

word, and David his ten thousands. *Saul was very wrath.* David was the popular hero: the incident was not in the least to Saul's liking. David's success and popularity roused the jealousy of the king. *Unto David ten thousands: to me, but thousands.* It was as if a great general in our day, coming home from some brilliant conquest, should see the chief glory of it given to some obscure officer in his army. *What more but the kingdom?* The anointing of David as king (ch. 16: 12, 13) was likely unknown to Saul; but the suspicion may have entered his mind that David was the "neighbor.. better than he", to whom Samuel had told him the kingdom was to be given, ch. 15: 28. *Eyed David.* Jealousy kept rankling in his mind, and melancholy and jealousy bred suspicion.

II. David Envied, 10, 11.

V. 10. *Evil spirit.* The king's malady, a form of melancholy madness, again became very acute (compare ch. 16: 14-23). The mania was due to an evil spirit which had taken possession of Saul's bodily frame. The result of the possession was that Saul was beside himself. *He prophesied.* He was raving mad. To prophesy was to speak under supernatural influence, whether from an "evil spirit", as here, or from God, like the true prophets sent to make known His will. *David played,* etc. This time the playing had no curative effect on Saul: jealousy frustrated the natural influence of music. *Saul had his spear in his hand* (Rev. Ver.). The spear or javelin was the symbol of royalty, like the sceptre amongst us. In the council and in the palace it was in the king's hand. It stood by his side at table, and was stuck in the ground by his pillow in the camp (compare chs. 19: 9; 20: 33; 22: 6; 26: 7). So the sheikh's tent in an Arab encampment is known by the tall spear standing against it.

V. 11. *Cast the javelin.. smite* (pin).. *him to the wall.* Some think the meaning to be that Saul only brandished the weapon in fierce threatening; others that he actually hurled it at David, as he did on a later occasion, ch. 19: 10. *Avoided*; escaped (from the Norman French "voider", to empty, Latin, "viduare").

III. David Dreaded, 12-16.

Vs. 12, 13. *Saul was afraid of David.. removed him.* The king next sought to get rid of David by underhand means. *The Lord.. with him*; manifestly protecting and guiding him. *Was departed from Saul*; had withdrawn His favor, because Saul had proved himself unworthy of it. David was removed from Saul's presence. Out of suspicion grew fear, and he could no longer bear to have David in personal attendance. *Captain over a thousand.* Not daring to insult the people's favorite, he gave him a post of honor, but one of great danger.

Vs. 14-16. *David behaved himself wisely.* The young hero's valor only shone the more conspicuously, so that *Saul.. stood in awe of him* (Rev. Ver.); a stronger word than "afraid" in v. 12. *All.. loved David.* The affection of the people, Saul imagined, would turn David's head, and he would attempt to supplant him (v. 8) and rule in his place.

Light from the East

JAVELIN—Was a short, heavy spear used by light troops for throwing at the enemy when charging them. Saul's threatening his life with a spear absolved David from his allegiance to the king of Israel, for by the custom of ancient Asia, which was long preserved among Teutonic nations, to throw a dart at a serf, who escaped from it by flight, was the demonstrative token of full and final liberty. He was henceforth freed from all obligation to service of any kind, and from all vows of allegiance which he might have taken. Otherwise, David owing to his subsequent conduct, might have been considered a rebel.

TABRET—The modern tambourine, a musical instrument of the drum species, consisting of a piece of parchment stretched over the top of a broad hoop, to which are attached little bells. It is sounded by sliding the fingers along the parchment, or by striking it with the back of the hand, or with the fist or elbow. Not only the circular form was used, but also a square or oblong one, and one composed of two squares connected by a bar. The instrument was used principally on joyous, festive occasions; but amongst the Egyptians its slow, monotonous rhythm accompanied the mournful song of lamentation for the dead.