

# **Bible Study February 7, 2024**

## **1 SAMUEL 18 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)**

### **David and Jonathan's Friendship**

***<sup>1</sup> As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. <sup>2</sup> And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. <sup>3</sup> Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. <sup>4</sup> And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.***

When David and Jonathan met, they became close friends at once. Their friendship is one of the deepest and closest recorded in the Bible because (1) they based their friendship on commitment to God, not just each other; (2) they let nothing come between them, not even career or family problems; (3) they drew closer together when their friendship was tested; and (4) they remained friends to the end.

Jonathan, the prince of Israel, later realized that David—and not he—would be the next king (23:17). But that did not weaken his love for David. Jonathan would much rather lose the throne of Israel than lose his closest friend.

***<sup>5</sup> And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.***

### **Saul's Jealousy of David**

***<sup>6</sup> As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. <sup>7</sup> And the women sang to one another as they celebrated,***

***“Saul has struck down his thousands,  
and David his ten thousands.”***

***<sup>8</sup> And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?” <sup>9</sup> And Saul eyed David from that day on.***

Saul's appreciation for David turned to jealousy as people began to applaud David's exploits. In a jealous rage, Saul attempted to murder David by hurling his spear at him (18:10-12).

Jealousy may not seem to be a major sin, but in reality, it is one step short of murder. Jealousy starts as you resent a rival; it leads to your wishing he or she were removed; then it manifests itself in your seeking ways to harm that person in word or action. Be careful not to let jealousy get a foothold in your life.

***10 The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand.***

What was this tormenting spirit the Lord sent? Perhaps Saul was deeply depressed. Or perhaps when the Holy Spirit left Saul, God allowed an evil spirit (or a demon) to torment him as judgment for his disobedience. Either way, Saul was driven to madness and paranoia, which led him to attempt to murder David.

***11 And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David evaded him twice.***

***12 Saul was afraid of David because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.***

Saul tried to kill David because he was jealous of David's popularity. David was greatly loved by Jonathan, Saul's son (18:1); Michal, Saul's daughter (18:20); and all the people (18:16). Yet despite Saul's attacks on David, he continued to protect and comfort Saul. Perhaps people have been jealous of you and have even attacked you in some way. They may be intimidated by your strengths, which make them conscious of their own shortcomings. It would be natural to strike back or to avoid them. A better response is to befriend them (Matthew 5:43-44). Ask God to open a door of opportunity for friendship with them and to give you the strength to continue to show them love, just as David did with Saul.

***13 So Saul removed him from his presence and made him a commander of a thousand. And he went out and came in before the people. 14 And David had success in all his undertakings, for the LORD was with him. 15 And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.***

### **David Marries Michal**

***17 Then Saul said to David, "Here is my elder daughter Merab. I will give her to you for a wife. Only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "Let not my hand be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him." 18 And David said to Saul, "Who am I, and who are my relatives, my father's clan in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?"***

While Saul's popularity made him proud and arrogant, David remained humble (18:23), even when the entire nation praised him. Although David succeeded in almost everything he tried and became famous throughout the land, he refused to use his popular support to his advantage against Saul. It can be tempting to allow popularity to twist your perception of your own importance. Being humble is fairly easy when you're not on center stage, but how will you react to praise and honor?

***19 But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.***

***20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21 Saul thought, "Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You***

*shall now be my son-in-law.”<sup>22</sup> And Saul commanded his servants, “Speak to David in private and say, ‘Behold, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now then become the king’s son-in-law.’”<sup>23</sup> And Saul’s servants spoke those words in the ears of David. And David said, “Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king’s son-in-law, since I am a poor man and have no reputation?”<sup>24</sup> And the servants of Saul told him, “Thus and so did David speak.”<sup>25</sup> Then Saul said, “Thus shall you say to David, ‘The king desires no bride-price except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged of the king’s enemies.’” Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.<sup>26</sup> And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king’s son-in-law. Before the time had expired,<sup>27</sup> David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king’s son-in-law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife.<sup>28</sup> But when Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him,<sup>29</sup> Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was David’s enemy continually.*

*<sup>30</sup> Then the commanders of the Philistines came out to battle, and as often as they came out David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly esteemed.*