**Faithful Regardless**

“Event or Continuum?”

**Saul’s jealousy and fear of David was growing more and more each chapter.**

**1st Samuel 18: 28**When Saul realized that the Lord was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, **29**Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

**30**The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul’s officers, and his name became well known.

In chapter 19 Saul is deeply conflicted, continues his acting severely irrational behavior.

* The chapter begins with him commanding his son and all his men to kill David.
* Then takes an oath NOT to kill David.
* Then tries to kill David himself with a spear while David is playing his harp, but David got away.
* He then hunts him down, and when he finds him, the Holy Spirit came upon so heavily that he fell down and laid around prophesying night and day, while David got away.

**1st Samuel 19:1-24 “**Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David **2**and warned him, “My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. **3**I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I’ll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out.”

Jonathan and David were not just friends, they were in a “Covenant Relationship”, meaning they were deeply bound to one another even more deeply than brothers. This covenant meant that they would fight for, and even die for one another, and any enemy of one, would be the enemy of the other.

**4**Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly. **5**He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The Lord won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?”

**6**Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: “As surely as the Lord lives, David will not be put to death.”

Saul was obviously becoming psychologically and emotionally unstable. He also was the subject of a spiritual tug-of-war between the evil spirit that would come upon him, and the Holy Spirit that he was exposed to through David and Samuel. He may have been sincere about his oath not to kill David in that moment, but he soon becomes overcome with a spirit of jealously, fear, and hate for David.

**7**So Jonathan called David and told him the whole conversation. He brought him to Saul, and David was with Saul as before.

**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.

David in his victories in battle, was proving to all of Israel time and time again that he was the great Military leader that the people yearned for, and Saul was not.

**9**But an evil spirit from the Lord came on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the lyre, **10**Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape.

This is very much like the scenario in Chapter 16 when Saul was troubled by an evil spirit and David would play the harp to comfort him. This time however, the evil in Saul’s heart was deeper and more volatile and instead of being comforted by David’s music, he tried to pin him to the wall with his spear. David escaped and went home to his wife.

**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.” **12**So Michal let David down through a window, and he fled and escaped. **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.

**14**When Saul sent the men to capture David, Michal said, “He is ill.”

**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.” **16**But when the men entered, there was the idol in the bed, and at the head was some goats’ hair.

**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?’”

David’s first wife Michal (Jonathan’s sister) did not tell her father that she had helped David, but she saved David’s life.

Michal is sort of a tragic figure in 1st Samuel and is often misunderstood and overlooked. Before we move on from Michal let’s take a look see **Shawn Blythe’s video** from his “Margins of the Miraculous” blog on northshorenj.org.

**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. **19**Word came to Saul: “David is in Naioth at Ramah”; **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 on Saul’s men, and they also prophesied. **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. **22**Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Seku. And he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?”

“Over in Naioth at Ramah,” they said.

**23**So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even on him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. **24**He stripped off his garments, and he too prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why people say, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

 The Spirit of the Lord was so strong upon Samuel and the men of Naioth at Ramah where David was staying that all the men Saul sent to capture him were so consumed by the spirit that they prophesied along with the rest. Even Saul who was filled with vengeance, jealousy and murderous hate for David was overtaken by the power of the Spirit of God, that he prophesied as well. He was so humbled by the Spirit that he *“24He stripped off his garments, and he too prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay naked all that day and all that night.”*

Prophesying in this context was not necessarily speaking a direct message from God to a people, or predicting the future. It was closely associated with all-consuming worship and music, similar to what Saul experienced in Gibeah when he was first selected as king.

**1st Sam 10:9“**As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul’s heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day. **10**When he and his servant arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came powerfully upon him, and he joined in their prophesying.”

But what happens next here in chapter 19?

Was Saul’s heart changed again?

Did he recapture what he had lost in Gibeah and repent?

Sadly no.

The sin in his heart was so deep, and his hatred for David was so strong that the very next chapter Saul hurls a spear at his own son Jonathan for simply asking him a question.

The rest of Saul’s days are marked with evil, hatred and failure.

Why didn’t the experience in Ramah change him?

Because he harbored sin in his heart and would not let it go.

It would have been tremendous if after experiencing what he did with Samuel and the prophets that he repented of his sin and turned his heart to God. It seemed that the Spirit of God had really gotten a hold of him in worship and prophecy. But as it turns out, it was an *event, not a continuum*.

We have to understand that for our own lives as well. Often times we are seeking an event that we think will change our lives and fulfill our longing for God’s power. We often seek things like, an outpouring, visitation, or a revival. We hope to conjure up another Pentecost in our church in hopes that it will breathe life into us and change us into what we should be.

God is not as concerned with an event as he is with a continuum. He wants to change our hearts and see long-term growth and fruit in our lives not just a one-time episode.

Our hearts can change at any time, in any place, in any circumstance. We don’t need tongues of fire and rushing wind to repent of our sins and make a genuine commitment to God.

Revival is amazing when it happens. It’s awesome to see God move more powerfully and effectively than anyone could expect or imagine. Renewal, however, can begin at any time simply by asking God to take his place as the King of your heart and submit to His Lordship in all things.

This is something Saul didn’t do but we should and we can.

It’s also something David did when he lost his way.

His well-known prayer in Psalm 51 did not come out of an experience like Gibeah, Ramah or even Pentecost. It was in one of the lowest valleys of David’s life filled with sadness, remorse, emptiness and shame.

**Psalm 51:10-12**“Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
**11**Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

**12**Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.”

Regardless of what you are experiencing in your Christian life, whether its tremendous victory and powerful times of worship, OR you are feeling defeated and disconnected from God, He wants to create a clean heart and renew a right spirit in you.

So that you can walk more closely with Him, experience His goodness in your life and lead others to the joy and love that the Heavenly Father has for them as well.

We can pray for Revival to come to our church, our nation and the world,

But until then let’s also ask God to “renew and restore”.

“renew and restore”

Ask Him to:

Renew a steadfast spirit within you.
and also,

Restore to you the joy of Your salvation,