

Saul & David: Personal cp/w Unconditional Love, 1 Samuel 16 - 2 Samuel 1

The instability and fragility of personal love can be seen in the relationship between King Saul and David in the book of 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel 16:14-23

1 Samuel 16:21

Then David came to Saul and attended him and Saul loved him greatly; and he became his armor bearer. Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, s.v. "aheb":

The love of a father for son is exemplified by Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22:2) and Israel and Joseph (Genesis 37:3). This is the word used in the rule "love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Ruth "loved" Naomi (Ruth 4:15). Rebekah "loved" her son Jacob (Genesis 25:28). Notice that nowhere is the love of children toward parents mentioned. Rather, they are to honor, revere, and obey.

God has commanded man to "love" him (Deuteronomy 6:5). Conversely, God "loves" men, especially his people Israel (Deuteronomy 4:37). The Lord also "loves" righteousness and justice (Psalm 33:5).

1 Samuel 16:22 - And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David now stand before me; for he has found favor in my sight."

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, s.v. "hen":

Favor. The focus of attention is not on the giver, but on the recipient, of what is given.

Many passages in which this phrase is found concern the relations of a superior to an inferior, e.g. a king to his subject.

In a number of passages hen means ... an attractive personality which creates a favorable impression. 1 Samuel 18:5-1 Samuel 18, 1 Samuel 18:29;

1 Samuel 19:1, 1 Samuel 19:9-1 Samuel 19:15; 1 Samuel 20:30, 1 Samuel 20:31; 1 Samuel 23:7, 1 Samuel 23:8, 1 Samuel 23:9a, 1 Samuel 23:13, 1 Samuel 23:14, 1 Samuel 23:19, 1 Samuel 23:20, 1 Samuel 23:24, 1 Samuel 23:25, 1 Samuel 23:26, 1 Samuel 23:27, 1 Samuel 23:28, 1 Samuel 23:29.

The stability and faithfulness of unconditional love can be seen in David's response to Saul's jealousy towards him and the King's resultant murderous vendetta against him.

1 Samuel 24:1-1 Samuel 24:12, 1 Samuel 24:16-1 Samuel 24:22; 1 Samuel 26:1-1 Samuel 26:25; 1 Samuel 28:1, 1 Samuel 28:7, 1 Samuel 28:16, 1 Samuel 28:17, 1 Samuel 28:18, 1 Samuel 28:19 (1 Samuel 12:14, 1 Samuel 12:15):

O, the road to Endor is the oldest road of all, And the craziest road of all.

Straight it runs to the witches of old, As it did in the days of Saul,

And nothing has changed of sorrows in store For such as go down the road to Endor. (Rudyard Kipling, "The Witch of Endor")

1 Samuel 31:1-1 Samuel 31:13;

2 Samuel 1:1-2 Samuel 1:16.

Summary of Saul's attempts to murder David in 1 Samuel

1, 2 - While David was playing the harp. 1 Samuel 18:11

3- Schemed to get him into battle with the Philistines. 1 Samuel 18:17, 1 Samuel 18:21

4- Once more while David was playing the harp. 1 Samuel 19:10

5- While David was sleeping. 1 Samuel 19:11, 1 Samuel 19:12, 1 Samuel 19:13, 1 Samuel 19:14, 1 Samuel 19:15

6- While in the city of Keilah. 1 Samuel 23:7, 1 Samuel 23:8

7- While in the wilderness of Maon. 1 Samuel 23:24, 1 Samuel 23:25, 1 Samuel 23:26

8- While at Engedi. 1 Samuel 24:1, 1 Samuel 24:2

9- While in the wilderness of Ziph. 1 Samuel 26:1, 1 Samuel 26:2

10- Also there was an unsuccessful effort to get his son Jonathan to murder David. 1 Samuel 20:30, 1 Samuel 20:31

David's ultimate expression of unconditional love for both Saul and his closest friend, Jonathan, is seen in his eulogy, given as an elegy, in: 2 Samuel 1:17-2 Samuel 1:27