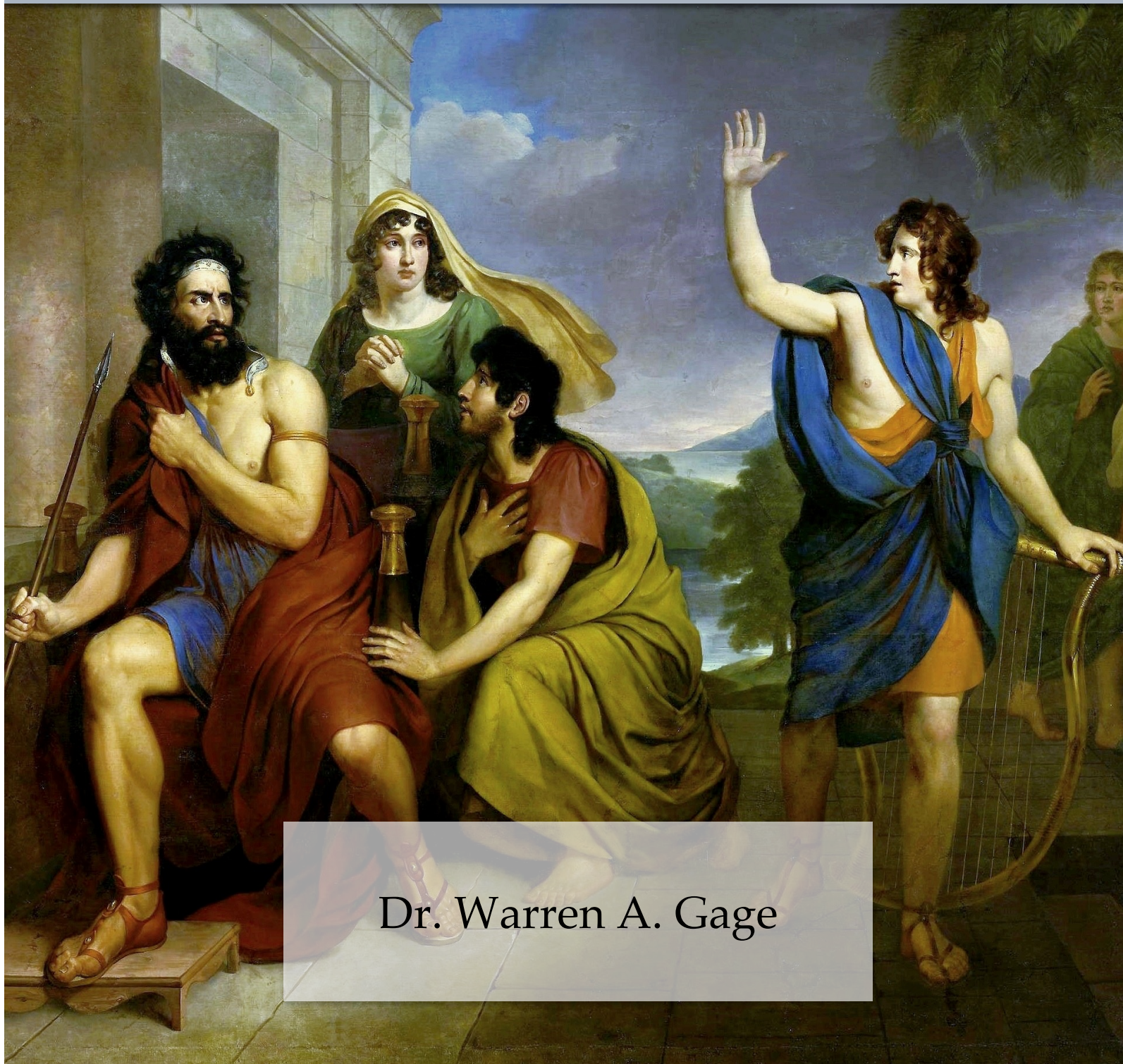




The Alexandrian Forum

# DAVID ESCAPES FROM SAUL

1 SAMUEL 19



Dr. Warren A. Gage



# Christ in all of Scripture

## David's Escape from Saul

1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-16

### Read the Passage

#### 1 Samuel 18:10-11

*<sup>10</sup>And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand. <sup>11</sup>And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.*

#### 1 Samuel 19:9-16

*<sup>9</sup>Now the distressing spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing music with his hand. <sup>10</sup>Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night. <sup>11</sup>Saul also sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." <sup>12</sup>So Michal let David down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped. <sup>13</sup>And Michal took an image and laid it in the bed, put a cover of goats' hair for his head, and covered it with clothes. <sup>14</sup>So when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." <sup>15</sup>Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." <sup>16</sup>And when the messengers had come in, there was the image in the bed, with a cover of goats' hair for his head.*



"Saul Attacking David"  
by Guernico  
1646



## Gospel Preview in the Text

The account of David's three escapes from Saul, who was trying to kill him with a spear, are pre-enactments of the New Testament drama of the religious leaders of the temple as they will attempt three times to kill Jesus. The story foresees David escaping death and afterward receiving the throne in Israel. Jesus, the Son of David, will likewise escape death three times, and afterward receive the throne in Israel. The account of the Chronicler is a story of David's suffering followed by glory. It is the gospel foretold.

### DAVID IN SUFFERING & GLORY

1. **Saul** feared David's royal ambition and **made two attempts to kill David** with the spear he held in his hand. **David escaped both attempts** (1 Sam 18:10-11).
2. **A third time Saul intended to kill David** as he held a spear in his hand. He planned to pierce him and **pin him to the wall**. Saul drove the spear into the wall, but **David escaped a third time** (1 Sam 19:10).
3. David escaped that night from Saul (day 1), but **Saul wanted him watched** (1 Sam 19:10).
4. Saul sent troops to seize David in the morning. Mikal warned him to flee that day (day 2). **He escaped** through a window at night (1 Sam 19:12).
5. Mikal took a household idol and **dressed it like David in the bed with a goat hair pillow** (1 Sam 19:13).
6. Saul sent soldiers to seize David in the morning (day 3) (1 Sam 19:11), but **David had escaped. The soldiers only found David's bedclothes** (1 Sam 19:16).
7. **David escaped the death Saul intended for him because God intended to exalt him to rule upon the throne of all Israel** (1 Sam 19:18).

### JESUS IN SUFFERING & GLORY

1. **The leaders in the temple** rejected Jesus' messianic claim and **made two attempts to kill Jesus, but he escaped both attempts** (John 8:59, 10:31, 39).
2. **The priests** in the temple arrested Jesus a third time. They **intended to kill him** by crucifixion, **nailing him to a cross**. But **Jesus would escape the third time**, too, by resurrection (Acts 2:23-24).
3. Jesus was crucified and buried. **The Jews asked Pilate to secure the tomb of Jesus** (Matt 27:62-66).
4. A Roman guard was sent to secure the tomb. The tomb was sealed and a guard was set by the Jews to watch over the tomb. Early in the morning (day 3), the risen **Jesus escaped** the tomb (Matt 28:6).
5. Joseph had **dressed Jesus in a shroud with a facecloth** for burial (Matt 28:58-60; John 20:7).
6. All who came to the tomb of Jesus on the morning (day 3) found **he was not there** (Matt 28:6); **they found only his graveclothes** (John 20:5-7).
7. **Jesus escaped the death Pilate and Herod and the Jews intended for him because God intended to exalt him to rule upon David's heavenly throne** (Acts 2:30-32, 4:27-28).



## Prophetic Narrative of the Gospel in the Text

1. Saul's enmity against David was grounded in the enmity of the serpent against the Seed of the Woman (Gen 3:15). Had Saul killed David, the promise of a chosen Seed of the Woman, who was to come through David's line, would have been defeated. The culminating enmity of the serpent's seed was expressed by the religious leaders of Jerusalem, the "brood of vipers" as John had discerned them to be (Matt 3:7), who would make three direct attempts against the life of Jesus, just as Saul made three direct attempts against the life of David.
2. Saul came against David in an attempt to pin him to the wall with a javelin. The Jews of the temple schemed to have the Son of David pinned to the cross. David's escape from death by fleeing anticipated Jesus' escape from death by resurrection.
- 3-4. David fled from Saul and went to his house. The next day David's wife urged him to flee, knowing that her father the king would dispatch a guard to watch his house. She told David he would die unless he left urgently. So David fled that night, the second day. He left by escaping through a window, recalling the escape of the spies of Jericho (Josh 2:18), which made Gibeah of Saul like Jericho, serving a dynasty soon to "fall."

The next morning Saul sent to arrest David, even though his wife had represented that he was sick. The soldiers of Saul were sent back to bring him in any case before the king. But David's wife had taken a household cultic image and put it in David's bed. She took a pillow of goat's hair to place at the head, all to deceive the soldiers. When they demanded entrance, however, all that remained were David's bedclothes.

When the Lord Jesus was buried, the religious leaders warned Pilate that Jesus had said he would rise on the third day after his death. They asked for a custodial guard to seal the tomb to prevent any deception of Jesus' disciples. But Jesus nonetheless escaped their watch. All he left behind were his graveclothes (Matt 27:16-28:6).

5. The bedclothes of David are juxtaposed to the graveclothes of the Son of David. Most striking, however, is the substitution of the *teraphim* image, which in every other context in the Hebrew Bible is idolatrous and so must likewise be presumed to be so here. What an emblem it is! An idol god taken for a sick man! There is certainly a polemical intent here to diminish the *terephim* of Michal.
6. David's escape into the night and the discovery of his bedclothes in the morning appear to be the events of the third day. This corresponds to the deliverance of Jesus from death by resurrection and the discovery of his graveclothes on the third day.
7. David was already the "anointed" (Heb Messiah) king of Israel, the Spirit having left Saul (1 Sam 16:13-14). God spared David from the enmity of both Goliath and Saul, for his destiny was to rule over the kingdom of Israel. Jesus, too, as the messianic King, had to be delivered from



death to fulfill his destiny rightfully to take title as heir to David's everlasting mercies in his covenant, especially to rule upon David's throne (Acts 2:22-36).

## Gospel Takeaways from the Text

1. The great drama of redemption is foretold in the Oracle of Destiny, the battle between the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the Woman (Gen 3:15). The assaults of Saul against the innocent David are best understood within this dynamic. David's triumph is ordained. Saul's strivings against David will be in vain. The same assaults launched against us are likewise in vain! Our victory against the Dragon is assured, and all the assaults of the enemy against us will fail!
2. There are multiple reenactments of this drama in Scripture. Several examples are the following: Pharaoh tries to kill the male seed of Israel. Athaliah tries to kill the royal seed of Judah. Haman tries to kill the diaspora of the Jews. Herod tries to kill the infant messiah by killing the male seed of Bethlehem. But God preserves the Seed according to his promise, and at last delivers the Seed of the Woman from death, crushing the serpent under foot (Rom 16:20).
3. Paul (in Romans 16:20) assures the church that we too will soon crush Satan under our foot, an assurance that the Lord God has ordained our victory over evil, sin, and death! What an encouragement to our faith!





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*Dr. Warren A. Gage*  
President of the Alexandrian Forum



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