

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic.,
3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS
LESSON 14A
FIRST SAMUEL
CHAPTER 19**

INTRODUCTION

In life, we face many hardships and difficulties. These can take the form of people who wish to do us harm for no other reason than the fact that we are better off than them. How do we cope with such situations? Can we use situational ethics, that is, ungodly means to achieve “noble” ends? What is true friendship? When confronted by the enemy, should we retaliate or turn the other cheek?

There are times when, in our adversity, we question whether God truly cares for us. It is marvellous when, in retrospect, we see God working in His unobtrusive ways causing people and circumstances to bring out the best in us and save us from grave danger. We need to trust and obey him. No matter how dark the hour might be, the light of God will always shine through. We must persevere to the very end in godliness and faith trusting in our gracious and compassionate heavenly Father to protect and deliver in His time.

We can learn these precious truths and lessons in this study.

COMMENTARY

**Saul’s Desire to Kill David was
Stayed for a While—19:1-7**

Saul now talked openly in front of Jonathan and his servants about killing David. He had gradually turned from a noble man into one capable of committing a crime in violation of the Sixth Commandment, that is, murder (Exodus 20:13). At first, he was envious of David. Instead of dealing resolutely with his envy, he let it develop into malice. He sent David on dangerous assignments in the hope that he might be slain. When all else failed, he talked openly about killing him. Jonathan, who loved David like his own brother and had made a covenant with him, warned him of his father’s intent. He earnestly urged David to be watchful and on guard. He even advised him to hide while he sought to talk to his father about the matter.

Jonathan put in a good word for David before his father. He pointed out that David had not sinned against him. On the contrary, his service to the king had been very commendable and excellent. He had “put his life in his hand” -- a Hebraic expression of risking his life to fight against Goliath -- and the LORD had performed a great deliverance for all Israel. Saul had seen it for himself

and had rejoiced over it. Jonathan challenged Saul not to sin by shedding “innocent blood”. Saul was persuaded: “As the LORD liveth, he (David) shall not be slain” (19:6). Jonathan related the good news to David and brought him to Saul. David was allowed to return to the palace court and be with Saul as in old times.

The problem with Saul’s obsession to kill David was not external. The problem lies with his heart. He was frightened that he might lose “his” kingdom. The reprieve given to David was only temporary. Soon the evil obsession of holding onto his kingdom and preserving a dynasty got the better of him and he wanted David dead again.

Saul Renewed His Attempts to Kill David—19:8-10

The reconciliation between Saul and David brought about by the intervention of Jonathan was short lived.

David went out to battle again. His victories put him in the limelight and that rekindled Saul’s evil intent. Saul was intensely jealous of David’s conquests. He was unable to rejoice. He was again afflicted by the evil spirit. Dutifully, David played his harp to help soothe him. But Saul, in a fit of jealousy and envy, snatched his javelin and hurled it at David to pin him against the wall. Fortunately,

David was on his guard. Saul missed his target.

There will be times in the believer’s life when he has to suffer for Christ’s sake. This will include defending the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. We are living in the end times. The world will not love us but hate us. Satan knows that his time is running out. There will be deceivers and professing Christians who may think that they are suffering for Christ in the course of doing evil. They spend their time and substances attacking God’s Word and Christ’s testimony. Instead of repenting, they stoutly and resolutely hold onto their “false” positions and delude themselves into thinking that they are being persecuted for Christ sake.

David was persecuted for no wrongdoing of his own. Saul’s obsession and deep seated jealousy was the cause of David’s sorrow. Yet, the believer can be comforted by the revelation that his God is in sovereign control. He has allowed all these to occur because David’s school of training was the school of Fugitive Life. These were the best years of David’s life when he was drawn really close to God. The discomforts of physical life spawned a rich spiritual life.

Those who are being persecuted must be honest with themselves. They should do an inward self examination. If they are

honest with themselves and see that they are not actually suffering for Christ but in fact have been attacking Him, then they need to repent and return to God.

**David fled for the last time—
19:11-17**

David ran home to his wife. Saul sent his men to David's house and gave instructions for them to kill him in the morning. That night Michal, David's wife, told him to flee for his life. We are not told of how Michal knew of the terrible danger that her husband was in. Her insistence that David flee that night was God-sent. David fled by escaping through a window. It was ironic that two of Saul's children, Jonathan and Michal, helped David though he was destined to take their father's throne! Thus says the LORD (Isaiah 55:8): "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways.*"

In the meantime, Michal made preparations to deceive Saul's men. She used "an image" (Hebrew *teraphim*, household gods or idols, Genesis 31:19, 30-35) and a bolster of goats' hair and covered it with a cloth. When Saul's men came, she gave the excuse that David was sick and in bed. But Saul sent them back to bring David to him, sick or otherwise. When the men discovered the ruse and reported to Saul, he chided his daughter Michal for deceiving him and letting his enemy escape. Michal defended herself by

saying that David threatened to kill her if she did not let him go.

Michal's use of situational ethics (that is, the ends justify the means) was a violation of the Ninth Commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." She defended herself by lying to her father that she had no choice but to let David escape. God's Word plainly declares that lies and deception are never justified.

God will turn the sins of His enemies against themselves for His own glory. This knowledge gives comfort to those who trust in Him.

David the Fugitive – 19:18-24

David ran away not because he was a criminal. On the contrary he was being pursued by a villain. David fled to Samuel in Ramah. That was the very place where Samuel had, at one time, secretly anointed Saul as the first king of Israel. David found refuge with Samuel, the prophet and man of God. David went to Samuel because Samuel was the one whom God had used to anoint him as the next king. Samuel was about the only person he could trust. Together they went to Naioth (Hebrew, *habitations or dwelling-places*). It appeared that Samuel's school of prophets (in modern terms a Bible college or seminary) was in Naioth. Samuel took David there probably because it was safer. David must have enjoyed the fellowship with the student-prophets. It was also a time

of rest that would prepare him for the trials ahead.

Someone reported the whereabouts of David to Saul. Saul sent a contingent to apprehend David. As they approached Naioth, they saw a group of prophets prophesying. They were overcome by the Spirit of God. They forgot about their task and began to prophesy too. Saul sent another contingent and the same happened to them. So he sent a third contingent and they had the same experience. Finally, Saul went there himself. He enquired as to the whereabouts of Samuel and David at a well in Sechu (Hebrew, *the watch-tower*). When told, he proceeded to Naioth. When he reached the place, the Spirit of God fell upon him and he prophesied just like the rest. He even stripped off his clothes and “lay naked” (probably not completely naked but waist upwards) all that day and night. Here is a clear illustration of how God protected His anointed. His people should not and need not resort to situational ethics to carry out God’s work.

PRACTICAL VALUE

Saul’s determination to destroy David was appalling. Pride, jealousy and envy had eaten him up and transformed him into a despicable person. It was ironical that the loyalty of his son and daughter towards David exceeded their filial piety

towards him. They both loved David. Jonathan had a covenant with David while Michal was David’s wife. The providential hand of God worked to protect and save his anointed. God did not allow his anointed to be touched by men with evil intent.

Although Michal’s intention to save David was laudable, her use of situational ethics was unacceptable. It is commendable that she risked her life to save David but we cannot approve of her lies. It is not clear if she believed and trusted in the LORD because she had house-gods. In contrast, Jonathan truly took great risks in verifying David’s accusation of his father’s intent to kill him and also personally warning him. God too protected Jonathan when Saul threw the javelin to smite and kill him.

One lesson stood out very vividly. If the Lord God is with us, we have nothing to fear. God who knows our fears will strengthen us as we learn to lean on and trust in Him. He promises to protect and bless His children from those who harbour ill will and harm towards them. What we need to know is: Is God with me?

AMEN.

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: 1 Samuel 19:1-17; Philippians 1:20, 21; 3:8.

Tuesday: 1 Samuel 19:18-24; Jonah 2:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Wednesday: 1 Samuel 19:1-24.

Thursday: 1 Samuel 19:1-24.

Friday: 1 Samuel 19:1-24.

Analysis:

Text	Practical Value
1 Samuel 19:1-10	
1 Samuel 19:11-17	
1 Samuel 19:18-24	

Discussion Questions

1. What is the best way to deal with jealousy and envy?

2. What is the root problem with situational ethics? Have you practised situational ethics before?

3. Why did Saul persist in killing David? He knew that it was wrong. He knew he had no justification yet he persisted. Why?

4. How were Saul's attempts to destroy David foiled?

5. Why did Saul and the people prophesy? What was the significance?
