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A Chain of Deliverances

I Samuel 19

Intro: When David killed Goliath, it seemed that Saul had become his biggest fan. But after the people began to honor David more than Saul, the Bible says he, “**eyed David from that day forward**” (18:9). More than that, Saul began 2 secretly instigate certain events that he hoped might lead 2 either David’s death or a drop in public opinion. Twice, he tried 2 pin David 2 a wall w/ his spear. He offered his oldest daughter 2 David as a bride, hoping he would be killed attempting 2 earn the dowry Saul set 4 her. Then Saul pulled the offer & married her off 2 another man, hoping 2 lead David into the sin of rebellion or treason. He then encourages a union between David & his youngest daughter & again, requested a dowry that might lead 2 David’s death. Saul was trying 2 **eliminate** David but, while none of these schemes worked, none of these failures changed Saul’s heart. He was David’s enemy continually!

1- kill- Well, the cats out of the bag now. Saul’s mind & heart are so controlled by hatred 4 David that he openly commands his son & his closest advisors that they are now 2 try & kill David! Saul was done w/ the cloak & dagger stuff, he wants David dead: yesterday! So begins a chapter where Saul engages in a whole chain of **deliberate** plans 2 wipe out David & where David experiences a whole chain of **deliverances** under some very unusual circumstances.

Saul’s heart – many people are confused at the spiritual standing of Saul in this book. Many wrongly assume that since the Spirit of the Lord came upon him early in his career as king, that he must be a believer even tho he drops the ball later on in life. They confess that Saul is doing what any king would do in that position, but that is not correct. Of course, 4 all intents & purposes, Saul was a pretty good king, as kings go. He defended & protected his country & successfully pushed back the constant onslaught of invaders from all the surrounding pagan nations. But what is the spiritual estimation of Saul? Is he just a good guy that’s become a little jaded? Is he just holding on 2 tight? Not at all!

Let’s review: b/c of disobedience, Samuel tells Saul that the royal dynasty has been removed from his family & w/b given 2 another. After a subsequent act of out-right rebellion, Samuel tells Saul that **YHWH** has rejected him from being king. He literally said, “**The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today & has given it 2 a neighbor of yours, who is better than you**” (15:28). Now David comes on the scene & even tho Saul is not aware of his anointing, he has begun 2 connect the dots & come 2 his own conclusions. Saul m/b insanely jealous but he’s not stupid.

Now, let’s look at the big picture: we know from the rest of the Bible that the **hope** of Israel (**whole world**) lies in the heart & ministry of David & yet **Saul wants 2 kill him!** Saul’s not fighting 4 his own survival, he is consciously & actively working against the **word**, the **will** & the **work** of God. Is there a clearer definition of what a **wicked heart** is? Since David’s descendants will produce the Messiah, the seed of the woman, Saul can represent nothing other than the seed of the serpent who is attempting 2 bruise His heel. Saul’s heart is not misguided, it’s wicked thru & thru. As we go thru **ch19** & the rest of the book, we’ll see where his wicked heart leads him: into despair, trouble & death.

2-7- told- Wow, this is what true friendship looks like! No sooner had Saul disclosed his murderous plan 2 his inner circle that Jonathan disclosed his father’s murderous intentions 2 David. But he doesn’t just spill the beans 2 David, he actively intervenes 4 David w/ his father. That took some guts b/c daddy was sure 2/b upset. That’s the courage of faith. Jonathan could’ve decided 2 just not help his father & remain neutral & let God work it out but that’s not the kind of believer or friend Jonathan was. Jonathan **delighted in** David, trusted him & trusted God. He also knew David was **YHWH**’s choice 2/b the next king of Israel & that God was w/ David so he wanted 2/b supporting David as well.

Do you wish you had a friend like that? 1 that would stick up 4 you in the face of great opposition, 1 that loved you enough 2 hazard his own life just 2 protect yours? Well, if you know **Jesus Christ** as your Savior, then you already have that kind of friend. He loved you enough 2 die 4 you even while you were His enemy. He loves you enough 2 continually intercede on your behalf b/4 the throne of God. He also delights in you, not b/c of who you are or what you’ve done but b/c He is full of grace & love & you have received it from Him. Who wouldn’t want a friend like that?

Why?- Jonathan’s argued 4 David from a rational, moral & theological perspective: “**David hasn’t wronged you, everything he’s done has been 4 your benefit. He risked his life 4 Israel when he took down Goliath; YHWH saved us & you were so glad; what’s the deal?**” Why does he remind Saul of these events? Not b/c Saul had forgotten them but b/c Saul has twisted these events w/ a meaning that justified his jealous desire 2 murder David. He even boldly calls his father’s intentions what they really are – **sin** - & he did it twice! Jonathan is calling his father back 2 **reality**.

Amazingly, it worked! Saul does a complete about-face, even so far as offering an oath guaranteeing David’s safety. Jonathan told David & brought him back 2 the king’s court. All was right w/ the world again, or so it seemed.

8-10-struck- there was more war w/ the Philistines, more success 4 David & more madness from Saul. It was David’s success that riled up Saul’s jealousy in the 1st place (**ch18**). Now, David is successful again & like clock-work, Saul is tempted 2 jealousy & murder once again. “**Hey, didn’t he just swear 2 keep David safe?**” Yes, 4 what it was worth. But just b/c a wicked heart has an occasional good thought doesn’t mean it will stay there long. In the end, a wicked heart does what a wicked heart wants 2 do. Of course, the oath Saul made was completely true (**6b**); not that’s no

credit 2 Saul, he kept trying 2 kill David. David survived, not b/c of Saul's best efforts but in spite of them.

4 the last time, David escapes from Saul's court & he would never return 2 the palace until he was installed as king of Israel some 20 yrs later. From now until the day he's crowned king, David will live as a **fugitive** from Saul's hatred.

11-17- home was no refuge. Saul posted his thugs 2 watch the door & 2 kill David when he came out the next day. Michal had keen insight into her father's methods & madness. She knew how desperate David's plight really was. She said, "If you don't escape tonight, you'll be a goner tomorrow!" She let him down thru a window & he escaped.

image- Now Michal creates a diversion 2 buy David a little more time. What's the **image** that she uses? The Hebrew word is **teraphim**: a family idol, the kind used in a household shrine 4 worship. In **Gen 31**, **Rachel** stole her father's **teraphim** when Jacob & his family left 4 Canaan. In **Jud 17**, **Micah** the wanna-be priest used **teraphim** in his corrupt pagan worship. Even in **1 Sam 15:23**, when Samuel said, "**4 rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft & stubbornness is as iniquity & idolatry.**" That word **idolatry** in the Hebrew is **teraphim**. Clearly, God's people had no business having or using an image like this & this shows that Michal didn't have the kind of relationship w/ God that she should have. This weak relationship w/ God will reveal itself again in Michal as the story of David's life continues 2 unfold. But, b/4 we castigate her completely, I must point out that Michal's the only person in Scripture that ever found an appropriate use 4 an idol – she used it as a **dummy**! What could be more appropriate than that b/c that's exactly what an idol is!

Regardless of her questionable theology, this was a masterful delay tactic. It had the desired effect, tho it earned her the wrath of her father. I'll bet it wasn't the 1st time she'd faced it so I'm sure she was up 2 it. Of course, she followed up 1 deception w/ another, telling her father she was forced 2 assist David in his escape (not the instigator of it).

My enemy- saddest words of passage. David was really Saul's friend, he had done more 2 help Saul than any 1 else but Saul's hatred 4 David would not allow him 2 look at David as anything other than his enemy – what **blindness**!

18- David flees 2 Samuel. That's the right thing 2 do when you're in a **difficult & confusing** situation: spend some time w/ a **godly man** (or woman). David probably poured out his soul 2 the old prophet but really, what could Samuel do? Saul had informers every where & it wasn't long that he had his police on the way 2 apprehend David in Ramah.

19-21- a funny thing happened 2 Saul's men as they arrived in Ramah – when they saw Samuel's preacher boys prophesying, **the Spirit of God came upon** them & **they also** prophesied! Saul sends a 2nd & 3rd group & **they - likewise** & **they...also** prophesy. The point is clear: David's backed into a corner; Saul refuses him any sanctuary, even in Samuel's presence. So, God sends forth His spirit in raw, irresistible power on Saul's men & renders them helpless! The only real question is: **how long until Saul finally listens 2 the Holy Spirit?** But, Saul's 2 **dense** 2 get the point!

22-24- Off Saul goes 2 Ramah muttering under his breathe, "**If you want something done right...**" Now the oft repeated "**they also**" is replaced w/ "**he also**" proving that **YHWH** is no respecter of persons & sees no reason 2 exempt Saul from His brute force just b/c Saul is king. So David's Defender assaulted Saul b/4 he ever got 2 Ramah! Since Saul was already "in the Spirit" when he arrived, there was no unnecessary disturbance in the worship service.

The message of **ch19** is clear: **YHWH constantly protected His servant**. This out-working of this divine protect is 1st – **Instructive** – **a) to us**. God protected David thru Jonathan, thru his own nimbleness & thru Michal. But when he came 2 Ramah, surprisingly, Samuel can do nothing! Instead, it's the sheer power of **YHWH's** spirit that keeps David safe. Providing a **way of escape** is the gracious work of God. He may use human instruments but sometimes He chooses 2 do it Himself just 2 show us that **salvation belongs 2 the Lord (Ps 3:8)**. The **way** God chooses 2 delivers His people must never overshadow that **fact** that God is the sole **source** of all the deliverances that we enjoy.

b) to David. The danger is still real 4 David but in the midst of the mess, he can see clear evidence **YHWH's** hand of care & His intention 2 preserve his life. Sometimes the clearest evidence of God's presence in your life is not that you're **successfully past your trial** but that you're **still on your feet** in the middle of it! David had this reassurance.

c) to Saul. He should have seen the hopelessness of his efforts 2 kill David. **Ps 2:1-4**, Saul is 1 of the kings of the earth plotting against God & His anointed. God just wants him 2 wise up, straighten up & fly right. You can throw yourself against omnipotence all you want but the survival rate is **zero**! Heaven laughs at such foolishness.

Saul failed 2 gain any wisdom from all his failures but we should & hope too! God's protection is completely assured until His purposes 4 my life have been fulfilled. But maybe there's someone here that doesn't enjoy that assurance.

Which character best describes your life: David or Saul? You might say, "I'm not as blessed as David but I'm not as **bad** as Saul." Saul wasn't just bad, he was wicked & remember why he was wicked: b/c he was actively resisting the **word, will & work** of God. He blatantly disobeyed God's clear commands. "**I would never do that!**" How do you know that? There are a lot of commandments in the Bible but 1 of the most important is found in **Acts 17:30b**, "**God... commands all men everywhere 2 repent.**" This is most important of all commands b/c w/o it, none of the other matter.

Bible clearly tells you where you stand: **there is none righteous, no not 1 (Rom 3:10)**; **4 all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23)**; **4 the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23a)**. This means you're in the same boat w/ Saul, fighting the same losing battle but just like He did 4 David, God has made a **way of escape (Rom 6:23b)** **but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**. It's God's will & desire 4 you 2 repent of your sins & accept the blood of Jesus Christ that He shed on the cross as payment 4 your sins & invite Him into your heart & life. Failure 2 do this is

2 actively work against the word, will & work of God; revealing a heart that is just as wicked as Saul's & is under the same judgment of God. Stop trying 2 resist the irresistible grace of an all-powerful Creator & Redeemer. Take His offer of salvation & enter into the peace that comes from being completely forgiven!

