay in a secret place and hide yourself.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:2 καὶ πγγειλεν Ἰωνᾶθαν τὸ Δαυιδ ἡ γυνὴ Σαουλ ζητεῖ θανάτῳ σε φηλαξαὶ οὐρανὸν πρῶ καὶ κρυβῆθαι καὶ κθισον κρυβ

LXE 1 Samuel 19:2 And Jonathan, Saul's son, loved David much: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul seeks to kill thee: take heed to thyself therefore to-morrow morning, and hide thyself, and dwell in secret.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:2 But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself:

NET 1 Samuel 19:2 So Jonathan told David, "My father Saul is trying to kill you. So be careful tomorrow morning. Find a hiding place and stay in seclusion.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:2 so he told him: "My father Saul intends to kill you. Be on your guard in the morning and hide in a secret place and stay there.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:2 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:2 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.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:2 told him what his father was planning. "Tomorrow morning," he warned him, "you must find a hiding place out in the fields.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:2 Jonathan told David, "My father Saul is trying to kill you; therefore be on guard tomorrow morning; stay in a secret place and hide yourself.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:2 and Jonathan warned David, 'My father Saul is looking for a way to kill you, so be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding, stay out of sight.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:2 told him: "My father Saul is trying to kill you. Therefore, please be on your guard tomorrow morning; get out of sight and remain in hiding.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:2 and Jonathan son of Saul delighted exceedingly in David, and Jonathan declareth to David, saying, 'Saul my father is seeking to put thee to death, and, now, take heed, I pray thee, in the morning, and thou hast abode in a secret place, and been hidden,

- **Jonathan:** 1Sa 20:2 Pr 17:17 Ac 9:24 23:16
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

If you say [Forewarned is forearmed](#), you are saying that if you know about a problem or situation in advance, you will be able to deal with it when you need to. David would be a fugitive from Saul the rest of his days. Talk about God taking David through a difficult school with all the trials he would soon experience!

**So Jonathan told David - So** serves as a term of conclusion in this context, this conclusion being based on their genuine, deep friendship. Jonathan disobeys his father's command because it was a sin against God's clear law in Ex 20:13! Recall also that he and David had cut covenant with one another and thus entered into the most solemn, binding and intimate agreement that was known to exist between men. Part of that covenant agreement was to be the protector of the other party! Jonathan's disobedience to his father's authority because he was asking for him to commit a sin reminds one of Peter and the apostles in Acts 5:29+ when they declared to the Jewish leaders "We must obey God rather than men."

**saying, "Saul my father is seeking to put you to death - NLT - "told him what his father was planning"**

**Now therefore, please be on guard in the morning, and stay in a secret place and hide yourself -**Recall Jonathan loved David as himself, so he took his father's threat personally and did not hesitate to warn David.

**1 Samuel 19:3 "I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you; if I find out anything, then I will tell you."**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:3 καὶ γὰρ ἐξελεσμαι καὶ στῆσομαι ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ πατρὸς μου καὶ ἠκούσω περὶ σοῦ καὶ ἐκτελέσω τὸ πρῶτον τοῦ λόγου τοῦ ἐλάλῃ μοι καὶ ἐκτελέσω τὸ πρῶτον τοῦ λόγου τοῦ ἐλάλῃ μοι

LXE 1 Samuel 19:3 And I will go forth, and stand near my father in the field where thou shalt be, and I will speak concerning thee to my father; and I will see what his answer may be, and I will tell thee.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

NET 1 Samuel 19:3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are. I will speak about you to my father. When I find out what the problem is, I will let you know."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:3 I'll go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are and talk to him about you. When I see what he says, I'll tell you."

ESV 1 Samuel 19:3 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:3 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."

NLT 1 Samuel 19:3 I'll ask my father to go out there with me, and I'll talk to him about you. Then I'll tell you everything I can find out."

NRS 1 Samuel 19:3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you; if I learn anything I will tell you."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:3 I shall go out and keep my father company in the countryside where you will be, and shall talk to my father about you; I shall see what the situation is and then tell you.'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:3 I, however, will go out and stand beside my father in the countryside where you are, and will speak to him about you. If I learn anything, I will let you know."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:3 and I -- I go out, and have stood by the side of my father in the field where thou art, and I speak of thee unto my father, and have seen what is coming, and have declared to thee.'

- what I see: 1Sa 20:9,13
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JONATHAN PROMISES TO RECONNOITER

To [reconnoiter](#) is to make a military observation, which is a good description of the current events for Saul has just declared war (in effect) on David! To make a preliminary examination of (an area or a group, for example), usually by moving around and observing, in order to gather information, especially for military purposes. Jonathan will reconnoiter the enemy position of King Saul.

**I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you; if I find out anything, then I will tell you** - Jonathan is like David's covert agent in the palace, his friend in high places who promises to relay any new information back to David.

**1 Samuel 19:4 Then Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "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.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:4 κα λ λησεν Ιωναθαν περ Δαυιδ γαθ πρ ς Σαουλ τ ν πατ ρα α το κα ε πεν πρ ς α τ ν μ μαρτησ τω βασιλε ς ε ς τ ν δο λ ν σου Δαυιδ τι ο χ μ ρτηκεν ε ς σ κα τ ποι ματα α το γαθ σφ δρα

LXE 1 Samuel 19:4 And Jonathan spoke favorably concerning David to Saul his father, and said to him, Let not the king sin against thy servant David, for he has not sinned against thee, and his deeds are very good.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:4 And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good:

NET 1 Samuel 19:4 So Jonathan spoke on David's behalf to his father Saul. He said to him, "The king should not sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you. On the contrary, his actions have been very beneficial for you.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:4 Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul. He said to him: "The king should not sin against his servant David. He hasn't sinned against you; in fact, his actions have been a great advantage to you.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:4 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:4 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.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:4 The next morning Jonathan spoke with his father about David, saying many good things about him. "The king must not sin against his servant David," Jonathan said. "He's never done anything to harm you. He has always helped you in any way he could.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:4 Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul, saying to him, "The king should not sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have been of good service to you;

NJB 1 Samuel 19:4 Jonathan spoke highly of David to Saul his father and said, 'The king should not harm his servant David; far from harming you, what he has done has been greatly to your advantage.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:4 Jonathan then spoke well of David to his father Saul, saying to him: "Let not your majesty sin against his servant David, for he has committed no offense against you, but has helped you very much by his deeds.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:4 And Jonathan speaketh good of David unto Saul his father, and saith unto him, 'Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works for thee are very good;

- **spoke well:** 1Sa 20:32 22:14 Pr 24:11,12 31:8,9 Jer 18:20
- **sin against:** 1Sa 2:25 Ge 9:6 42:22 2Ch 6:22 1Co 8:12 1Jn 3:15
- **since his deeds:** Ps 35:12 109:4,5 Pr 17:13 Jer 18:20
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JONATHAN COURAGEOUSLY REASONS WITH SAUL

**Then Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father** - Remember Saul had previously once almost called for his own son's life. So this took courage for Jonathan to confront an [impetuous](#) man like Saul. Jonathan will remind Saul of first the danger of falling into the trap of sin and then the good that David had done for Saul.

**and said to him, "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** - Note Jonathan reminds Saul that David is Saul's servant and that it is not reasonable to commit sin against a servant, especially one who has been such a help to the king. The NJB says "what he has done has been greatly to your advantage."

**1 Samuel 19:5 "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?"**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:5 κα θετο τ ν ψυχ ν α το ν τ χειρ α το κα π ταξεν τ ν λλ φυλον κα πο ησεν κ ριος σωτηρ αν μεγ λην κα π ς Ισραηλ ε δον κα χ ρησαν κα να τ μαρτ νεις ε ς α μα θ ον θανατ σαι τ ν Δαυιδ δωρε ν

LXE 1 Samuel 19:5 And he put his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great deliverance; and all Israel saw, and rejoined: why then dost thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

KJV 1 Samuel 19:5 For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

NET 1 Samuel 19:5 He risked his life when he struck down the Philistine and the LORD gave all Israel a great victory. When you saw it, you were happy. So why would you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death for no reason?"

CSB 1 Samuel 19:5 He took his life in his hands when he struck down the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced, so why would you sin against innocent blood by killing David for no reason?"

ESV 1 Samuel 19:5 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?"

NIV 1 Samuel 19:5 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?"

NLT 1 Samuel 19:5 Have you forgotten about the time he risked his life to kill the Philistine giant and how the LORD brought a great victory to all Israel as a result? You were certainly happy about it then. Why should you murder an innocent man like David? There is no reason for it at all!"



NRS 1 Samuel 19:5 for he took his life in his hand when he attacked the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced; why then will you sin against an innocent person by killing David without cause?"

NJB 1 Samuel 19:5 He took his life in his hands, he killed the Philistine, and Yahweh brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw for yourself. How pleased you were! Why then sin against innocent blood by killing David for no reason?"

NAB 1 Samuel 19:5 When he took his life in his hands and slew the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great victory for all Israel through him, you were glad to see it. Why, then, should you become guilty of shedding innocent blood by killing David without cause?"

YLT 1 Samuel 19:5 yea, he putteth his life in his hand, and smiteth the Philistine, and Jehovah worketh a great salvation for all Israel; thou hast seen, and dost rejoice, and why dost thou sin against innocent blood, to put David to death for nought?"

- **put his life:** 1Sa 28:21 Jdg 9:17 12:3 Ps 119:109 Ac 20:24 Php 2:30
- **struck:** 1Sa 17:49-51
- **brought:** 1Sa 11:13 14:45 17:52,53 Ex 14:13 1Ch 11:14 Heb 2:3
- sin against innocent: 1Sa 20:32 Jer 26:15 Mt 27:4,24
- without a cause: Ps 25:3 69:4 Joh 15:25
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JONATHAN EMPHASIZES DAVID'S GOOD WORKS FOR SAUL

**For** - Term of explanation. Jonathan explains the good David had done for Saul.

**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.** - Jonathan emphasizes how David had already put his life on the line for Saul resulting in deliverance for the entire nation. Had David lost, they would be slaves to the Philistines. Such a great victory brought Saul joy which Jonathan wants his father to remember now.

**Why then will you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death without a cause** - This is the second time Jonathan brings up the "S" word, sin, to his father. He is trying to reason with him about the greatness of his sin should he kill an innocent man, a truth he reiterates by saying killing him **without a cause**.

**MacArthur** makes a good point - Jonathan knew that the spilling of innocent blood would affect all Israel, not just the house of Saul (Dt 21:8, 9+). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** - Thus Jonathan proved himself a real friend. We ought always to be ready to speak up for those who are falsely condemned.

**1 Samuel 19:6 Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul vowed, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:6 καὶ κούσεν Σαουλ τὴν φωνὴν Ἰωνᾶθαν καὶ ὤρκωσεν Σαουλ λέγων ὅτι ὡς ὁ κύριος ἐπιθάνεται

LXE 1 Samuel 19:6 And Saul hearkened to the voice of Jonathan; and Saul swore, saying, As the Lord lives, he shall not die.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain.

NET 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul accepted Jonathan's advice and took an oath, "As surely as the LORD lives, he will not be put to death."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul listened to Jonathan's advice and swore an oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be killed."

ESV 1 Samuel 19:6 And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan. Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."



NIV 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be put to death."

NLT 1 Samuel 19:6 So Saul listened to Jonathan and vowed, "As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be killed."

NRS 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan; Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul was impressed by Jonathan's words. Saul swore, 'As Yahweh lives, I will not kill him.'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:6 Saul heeded Jonathan's plea and swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be killed."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:6 And Saul hearkeneth to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul sweareth, 'Jehovah liveth -- he doth not die.'

- **vowed:** 1Sa 14:39 28:10 Ps 15:4 Pr 26:24,25 Jer 5:2
- **he shall not:** 1Sa 19:10,11
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 30:2+ "If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Deuteronomy 23:21+ "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the LORD your God will surely require it of you.

### JONATHAN'S DEFENSE OF DAVID TEMPORARILY EFFECTIVE

**Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul vowed, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death-** One is reminded of Proverbs 15:1 that says "A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger." (cf Pr 16:7) Jonathan's defense seems to have broken through Saul's hard heart so that he even makes a vow to not kill David. Saul is big on making vows, having vowed earlier to kill the man who ate food when they were battling the Philistines, even vowing to kill his own son (1Sa 14:39), a vow the people forced him to break. Given Saul's history with vows we would not be too hopeful that he would keep this one either!

**Spurgeon** - Little however did his oath bind him. He was never in a good frame of mind long together. Envy cannot be quiet.

**Arthur Pink** - . Once more we see how easy it is for wicked men to make use of pious expressions, and appear to superficial observers godly men. The sequel shows of what little value is the solemn oath of a king, and warns us to place no confidence in the engagements of earthly rulers. They who are acquainted with the Scriptures are not surprised when even national and international treaties become only worthless "scraps of paper."

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#### F B Meyer - 1 Samuel 19:6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan.

It was a noble act of Jonathan. He might have withdrawn from his friendship with David when it threatened his relations with his father; but, instead, he stepped into the breach, and pleaded for his friend, endeavoring to eradicate the false and ungenerous conceptions of which Saul had become possessed. It is an example we do well to study and copy. For his love's sake, as well as for his father's, he was extremely eager to effect a reconciliation between him to whom he owed allegiance of son and subject, and this fair shepherd-minstrel-warrior, who had so recently cast a sunny gleam upon his life.

Men often misconceive of one another. Jealousy and envy distort behavior and actions which are in themselves as beautiful as possible. Misrepresentation will blind us to the true excellences of one another's characters. Wrong constructions are often put on the most innocent incidents. We cannot help these things, they are part of the sad heritage of the Fall; but we may often take up the cause of a misunderstood man, and at the risk of losing our own reputation, and diverting to ourselves some of the odium which attaches to him, we may stand as his sponsors.

Even if we dislike another, as Saul did David, let us give scope to the good Spirit to plead his cause at the bar of our hearts, as Jonathan did for his friend. Let us consider all the kind and loving things that may be said of him; let us put ourselves in his position; let us be willing to believe and hope all things. Let us plead for others, since this is a work in which Christ's followers most closely approximate to Him who ever liveth to intercede.

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## True Friends

A friend loves at all times. Proverbs 17:17

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 18:1–4; 19:1–6

In high school, I had a “sometimes friend.” We were “buddies” at our church, and we occasionally hung out together outside of school. But at school, it was a different story. If she met me by herself, she might say hello; but only if no one else was around. Realizing this, I rarely tried to gain her attention within school walls. I knew the limits of our friendship.

We’ve probably all experienced the pain of disappointingly one-sided or narrow friendships. But there’s another kind of friendship—one that extends beyond all boundaries. It’s the kind of friendship we have with kindred spirits who are committed to sharing life’s journey with us.

David and Jonathan were such friends. Jonathan was “one in spirit” with David and loved him “as himself” (1 Samuel 18:1–3). Although Jonathan would have been next in line to rule after his father Saul’s death, he was loyal to David, God’s chosen replacement. Jonathan even helped David to evade two of Saul’s plots to kill him (1Sa 19:1–6; 20:1–42).

Despite all odds, Jonathan and David remained friends—pointing to the truth of Proverbs 17:17: “A friend loves at all times.” Their faithful friendship also gives us a glimpse of the loving relationship God has with us (John 3:16; 15:15). Through friendships like theirs, our understanding of God’s love is deepened. By: Alyson Kieda ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Who do you consider a true friend? Why? How is it comforting to know that God is our truest friend?

Heavenly Father, we long for friends. Please open up doors to true, lasting, and God-centered friendships.

**1 Samuel 19:7 Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these words. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as formerly.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:7 κα κ λεσεν Ιωναθαν τ ν Δαυιδ κα π γγειλεν α τ π ντα τ ματα τα τα κα ε σ γαγεν Ιωναθαν τ ν Δαυιδ πρ ς Σαουλ κα ν ν πιον α το σε χθ ς κα τρ την μ ραν

LXE 1 Samuel 19:7 And Jonathan called David, and told him all these words; and Jonathan brought David in to Saul, and he was before him as in former times.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.

NET 1 Samuel 19:7 Then Jonathan called David and told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as he had done formerly.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:7 So Jonathan summoned David and told him all these words. Then Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as he did before.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:7 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:7 So Jonathan called David and told him the whole conversation. He brought him to Saul, and David was with Saul as before.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:7 Afterward Jonathan called David and told him what had happened. Then he brought David to Saul, and David served in the court as before.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:7 So Jonathan called David and related all these things to him. Jonathan then brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:7 Jonathan called David and told him all this. Jonathan then brought him to Saul, and David remained in attendance as before.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:7 So Jonathan summoned David and repeated the whole conversation to him. Jonathan then brought David to Saul, and David served him as before.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:7 And Jonathan calleth for David, and Jonathan declareth to him all these words, and

Jonathan bringeth in David unto Saul, and he is before him as heretofore.

- in times past: Heb. yesterday, third day, 1Sa 16:21 18:2,10,13 Ge 31:2 Ex 4:10 1Ch 11:2 Isa 30:33
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SO FAR, SO GOOD A STAY OF EXECUTION

[Stay of execution](#) is a court order to temporarily suspend the execution of a court judgment or other court order.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these words. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as formerly** - This is amazing. Both Jonathan and David trust Saul's vow and resume relations in the royal court. But we as the readers are not surprised at his fickle behavior.

**1 Samuel 19:8 When there was war again, David went out and fought with the Philistines and defeated them with great slaughter, so that they fled before him.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:8 κα προσθετο πλεμος γενσθαι πρς Σαουλ κα κατσχυσεν Δαυιδ κα πολμησεν το ς  
λλοφλους κα πταξεν ν α το ς πλην ν μεγλην σφδρα κα φυγον κ προσ που α το

LXE 1 Samuel 19:8 And there was again war against Saul; and David did valiantly, and fought against the Philistines, and smote them with a very great slaughter, and they fled from before him.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:8 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.

NET 1 Samuel 19:8 Now once again there was war. So David went out to fight the Philistines. He defeated them thoroughly and they ran away from him.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:8 When war broke out again, David went out and fought against the Philistines. He defeated them with such a great force that they fled from him.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:8 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:8 Once more war broke out, and David went out and fought the Philistines. He struck them with such force that they fled before him.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:8 War broke out again after that, and David led his troops against the Philistines. He attacked them with such fury that they all ran away.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:8 Again there was war, and David went out to fight the Philistines. He launched a heavy attack on them, so that they fled before him.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:8 War broke out again and David sallied out to fight the Philistines; he inflicted a great defeat on them and they fled before him.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:8 When war broke out again, David went out to fight against the Philistines and inflicted a great defeat upon them, putting them to flight.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:8 And there addeth to be war, and David goeth out and fighteth against the Philistines, and smiteth among them -- a great smiting, and they flee from his face.

- David: Ps 18:32-50 27:3
- him: Heb. his face
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID WINS ANOTHER GREAT VICTORY OVER PHILISTINES

**When there was war again** - Recall that 1Sa 14:52+ stated "Now the war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul." So here we see them rise up again. Remember however that these events are not happening at random, but that the God of

providence is behind them in some way as he orchestrates the final removal of Saul and fulfillment of his desire to make David king.

**David went out and fought with the Philistines and defeated them with great slaughter, so that they fled before him -** Another victory for David, which was **great** because the LORD was with him, so that "wherever Saul sent him, he prospered." (1Sa 18:5+) and "David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD was with him." Of course the problem this created was that "When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly, he dreaded him." (1Sa 18:15+). Not to mention that he became very jealous, soon even "insanely" jealous.

**1 Samuel 19:9 Now there was an evil spirit from the LORD on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing the harp with his hand.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:9 καὶ γένητο πνεῦμα θεοῦ πονηρὸν ἐπὶ Σαουλ καὶ ἔκειτο ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ καθεδρὼν καὶ ὄρου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ Δαυὶδ ψάλλεν ἐν τῇ κιθάρᾳ αὐτοῦ

LXE 1 Samuel 19:9 And an evil spirit from God was upon Saul, and he was resting in his house, and a spear was in his hand, and David was playing on the harp with his hands.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:9 And the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand.

NET 1 Samuel 19:9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul. He was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing the lyre.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:9 Now an evil spirit sent from the LORD came on Saul as he was sitting in his palace holding a spear. David was playing the lyre,

ESV 1 Samuel 19:9 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:9 But an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the harp,

NLT 1 Samuel 19:9 But one day when Saul was sitting at home, with spear in hand, the tormenting spirit from the LORD suddenly came upon him again. As David played his harp,

NRS 1 Samuel 19:9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing music.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:9 An evil spirit from Yahweh came over Saul while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand; David was playing the harp.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with spear in hand and David was playing the harp nearby.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:9 And a spirit of sadness from Jehovah is unto Saul, and he is sitting in his house, and his javelin in his hand, and David is playing with the hand,

- 1Sa 16:14 1Sa 18:10,11
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 16:14+ Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and **an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him.**

1 Samuel 18:10; 11+ Now it came about on the next day that **an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house,** while David was playing the harp with his hand, as usual; and a spear was in Saul's hand. 11 Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice.



**Sinister Spirit Seizes Saul**

## **ANOTHER EVIL SPIRIT FROM THE LORD**

**Now there was an evil spirit from the LORD on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing the harp with his hand** - One would think that David's playing the harp would be a good "preventative" to keep the evil spirit from coming on Saul, but clearly that is not the case. Saul is a good illustration of the proverbial saying in 2 Peter 2:22+ that "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."

**Arthur Pink** - How often unsaved people, after sudden conviction have resolved to break from their evil doings, and serve the Lord, but only after a short season to return to their course of sin, like a washed sow to her wallowing in the mire (2 Peter 2:22), Where there has been no miracle of mercy wrought within the heart, no change of disposition, and where there is no dependence upon divine grace for needed strength, resolutions, however sincere and earnest, seldom produce any lasting effect. Unmortified lusts quickly break through the most solemn vows; where the fear of God does not possess the heart, fresh temptations soon arouse the dormant corruptions, and this gives Satan good opportunity to regain complete mastery over his victim.

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**Walter Kaiser** - [go to page 211 in Hard Sayings of the Bible](#) for discussion of the question - **1 Samuel 16:14 An Evil Spirit from the Lord?**

Just as the prophet Samuel anointed David as the next king, King Saul became bereft of the Spirit of God and fell into ugly bouts of melancholia, which were attributed to an evil spirit sent from the Lord.

The Spirit of God had overwhelmed Saul when he had assumed the role of king over the land (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6). Exactly what the Spirit's presence with Saul entailed is not explained, but it seems to have included the gift of government, the gift of wisdom and prudence in civil matters, and a spirit of fortitude and courage. These gifts can be extrapolated from the evidence that after Saul was anointed king, he immediately shed his previous shyness and reticence to be in the public eye. It is obvious that Saul did not have a natural aptitude for governing, for if he had, why did he hide among the baggage when he knew already what the outcome would be? But when the Spirit of God came upon him in connection with the threatened mutilation of the citizens of Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam 11), and Saul sent out word that all able-bodied men were to report immediately for battle, the citizens of Israel were so startled that this had come from the likes of Saul that they showed up in force. God had suddenly gifted him with the "Spirit of God" (1 Sam 11:6), and Saul was a great leader for twenty years (1 Sam 14:47–48).

But all of this was lost as suddenly as it had been gained—the Spirit had removed his gift of government.

But what was the evil spirit mentioned here and in 1 Samuel 18:10 and 19:9? The ancient historian Josephus explained it as follows: "But as for Saul, some strange and demonical disorders came upon him, and brought upon him such suffocations as were ready to choke him" (Antiquities 6.8.2). Keil and Delitzsch likewise attributed Saul's problem to demon possession. They specified that this

was not merely an inward feeling of depression at the rejection announced to him, ... but a higher evil power, which took possession of him, and not only deprived him of his peace of mind, but stirred up the feelings, ideas, imagination, and thoughts of his soul to such an extent that at times it drove him even into madness. This demon is called "an evil spirit [coming] from Jehovah" because Jehovah sent it as a punishment.

A second suggestion is that this evil spirit was a messenger, by analogy with the situation in 1 Kings 22:20–23. This unspecified

messenger did his work by the permission of God.

A third suggestion is that this evil spirit was a “spirit of discontent” created in Saul’s heart by God because of his continued disobedience.

Whatever the malady was, and whatever its source, one of the temporary cures for its torments was music. David’s harp-playing would soothe Saul’s frenzied condition, so that he would once again gain control of his emotions and actions (1 Sam 16:14–23).

All this happened by the permission of God rather than as a result of his directive will, for God cannot be the author of anything evil. But the exact source of Saul’s torment cannot be determined with any degree of certitude. The Lord may well have used a messenger, or even just an annoying sense of disquietude and discontent. Yet if Saul really was a believer—and I think there are enough evidences to affirm that he was—then it is difficult to see how he could have been possessed by a demon. Whether believers can be possessed by demons, however, is still being debated by theologians.

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**Gleason Archer** - [go to page 183 in The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#) for the discussion of the topic -First Samuel 18:10 says that an evil spirit from God came on King Saul. How can this be explained if only good comes from God?

It is not quite accurate to say that only good comes from God. While it is true that God’s original creation was good (Gen. 1:31) and that God Himself is not tempted by evil, nor does He tempt (in the sense of attracting or enticing) any man to evil (James 1:13), nevertheless it remains true that genuine goodness in a moral God requires that a real difference be made between good and evil. As the ordainer and preserver of the moral order, it is absolutely necessary for God to punish sin, no matter how much love and compassion He may feel toward the sinner.

In Isaiah 45:7 we read, “[I am] the One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these” (NASB). The word rendered by NASB as “calamity” is the Hebrew *rā’*, which has the basic meaning of “evil” (either moral evil or misfortune evil). Here it points to the painful, harmful consequences that followed the commission of sin. Notice how James goes on to indicate how this process works: “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (James 1:14–15, NASB).

In Saul’s case, he had knowingly flouted the law of God—first, by performing priestly sacrifice at the Lord’s altar contrary to the divine command (1 Sam. 13:12–13), and, second, by sparing King Agag and some of the cattle of the Amalekites after he had been ordered to put them all to death (1 Sam. 15:20–23). Moreover in 1 Samuel 18:8 it is stated that Saul became insanely jealous of young David because of the public praise he had received for his prowess in slaying Goliath and the Philistines. By these successive acts of rebellion against the will and law of God, King Saul left himself wide open to satanic influence—just as Judas Iscariot did after he had determined to betray the Lord Jesus (cf. John 13:2).

Insofar as God has established the spiritual laws of cause and effect, it is accurate to say that Saul’s disobedience cut him off from the guidance and communion of the Holy Spirit that he had formerly enjoyed and left him a prey to a malign spirit of depression and intense jealousy that drove him increasingly to irrational paranoia. Although he was doubtless acting as an agent of Satan, Saul’s evil bent was by the permission and plan of God. We must realize that in the last analysis all penal consequences for sin come from God, as the Author of the moral law and the one who always does what is right (Gen. 18:25).

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#### **QUESTION** - [Why did God send an evil spirit to torment King Saul?](#)

**ANSWER** - First Samuel 16:14 says, “The Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.” This is also mentioned in 1 Samuel 16:15–16, 23; 18:10; and 19:9. Why did God let an evil spirit torment Saul? In what way was the evil spirit “from” the Lord?

First, the evil spirit was “from” the Lord in that it was allowed by God to harass Saul. Ultimately, all created things are under God’s control. It is likely that this evil spirit was part of God’s judgment upon Saul for his disobedience. Saul had directly disobeyed God on two occasions (1 Samuel 13:1–14; 15:1–35). Therefore, God removed His Spirit from Saul and allowed an evil spirit to torment him. Likely, Satan and the demons had always wanted to attack Saul; God was now simply giving them permission to do so.

Second, the evil spirit was used to bring David into the life of Saul. This account is recorded immediately following David’s anointing as the future king of Israel. The reader would be wondering how a shepherd boy would become king. First Samuel 16 reveals the first step in this journey. When the king’s servants saw the torment Saul was enduring, they suggested, “See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better” (1 Samuel 16:15–16).



One of the king's servants referred David to the king, describing the youth as a great harp player, among other things (verse 18). Saul called David to come and found him to be a great comfort: "David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armor-bearers. Then Saul sent word to Jesse, saying, 'Allow David to remain in my service, for I am pleased with him.' Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him" (1 Samuel 16:21–23).

It is important to note that this evil spirit that troubled Saul was only temporary. The final verse notes that the evil spirit came on multiple occasions to bother Saul, but also it departed from him.

A related question is, does God send evil spirits to torment people today? There are examples of individuals in the New Testament being turned over to Satan or demons for punishment. God allowed Ananias and Sapphira to be filled with the spirit of Satan as a warning and example to the early church (Acts 5:1–11). A man in the Corinthian church was committing incest and adultery, and God commanded the leaders to "hand him over to Satan" to destroy his sinful nature and save his soul (1 Corinthians 5:1–5). God allowed a messenger of Satan to torment the apostle Paul in order to teach him to rely on God's grace and power and not become conceited because of the tremendous abundance of spiritual truth he was given (2 Corinthians 12:7).

The New Testament reveals how God can use the presence of evil spirits to reveal His power. Jesus showed His power over demons on multiple occasions; every time Jesus cast out a demon, it was an affirmation of the Lord's authority. The account of Jesus' casting out the demons who entered a herd of pigs indicates that perhaps as many as 2,000 evil spirits were present, yet they all feared the power of Christ (Mark 5:1–13).

If God does allow evil spirits to torment people today, He does so with the goal of our good and His glory (Romans 8:28). And, just as in Job's case, Satan and his minions can do only what God allows them to do (Job 1:12; 2:6). They never act independently of God's sovereign and perfect will and purpose. If believers suspect they are being tormented by demonic forces, the first response is to repent of any known sin. Then we should ask for wisdom to understand what we are to learn from the situation. Then we are to submit to whatever God has allowed in our lives, trusting that it will result in the building up of our faith and the glory of God.

Evil spirits are no match for the power of God. As Ephesians 6:10–12 commands, "Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

[GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### **Related Resource:**

- For a thorough treatment of the Holy Spirit's role in the OT I would strongly recommend Dr Leon Wood's book [The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament](#) which can be borrowed. He has an entire chapter on [Saul and Evil Spirits](#)
- [An Evil Spirit from the Lord'-Demonic Influence or Divine Instrument?" The Evangelical Quarterly 70.1 \(Jan.-Mar. 1998\): 3-22. \[1 Samuel 16:14\]](#) Robin Routledge
- [What are evil spirits? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**G Campbell Morgan** - An evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul.—1 Sam. 19.9.

This evil spirit came upon Saul when the Spirit of Jehovah departed from him (see 16. 14). There is no doubt that Saul suffered through all this period from a mental disorder. His actions were those of a madman, over and over again. What is remarkable in the narrative is, first, that this malady is attributed to the action of an evil spirit, who found its opportunity when the Spirit of the Lord was withdrawn; and secondly, that this evil spirit is declared to have been under the government of God also, in that it is described as "from Jehovah." This is all very suggestive. The tendency of modern thinking, to deny the actuality of the influence of spirits on human life, is entirely out of harmony with Scripture teaching. Therein; the fact is always recognized. Two things, however, are illustrated in this story, and the whole Biblical revelation corroborates them. The first is, that the spirits that have access to the soul of man are all evil; they are the spirits of lawlessness. There is but one Spirit Who brings to the soul influences of purity and wisdom and strength, and that is the Spirit of God. The second fact is, that these evil spirits are also under the control of God. They are permitted to act, but ever only within His government. Satan must seek permission to tempt Job; he must obtain the Apostles by asking, if he would sift them as wheat. The messenger of Satan may buffet, but only within the limitations fixed by God. Finally, no created being, whether angelic or human, escapes the government of God. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))



**1 Samuel 19:10 Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, so that he stuck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:10 καὶ ζήτησεν Σαουλ πατάξαι τὸ δρυεὶς Δαυὶδ καὶ πρὸς τὴν Δαυὶδ κ' προσέβητο Σαουλ καὶ πατάξεν τὸ δρυεὶς τὸ τοῦ χόρου καὶ Δαυὶδ νύχρησεν καὶ διεσθῆναι

LXE 1 Samuel 19:10 And Saul sought to smite David with the spear; and David withdrew suddenly from the presence of Saul; and he drove the spear into the wall; and David retreated and escaped.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:10 And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

NET 1 Samuel 19:10 Saul tried to nail David to the wall with the spear, but he escaped from Saul's presence and the spear drove into the wall. David escaped quickly that night.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:10 and Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear. As the spear struck the wall, David eluded Saul, ran away, and escaped that night.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:10 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:10 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.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:10 Saul hurled his spear at David. But David dodged out of the way, and leaving the spear stuck in the wall, he fled and escaped into the night.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:10 Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear; but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:10 Saul tried to pin David to the wall with his spear, but he avoided Saul's thrust and the spear stuck in the wall. David fled and made good his escape. That same night

NAB 1 Samuel 19:10 Saul tried to nail David to the wall with the spear, but David eluded Saul, so that the spear struck only the wall, and David got away safe.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:10 and Saul seeketh to smite with the javelin through David, and through the wall, and he freeth himself from the presence of Saul, and he smiteth the javelin through the wall; and David hath fled and escapeth during that night.

- **Saul tried to pin David:** 1Sa 19:6 Ho 6:4 Mt 12:43-45 Lu 11:24-26 2Pe 2:20-22
- **he slipped:** 1Sa 20:33 Job 5:14,15 Ps 18:17 34:19 Pr 21:30 Isa 54:17 Lu 4:30 Joh 10:39
- **and escaped:** Ps 124:7 Mt 10:23
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### SAUL SEEKS TO PIN DAVID WHO PROVES TOO SLIPPERY

**Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, so that he stuck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night** - This is Saul's third attempt to pin David and he missed again. Saul is a bad shot, but God is a good Protector!

"Not a single shaft can hit,  
Till the God of love thinks fit."

**Spurgeon** - We are safe anywhere while the Lord has work for us to do. Be it ours to live with the harp in our hand, praising God and blessing our fellow-men, and we shall be preserved from the javelins of our foes.

**Arthur Pink** - How wonderful is the care of God for His own! Though invisible, how real are His protecting arms!" Not a shaft of hate can hit, till the God of love sees fit. "What peace and stability it brings to the heart when faith realizes that 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them' " (Ps. 34:7). Men may be filled with malice against us, Satan may rage and seek our destruction, but none can touch a hair of our heads without God's permission. The Lord Almighty is the "Shield and Buckler," the "Rock and Fortress" of all those who put their trust in Him. Yet note that David was not foolhardy and reckless.

Faith is not presumptuous: though we are to trust Him, we are forbidden to tempt the Lord; therefore it is our duty to retire when men seek our hurt (Cf. Matthew 10:23).

**Guzik** points out that this passage marked a crucial turning point in David's life writing "David never returned to the palace until he was the king of Israel – some 20 years later! From now until the day Saul dies David lives as a fugitive." No longer would he be a welcome member of the court and never again would he command Saul's army.

**ILLUSTRATION** - In spite of Saul's continual attacks, God consistently protects him. A believer was fleeing from his enemies during a persecution in North Africa. Pursued over a hill and through a valley with no place to hide, he fell exhausted into a cave, expecting to be caught and killed. Awaiting his death, he saw a spider weaving a web. Within minutes, the spider had woven a beautiful web across the mouth of the cave. The man's pursuers arrived, but on seeing the unbroken spider web they assumed it was impossible for him to have entered the cave. Later that Christian exclaimed, "Where God is, a spider's web is a wall. Where God is not, a wall is like a spider's web." Our security outside of God is insecure. The Lord is our protector and keeper just like he was David's. (Rod Mattoon)

**1 Samuel 19:11 Then Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, in order to put him to death in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death."**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:11 κα γενθη ν τ νυκτ κε ν κα π στειλεν Σαουλ γγ λους ε ς ο κον Δαυιδ φυλ ξαι α τ ν το θανατσαι α τ ν πρω κα π γγειλεν τ Δαυιδ Μελchol γυν α το λ γουσα ν μ σ σ ς τ ν ψυχ ν σαυτο τ ν ν κτα τα την α ριον θανατωθ σ

LXE 1 Samuel 19:11 And it came to pass in that night, that Saul sent messengers to the house of David to watch him, in order to slay him in the morning; and Melchol David's wife told him, saying, Unless thou save thy life this night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain.

NET 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to guard it and to kill him in the morning. Then David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save yourself tonight, tomorrow you will be dead!"

CSB 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul sent agents to David's house to watch for him and kill him in the morning. But his wife Michal warned David, "If you don't escape tonight, you will be dead tomorrow!"

ESV 1 Samuel 19:11 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul sent men to David's house to watch it and to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you don't run for your life tonight, tomorrow you'll be killed."

NLT 1 Samuel 19:11 Then Saul sent troops to watch David's house. They were told to kill David when he came out the next morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you don't escape tonight, you will be dead by morning."

NRS 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to keep watch over him, planning to kill him in the morning. David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:11 Saul sent agents to watch David's house, intending to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, 'If you do not escape tonight, you will be a dead man tomorrow!'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:11 The same night, Saul sent messengers to David's house to guard it, that he might kill him in the morning. David's wife Michal informed him, "Unless you save yourself tonight, tomorrow you will be killed."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:11 And Saul sendeth messengers unto the house of David to watch him, and to put him to death in the morning; and Michal his wife declareth to David, saying, 'If thou art not delivering thy life to-night -- tomorrow thou art put to death.'

- **to watch him:** Jdg 16:2
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Psalm 59:1-3 For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, **when Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him.** Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me. 2 Deliver me from those who do iniquity And save me from men of bloodshed. 3 For behold, **they have set an ambush for my life;** Fierce men launch an attack against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O LORD,

### SAUL BREAKS HIS VOW MICHAL KEEPS HER VOW

**Then Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, in order to** (term of purpose) **put him to death in the morning** - Saul is like Satan in 1Pe 5:8+ seeking continually to devour. Saul sends a "hit squad" to take David out! Whether Saul's breaking of his vow was under the influence of the evil spirit or simply a reflection of Saul's jealousy and rage rising up again we cannot say. Clearly the great victory brought praise to David and once again inflames Saul's jealousy.

**But Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death-** Michal far from being a snare to David (cf 1Sa 18:21) was used by God to be a "savior" of David's life! **Michal** presumably made a vow like we do today which says "In the name of God, I, (MICHAL), take you, (DAVID), to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until parted by death. This is my solemn vow." Whether she took such a vow or not we cannot state with certainty but clearly her love for David superseded her loyalty to Saul, so just as her brother Jonathan had done, she forewarned her husband of the looming danger.

**Arthur Pink** - man proposes, and God disposes. The Lord had other services for David to perform, and the servant of God is immortal until the work allotted him has been done. This time the king's own daughter, who had married David, was the one to befriend him. In some way she had learned of her father's plan, so at once took measures to thwart it.

**Rod Mattoon** - Run David run!" is her message to him. As she warns David, we too are to warn the lost of the dangers and destruction to come. Isaiah 58:1—Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. David can respond to his wife's warning one of two ways. He can respond in pride and ignore the plea of his wife. He can also consider and heed the cautions of his wife and flee. Even though the wife is not the head of the home, her role as a helpmeet to her husband is very important. Part of her role as a helpmeet is to offer caution and insight to her husband when she foresees danger, destruction, or evil on the path of her husband or family. Attentiveness involves being alert to God's warnings through the spoken or unspoken cautions of your wife. **(ED: MY WIFE WARNED ME NOT TO BUY A LAKEFRONT LOT IN A PRIME LOCATION IN AUSTIN, TEXAS. I HAD EVEN PLACED A DEPOSIT. SHE, A GODLY WOMAN, WAS ADAMANT. SO I WITHDREW THE OFFER. I AM CONVINCED THAT THIS HOUSE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE SITE OF A HORRIBLE TRAGEDY, FOR I HAVE 7 GRANDKIDS AND THE LONG LAWN IN THE BACK GOES TO THE WATER WITH AN ABRUPT FALL INTO DEEP WATER! YOU CAN SEE THE SCENARIO THAT "COULD HAVE BEEN." IT IS INTERESTING THAT 20 YEARS LATER AUSTIN BECAME ONE OF THE HOTTEST REAL ESTATE MARKETS IN THE U.S. I COULD HAVE SOLD THE PROPERTY FOR MANY TIMES OVER THE ORIGINAL PRICE! GOD'S SPIRIT USES THIS EVENT IN MY LIFE TO REMIND ME TO OBEY Colossians 3:2+ and Mt 6:20+. OUR FATHER IS SO GOOD -- HERE'S THE MORAL OF THE STORY - HUSBANDS LISTEN UP TO YOUR GODLY WIVES COUNSEL!!!)** As an aside David years later listened to the counsel of a woman named Abigail (1Sa 25:23-31) and Bathsheba (1Ki 1:15)

Psalm 59 was written in accordance with this event and reveals what is going on in David's heart and mind. (See Alan Redpath's discussion of this Psalm in relation to 1 Samuel 19 - go to page 25 in [The Making of a Man of God - Life of David](#))

1. David's Danger—Ps 59:1-9
  2. David's Deliverance—Ps 59:10-17
  3. His Plea—Ps 59:1, 2
  4. His Panic—Ps 59:3-5
  5. His Peril—Ps 59:6, 7
  6. His Protection—Ps 59:8-15
  7. His Praise—Ps 59:16, 17.
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## The Shield of God

My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.—Psalm 7:10

Read 1 Samuel 19:1–24

According to tradition, the emperor Constantine saw a vision of a blazing cross against the sun and words which said, “In this sign, you will conquer.” Constantine’s troops placed this symbol, made up of the Greek letters Chi and Rho, on their shields. He believed it would be their certain defense in battle. David’s shield of protection was God Himself. Today’s reading shows how the Lord shielded David from Saul’s attempts to take his life. In the first instance, when Saul told his son and servants to kill David, Jonathan reasoned him out of it (1Sa 19:4–5). Saul vowed to spare David, but his resolve was only temporary. After a string of military successes, Saul made another murderous attempt on David’s life when he “tried to pin him to the wall with a spear” (1Sa 19:10). This was the third time Saul had attempted to kill David in this manner (1 Sam. 18:11). Next, Saul sent men to lie in wait for David at his house. David’s wife Michal helped him to escape. Saul’s sense that the kingdom was being torn from his grasp was no doubt aggravated by the knowledge that David had won the allegiance of the king’s son and daughter. Fleeing for his life, David escaped Saul’s household and took refuge with Samuel. When Saul sent troops to kill David, the Spirit of God overtook them, and they were unable to complete their mission. Saul sent two more companies of soldiers, but the same thing happened. Finally, Saul came, and “the Spirit of God came even on him” (1Sa 19:23). This was a demonstration of God’s power, as well as an ironic reminder of Saul’s initial call to kingship.

You may not be a skilled soldier like David, but if you belong to Christ, you too are under God’s protection. “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” is His promise (Matt. 28:20). Is the Lord your shield of protection? The same God who protected King David is your shield as well! If you belong to Christ, He is with you always. Ask, and He will help you trust and rely on Him more. ([Courtesy of Today in the Word](#))

**1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal let David down through a window, and he went out and fled and escaped.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:12 κα κατ γει Μελχολ τ ν Δαυιδ δι τ ς θυρ δοϛ κα π λθεν κα φυγεν κα σ ζεται

LXE 1 Samuel 19:12 So Melchol lets David down by the window, and he departed, and fled, and escaped.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.

NET 1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal lowered David through the window, and he ran away and escaped.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:12 So she lowered David from the window, and he fled and escaped.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal let David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal let David down through a window, and he fled and escaped.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:12 So she helped him climb out through a window, and he fled and escaped.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:12 So Michal let David down through the window; he fled away and escaped.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:12 Michal then let David down through the window, and he made off, took to flight and so escaped.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:12 Then Michal let David down through a window, and he made his escape in safety.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:12 And Michal causeth David to go down through the window, and he goeth on, and fleeth, and escapeth;

- Michal: Ps 34:19
- let David: Jos 2:15 Ac 9:24-25 2Co 11:32,33
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Joshua 2:14+ Then she **let them down by a rope through the window**, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall.

Acts 9:24-25+ but their plot became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night so that they might put him to death; 25 but his **disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening**

in the wall, lowering him in a large basket.

## MICHAL FOREWARNED DAVID AND HE ACTED ON HER WARNING

**So Michal let David down through a window, and he went out and fled and escaped** - David had a small window of time to make his escape and was helped by his wife Michal to use that time to escape by a literal window, even as had the Hebrew spies escaped Rahab's house and Saul escaped from Damascus (see above).

**1 Samuel 19:13 Michal took the household idol and laid it on the bed, and put a quilt of goats' hair at its head, and covered it with clothes.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:13 καὶ λαβὲν Μελχολ τὰ κενότφια καὶ θέτο πρὸ τῆς κλινῆς καὶ παρὰ τὸν ἄγρον θέτο πρὸς κεφαλὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ κλυψεν αὐτὰ ματ.

LXE 1 Samuel 19:13 And Melchol took images, and laid them on the bed, and she put the liver of a goat by his head, and covered them with clothes.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:13 And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.

NET 1 Samuel 19:13 Then Michal took a household idol and put it on the bed. She put a quilt made of goat's hair over its head and then covered the idol with a garment.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:13 Then Michal took the household idol and put it on the bed, placed some goat hair on its head, and covered it with a garment.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:13 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:13 Then Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed, covering it with a garment and putting some goats' hair at the head.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:13 Then she took an idol and put it in his bed, covered it with blankets, and put a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:13 Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed; she put a net of goats' hair on its head, and covered it with the clothes.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:13 Michal then took a domestic image, laid it on the bed, put a tress of goats' hair at the head of the bed and put a cover over it.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:13 Michal took the household idol and laid it in the bed, putting a net of goat's hair at its head and covering it with a spread.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:13 and Michal taketh the teraphim, and layeth on the bed, and the mattress of goats' hair she hath put for his pillows, and covereth with a garment.

- **idol**: Heb. teraphim, Ge 31:19 Jdg 17:5 18:14,17 Ho 3:4
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MICHAL'S MASQUERADE!

**Michal took the household idol (teraphim) and laid it on the bed, and put a quilt of goats' hair at its head, and covered it with clothes** - The Hebrew word for **household idol** is [teraphim](#) translated in Greek with an interesting word kenotophion (only in 1Sa 19:13, 16) from kenos meaning empty and taphos meaning tomb, thus literally an "empty tomb." The Greek gives us our word cenotaph (from kenotaphion), which is a monument, sometimes in the form of a tomb, to a person who is buried elsewhere. Given the fact that Michal was trying to mimic David's body lying in bed, the teraphim had to be of some size (and not a small idol) or otherwise her ruse would not been effective. Some writers postulate that Michal may have kept the idol because of barrenness, the same reason [Rachel](#) had a secret idol (Ge 31:19).

Josephus had a somewhat off the wall comment that Michal had placed a still-moving goat's liver in the bed to make the messengers believe that there was a breathing invalid beneath.

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**Household idol** (08655)(teraphim) refers to a kind of idol, terāpîm is a plural noun, probably of Hittite origin. In all but one somewhat ambiguous context (1 Samuel 19:11-17), it is clear that the seraphim of ancient Israel were pagan household idols (cf. Genesis 31:19 with Genesis 31:30, 32; Judges 18:17 with Judges 18:24). Their primary function among the apostate element in Israel's population seems to have been that of divination (1Sa 15:23; 2Ki 23:24; Ezek 21:21; Zech. 10:2), in which role they are often found in context with the ephod (see Jdg 17:5; Jdg 18:14, 17, 18, 20; Hosea 3:4). Teraphim were associated with false worship and divination (2 Kings 23:24; Ezek. 21:21; Zech. 10:2). When Samuel condemned Saul's disobedience, he likened teraphim to the sin of divination (1 Sam. 15:23). The Ephraimite Micah's shrine included an ephod and teraphim (Jdg. 17:5; 18:14-31). Hosea also linked teraphim with the ephod (Hos. 3:4) in the list of cultic and national icons of which Israel would be deprived.

1 Samuel 15:23+ "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and **idolatry** (teraphim). Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king."

**Young** writes "Still unsolved is the problem of the nature of the teraphim in 1 Samuel 19:11-17. It is scarcely possible that the word (used as a singular; cf. KJV, RSV "image") there refers to household deities, since archaeologists have found no such images that even begin to approach the size of a fullgrown man (cf. W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 114; cf. also Genesis 31:34, where at least two teraphim could be hidden in a saddle). It has therefore been suggested that sometimes the word terāpîm refers to an image in the shape of a head, bust, or cultic mask (cf. A. R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*, p. 31, note 3) or, alternatively, that Michal's teraphim were "old rags" (W. F. Albright op. cit., p. 207, note 63). The size and even meaning and use of teraphim may have varied widely over the centuries. Needless to say, teraphim were never condoned in the OT as legitimate appurtenances to the worship of the Lord; in fact, they came under frequent prophetic condemnation (1 Samuel 15:23; 2 Kings 23:24; Zech. 10:2). ([link to the TWOT](#))

**Gilbrant** - Referring to "household gods," the noun terāpîm occurs fifteen times in the OT, always with the plural ending -îm. Most often, the word has the article (four times it does not; cf. Judg. 17:5; 18:14; 1 Sam. 15:23; Hos. 3:4). The plural form indicates real plurality only two times (2 Ki. 23:24; Zech. 10:2).

Koehler-Baumgartner (4:1795) prefers the English word "image" as the best translation. It may be, more specifically, a "statuette" (cf. Gen. 31:19, 34f) or even a "mask" of some kind. These objects functioned in the religious sphere as "household gods" or "family gods." Verse 34 indicates that relatively small objects were involved since Rachel put them inside her camel's saddle. In 1 Sam. 19:13, 16, it is suggested that an image of average human size is indicated, possibly a "ceremonial mask" or even "rags" are the best translations. The meaning, in fact, remains enigmatic.

The terāpîm possibly functioned as a source of oracles or even divination (cf. Judg. 17:5; Hos. 3:4; Zech. 10:2). The terāpîm were indeed eventually outlawed in Israel (cf. Gen. 31:19ff; 1 Sam. 15:23; 19:13, 16; 2 Ki. 23:24; Zech. 10:2f); rather, obedience and faith in God's Word were expected and inculcated. The terāpîm were used for divination by a Babylonian king (Ezek. 21:21). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Teraphim - 15x/15v - household idol(2), household idols(10), idolatry(1), teraphim(2).** Gen. 31:19; Gen. 31:34; Gen. 31:35; Jdg. 17:5; Jdg. 18:14; Jdg. 18:17; Jdg. 18:18; Jdg. 18:20; 1 Sam. 15:23; 1 Sam. 19:13; 1 Sam. 19:16; 2 Ki. 23:24; Ezek. 21:21; Hos. 3:4; Zech. 10:2

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**Walter Kaiser** - [go to page 187 in Hard Sayings of the Bible](#) for discussion of the question - **1Sa 19:13 David's House Has an Idol?**

What is an idol doing in the house of David, a monotheist and the one through whom the line of Christ is to come? Where did his wife Michal lay her hands on such an item, no matter what good intentions she had of protecting her husband from her jealous father?

Michal's ruse gave David time to flee from the soldiers who were sent to capture David, but that is not the point. Michal's dummy is described as being one of the terāpîm, "idols" or "household gods." The word is always found in the plural form, and the idols were sometimes small enough to be tucked away in a camel's saddle (Gen 31:19, 34-35), but here the idol seems to be man-sized, since Michal used it to simulate David's presence in bed.

The fact that household gods or idols were part of Michal's belongings, if not David's as well, **probably** reflects a pagan inclination or ignorant use of the surrounding culture. It would appear that the narrator made a deliberate connection between Michal and Rachel, who hid the teraphim in her camel saddle in Genesis 31. Each woman deceived her father in the use of the teraphim and thereby demonstrated more love and attachment to her husband than to her father. If our estimate of Rachel was that the teraphim may not



have been symbols of the person who held the will, that is, the rights to the inheritance, but were idols that would later have to be gotten rid of (Gen 35), then Michal, and David by implication, would be guilty of the same sin and in need of repentance and God's forgiveness.

See also comment on GENESIS 31:34.

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### John Kitto - Teraphim—I Samuel 19:1–17

David was now still more conspicuously brought before the view of the people, and his consequence in their eyes much enhanced by his alliance with the royal family. Aware of this—and perceiving that his underhand devices only tended to raise the son of Jesse to higher credit, and but gave him opportunities of achieving greater distinction, the king's dislike ripened fast into mortal hatred. He also found that his daughter really loved her husband, and could not in any way be made instrumental in bringing his safety into danger. These things made him wild. He began among his intimates to throw aside the mask which had hitherto veiled, however thinly, the motive of his proceedings; and he hinted, that a removal of David by any means would be a service most acceptable to him. Providentially, he mentioned this to Jonathan among the rest. That faithful friend said nothing at the time, but went up and apprized David of his danger, and directed him to a place of concealment; and he promised to lead Saul the next day in that direction, so that his friend might overhear what passed when he interceded for him. He arranged this, probably, that in case his father broke forth into violence or proved inexorable, David might be aware of it, and escape without incurring the danger of further personal communications.

In this conversation with his father, Jonathan took a strong and decided tone. He plainly told him that he was about to commit a great sin, in thus seeking the destruction of a valuable public servant, who had rendered great services to the state, and all whose conduct towards him had been most true and loyal. "Wherefore then," he said with vehemence, "wilt thou sin against innocent blood, by slaying David without a cause?" The king—a man of impulses, and in whom the impulse to right feeling was not yet extinct, was moved by this earnest appeal; and he pledged himself by an oath to Jonathan, that he would no longer seek the life of Jesse's son.

David then left his concealment, and resumed his usual duties; and soon after he went again to the wars, and acquired still further renown, so that his praise was in the mouth of all the people. This was wormwood to Saul. His former malignity, suspicion, and hatred, all revived; and when David came back to court, his old paroxysms of madness returned with such violence, that the harp of David, who had now a place at the king's table as his son-in-law, had no longer the power over him it once possessed. He could no longer heed the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. One day his pent-up passion so over-mastered him, that he again threw his javelin at David. With such force was it thrown, that it stuck into the wall and remained there, for David had evaded the stroke, and immediately withdrew from the king's presence. But now that he had committed himself by this act, Saul was determined to carry his purpose out, and he set a guard to watch David's house all night to prevent his escape. We may guess that only the fear of alarming the town, and of rousing the populace to rescue their favorite hero, prevented him from directing them to break into the house, and slay David there. It was so providentially ordered; for he was thus, at the suggestion of his wife, enabled to escape through a back window, by which she let him down.

David having thus escaped, the remaining anxiety of Michal, then, was to protract the time as much as possible, that he might be far enough off before the pursuit commenced. She "took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for a bolster, and covered it with a cloth." The object of this was to convey the impression, on a cursory view, that some one was lying in the bed. The "image" is, in the original, "teraphim." There is much difficulty about these teraphim. They are first mentioned as things that had been secreted by Rachel when her husband fled from Padanaram, and about which Laban made so much uproar when he overtook them. That they were held in superstitious regard, partaking of idolatry, is manifest, but that they were not looked upon by those who used them as interfering with the worship of Jehovah, but of being auxiliary to it, seems to appear from their being found in families which professed to be true worshippers of the Lord. It seems to us that they were superstitious symbolical figures, which were regarded as bringing peculiar blessings and as securing peculiar protections—essentially the blessings and protections of Jehovah—to the houses in which they were found, like, in some degree, the tutelary and household gods, the Penates and Lares of the Roman; or, as we take it, still more like the pictures of St. Nicholas or of the Virgin, which one sees in every Russian shop, before which a lamp is kept continually burning, and which every one who enters the place reverently salutes.

Of their evil there can be no question, from their tendency to lead into more direct idolatry, and the deficient appreciation, which the use of them evinced, of the spiritual worship which God, who is a Spirit, required, and which is most acceptable in his sight. It was a form of worshipping God, but being an unscriptural and dangerous form, was evil in his eyes, and was commandatorily put down, along with other forms of idolatry, by Joshua;445 yet it is nowhere denounced and suppressed with the same rigor as the worship of Moloch or of Baal. It is observable that women were particularly addicted to the use of these teraphim. First, there was Rachel who had them without the knowledge of her husband, and now here is Michal, who has a teraph, doubtless without the privity of David. That may have been easy in the case of Rachel, seeing the images appear to have been small, from the facility with which they were concealed; but this of Michal seems to have been as large as a human body; and it may be asked, Was it possible that David



should have been ignorant of its existence in his house? It is very possible under the arrangement of eastern habitations, which assigns a separate part of the house to the women; and particularly so in the case of David, who, as being now a high military commander, and especially as having married the king's daughter, doubtless dwelt in a large house, and showed to her all the consideration in these matters which a lady of her rank was entitled to expect.

There has been some difference of opinion as to the form of the teraphim. The passage before us would seem to intimate that it had the human shape, being intended, when lying in the bed and covered with the bed-clothes, to be taken for David, ill in bed. This is not, however, conclusive, seeing that almost anything of sufficient bulk might be made to suggest that idea in a darkened room, and in the dim of the morning, so long as the head was not visible.

There is a very prevalent notion among the Jewish writers that the teraphim were figures of brass, constructed under certain horoscopic and astrological aspects; and that, a plate of gold being placed under the tongue, they were, on being invoked with ceremonies of divination, enabled to deliver oracles. To state this is to refute it.

The mention of a pillow of goats' hair in the present passage, leads Josephus astray into the odd fancy, that Michal put in the bed the lungs of a goat recently killed, the palpitations of which would impart the motion caused by a man's breathing in bed. Then how as to the form of a man in bed, which the teraph must have presented? and how long do the lungs of a slain goat continue thus to palpitate? The thing is absurd. Nevertheless, we are not very sure that we understand this matter of "the pillow of goats' hair." The hair of a Syrian goat might form a good stuffing for a pillow-case; but how were the persons to be deceived to know that the pillow was filled with goats' hair? We incline to think the pillow was of goats' skin, with the hair outside, and that such a pillow was then regarded as having a sanative property in some diseases; whence to see such a pillow in a bed would strengthen the illusion that a sick man lay there. Although this is a conjecture of our own, it seems to us more probable than the notion of some interpreters, that Michal made a kind of wig for the teraph, with the goat's skin, to produce a passable resemblance to David's head.

#### 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

BGT 1 Samuel 19:14 κα π στείλεν Σαουλ γγ λους λαβε ν τ ν Δαυιδ κα λ γουσιν νοχλε σθαι α τ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 19:14 And Saul sent messengers to take David; and they say that he is sick.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

NET 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, "He's sick."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent agents to seize David, Michal said, "He's sick."

ESV 1 Samuel 19:14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent the men to capture David, Michal said, "He is ill."

NLT 1 Samuel 19:14 When the troops came to arrest David, she told them he was sick and couldn't get out of bed.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent the agents to arrest David, she said, 'He is ill.'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, "He is sick."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:14 And Saul sendeth messengers to take David, and she saith, 'He is sick.'

- **she said:** Jos 2:5 2Sa 16:17-19 17:20
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### MICHAL'S LIE TO COVER FOR DAVID

**When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."** Ironically, for the second time David's life was saved by a member of Saul's household. God is not condoning lying, for it is a sin. This is no little white lie, for if she were discovered lying her father might execute her for treason. In short, she was willing to lay down her life for David.

**1 Samuel 19:15 Then Saul sent messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed, that I may put him to death."**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:15 καὶ ποστὸν ἀλλοῖς π τ ν Δαυιδ λ γων γ γετε α τ ν π τ ς κλ νης πρ ς με το θανατ σαι α τ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 19:15 And he sends to David, saying, Bring him to me on the bed, that I may slay him.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.

NET 1 Samuel 19:15 Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed so I can kill him."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:15 Saul sent the agents back to see David and said, "Bring him on his bed so I can kill him."

ESV 1 Samuel 19:15 Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:15 Then Saul sent the men back to see David and told them, "Bring him up to me in his bed so that I may kill him."

NLT 1 Samuel 19:15 But Saul sent the troops back to get David. He ordered, "Bring him to me in his bed so I can kill him!"

NRS 1 Samuel 19:15 Then Saul sent the messengers to see David for themselves. He said, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:15 Saul sent the agents back to see David, with the words, 'Bring him to me on his bed, for me to kill him!'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:15 Saul, however, sent the messengers back to see David and commanded them, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:15 And Saul sendeth the messengers to see David, saying, 'Bring him up in the bed unto me,' -- to put him to death.

- Bring him: The eastern beds consist merely of two thick cotton quilts, one of which, folded double, serves as a mattress, the other as a covering. Such seems to have been the bed of David, which could easily have been carried, with himself in it, to the presence of Saul. 1Sa 19:6 Job 31:31 Ps 37:12 Pr 27:3,4 Ro 3:15
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **NOW SAUL PERSONALLY SEEKS TO KILL DAVID**

**Then** - Marks progression in the story.

**Saul sent messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed, that I may put him to death** - Saul wanted David awoken so he could be put to sleep forever!

**1 Samuel 19:16 When the messengers entered, behold, the household idol was on the bed with the quilt of goats' hair at its head.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:16 καὶ ῥχονται ο γγελοι καὶ δο τ κενοτ φια π τ ς κλ νης κα παρ τ ν α γ ν πρ ς κεφαλ ς α το

LXE 1 Samuel 19:16 And the messengers come, and, behold, the images were on the bed, and the goat's liver at his head.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.

NET 1 Samuel 19:16 When the messengers came, they found only the idol on the bed and the quilt made of goat's hair at its head.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:16 When the messengers arrived, to their surprise, the household idol was on the bed with some goat hair on its head.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:16 And when the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair at its head.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:16 But when the men entered, there was the idol in the bed, and at the head was some goats' hair.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:16 But when they came to carry David out, they discovered that it was only an idol in the bed with a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:16 When the messengers came in, the idol was in the bed, with the covering of goats' hair on its head.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:16 So in the agents went, and there in bed was the image, with the tress of goats' hair on its head!

NAB 1 Samuel 19:16 But when the messengers entered, they found the household idol in the bed, with the net of goat's hair at its head.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:16 And the messengers come in, and lo, the teraphim are on the bed, and the mattress of goats' hair, for his pillows.

- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SLEEPING DAVID HAD BECOME A HAIRY IDOL

**When the messengers entered, behold, the household idol was on the bed with the quilt of goats' hair at its head**- Saul's servants had been duped!

**Spurgeon** - We cannot admire Michal's deceit, nor yet her having idols in her house. She was Saul's daughter, and came of a bad stock. The Lord, however, overruled her love for David, so that the persecuted one escaped. God will preserve his own.

**1 Samuel 19:17 So Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" And Michal said to Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I put you to death?'"**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:17 κα ε πεν Σαουλ τ Μελχολ να τ ο τως παρελογ σω με κα ξαπ στειλας τ ν χθρ ν μου κα διεσ θη κα ε πεν Μελχολ τ Σαουλ α τ ς ε πεν ξαπ στειλ ν με ε δ μ θανατ σω σε

LXE 1 Samuel 19:17 And Saul said to Melchol, Why hast thou thus deceived me, and suffered my enemy to depart, and he has escaped? and Melchol said to Saul, He said, let me go, and if not, I will slay thee.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?

NET 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me this way by sending my enemy away? Now he has escaped!" Michal replied to Saul, "He said to me, 'Help me get away or else I will kill you!'"

CSB 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul asked Michal, "Why did you deceive me like this? You sent my enemy away, and he has escaped!" She answered him, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I kill you?'"

ESV 1 Samuel 19:17 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?'"

NIV 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul said to Michal, "Why did you deceive me like this and send my enemy away so that he escaped?" Michal told him, "He said to me, 'Let me get away. Why should I kill you?'"

NLT 1 Samuel 19:17 "Why have you betrayed me like this and let my enemy escape?" Saul demanded of Michal. "I had to," Michal replied. "He threatened to kill me if I didn't help him."

NRS 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go; why should I kill you?'"

NJB 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul then said to Michal, 'Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, and so make his escape?' Michal replied to Saul, 'He said, "Let me go, or I shall kill you!" '

NAB 1 Samuel 19:17 Saul therefore asked Michal: "Why did you play this trick on me? You have helped my enemy to get away!" Michal answered Saul: "He threatened me, 'Let me go or I will kill you.'"

YLT 1 Samuel 19:17 And Saul saith unto Michal, 'Why thus hast thou deceived me -- that thou dost send away mine enemy, and he is escaped?' and Michal saith unto Saul, 'He said unto me, Send me away: why do I put thee to death?'

- **Why have:** 1Sa 22:17 28:12 Mt 2:16
- **enemy:** 1Ki 21:20 Ga 4:16
- **Michal:** 2Sa 17:20
- **He said:** 1Sa 19:14 Ex 1:17-19
- **why should:** 2Sa 2:22
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MICHAL ANSWERS ACCUSATION WITH A LIE

**So Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?"**- Michal's deception had indeed allowed David to escape. What is so sad is that Saul (whether under the influence of the evil spirit or just his fallen flesh) has gone from a man who loved David greatly (1Sa 16:21), to a man who now sees him as his adversary.

**Arthur Pink** - How thoroughly blurred is the vision of one who is filled with envy, anger and hatred! He who had befriended Saul again and again, was now regarded as an "enemy." There is a solemn lesson for us in this: if pride, prejudice, or self-seeking rule our hearts, we shall regard those who are our wisest counselors and well-wishers as foes

**And Michal said to Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! Why should I put you to death** - Michal lies the NAB has "He threatened me, 'Let me go or I will kill you.' David did not threaten her.

**1 Samuel 19:18 Now David fled and escaped and came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:18 κα Δαυιδ φυγεν κα διεσθη κα παραγνεται πρς Σαμουηλ ες Αρμαθαιμ κα παγγλλει ατ πντα σα ποησεν ατ Σαουλ κα πορεθη Δαυιδ κα Σαμουηλ κα κθισαν ν Ναυαθ ν Ραμα

LXE 1 Samuel 19:18 So David fled, and escaped, and comes to Samuel to Armathaim, and tells him all that Saul had done to him: and Samuel and David went, and dwelt in Navath in Rama.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:18 So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

NET 1 Samuel 19:18 Now David had run away and escaped. He went to Samuel in Ramah and told him everything that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:18 So David fled and escaped and went to Samuel at Ramah and told him everything Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel left and stayed at Naioth.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:18 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:18 When David had fled and made his escape, he went to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to Naioth and stayed there.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:18 So David escaped and went to Ramah to see Samuel, and he told him all that Saul had done to him. Then Samuel took David with him to live at Naioth.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:18 Now David fled and escaped; he came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul

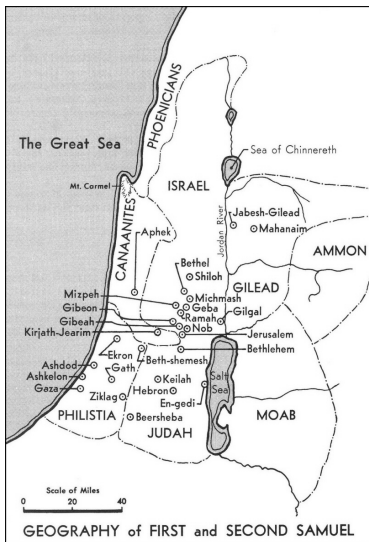
had done to him. He and Samuel went and settled at Naioth.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:18 David, having fled and made his escape, went to Samuel at Ramah and told him exactly how Saul had treated him; he and Samuel went and lived in the huts.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:18 Thus David got safely away; he went to Samuel in Ramah, informing him of all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to stay in the sheds.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:18 And David hath fled, and is escaped, and cometh in unto Samuel to Ramath, and declareth to him all that Saul hath done to him, and he goeth, he and Samuel, and they dwell in Naioth.

- to Samuel: 1Sa 7:17 15:34 28:3 Ps 116:11 Jas 5:16
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



See Ramah - Naioth is in the vicinity

## DAVID FLEES TO SAMUEL

Gene Getz in his book I recommend (borrow [David: God's man in faith and failure](#)) entitles his chapter 7 "The Bible Tells It Like It Is (Read 1 Samuel 19:18–24; 20:1–42; 1Sa 21:1–15; Psalm 34)" **David's Slide from Faith to Fear** - In our study of David's life, we have noticed his strengths. He was called a man after God's heart—one of the greatest tributes a person could ever receive. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him mightily. Against impossible odds, he faced Goliath and slew him, which was only the beginning of his great exploits in doing battle against the Philistines. He was known in Israel as a man of unusual courage and great faith in God. But all was not well in David's heart and life. A change was gradually taking place. **Little by little his faith in God's protection was being replaced by fear of what one man could do to him.** And that man was King Saul! David's fear is understandable—even predictable. He had faithfully served Saul as one of his armor-bearers and as his personal musician. At one time the king had demonstrated great love toward him (1 Sam. 16:21). But when David was honored by the people of Israel for his great victory over Goliath, Saul's love turned to intense jealousy, anger, and suspicion. He actually looked for opportunities to kill David. Foiled in his murder attempts, Saul planned David's death on the battlefield by giving him greater military responsibility. Again, Saul's scheme failed. Repeatedly, he tried to "pin David to the wall" with his spear. But each time, David escaped. Saul's anger became relentless. He sent his own men to kill David. But David, with his wife's help, escaped through a window and fled. Saul's attempts on David's life were becoming more frequent and intense. **It was no longer a private scheme but a public strategy.** And no one—including God Himself—would blame David for fleeing from Saul's presence. It was the only sensible thing to do. There is no doubt David was under tremendous pressure. Few men would have—or could have—handled the situation the way he did. God certainly understood these difficulties. However, there is another perspective. How David responded inwardly to these pressures and—more significantly—how he responded to God's protection is another matter. **Rather than trusting the Lord as he had done so frequently in difficult situations, he began to lose his spiritual and emotional bearings. His most serious mistake: he ignored God's protection and he took matters into his own hands. When he did, things went from bad to worse.**

**Now David fled and escaped and came to Samuel at Ramah** (Samuel's home), **and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth** ("habitations" - [map of possible site](#)) - Men of God go to men of God when adversity strikes. Since the word Naioth means dwellings, residence or habitations, it seems that this place name was in the region of Ramah and was possibly the place Samuel trained his disciples or prophets (cf 2KI 6:1-2)

**THOUGHT** - Dear man or woman of God, to whom do you run when the fires of the trial begin to burst into full flame? Do you go to secular sources or do you seek out one who you know speaks with God?

**Brian Bell** - David fled straight to Samuel, and until the day of his death, Samuel stood by David.

**Guzik on Naioth** - The word Naioth comes from the Hebrew word for residence. This spoke of Samuel's home (which may have had "Naioth" title itself), or it may have been some landmark or specific place in Ramah. Whenever Naioth is mentioned it is associated with Ramah.

**THOUGHT**- David the fugitive is running for his life which reminds me of the song [Run like Heaven](#)." Let us run for Heaven like imitating David running for his life, for we too are continually being pursued by our enemies, the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#).

## MAPS TRACING DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL 1 SAMUEL 19-24

[Click here for an excellent map with DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL with Numbered Movements of David](#) - Copyright Faithlife / Logos Bible Software (<https://www.logos.com>).

Below is a summary from the [ESV Global Study Bible](#) of 18 places David fled

Click to Enlarge

David's growing reputation among the people as a warrior and leader incited Saul's jealousy, and Saul began trying to kill David (1Sa 19:9-10).

- (1) David fled from Saul in Gibeah (1Sa 19:9-10) and then from his home (1Sa 19:11-17)
- (2) After Saul tried unsuccessfully to kill him in his home, he fled to Samuel at Naioth in Ramah (1Sa 19:18)
- (3), Saul sought David in Naioth of Ramah, but the Spirit saved him (1Sa 19:19-24), and he fled back to meet Jonathan in Gibeah where Jonathan sent an "arrow-gram" warning David of Saul's determination to kill him (1Sa 20:1-42)
- (4). David then fled to Ahimelech the priest at Nob where he collected food and Goliath's sword. (1Sa 21:1-9)
- (5), David briefly sought refuge in the Philistine city of Gath (1Sa 21:10-15)
- (6) David then escaped to set up headquarters at the cave of Adullam where his army swelled to 400 men. (1Sa 22:1-2)
- (7), In order to protect his parents from harm, David left them in the care of the king of Moab at Mizpah (1Sa 22:3-4)
- (8) and went to live in "the stronghold", the cave of Adullam (1Sa 22:1, 4)
- (9). Prophet Gad warns David and he went to the forest of Hereth (1Sa 22:5)
- (10) and then left to rescue nearby Keilah from some Philistine raiding parties. (1Sa 23:1-5)
- (11) When David heard that Saul was coming to Keilah, he and his 600 men fled Keilah. (1Sa 23:9-13) David relocated to the wilderness of Ziph (1Sa 23:14)
- (12) After the men of Ziph betrayed David to Saul (1Sa 23:19-20), David and his men went to live in the wilderness of Maon (1Sa 23:24-25) and narrowly escaped capture there by Saul (1Sa 23:26-28)
- (13) . Fleeing the strongholds of Engedi (1Sa 23:29) David again evaded capture by Saul and refused an opportunity to take Saul's life. (1Sa 24:1-22)
- (14) After Samuel's death (1Sa 25:1) David went to the wilderness of Paran (1Sa 25:1)
- (15). While he was there, David was again betrayed to Saul by the men of Ziph and refused another opportunity to take Saul's life. (1Sa 26:1-25)

Below is another map from the Holman Bible Atlas ([digital book](#); [Hardcover](#))

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### 1 Samuel 19:19 It was told Saul, saying, '**Behold**, David is at Naioth in Ramah.'

BGT 1 Samuel 19:19 καὶ πηγγύλη τὸ Σαουλ ἰδὼν γόντες δὸ Δαυὶδ ἐν Ναυαθ ἐν Ραμὰ

LXE 1 Samuel 19:19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is in Navath in Rama.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.

NET 1 Samuel 19:19 It was reported to Saul saying, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:19 When it was reported to Saul that David was at Naioth in Ramah,

ESV 1 Samuel 19:19 And it was told Saul, "Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:19 Word came to Saul: "David is in Naioth at Ramah";

NLT 1 Samuel 19:19 When the report reached Saul that David was at Naioth in Ramah,

NRS 1 Samuel 19:19 Saul was told, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:19 Word was brought to Saul, 'David is in the huts at Ramah.'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:19 When Saul was told that David was in the sheds near Ramah,

YLT 1 Samuel 19:19 And it is declared to Saul, saying, 'Lo, David is in Naioth in Ramah.'

- 1Sa 22:9,10 23:19 26:1 Pr 29:12
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL LEARNS OF DAVID'S LOCATION

It was told Saul, saying, "**Behold**, David is at Naioth in Ramah." - See [#2 on map above](#). Was he also told David was there with Samuel? The text does not say. In any event Saul thinks "I've got him now!" and he moves swiftly to capture his enemy!

### 1 Samuel 19:20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David, but when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing and presiding over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul; and they also prophesied.

BGT 1 Samuel 19:20 καὶ πέμψεν Σαουλ γγύλους λαβεῖν τὸν Δαυὶδ καὶ ἔδαν τὸν κκλησάντων προφητῶν καὶ Σαμουὴλ ἐστὲν καθέστηκας πᾶσιν καὶ γενέθη πτός γγύλους τὸ Σαουλ πνεύμα θεοῦ καὶ προφητευσίαν

LXE 1 Samuel 19:20 And Saul sent messengers to take David, and they saw the assembly of the prophets, and Samuel stood as appointed over them; and the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they prophesy.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:20 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 was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

NET 1 Samuel 19:20 So Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw a company of prophets prophesying with Samuel standing there as their leader, the spirit of God came upon Saul's messengers, and they also prophesied.



CSB 1 Samuel 19:20 he sent agents to seize David. However, when they saw the group of prophets prophesying with Samuel leading them, the Spirit of God came on Saul's agents, and they also started prophesying.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:20 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:20 so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:20 he sent troops to capture him. But when they arrived and saw Samuel leading a group of prophets who were prophesying, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men, and they also began to prophesy.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David. When they saw the company of the prophets in a frenzy, with Samuel standing in charge of them, the spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also fell into a prophetic frenzy.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:20 Saul accordingly sent agents to capture David; when they saw the community of prophets prophesying, and Samuel there as their leader, the spirit of God came over Saul's agents, and they too fell into frenzy.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:20 he sent messengers to arrest David. But when they saw the band of prophets, presided over by Samuel, in a prophetic frenzy, they too fell into the prophetic state.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:20 And Saul sendeth messengers to take David, and they see the assembly of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing, set over them, and the Spirit of God is on Saul's messengers, and they prophesy -- they also.

- **sent messengers:** 1Sa 19:11,14 Joh 7:32,45
- **when they:** 1Sa 10:5,6,10 Nu 11:25,26 Joe 2:28 Joh 7:32,45,46-52 1Co 14:3,24,25
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION: SPIRIT SWEEPS IN TO MAKE SAUL'S MEN PROPHECY**

**Then** - A strategically time "then." When? When Saul heard where David was, he moved quickly to capture him.

**Saul sent messengers** ("agents," "troops") **to take David, but when they saw the company of the prophets**([nabiy](#); Lxx = [prophetes](#)) **prophesying** ([naba](#); Lxx = [propheteuo](#) in present tense = continually), **with Samuel standing and presiding over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul; and they also prophesied** - This is a strange supernatural intervention by God! In this passage and the following, God uses a unique method to protect His future king David. He causes the adversaries to prophesy by His Spirit. The effect would clearly be to distract them from the task to take David. This passage teaches that not every time the Spirit comes upon someone were they converted. At least it is difficult to believe all of Saul's messengers became true believers in Yahweh. This coming of the Spirit upon them was a manifestation of the omnipotent power of God to control a situation that could have potentially led to the death of David, God's choice for king. This was a case of "non-profit" prophesying as far as Saul was concerned because it supernaturally took the messenger's minds off of their objective to bring David back to Saul. What were they prophesying? We cannot be certain, but the Holy Spirit was the One Who energized their speaking, so we have to assume holy speech came out of their mouths, possibly words of exaltation to Yahweh or possibly words of the Scriptures, forthtelling but surely not foretelling like the prophet Samuel had prophesied.

**THOUGHT** - God's providential provision of protection for David (which David did not even ask for and may not have even been aware of!) makes me wonder how many times in our lives has God provided providential protection and we were not even aware of His good hand of protection? I hope part of Heaven will be to see the good hand of the LORD protecting us undoubtedly countless times in our lives, for He Alone would receive the glory. Just a thought to ponder regarding our "so great a salvation," (Heb 2:1+) and the truth of His "ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (Heb 1:14+). I can recall 3 times in my life before I was a believer in Jesus, that "strange circumstances" saved my life! And my guess is those were just the ones I was aware of!

[Guzik](#) - When it says that they were all prophesying it isn't that they were all predicting the future. The Hebrew word simply has the idea of speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They probably all gave spontaneous and inspired praise to God. This was

an unusual work of the Holy Spirit – to come upon men who did not seek after God, who did not long to be filled with the Spirit. God did this to protect David, and this was His way of “disarming” those who came to capture David.

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**Prophesying** (5012) (naba from [nabiy](#) = prophet) means prophesy, to speak by inspiration, and twice translated raved!

**W E Vine** - The first appearance is in 1 Sam. 10:6, where Saul is told by Samuel that when he meets a certain band of ecstatic prophets, he too will "prophesy with them, and ... be turned into another man." This incident points up the fact that there is a certain amount of ambiguity in the biblical use of both the verb and the noun forms, just as there is in the English "to prophesy" and "prophet." Thus, there is a wide range of meanings reflected in the term in the Old Testament. Most frequently *nābā'* is used to describe the function of the true prophet as he speaks God's message to the people, under the influence of the divine spirit (1 Kings 22:8; Jer. 29:27; Ezek. 37:10). "To prophesy" was a task that the prophet could not avoid: "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8; cf. Jer. 20:7, where Jeremiah says that he was both attracted to and forced into being a prophet). While the formula "The word of the Lord came [to the prophet]" is used literally hundreds of times in the Old Testament, there is no real indication as to the manner in which it came, whether it came through the thought-processes, through a vision, or in some other way. Sometimes, especially in the earlier prophets, it seems that some kind of ecstatic experience may have been involved, as in 1 Sam. 10:6, 11; 1 Sam. 19:20. Music is sometimes spoken of as a means of prophesying, as in 1 Chron. 25:1-3. The false prophets, although not empowered by the divine spirit, are spoken of as prophesying also: "... I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied" (Jer. 23:21). The false prophet is roundly condemned because he speaks a non-authentic word: "... Prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord; ... Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!" (Ezek. 13:2-3). The false prophet especially is subject to frenzied states of mind which give rise to his prophesying, although the content of such activity is not clearly spelled out (1 Kings 22:10). The point is that in the biblical context "to prophesy" can refer to anything from the frenzied ecstasism of a false prophet to the cold sober proclamation of God's judgment by an Amos or an Isaiah. "To prophesy" is much more than the prediction of future events. Indeed, the first concern of the prophet is to speak God's word to the people of his own time, calling them to covenant faithfulness. The prophet's message is conditional, dependent upon the response of the people. Thus, by their response to this word, the people determine in large part what the future holds, as is well illustrated by the response of the Ninevites to Jonah's preaching. Of course, prediction does enter the picture at times, such as in Nahum's prediction of the fall of Nineveh (Nah. 2:13) and in the various messianic passages (Isa. 9:1-6; Isa. 11:1-9; Isa. 52:13-53:12). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**Gilbrant** - The verb *nābā'* is a denominative derived from *nābī'*, "prophet." The verb occurs 115 times in the Hebrew Bible and has cognates in Biblical Aramaic, Middle Hebrew, Talmudic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Mandaean, Syriac and Tigre. The verb, which means "to prophesy," conveys more than merely speaking. Indeed, speaking often requires a second verb (e.g., *'āmar*, "to speak"). Music often accompanied prophesying. The example of Saul joining a prophetic band when the Spirit of Yahweh was upon him is a prime example of prophetic activity, as Samuel had predicted, "You will meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them; and they shall prophesy: Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and you will be changed into a different man" (1Sa 10:5f). Indeed, David appointed musicians as temple prophets (1 Chr. 25:1ff). Manic actions are sometimes associated with prophesying. The prophets of Baal were especially given to this type of behavior (1 Ki. 18:20-28; cf. also the description of a Phoenician prophet of Baal in the Egyptian text known as Wen-Amon). So, on occasion, were the prophets of Yahweh, judging from the passing remark of Jer. 29:26 in regard to Shemaiah, who usurped the position of high priest in the eyes of Jeremiah that he might have charge of "every man that is mad, and makes himself a prophet." Prophesying included a number of symbolic acts. Ezekiel's actions in the early chapters of his work are as bizarre and extroverted as any: he built a model of Jerusalem, cut his hair and symbolically portrayed the coming siege of Jerusalem (cf. ch. 4). False prophets displayed similar behavior (1 Ki. 22:10f). This unusual behavior was sanctioned by Yahweh when the prophets spoke for Him (cf. Amos 7:15). The prophets of the court of Ahaz, king of Israel, were prophesying falsely according to a ruse devised in the divine court of Yahweh (1 Ki. 22:18-25). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Naba - prophesied(31), prophesies(8), prophesy(55), prophesying(19), raved(2).** Num. 11:25; Num. 11:26; Num. 11:27; 1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Sam. 10:6; 1 Sam. 10:10; 1 Sam. 10:11; 1 Sam. 10:13; 1 Sam. 18:10; 1 Sam. 19:20; 1 Sam. 19:21; 1 Sam. 19:23; 1 Sam. 19:24; 1 Ki. 18:29; 1 Ki. 22:8; 1 Ki. 22:10; 1 Ki. 22:12; 1 Ki. 22:18; 1 Chr. 25:1; 1 Chr. 25:2; 1 Chr. 25:3; 2 Chr. 18:7; 2 Chr. 18:9; 2 Chr. 18:11; 2 Chr. 18:17; 2 Chr. 20:37; Jer. 2:8; Jer. 5:31; Jer. 11:21; Jer. 14:14; Jer. 14:15; Jer. 14:16; Jer. 19:14; Jer. 20:1; Jer. 20:6; Jer. 23:13; Jer. 23:16; Jer. 23:21; Jer. 23:25; Jer. 23:26; Jer. 23:32; Jer. 25:13; Jer. 25:30; Jer. 26:9; Jer. 26:11; Jer. 26:12; Jer. 26:18; Jer. 26:20; Jer. 27:10; Jer. 27:14; Jer. 27:15; Jer. 27:16; Jer. 28:6; Jer. 28:8; Jer. 28:9; Jer. 29:9; Jer. 29:21; Jer. 29:26; Jer. 29:27; Jer. 29:31; Jer. 32:3; Jer. 37:19; Ezek. 4:7; Ezek. 6:2; Ezek. 11:4; Ezek. 11:13; Ezek. 12:27; Ezek. 13:2; Ezek. 13:16; Ezek. 13:17; Ezek. 20:46; Ezek. 21:2; Ezek. 21:9; Ezek. 21:14; Ezek. 21:28; Ezek. 25:2; Ezek. 28:21; Ezek. 29:2; Ezek. 30:2; Ezek. 34:2; Ezek. 35:2; Ezek. 36:1; Ezek. 36:3; Ezek. 36:6; Ezek. 37:4; Ezek. 37:7; Ezek. 37:9; Ezek. 37:10; Ezek. 37:12; Ezek. 38:2; Ezek. 38:14; Ezek. 38:17; Ezek. 39:1; Joel 2:28; Amos 2:12; Amos 3:8; Amos 7:12; Amos 7:13; Amos 7:15; Amos 7:16; Zech. 13:3; Zech. 13:4

David had not now to evade merely the sudden paroxysms of Saul's wrath, but **this fixed and avowed purpose of effecting his destruction**, in the face of the oath which had been made to Jonathan. Any step he might now take was of the utmost importance to David, and might be pregnant with ulterior consequences. He, therefore, wisely resolved to repair to Samuel at Ramah, to obtain the advantage of his counsels and experience. Whether there had been any intercourse between them during the years which had passed since the anointing of David, we do not learn. On account of the suspicious character of Saul, and the probability that too close an intercourse would have led him to suppose that some collusion existed between them, and that Samuel was preparing to bring the son of Jesse forward, as the worthier man destined to fill the throne, **it is probable that there had been little, if any, communication between him and David.** It was not needed. They knew enough of each other without it. David knew that Samuel had relinquished all part in public affairs, and was solely occupied in his religious duties as prophet, and in the superintendence and instruction of the college of religious young men, which he had established at the rural hamlet of Naioth, in the vicinity of Ramah. There they were instructed in sacred learning and religious exercises, and were led to cultivate, especially by psalmody and music, the devotional feelings which might fit them, when occasion called, to become the messengers of God and teachers of the people. Samuel, on his part, could not have been ignorant of the public history of David; and we may conceive the interest with which he beheld the providence of God gradually leading this young man forward in his appointed path and to his destined station. The purposes of God were ripening every hour; and he was content to wait, knowing well what the end must be.

David not only sought counsel of Samuel, but probably thought that with him he might find safety and protection. The school at Naioth formed a sanctuary which even Saul, he might think, would not be likely to invade. Besides that, the presence of Samuel alone must surely be a sufficient protection from outrage. It is true this step might confirm the suspicions of Saul as to his being the man Samuel had announced as the heir of his throne. Yet the movement would not be in itself conclusive, seeing that it was no doubt still the practice for every one who was in great perplexity, to repair to the venerable prophet for counsel and advice.

At Ramah David reported to Samuel all the particulars of Saul's conduct towards him; and on hearing this, the prophet took him to his college at Naioth, as if to put him into sanctuary there. At this place the son of Jesse remained some time before Saul learned where he was. These were no doubt happy days with him. Here he was in an atmosphere congenial to his best feelings, his highest tastes, and holiest aspirations; and here his accomplishments, in sacred minstrelsy and song, had ample scope and exercise, enabling him to join heart and soul in their harmonious "prophesyings," and doubtless endearing him greatly to the good men who had their quiet dwelling there. There were probably moments when, feeling sick of the turmoil of public life, and tired of the persecutions and suspicions which followed him, he had been content to abandon his high career for the peaceful and holy life he was now allowed to share. It may even be possible that such was his intention, and that he hoped this voluntary retirement would abate the suspicions of Saul, and mollify his hatred.

But it was not so to be. When Saul learned to what place David had retired, he sent a body of men to apprehend him. These men, however, no sooner came to the sacred place, and beheld the prophets engaged in their sacred exercises, led by the venerable Samuel, than their hearts were smitten. They felt that they dared not attempt any violence, and they stood contentedly, swelling by their voices the loud chorus of praise to God.

This occurred to two other sets of emissaries—three in all; and at last Saul determined to go himself, and execute on the spot the fell purposes of his will. So forth he went. On his approach to Ramah, he came to the great well of Sechu, and finding there a number of people who had come from the town for water, he inquired of them where Samuel and David then were. On hearing that they were at Naioth, he turned his steps in that direction; but he had proceeded only a little way, when the Spirit which had moved his messengers, fell upon him also,—with this difference, that they had not thus been moved till they reached the presence of Samuel and his pupils; whereas Saul felt the spirit come upon him while he was on the road, giving him, for the time, the heart of another man. This is very remarkable; the messengers, as Saul himself on a former occasion, may be supposed to have been influenced by a sympathy with what they saw and heard, when they came into the presence of the prophets; but now the heart of Saul is moved in the absence of all such associations, as if purposely to show, that the change wrought in him was the immediate work of Him who holds the hearts of all men in his hand. It showed, also, that this power was not confined to place or persons, and that the prophesyings at Naioth were owing to no influence of example—to no intoxicating vapors, or to the temperature of the air, as was suspected of some of the heathen oracles of old.

Thus the king went on, singing in high excitement the praises of God; and when he came to Naioth, and entered the presence of Samuel—between whom and him an angry scene might have been expected but, for this Divine intervention—he cast off his weapons, and the outer robes which belonged to his rank, and stood among the sons of the prophets as one of themselves, taking his part in their holy chants.<sup>446</sup> Thus disarrayed of all that marked the king or the warrior, Saul, when the "prophesyings" were ended, lay down exhausted or entranced all the remainder of that day, and all the ensuing night. It is said that "he lay down naked,"

which we have interpreted to mean, that he divested himself of his outer raiment, which from its looseness could be easily slipped off, and remained in his closer inner vesture and girdle. This is not the only instance in which the term “naked” is thus applied in Scripture. We have another in the order to the prophet Isaiah to put off his sackcloth and “go naked and barefoot” for three years. This was to denote, that the Egyptians and Arabians were to be carried away captives in the like guise by the Assyrians. It was not, however, the custom to strip captives altogether naked; but only to deprive them of good clothes and flowing vestures, and to give them others more sordid and shorter, that they might be the more fit for service. Apart from this, no one who reflects on the matter will imagine that the prophet literally remained three whole years without any covering, in a climate the winter cold of which is much more severe than we are apt to think. The same employment of the term “naked,” may be recognized among other ancient nations. Thus Aurelius Victor relates, that those who were sent to summon L. C. Cincinnatus to assume the dictatorship, found him “naked,” plowing on the other side of the Tiber. This can hardly mean that he was entirely naked; and that it does merely signify that he wrought with no clothing but his inner garment, is intimated by Livy, who, in relating the same occurrence, says that, on being thus summoned, Cincinnatus called to his wife Ruca for gown or toga, that he might appear fit to accompany them.

Indeed, we need not go far to look for illustrations of this limited signification of the word “naked;” for it is common enough with ourselves, especially among women, to say that one is “naked” who has not adequate clothing.

It will appear, then, that Saul’s being naked consisted in his being without the outer robes which he usually wore in public; and this is the same sense in which David was “naked” when he played on his harp before the ark of God.

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**Martin Manser - school of prophets** -A company of prophets working and prophesying together under the instruction and leadership of a more experienced prophet. There were also similar companies of false prophets.

- A school of prophets used by God to influence others 1Sa 19:19-24 See also 1Sa 10:5-6,10-13; 2Ki 9:1-3; Ezr 5:2
- Schools of prophets associated with particular places Bethel 2Ki 2:3 Jericho 2Ki 2:15
- Leaders of schools of prophets Samuel and a school of prophets 1Sa 19:20
- Elisha and a school of prophets 2Ki 2:15 See also 2Ki 4:1,38; 6:1-4
- A school of prophets in danger 1Ki 18:4 See also 1Ki 18:13
- Schools of false prophets 1Ki 18:19,40; 22:6 pp 2Ch 18:5; 1Ki 22:10 pp 2Ch 18:9; 1Ki 22:12-14 pp 2Ch 18:11-13; 1Ki 22:19-23 pp 2Ch 18:18-22; Ne 6:14

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#### QUESTION - [What was the school of prophets?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Old Testament mentions a school of prophets in 1 Samuel 19:18–24 and in 2 Kings 2 and 4:38–44 (some translations say “company of prophets” or “sons of the prophets”). Also, the prophet Amos possibly mentions a prophetic school in stating his credentials (or lack thereof) to Amaziah the priest: “I was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet” (Amos 7:14).

First Samuel 19 relates an account in which King Saul sends messengers to arrest David. When these men encountered a company of prophets under Samuel’s leadership, the king’s men also prophesied. This happened three times. Saul himself then went, and he, too, prophesied, leading people to ask, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1 Samuel 19:24), which became a saying in those days.

The “group of prophets” in 1 Samuel 19 was clearly comprised of students of the prophet Samuel. These students were likely Levites who served in roles related to the tabernacle and ceremonial worship. The content of their “prophesies” is not specified. Their messages could have been general teachings from God’s laws in the Books of Moses, or they could have included additional revelation.

In 2 Kings 2 Elijah is traveling with Elisha, and a group of prophets from Bethel tells Elisha that Elijah would be taken from him that day (verse 3). Another group of prophets at Jericho repeats the prophecy (verse 5), and a third group of prophets near the Jordan River also delivers the same message (2Ki 2:7). This third group of 50 men may have been a subset of the group of prophets at Jericho. After Elijah was taken up into heaven, Elisha reluctantly sends 50 of these prophets to search for Elijah for three days (2Ki 2:15–18).

In 2 Kings 4:38–41 Elisha is in Gilgal during a time of famine. Elisha miraculously changes an inedible stew into a comestible dish for the group of prophets there. Chapter 4 ends with Elisha’s turning 20 loaves of bread into more than enough food for 100 people. Nothing else is mentioned about this school of prophets, though it is clear they lived together in some kind of community and were known as sons of the prophets who worshiped the Lord.

These groups of men were likely leaders among those 7,000 Israelites who had not bowed down to Baal, as God had told Elijah (1 Kings 19:18). There were at least three schools or communities of these prophets and possibly more, consisting of men who were devoted to God and served Him. They followed the teachings of Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha during the time of the prophets and were

**1 Samuel 19:21 When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. So Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:21 καὶ πηγγύη τὸ Σαουλ καὶ πέστειλεν ἄλλους τρεῖς καὶ προφτευσάν καὶ αὐτὸ καὶ προσέθετο Σαουλ ποστέλαι ἄλλους τρεῖς καὶ προφτευσάν καὶ αὐτὸ

LXE 1 Samuel 19:21 And it was told Saul, and he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied: and Saul sent again a third set of messengers, and they also prophesied.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:21 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.

NET 1 Samuel 19:21 When it was reported to Saul, he sent more messengers, but they prophesied too. So Saul sent messengers a third time, but they also prophesied.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:21 When they reported to Saul, he sent other agents, and they also began prophesying. So Saul tried again and sent a third group of agents, and even they began prophesying.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:21 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:21 Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:21 When Saul heard what had happened, he sent other troops, but they, too, prophesied! The same thing happened a third time.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:21 When Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they also fell into a frenzy. Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also fell into a frenzy.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:21 When Saul was told of this, he sent other agents, and they too fell into frenzy; Saul then sent a third group of agents, and they fell into frenzy too.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:21 Informed of this, Saul sent other messengers, who also fell into the prophetic state. For the third time Saul sent messengers, but they too fell into the prophetic state.

YLT 1 Samuel 19:21 And they declare it to Saul, and he sendeth other messengers, and they prophesy -- they also; and Saul addeth and sendeth messengers a third time, and they prophesy -- they also.

- **sent messengers:** 2Ki 1:9-13 Pr 27:22 Jer 13:23
- **prophesied :** Joe 2:28
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **SURELY THE THIRD TIME WOULD BE THE CHARM!**

**When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied** ([naba](#); Lxx = [propheteuo](#)). **So Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied** ([naba](#); Lxx = [propheteuo](#))- So Saul sends 3 squads of hit men to take David out, but God sends all three away prophesying! You might say the warriors became worshipers as the result of the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit. God was protecting His anointed with spiritual weapons, which reminds us that "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." (2Co 10:4+)

**1 Samuel 19:22 Then he himself went to Ramah and came as far as the large well that is in Secu; and he asked and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah."**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:22 καὶ θυμὸν ἑαυτοῦ Σαουλ καὶ πορεύθη καὶ ἄχρι τῆς Ἀρμαθαὶμ καὶ ῥηταὶ ὥς τὸ φράγμα τοῦ ὕδατος Σεφὶ καὶ ῥητήσεν καὶ ἔπεν ποτὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ Δαυὶδ καὶ ἔπαν ὁ νεναυαθὲν Ραμὰ



LXE 1 Samuel 19:22 And Saul was very angry, and went himself also to Armathaim, and he comes as far as the well of the threshing floor that is in Sephi; and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And they said, Behold, in Navath in Rama.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah.

NET 1 Samuel 19:22 Finally Saul himself went to Ramah. When he arrived at the large cistern that is in Secu, he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" They said, "At Naioth in Ramah."

CSB 1 Samuel 19:22 Then Saul himself went to Ramah. He came to the large cistern at Secu, looked around, and asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "At Naioth in Ramah," someone said.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:22 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 19:22 Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "Over in Naioth at Ramah," they said.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:22 Finally, Saul himself went to Ramah and arrived at the great well in Secu. "Where are Samuel and David?" he demanded. "They are at Naioth in Ramah," someone told him.

NRS 1 Samuel 19:22 Then he himself went to Ramah. He came to the great well that is in Secu; he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "They are at Naioth in Ramah."

NJB 1 Samuel 19:22 He then went to Ramah himself and, arriving at the large storage-well at Seku, asked, 'Where are Samuel and David?' And someone said, 'Why, they are in the huts at Ramah!'

NAB 1 Samuel 19:22 Saul then went to Ramah himself. Arriving at the cistern of the threshing floor on the bare hilltop, he inquired, "Where are Samuel and David?", and was told, "At the sheds near Ramah."

YLT 1 Samuel 19:22 And he goeth -- he also -- to Ramath, and cometh in unto the great well which is in Sechu, and asketh, and saith, 'Where are Samuel and David?' and one saith, 'Lo, in Naioth in Ramah.'

- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL GOES TO NAIOTH

**Then he himself went to Ramah and came as far as the large well that is in Secu**(exact site ?); **and he asked and said, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah** - Saul has apparently not seen Samuel for years, but this is not a friendly visit to catch up or let [by gones be by gones](#)! Saul has a sinister motive in his heart and that is to kill David.

[Guzik](#) - Three times, the Holy Spirit said to Saul, "Leave David alone. My Spirit is stronger than you are. You will never win this battle against Me and against David." But Saul didn't listen. Instead, to an even greater degree, Saul took matters into his own hands:

**1 Samuel 19:23 He proceeded there to Naioth in Ramah; and the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he went along prophesying continually until he came to Naioth in Ramah.**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:23 κα πορεθη κεθεν ες Ναυαθ ν Ραμα κα γενθη κα π α τ πνεμα θεο κα πορε ετο προφητεων ως το λθεν α τ ν ες Ναυαθ ν Ραμα

LXE 1 Samuel 19:23 And he went thence to Navath in Rama: and there came the Spirit of God upon him also, and he went on prophesying till he came to Navath in Rama.

KJV 1 Samuel 19:23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

NET 1 Samuel 19:23 So Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. The Spirit of God came upon him as well, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

CSB 1 Samuel 19:23 So he went to Naioth in Ramah. The Spirit of God also came on him, and as he walked

along, he prophesied until he entered Naioth in Ramah.

ESV 1 Samuel 19:23 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 19:23 So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth.

NLT 1 Samuel 19:23 But on the way to Naioth in Ramah the Spirit of God came even upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy all the way to Naioth!

NRS 1 Samuel 19:23 He went there, toward Naioth in Ramah; and the spirit of God came upon him. As he was going, he fell into a prophetic frenzy, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

NJB 1 Samuel 19:23 Making his way from there to the huts at Ramah, the spirit of God came over him too, and he went along in a frenzy until he arrived at the huts at Ramah.

NAB 1 Samuel 19:23 As he set out from the hilltop toward the sheds, the spirit of God came upon him also, and he continued on in a prophetic condition until he reached the spot. At the sheds near Ramah

YLT 1 Samuel 19:23 And he goeth thither -- unto Naioth in Ramah, and the Spirit of God is upon him -- him also; and he goeth, going on, and he prophesieth till his coming in to Naioth in Ramah,

- **the Spirit:** 1Sa 19:20 10:10 Nu 23:5 24:2 Mt 7:22 Joh 11:51 1Co 13:2
- **until he came:** Pr 16:9 21:1
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 10:9-11+ Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day. When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and **the Spirit of God came upon him mightily**, so that he prophesied among them. 11 It came about, when all who knew him previously saw that he prophesied now with the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

1 Samuel 11:6+ Then **the Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily** when he heard these words, and he became very angry.

1 Samuel 16:13-14+ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

14 Now **the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul**, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him.

### SPIRIT OF GOD AGAIN ON SAUL

**He proceeded there to Naioth in Ramah; and the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he went along prophesying** ([naba](#); Lxx = [propheteuo](#) in present tense = continually) **continually until he came to Naioth in Ramah** - The Spirit overpowered the will of Saul and took control! This is the last time the Spirit would come on Saul (first = 1Sa 10:10-11, 11:6). Saul was on his way to Naioth to execute David and who knows what he would have done with Samuel if he considered him an accomplice in aiding David's escape (we will see him murder priests later at the city of Nob for aiding David - 1Sa 22:19). Who sent the evil spirit on Saul? God. Who sends the Holy Spirit on Saul? God, but this time to save His anointed kill from Saul's murderous intentions! Saul was prophesying, so clearly was controlled by the Holy Spirit as had been his emissaries.

**Warren Wiersbe** has a very interesting comment - Saul hastened to the place only to be met by the Spirit of God and made to praise the Lord. He took off his outer royal garments and became like any other man, and he lay on the floor before Samuel. This would be their last meeting until that fateful night when Samuel came from the realms of the dead to pass judgment on the king (1 Sam. 28:7ff). But Saul had had a similar experience after Samuel had anointed him king (1Sa 10:9-13), and from it came the proverbial saying, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" After Saul's experience at Ramah, the proverb was resurrected. These two events prove that a person can have a remarkable religious experience and yet have no change in character. In Saul's case, both experiences were actually sent by the Lord, but Saul didn't profit from them. Special religious manifestations aren't evidences that a person is even saved (Matt. 7:21-23). Judas preached sermons and even performed miracles (Matt. 10:1-8), yet he was not a believer (John 6:67-71; 13:10-11; 17:12), and he betrayed the Lord and ended up committing suicide. Saul, like Judas, had many opportunities to see the Lord's hand at work, and yet he never had a life-changing experience with the Lord. (Borrow [Be successful](#))



**Gene Getz** on the Spirit coming on Saul and his agents - These are strange events, but they are in harmony with God's love in reaching out to men, no matter what their sins. In fact God was communicating two very important messages. God Was Still Reaching Out to Saul. When the Spirit of God came upon Saul and his men, the Lord was certainly reminding Saul of a very special event earlier in his life. Soon after he was anointed king, "the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among" the prophets (1Sa 10:10). The question the people asked at that time was the same question they asked in Ramah: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (Sa 10:11; 19:24). **How could Saul miss the message of this divine intervention? He was not just fighting David—he was fighting God! God was saying, loud and clear, that he was still able to change Saul's heart and life permanently—if only Saul would let Him.** God Would Deliver David. The second message was for David: God could and would protect and deliver him from Saul. The Lord visually and dramatically demonstrated this fact. Without God's permission, Saul and his men could not touch David. God was showing David that He would protect him just as He had when David confronted Goliath. **Sadly, David missed this message—just as Saul missed the message to him.** David's response to God's intervention on his behalf was anything but positive. As we've already noted, when he returned to talk to his friend Jonathan, he was emotionally and spiritually disturbed. His questions reflected confusion, doubt, and tremendous anxiety: "What have I done? "What is my iniquity? "And what is my sin before your father, that he is seeking my life?" (1Sa 20:1). (Borrow [David: God's man in faith and failure](#))

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**Walter Kaiser** - [go to page 188 in Hard Sayings of the Bible](#) for discussion of the question - How Did Saul Prophecy?

Seeking a naturalistic explanation for the phenomenon of prophecy in the Old Testament, some have theorized that such powers derived from ecstatic experiences in which the prophet wandered outside his own consciousness during a period of artistic creation. One of the passages used to sustain such a thesis is 1 Samuel 19:19–24.

Quite apart from the issue of ecstasy in prophecy are two other matters. Could a king also be a prophet? And did the king really strip off all his clothes as a result of this powerful experience of prophesying?

The story told here is clear enough. In a jealous rage over David's popularity and success, Saul was bent on capturing David. No doubt rumors were now spreading that Samuel had anointed David as king in place of the then-reigning Saul.

Saul sent three different groups of messengers to apprehend David, who had fled from Saul to join Samuel at his prophetic school at Ramah. All three groups encountered Samuel's band of prophets prophesying. And each of the groups of messengers began to prophesy as well.

At last Saul had had enough and decided to go in search of David himself. While he was still on the way, however, the "Spirit of God" came on him; so he too prophesied. Later, after coming to where the others were, he removed some of his clothing and lay in an apparent stupor the rest of that day and the following night.

Each of the three problems raised by this text deserves some response based on the meaning of certain words used in this context and other similar contexts.

It has been claimed that the Greeks thought artistic genius was always accompanied by a degree of madness; thus, those who prophesied must have similarly experienced "ecstasy"—a word literally meaning "to stand apart from or outside oneself." Furthermore, it was argued that the behavior of the Canaanite prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel was just like that of earlier Israelite prophets.

But the verb to prophesy, as used in this context, does not mean "to act violently" or "to be mad." The Old Testament makes a clear distinction between the prophets of Canaan and those under the inspiration of God.

Only three Old Testament passages have been used as evidence that prophesying entailed a temporary madness and standing apart from oneself. These three passages, however, record the estimates of others rather than God's estimates of prophets and the source of their inspiration. In 2 Kings 9:11, a young prophet sent by Elisha to anoint Jehu as king is called a "madman" (*mešugā'*) by the soldiers who are sitting in Jehu's barracks. Their label is hardly a statement from God or a source of normative teaching. The Bible simply records that that is what these men thought of prophets—an attitude not altogether dissimilar from that held today by some about the clergy. A second text, Jeremiah 29:26, quotes a certain Shemaiah, then captive in Babylon, from a letter where he too opines: "Every man that is mad [*mešugā'*] makes himself a prophet" (my translation). In the final text, Hosea 9:7, Hosea characterizes a point in Israel's thinking by saying, "The prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac [*mešugā'*]."

None of these three texts demonstrates that the verb to prophesy legitimately carries the connotation of madness. Instead, they simply show that many associated prophecy with madness in an attempt to stigmatize the work of real prophets. It was the ancient equivalent of the Elmer Gantry image of Christian ministers today!

As for Saul's being "naked" all day and night, the term used might just as well refer to his being partially disrobed. It seems to be

used with the latter meaning in Job 22:6, 24:7, Isaiah 58:7 and probably Isaiah 20:2–3, where Isaiah is said to have walked “stripped and barefoot for three years.” Saul probably stripped off his outer garment, leaving only the long tunic beneath. The figure of speech involved here is synecdoche, in which the whole stands for a part. Thus, naked or stripped is used to mean “scantily clad” or “poorly clothed.”

In an attempt to shore up the failing theory of ecstasy, some have pointed to 1 Samuel 19:24 as evidence that Saul was “beside himself”—again, the etymology of our word ecstasy. However, this will not work since the verb in verse 24 simply means “to put off” a garment (by opening it and unfolding it; the verb’s other meaning is “to expand, to spread out, to extend”). There is no evidence that it means “to stand beside oneself” or anything like that.

What about the apparent stupor? Did Saul momentarily lose his sanity? While the three groups of messengers experienced a strong influence of the Spirit of God, it was Saul, we may rightfully conclude, who fell under the strongest work of the Spirit.

The Spirit fell more powerfully on Saul than on the messengers because Saul had more stubbornly resisted the will of God. In this manner, God graciously warned Saul that he was kicking against the very will of God, not just against a shepherd-boy rival. The overmastering influence that came on Saul was to convince him that his struggle was with God and not with David. His action in sending the three groups to capture David had been in defiance of God himself, so he had to be graphically warned. As a result, the king also, but unexpectedly, prophesied. So surprised were all around them that a proverb subsequently arose to characterize events that ran against ordinary expectations: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1 Sam 19:24). Kings normally did not expect to receive the gift of prophecy. But here God did the extraordinary in order to move a recalcitrant king’s heart to see the error of his ways.

The noun prophecy and verb to prophesy appear more than three hundred times in the Old Testament. Often outbursts of exuberant praise or of deep grief were connected with prophesying. But there seems to be no evidence for ecstasy as wild, uncontrollable enthusiasm that forced the individual to go temporarily mad or insane. And if we dilute the meaning of ecstasy so as to take away the negative implications—like those attached to the Greek’s theory that artists only drew, composed or wrote when temporarily overcome with madness—the term becomes so bland that it loses its significance. In that case we all might qualify to join the band of the prophets. Certainly nothing in this text suggests the dancing, raving and loss of consciousness sometimes seen in contemporary extrabiblical phenomena.

See also comment on “When the Prophets Say, ‘The Word of the Lord Came to Me,’ What Do They Mean?” and DANIEL 12:8–10.

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**Gleason Archer** - - [go to page 184 in The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#) for the discussion of the topic - First Samuel 19:23–24 states of King Saul that “the spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied.... And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner.” Why did he prophesy naked?

The passage beginning with v. 19 indicates that Saul was in pursuit of his son-in-law, young David, and that David had gotten to Naioth in Ramah. Saul was informed that David was there with the prophets who had been trained for the Lord’s service under Samuel. So he sent his agents up to arrest David and to bring him down in chains.

When the king’s agents got there, however, and saw the august figure of Samuel himself and his prophetic assistants all engaged in a joyous praise service before the Lord, they too came under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Unable to control themselves or carry out the business for which they had been sent, they could do nothing else but surrender to the same emotional excitement and join in the songs and shouts of adoration before the Lord. By that time they felt utterly unable to perform their mission, and they had to return to Saul empty-handed.

After the same thing had happened to two other teams of soldiers whom Saul sent up to Samuel’s group, Saul finally resolved to carry out his mission himself. Until then he had hung back, hoping to avoid confrontation with Samuel, with whom he had had a complete falling out after the episode at Gilgal (1 Sam. 15:17–35), where Samuel had announced that Saul had been rejected by God from the kingship. Saul did not relish the prospect of facing that fearsome prophet again, but he felt there was no alternative.

Also, Saul was subject to manic depression and given to extreme changes of mood (cf. 1 Sam. 16:14–23; 18:10–11; 19:9). As he came near the praise service over which Samuel was presiding, Saul found himself coming under the spell of the excitement of the occasion; and he could not control himself. He too began to sing, shout, and dance along with the prophets themselves. (Somewhat similar cases have been reported at camp meetings during the Great Awakening in America in 1740 under George Whitefield and in 1800 at the revival meetings held in Kentucky.) Such an overpowering sense of the presence, power, and glory of God came over this wicked king that he recalled his earlier revival experience near Bethel (1 Sam. 10:5–6, 10), when he had first been called to the throne; and he succumbed to the same excitement again.

Unlike the other worshipers, Saul became so carried away with his enthusiasm that he stripped off his clothes as he shouted and

danced, and he finally collapsed exhausted on the ground and lay there in a stupor or trance the rest of the day and all through the night (1 Sam. 19:24). Undoubtedly this humiliation came on him as a divine judgment because in his heart he was radically opposed to the will of God, insofar as it went counter to his own ambition.

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**Norman Geisler** - [go to page 150 in When Critics Ask](#) for discussion of 1 SAMUEL 19:23–24—How could it be said that the Spirit of God was upon Saul when God had already rejected him?

**PROBLEM:** When Saul came to Naioth in Ramah to try to capture David, he sent soldiers up to bring David back in chains. When his soldiers came back empty-handed, Saul decided to go up himself. However, when he came near to Naioth, the Spirit of the Lord was upon him and he danced and prophesied before Samuel. How could it be said that the Spirit of God was upon Saul when God had already rejected him?

**SOLUTION:** The Spirit of the Lord was not upon Saul at this time in the same way that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him before his rejection. Originally, the Spirit came upon Saul to minister through him. On this occasion the Spirit came upon him to resist his evil intentions. In this incident, Saul's intent was to capture and ultimately kill David, but Saul was unwilling to chance a face-to-face encounter with the prophet Samuel. Twice Saul sent messengers to capture David and bring him back in chains, but each time the Spirit of the Lord overcame them so that they were unable to accomplish their task. Finally, Saul went up himself. However, when he came near to Naioth, the Spirit of the Lord overcame him so that he could not control himself. He danced and prophesied until he fell exhausted on the ground. The Spirit of the Lord overcame Saul and thwarted his efforts to capture David.

**1 Samuel 19:24 He also stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"**

BGT 1 Samuel 19:24 καὶ ἔδεσάτο τὸ μίτῃ αὐτοῦ καὶ προφτευσεν ἐν πνιὸν αὐτὸν καὶ πέσεν γυμνὸς ἡμέραν καὶ νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ νύκτα διὰ τοῦτο λέγοντες καὶ Σαουλ ἐν προφταῖς

LXE 1 Samuel 19:24 And he took off his clothes, and prophesied before them; and lay down naked all that day and all that night: therefore they said, Is Saul also among the prophets?

KJV 1 Samuel 19:24 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. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?

NET 1 Samuel 19:24 He even stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel. He lay there naked all that day and night. (For that reason it is asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?")

CSB 1 Samuel 19:24 Saul then removed his clothes and also prophesied before Samuel; he collapsed and lay naked all that day and all that night. That is why they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

ESV 1 Samuel 19:24 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?"

NIV 1 Samuel 19:24 He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

NLT 1 Samuel 19:24 He tore off his clothes and lay naked on the ground all day and all night, prophesying in the presence of Samuel. The people who were watching exclaimed, "What? Is even Saul a prophet?"

NRS 1 Samuel 19:24 He too stripped off his clothes, and he too fell into a frenzy before Samuel. He lay naked all that day and all that night. Therefore it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

NJB 1 Samuel 19:24 He too stripped off his clothes and he too fell into a frenzy in Samuel's presence, then collapsed naked on the ground for the rest of that day and all night. Hence the saying: Is Saul one of the prophets too?

NAB 1 Samuel 19:24 he, too, stripped himself of his garments and he, too, remained in the prophetic state in the presence of Samuel; all that day and night he lay naked. That is why they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

YLT 1 Samuel 19:24 and he strippeth off -- he also -- his garments, and prophesieth -- he also -- before Samuel, and falleth down naked all that day and all the night; therefore they say, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?'

- **stripped:** 2Sa 6:14,20 Isa 20:2 Mic 1:8
- **lay:** Heb. fell, Nu 24:4
- **Is Saul:** 1Sa 10:10-12 Ac 9:21
- [1 Samuel 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 10:10-12+ When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them. 11 It came about, when all who knew him previously saw that he prophesied now with the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" 12 A man there said, "Now, who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb: "**Is Saul also among the prophets?**"

### SAUL PROPHESED AND STRIPPED NAKED

**He also stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied ([naba](#); Lxx = [propheteuo](#)) before Samuel and lay down naked all that day and all that night** - Saul's removal of his royal garments and laying prostrate seems to speak of the LORD humbling Saul, who would not humble himself! Some say Saul was not completely naked but just down to his inner garments. While that may be true, the word naked (*arom*) is used to describe physical nudity as in Ge 2:25. Most of the translations render it "**naked**." In short God held Saul prostrate all day and all night giving David time to flee Naioth (see 1Sa 20:2) This is a strange passage and difficult to fully understand. What is clear in the context is that in some way God was protecting David through Saul's prophesying and clearly giving him the opportunity to escape. It is interesting that there is no record of David himself prophesying. While Saul prophesied before Samuel, there is no record of a meaning

**MacArthur** - Without the royal garments, Saul was figuratively "naked," perhaps so overwhelmed by the Spirit of God as to be in a deep sleep. Other than Saul's utter despair and pitiful state at the home of the witch at En-dor (1Sa 28:20) and his end at Mt. Gilboa (1Sa 31:4-6), this episode represents one of the severest humblings in Saul's life. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) )

**William MacDonald** makes a good point that "Verse 24 does not contradict 1Sa 15:34, 35, which says, "Samuel came no more to see Saul." Here it was Saul who came to the prophet, and that unintentionally and quite unexpectedly." (AS WELL AS IN A FRENZY AND CERTAINLY NOT FOR SAMUEL'S WISE COUNSEL!) (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets** - Like the proverb in 1 Samuel 10:12+

[Guzik](#) is probably correct in his interpretation of this proverb - This phrase was first mentioned in 1 Samuel 10:10-12, and it expressed astonishment that someone became a religious enthusiast. Saul was an unspiritual man who became very spiritual at the moment the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.

[Brian Bell](#) - The "ultimate weapon" of the believer is spiritual, the power of God at work changing people. God protected David & Samuel, not by sending an army but by sending the Holy Spirit to turn warriors into worshippers! 2. 2 Cor.10:3,4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds. That proverb (from 1 Samuel 10:12+) was resurrected again. But once again proves a person can have a remarkable religious experience and yet have no change in character (**ED**: AS THE SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS PROVE)

**Norman Geisler** - [go to page 151 in When Critics Ask](#) for discussion of 1 SAMUEL 19:24—Why did Saul strip off his clothes as he danced and prophesied before Samuel?

**PROBLEM:** Samuel was conducting a service in which the group of prophets were prophesying. When Saul's men came to capture David, they were overcome by the Spirit of the Lord and they also prophesied. However, when Saul came, he prophesied, danced, and stripped off his clothes. Why does Saul do this when apparently none of the others did?

**SOLUTION:** Some commentators say that this was apparently an act of judgment upon Saul in that Saul was humiliated in the presence of Samuel and the prophets. Saul was a man who was characterized by drastic mood changes (cf. 1 Sam. 16:14–23; 18:10–11; 19:9). Saul was so carried away by his enthusiasm that he stripped off his clothes and danced until he fell to the ground totally exhausted and remained there over night.

Others claim that the Spirit of God overcame Saul to a greater degree than in the case of the others in an attempt to soften the hard heart of Saul. If Saul continued in his obstinate way after this powerful experience of divine grace, then Saul would be swiftly hardened and ultimately destroyed.

