

## 1 Samuel 18

**Who was Jonathan (v. 1)?** He was the first-born son of a king (1 Chronicles 9:39). This made Jonathan more than a *prince*, he was the *crown prince*. Jonathan was in line to be the next king of Israel.

**How would you describe David and Jonathan's relationship?** Soul mates. Kindred spirits. Brothers in arms. They had a deep and lasting friendship. They both were bold...men of courage...warriors. Most of all, they both were men who had a real relationship with God. They had great trust in God.

**What was the message Jonathan was sending when he gave David his robe and armor (vv. 3-4)?** He was essentially saying, *You will be the next king of Israel. You should be dressed and armed as the crown prince. God's hand is on you, and these rightfully belong to you.* Jonathan, the legitimate successor to his father's throne, knew David's destiny and was perfectly willing to set aside any personal ambition to honor the Lord's choice.

The covenant of friendship referred to in v. 3 was a unilateral (binding on one party only) covenant in which Jonathan committed himself to David with complete disregard for self. This was a virtual abdication by Jonathan, the crown prince.<sup>1</sup>

**What was the result of David's success on the battlefield (v. 5)?** Saul promoted him to a high rank, probably a senior officer rank. David's key to success was because God was with him (vv. 12, 14). Not only did Jonathan love David, but all the people, including even Saul's servants—those people who were most loyal to the king—did too. God blesses personally those who relate to Him properly. They also become channels of blessing to others (cf. Genesis 12:2).<sup>2</sup>

**What did the people think of David as he returned home from killing Goliath (vv. 6-7)?** He was a true legend. David had captured the affection of many Israelites by his victory over Goliath. Successful military heroes still do so today. Notwithstanding David's popularity, not everyone was ready to join David's fan club, as the text proceeds to clarify. He became a controversial figure in Israel. This is usually the public reaction to any leader God raises up. If you take on a leadership role, you can count on some criticism as well as some praise.<sup>3</sup>

**What was Saul's response to David's success and popularity (vv. 8-9)?** As David continued to win battle after battle, Saul became extremely jealous. When he heard the songs of the women ascribing to David greater exploits than to himself, he became livid with rage.<sup>4</sup>

**What happened the very next day (vv. 10-11)?** The evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul again (16:14) and he hurled a spear at David. Saul's unchecked jealousy bred the symptoms of paranoia; he began to think that his most loyal subject was his mortal enemy.<sup>5</sup>

**How did David respond to the spear attack (twice in 18:11; 19:10)?** David didn't pick up the spear and throw it back. He simply eluded Saul. No one could blame David if he had struck back; it could easily have been called self-defense. But David had a different heart. David was determined to leave the situation in God's hands, and not *take* the throne himself. *God* would have to take care of Saul, because David wouldn't do it! He would not undercut Saul's position or authority in any way. He was content to be in the role God had placed him in as shepherd and harpist even though he had been anointed as king.

**Why was Saul afraid of David (v. 12)?** Because God was with David, but He had withdrawn from Saul (cf. v. 12, 14, 28).

**What did his fear of David prompt Saul to do (v. 13)?** Saul made him captain over a thousand soldiers, perhaps hoping that David would be killed while fighting the Philistines.

**What was the secret to David's success (v. 14)?** The Lord was with him in everything he did.

**What was Saul's attitude toward David (v. 15)?** Fear, jealousy, insecurity.

**What was the people's attitude toward David (v. 16)?** All the people loved David. His exploits attracted the attention and affection of all Israel.

**What did Saul offer David (v. 17)?** The king's daughter had been promised to the man who would kill the Philistine giant, so Merab, Saul's older daughter, was offered to David. However, Saul now added the condition that David also had to fight more battles for his king. Saul hoped David would be killed in the process

**How did David respond to Saul's offer (v. 18)?** David protested that he was a commoner and had no sufficient bridal price i.e., David humbly expressed his social unworthiness to be a son-in-law to the king. So, Merab was given to another man, which was perhaps Saul's way of trying to humiliate David.<sup>6</sup>

**Who next appears on the scene (v. 20)?** Saul's daughter Michal. **What do we know about Michal (v. 20)?** She was in love with David.

**When Saul found out that Michal loved David, what was his second offer to David (vv. 20-22)?** His daughter, Michal. This time Saul tried to break down David's humble resistance to becoming his son-in-law by sending servants or attendants to persuade him.

**When Saul ordered his attendants to play cupid with David, how did David respond (v. 23)?** In largely the same way he responded to Saul's earlier offer of Merab – *I am not worthy to be the king's son-in-law*.

**What was Saul's next tactic (v. 25)?** He assured David that his lack of wealth would not be a problem. In an act of apparent generosity Saul waived the usual bridal payment and demanded only that David kill 100 Philistines and bring back their foreskins.

Normally grooms paid their prospective fathers-in-law a price to compensate for the loss of their daughter (like a dowry). Again Saul hoped to kill David by the hand of the Philistines.

**When David found out what the "dowry" was for Michal, how did he respond (vv. 26-27)?** He was pleased to accept the king's offer. And he more than met the requirement by slaying 200 Philistines.<sup>7</sup>

**Once the marriage was a done deal, and he realized that the Lord was with David, how did Saul respond (vv. 28-29)?** He maintained his position as David's enemy. As continual military success made it clear that the Lord was with David, Saul's hatred and fear of him continued to grow.<sup>8</sup>

**How did David fare in battle after all this (v. 30)?** David's behavior and wisdom in battle, guided and provided by God's Spirit, caused him to become increasingly effective and appreciated in Israel. David had regarded himself as lightly esteemed but God made him highly esteemed.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel, 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 143.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 144.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 310.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel, 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 145.

<sup>6</sup> William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 311.

<sup>7</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, "1 Samuel," The Bible Knowledge Commentary: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Victor Books, 1985), 449-450.

<sup>8</sup> William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 311.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel, 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 148.