

THE JEALOUS HATRED OF SAUL

Introduction:

1. Our previous lesson focused on the friendship between Jonathan and David.
2. Jonathan's loyalty to God and to David is contrasted with Saul's continued rebellion against Jehovah and his desire to destroy David.
3. Thus, our focus in this lesson will be the further decline of Saul into fear, paranoia and hatred.
4. All the while, David will shine forth as an example of wisdom, meekness and faithfulness to God.

- I. The Root of Saul's Hatred (18:1-9)
 - A. Jonathan's loyalty to David (and to the Lord) is emphasized in verses 1-4.
 - B. Verse 5 gives an important summary of the character of David.
 1. David was obedient to the King, just as he was to the Lord.
 2. David acted with wisdom in every situation.
 - a. Literally, he was prudent, circumspect, or wise.
 - b. It means that he pondered the situation and acted with insight.
 - c. Thus, this word can sometimes mean "to prosper."
 3. David was a leader of men.
 4. David earned the respect of all men, from the common folk to the servants in the king's court.
 - C. While David was not boastful, the people could not help but praise him for his victories over the Philistines.
 1. It was common for the conquering soldiers to be greeted with music and singing as they returned home from battle.
 2. Apparently, a new song had been composed that praised David more highly than Saul.
 - a. Saul had defeated or slain his thousands.
 - b. But, David had defeated a myriad of enemies. *{Literally, a multitude, myriad, abundance (cf. Gen. 24:60)}*
 - D. Upon hearing these words, Saul's guilt and insecurity manifested itself in jealousy, anger, hatred and paranoia.
 1. The root of Saul's problem was his rebellion.
 2. The remedy for Saul's problem was repentance.
 - E. Thus, Saul watched David with jealousy from that day forward.
- II. Saul's First Attempt to Kill David (18:10-12)
 - A. Anger that is not dealt with properly becomes an open door for the Devil (Ephesians 4:26-27).
 - B. Thus, it is no surprise to find Saul drifting further into darkness and sin.
 - C. The evil spirit once again came upon Saul.
 1. The word "prophesied" can mean "to rave (like a mad man)" (cf. Jeremiah 29:8-9, 26-27; 1 Kings 18:28-29).
 2. This word is never used of a true prophet of God.
 3. It may be that Saul was pretending to prophesy (or trying to act like a prophet) to hide his true intentions from David.
 - D. This time, David's playing upon the harp was unable to help Saul.
 - E. Instead, Saul threw a javelin (lance, spear) at David twice in an attempt to kill him.

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- F. David escaped and Saul sank further into his fear and suspicion.
- III. Saul's Second Attempt to Kill David (18:13-19)
- A. Following this, Saul removed David from his presence by appointing him as a captain over 1,000 soldiers.
 - B. Though this may have seemed kind of Saul, his ulterior motive was for David to be killed in battle with the Philistines (vs. 17).
 - C. In order to increase the likelihood that this would happen, Saul offered David the hand of his daughter, Merab, in marriage if he would fight valiantly against the Philistines.
 - 1. Remember that this had been promised to the one who defeated Goliath (17:25).
 - 2. Saul had not kept this promise to David and only used it now as a means to kill him.
 - D. However, none of this worked the way Saul would have liked.
 - 1. David continued to behave himself wisely.
 - 2. The Lord continued to be with David.
 - 3. Both Israel and Judah loved David because he went out and fought their battles and returned to them victoriously.
 - 4. Furthermore, David responded with great humility to Saul's offer of a marriage to his daughter.
 - E. Ultimately, when Saul's plan failed, he was unfaithful to his promise and gave Merab in marriage to a man named Adriel.
- IV. Saul's Third Attempt to Kill David (18:20-30)
- A. Saul had another daughter, Michal, who loved David.
 - B. When Saul learned of this, he sought to use it to his advantage and to kill David.
 - 1. Consider the nature of Saul's statement in verse 21.
 - 2. What kind of father would wish such a thing upon his daughter and her marriage?
 - 3. Saul has digressed so far that he has lost all sense of decency and love (natural affection) (cf. Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3).
 - C. Thus, Saul let David know that he required a dowry from him if he were to marry his daughter.
 - 1. This was necessary because of David's continual humble attitude.
 - 2. Thus, Saul came up with a sinister plan.
 - D. This dowry was a bloody and violent one – 100 foreskins of the Philistines.
 - E. As before, Saul's scheming backfired.
 - 1. David killed not 100, but 200 Philistines.
 - 2. This increased his favor among the people and the soldiers.
 - 3. Furthermore, he was married to Michal who loved him and would later save his life from the hands of her father.
 - F. When Saul saw all of these things happened, it was further proof to him that the Lord was with David.
 - G. Thus, Saul became more afraid of David and treated him as an enemy.
 - H. Meanwhile, David continued to prove himself as a man of wisdom, honor and character.
- V. Saul's Fourth Attempt to Kill David (19:1-7)

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- A. Saul's next effort to destroy David was much more open and public.
 - B. Saul told all of the royal court and his son Jonathan that he wanted someone – anyone – to kill David.
 - C. However, Jonathan intervened and spoke well of David to his father.
 - D. As a result, Saul vowed not to kill David and he was brought back into the court of the king.
- VI. Saul's Fifth Attempt to Kill David (19:8-17)
- A. Once again, David led Israel to a decisive victory against the Philistines.
 - B. Following this, Saul was overcome with jealousy and anger and tried to kill David with a javelin.
 - C. Once again, David escaped; but, Saul was determined to be rid of his enemy for good.
 - D. Saul sent men to watch David's house so when he came out in the morning they could kill him.
 - E. David's wife, Michal (also Saul's daughter), warned David of her father's scheme and helped him escape out a window.
 - F. This began a period of nearly ten years during which David lived as an exile.
 - G. Michal covered an image in the bed and told Saul's servants that David was sick.
 - H. When her deception was discovered, she claimed that David had threatened her life.
 - 1. This was not done out of spite toward David.
 - 2. Rather, it was the only way she could protect herself from her wicked father.
 - I. Psalm 59
- VII. The Unity of David and Samuel (19:18-24)
- A. When David fled from Saul, he traveled to Ramah, the home of Samuel.
 - B. Samuel and David decided to move into the Naioth.
 - 1. The word "Naioth" means "habitations" or "dwelling places."
 - 2. It is thought that these were the "dormitories" for "school of prophets" overseen by Samuel.
 - 3. It is worth noting that David ran to Samuel in Ramah, not to his family in Bethlehem.
 - C. When Saul learned where David was, he sent three groups of messengers to arrest or capture David.
 - D. However, each group failed in their purpose because of the influence of God.
 - 1. They saw Samuel leading the company of prophets in praise and prophesying (*the word means to speak or sing*).
 - 2. On each occasion, Saul's messengers joined in with the prophets in their praise.
 - E. Finally, Saul came to Ramah himself to find David.
 - F. However, Saul removed his royal garments (his outer clothes) and began to prophesy as his messengers had.
 - G. Thus, God protected David
- VIII. David Forced to Flee from Saul (20:1-42)