

MONDAY

David fled to Samuel in Ramah, and he stayed with him there. Saul learned of this and sent messengers to order David back. But when the messengers arrived, they came upon Samuel leading other prophets in a time of preaching. The Spirit of God came upon them and the messengers soon found themselves drawn into the service - participating in it! Saul sent a second and a third group of messengers to fetch David, and each time, the same thing happened!

READ: I Samuel 19:18-21

David flees. But not to relatives, and not to old friends. He flees to Samuel. In this way, he was fleeing to God. "Samuel is the one who brought me God's message in the beginning," David must have reasoned; "so, it's to Samuel I must go now." And in fleeing to Samuel, he was fleeing to God Himself, *trusting in the shadow of his wings*.

TUESDAY

Finally, Saul himself made his way to Ramah to find David. The Spirit of God took control of him, as well, and he took off his outer clothes and began to prophesize. And for 24 hours, he stayed there while all who saw him expressed surprise.

READ: I Samuel 19:22- 24

There is an ancient Jewish tradition that King Saul joins the prophets in prophesizing things concerning David. Think of the irony of all that! He who created the mind and the tongue can claim dominion over both! And how He delights to do so as we yield ourselves to him. Lord, today, my mind and my tongue are yours.

WEDNESDAY

While Saul was otherwise occupied, David slipped away and found Jonathan. He expressed his frustration that although he had done Saul no wrong, the King was trying to kill him. Jonathan assured him that because he was Saul's son, he knew his father, and he was sure that his father was not trying to kill David. David suggested that maybe, because Saul knew of their friendship, he had more or less left Jonathan out of the loop. In the end, Jonathan promised to help David in any way he could.

READ: I SAMUEL 20:1-4

David's not the only one who loves Jonathan. We love him, too, don't we? What a guy! He defends his villainous father in an honorable way. And he remains always true to his friend. When presented with evidence that perhaps his father is up to no good when it comes to David, he assures his friend that he will ever be his faithful friend. There seems to be no guile in him. The lesson for us is in how important Jonathan's friendship proves to be in David's life. When we stand true to someone with a love that comes from above, the impact will be beyond what we can even imagine.

THURSDAY

David arranged with Jonathan to discover, and later, communicate with him concerning his father's attitude towards David. Jonathan was to ask Saul if

David might be permitted to return to Bethlehem for a while in order to offer the yearly sacrifice. If he said no, it would be clear that he intended evil upon David.

READ: I Samuel 20:5-7

David seems eager for Jonathan to see his own father for what he is. Jonathan doesn't get the picture yet. Notice especially David's desire that Jonathan see his point of view; that he recognize the dilemma David was facing, in wanting to be at the palace and with his dear friend, but unable to be there because of Saul's hostility. We have people around us everyday who just want somebody to understand them. What a unique position that puts us in as believers! We see them as they describe themselves, and also as God sees them. And that equips us to befriend them in a special way.

FRIDAY

David reminded Jonathan of the pact they made, one with the other. Jonathan assured David that he would keep it, no matter what. Jonathan suggested the means by which they might communicate: he took David out in the field to explain his plan to him on site, so to speak.

READ: I Samuel 20:8-11

This was a time of affirmation and reassurance. David was uneasy because he sensed that Jonathan was divided in his affections and loyalty. Jonathan assured him that he was, as always, a true and loyal friend. Affirming people is a great thing to do. Not for the sake of simply affirming someone - that would be meaningless - but for the sake of shoring up what the storms of life may have eroded away. Barnabas was a great affirmer. Jesus was the best. We have opportunities to follow in His steps.

SATURDAY

Jonathan spoke to David in the fields. He swore, in the name of God, to inform David of whatever his father has in mind. He prayed a curse on himself if he failed to warn David of danger. And he pleaded with David, should things turn out to be violent, that he would spare him and his descendants.

READ: I Samuel 20:12-15

We cannot miss here Jonathan's plea that David would spare his descendants. In other words, he was hoping for the relationship which he and David enjoyed to be passed on to their children and grandchildren. "This relationship is so dear to me, I want my kids to have the same experience!" Jonathan was saying. This is the desire we have a Christian parents, is it not? That our kids and grandkids would follow us in faith and have the same relationship with God which we depend upon so much. And even better.