

## Introduction

Today, the unsaved man is grasping for straws in understanding why men do insane things. The autopsy of the Las Vegas shooter was recently released and it bedeviled the authorities to find nothing with his brain that would have suggested that he would engage in such behavior. Scripture reveals, however that the sin nature was obviously his problem. Yet, there are other instances in which satan is seen as driving men to act insanely. Nebuchadnezzar is a classic example of such a man. Nebuchadnezzar was driven insane due to his pride. Yet, he was not the only such person whose mental instability is recorded in Scripture. Two other prominent occurrences of men with mental issues are recorded, as well. Over the next two Sundays, we will consider these three men and the source of their insanity. And we will see that the source is not as complicated as the unsaved man sees it.

### I. KING SAUL ENCOUNTERED CASES OF INSANITY DUE TO HIS REBELLION AGAINST GOD.

#### A. Saul's mental episodes began when the Spirit of the Lord left him. 1st Sam. 16:14,15

1. The Spirit (from) the Lord depart from Saul due to his rebellion. Cf. 1st Sam. 15:9-28
2. The evil spirit was sent by the Lord. 1st Sam. 16:14,15; 18:10; 19:9
  - a) The word "spirit" is raah which is defined by Girdlestone in his synonyms of the Old Testament as "**breaking up or ruin; raah binds together in one the wicked deed and its consequences; it is the opposite of good (tove) that which makes for happiness.**" Cf. Gen. 2:17
  - b) "Raah" is used with the word (spirit) ruach/pneuma several times in Scripture to identify a fallen angel. Cf. Judges. 9:23 (of God sending an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem) Acts 19:15-16 (of an evil spirit that indwelt a man)
  - c) The evil spirit did not indwell Saul, but came "upon" him. 1st Sam. 16:16; 18:10 (the 'al preposition is used to emphasize the absence of indwelling)

#### B. The evil spirit "troubled" Saul. 1st Sam. 16:15

1. "Troubled" is the word ba'ath which is used in the Old Testament of that which "**terrify, startle, fall upon, dismay, be overtaken by sudden terror.**" -- Brown, Driver & Briggs cf. Est. 7:6 (of Haman after Esther reveals him as the one plotting to kill the Jews); Dan. 8:17 (used of Daniel as he encountered the angel Gabriel)

2. The evil spirit would come and “depart” from Saul. 1st Sam. 16:23
  - a) “Depart” is the Hebrew word “sur” which means “**to turn aside, cause to depart, remove, take away, put away.**” -- Brown, Driver & Briggs lexicon cf. Gen. 35:2 (of putting away idols); Ex. 8:11 (of the frogs that departed Egypt)
  - b) The solution to the evil spirit was a harp player. 1st Sam. 16:16
    - (1) ***The chief of these instruments were the kinnōr (harp) and nebhel (psaltery); The music performed on these instruments seems to have been mainly of a joyful nature. It entered into all public and domestic festivities. In Psa\_81:2, the kinnōr is called “pleasant,” and Isa\_24:8 speaks of the “joy” of the kinnōr.*** -- I.S.B.E.
    - (2) ***“The powerful influence exerted by music upon the state of the mind was well known even in the earliest times; so that the wise men of ancient Greece recommended music to soothe the passions, to heal mental diseases, and even to check tumults among the people.”*** -- Keil & Delitzsch

- C. David helped to calm Saul’s attack by playing a harp. 1st Sa. 16:23
  1. David’s playing “refreshed” -- ravach -- “**to breathe easily, be relieved.**” -- BDB -- Saul. cf. Job. 32:20
  2. Saul attempted to murder David upon occasion. 1st Sam. 18:11-12; 19:11-12, 15-24
    - a) “Smite” is the Hebrew word nakah which means “**to be stricken or smitten; to smite, attack, destroy.**” -- Strong’s lexicon 1st Sam. 18:11 cf. Gen. 4:15 (translated kill)
    - b) “Javelin” -- is a spear.
  3. David’s playing made Saul “well” -- tob -- “**to be good, pleasing, be joyful, be beneficial, be pleasant, be favorable, be happy, right.**” --.BDB cf. Num. 11:8 (of Israel’s commentary on their time in Egypt)

## II. WORKS OF THE FLESH WERE ALSO MANIFEST IN SAUL’S BEHAVIOR

- A. Jealousy was another part of Saul’s problem. 1st Sam. 18:6-9
  1. The word “wroth” is “**to burn, be kindled, of anger; cause fire to burn.**” -- BDB vs. 8 cf. Gen. 4:5 (used of Cain)
  2. He was “displeased” -- yara -- “**to tremble, quiver; as showing mental qualities; of mental and spiritual faculties**” -- Strong’s lexicon cf. 1st Sam. 1:8 (of Hanna grieving over being barren)
- B. Saul attempted to murder David upon occasion. 1st Sam. 18:11-12; 19:11-12, 15-24

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2. "Javelin" -- is a spear.

C. Saul took his own life. 1st Sam. 31:4-5

CONCLUSION