

# 1 Samuel 18 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
1 Samuel Chart from Charles Swindoll

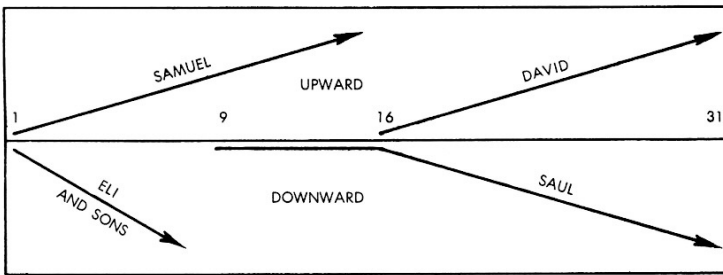
TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

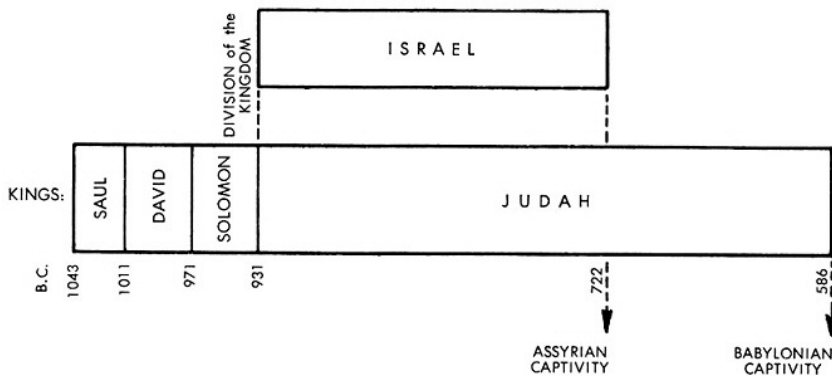
The Ryrie Study Bible

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Map on Left [ESV Global Study Bible](#), on right [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#)  
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Overlappings in 1 Samuel



First Three Kings of Israel

1	9	16	31
SAMUEL —prophet, priest, judge		DAVID —man after God's heart	
—birth —childhood —judgeship		—choice —reign —rejection	
		—anointing —pursuit —exile	

Main Characters in 1 Samuel

**1 Samuel 18:1** Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

NET 1 Samuel 18:1 When David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan and David became bound together

in close friendship. Jonathan loved David as much as he did his own life.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:1 When David had finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan committed himself to David, and loved him as much as he loved himself.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:1 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:1 After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:1 After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond of love between them, and they became the best of friends.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:1 When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:1 When David had finished talking to Saul, Jonathan felt an instant affection for David; Jonathan loved him like his very self;

NAB 1 Samuel 18:1 (By the time David finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan had become as fond of David as if his life depended on him; he loved him as he loved himself.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:1 And it cometh to pass, when he finisheth to speak unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan hath been bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loveth him as his own soul.

RSV 1 Samuel 18:1 When 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.

NKJ 1 Samuel 18:1 Now when 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.

ASV 1 Samuel 18:1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

DBY 1 Samuel 18:1 And it came to pass, when he had ended speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

GWN 1 Samuel 18:1 David finished talking to Saul. After that, Jonathan became David's closest friend. He loved David as much as he loved himself.

BBE 1 Samuel 18:1 Now after David's talk with Saul was ended, the soul of Jonathan was joined with the soul of David, and David became as dear to him as his very life.

BHT 1 Samuel 18:1 wayühî Kükallötô lüdaBBër ´el-šä´ül wüne<sup>o</sup>peš yüh<sup>o</sup>nätä<sup>n</sup> niqšürâ Büne<sup>o</sup>peš Däwid (wayye´éhäbô) [wayye´éhäbê<sup>hû</sup>] yühônätän Künapšô

NIRV 1 Samuel 18:1 David finished talking with Saul. After that, Jonathan and David became close friends. Jonathan loved David just as he loved himself.

RWB 1 Samuel 18:1 And it came to pass, when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

WEB 1 Samuel 18:1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

- **the soul of Jonathan:** 1Sa 14:1-14,45 Ge 44:30 Jdg 20:11 1Ch 12:17 Ps 86:11 Col 2:2
- **loved him:** 1Sa 18:3 19:2 20:17 De 13:6 2Sa 1:26 Pr 18:24
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## KINDRED SPIRITS FOR LIFE OR IN DEATH

**Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul** - This description would appear to follow the conversation David had with Saul in 1Sa 17:58.

**That the soul of Jonathan was knit ([qashar](#)) to the soul of David** - Even prior to cutting a covenant, the souls of Jonathan and

David were **knit** together or as the NIV renders it they "became one in spirit" (NET has "became bound together in friendship"). Note that this knitting is a reflection of the fact that Jonathan **loved** David as **himself**. Thus in the present context, the Hebrew noun for soul (*nephesh*) conveys the idea of Jonathan's inner man and reflects the totality of his being. The point is that Jonathan loved David as much as he loved his own life and, as verse 4 indicates, there was nothing Jonathan would not do for David. "David is seen in Jonathan's clothes that all may take notice he is Jonathan's second self." As an aside, the Scripture does not record at what point Jonathan realized that David had been anointed by Samuel (1Sa 16:13) as God's choice for Israel's next king.

**Keil** says literally = "*The soul of Jonathan bound itself to the soul of David*", NIV = "*became one in spirit with*" NIV

**Gene Getz** - The word **knit** literally means "chained." Think about that—the soul of Jonathan was "chained" to the soul of David. They were bound to each other in an inseparable relationship and union. In their minds and hearts they became one. They were "soul brothers." Though the friendship was initiated by Jonathan, David quickly responded with deep love and commitment. A friendship that flows only one way is really no friendship at all.....Though in many respects there was a "great gulf fixed" between these two men, they had a common bond. They were both men after God's heart. They both had a dynamic relationship with their Lord. When their souls were knit together as one, their union was not merely another human relationship; it was a friendship based on a mutual love for God....Jonathan was greatly impressed with David from the very moment the young shepherd boy accepted the challenge to fight Goliath. Perhaps he had considered accepting this challenge himself, and on the same basis as David. He too knew that the battle would have to be the Lord's. Perhaps David simply beat him to the draw, for Jonathan's view of God's power was the same as David's. He had experienced it himself in a previous battle with the Philistines. The parallels between Jonathan's experience and David's are very clear..... Jonathan, like David, believed with all his heart that God could win the battle for him. Reassuring the young man carrying his armor, he beckoned, "Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the Lord will work for us, for the LORD is not restrained to save by many or by few" (1Sa 14:6+). Jonathan knew it would be a simple matter for God to deliver the whole Philistine army into his hands. But Jonathan didn't proceed on blind faith. He knew he couldn't conceivably win this battle without God's supernatural power. So he asked the Lord for a clear signal—a sign that God would indeed win this battle for him. The Scriptures do not give us the exact details on how Jonathan discovered God's specific plan for approaching the Philistines. However, it's clear that he knew what to look for. (1Sa 14:10+).....Later, as Jonathan stood in the wings watching David accept Goliath's challenge, and then saw him single-handedly slay the giant, his heart and mind flooded with memories of his own experiences when God had delivered the Philistines into Israel's hands. He immediately identified with David's experience and felt his soul strangely drawn to this God-honoring Hebrew brother. They had something in common, something very important. They both were men with hearts in tune with God. They knew the Lord personally and understood His greatness. Perhaps more important than anything, they had a clear understanding of God's commitment to Israel. Both knew beyond a shadow of doubt that they were fighting the Lord's battle—not their own. There was no way they could have succeeded in their own strength. The friendship that developed between Jonathan and David was no ordinary friendship. It's true that all the human elements were there—emotion, respect, admiration, commitment—but interweaving these human factors was a divine dimension that made this Old Testament friendship one of the most significant relationships in human history. (Borrow [David: God's Man in Faith and Failure - page 62](#))

The verb **knit** (*qashar*) is used in a similar manner in the following passage in Genesis 44:30, 31 where Jacob's son Judah is addressing (unbeknownst to him at the time) his brother Joseph, who is second in command to Pharaoh:

Now, therefore, when I (Judah) come to your servant my father (Jacob), and the lad is not with us, since his (Jacob's) life (Hebrew *nephesh* = soul) is bound up in the lad's (Benjamin's) life (Hebrew *nephesh* = soul), it will come about when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he (Jacob) will die. Thus your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow.

This passage in Genesis shows that the basic meaning of "bound up" is that there is a special "bond of love" between the two people. The thought is that Jacob's life or desire to go on living depends on Benjamin's life, and therefore on his safety and safe return home. This gives one a picture of the closeness of the relationship of between Jonathan and David. Many men have never experienced a friendship to this level (other than with their spouse and sadly in some marriages not even there!) and therefore it is somewhat difficult to fully comprehend the depths of this bond between Jonathan and David.

**R Kent Hughes** comments that "Jonathan saw that David viewed life from the same divine perspective (God is sovereign and does as He pleases, and all of life is to be lived for Him). And when he saw this, his soul reflexively clung to David's. Here was a man whose heart beat with his!...**a Christian friendship exceeds anything that exists between nonbelievers— for such a friendship is founded on a supernatural mutuality of soul. The Holy Spirit makes your souls chorus the same cries You assent to the same authority. You know the same God. You are going the same way. You long for the same things. You dream mutual dreams. You yearn for the same experiences of holiness and worship. Jonathan's soul bound itself to David's soul. You know when this happens, and it is wonderful.**" (Borrow [Disciplines of a Godly Man](#))

and Jonathan loved ([ahab](#)) him as himself (literally = "as his own soul") - Clearly the relationship of Jonathan and David touched the very depth of their beings. This is actually the quality of love God calls for in His children for Jesus says we are to "love ([agapao](#) - selfless, unconditional love of) your neighbor as yourself." (Mk 12:31, quoting Lev 19:18).

"Friendship is an entire sameness, and one soul: a friend is another self."

**Henry Clay Trumbull** comments that "From that hour the hearts of David and Jonathan were as **one**. Jonathan could **turn away from father and mother**, and could **repress all personal ambition**, and all purely **selfish longings**, in proof of his loving fidelity to him who was dear to him as his own blood.' His love for David was " wonderful, passing the love of women.'" ([H. Clay Trumbull. The Blood Covenant](#))

**Adam Clarke** writes that "The most intimate friendship subsisted between them; and they loved each other with pure hearts fervently. No love was lost between them; each was worthy of the other. They had a friendship which could not be affected with changes or chances, and which exemplified all that the ancients have said on the subject; "**Friendship produces an entire sameness; it is one soul in two bodies: a friend is another self.**"

**Larry Richards** adds that "When we remember that Jonathan would normally have succeeded Saul as Israel's king, his friendship for David is especially impressive. The OT contains no finer example of what it means to be a friend. The story of how David returned Jonathan's friendship is found in 2 Sam. 9. ([The Bible Reader's Companion](#))

**Spurgeon** - Jonathan, the brave young soldier who had himself done great exploits, naturally admired the youthful warrior who had slain the Philistine giant, and also admired the modesty of his speech when he returned with the head of Goliath in his hand: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

**Believer's Study Bible** writes that "Neither the word for love here, ahav (Hebrew), nor the relationship of the two men suggests any abnormality. The word ahav was a technical term in covenant texts for the bonding together by pacts of loyalty and reciprocal responsibility. It refers, then, to a relationship between two parties who could depend on one another. ([Believer's Study Bible](#))

**Dave Roper** - "Both David and Jonathan were, to my thinking, swashbuckling men of faith, go-for-broke individuals, who were willing to fling their lives away and entrust themselves to the Lord, no matter what it might cost them. The theme of Jonathan's life is found in his own words: "The Lord will deliver, whether by many or by few." That is, 'It doesn't make any difference how many of us there are; it doesn't make any difference how many of our opponents may exist. The Lord will deliver. ' That was the keynote of his life. David likewise felt this way. As David was explaining to Saul his victory over the giant, Jonathan's heart was knit to the heart of David, and he made a covenant with him. This is where friendships usually start, with some sort of attraction like this. People think the way we think, like the things we like, are interested in things as we are interested in them, and we note that they have the same perspective as we. This is not necessarily wrong We have to remember that even the Lord chose twelve men. And Mark says he chose them on this basis: he chose those whom he would. He was drawn to these men, he liked them, he felt a natural attraction ([1 Samuel 18-20, 23 - Jonathan and David](#))

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**WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DAVID AND JONATHAN?** - Some writers have suggested that the '**love**' between Jonathan and David was indicative of a homosexual relationship. A use of love which helps see that Jonathan's love for David was not homosexual is found earlier when "David came to Saul and attended him, and Saul **loved** ([ahab](#)) him greatly; and he became his armor bearer." (1Sa 16:21). Also against this "homosexual" interpretation is the fact that the Hebrew verb '**ahab**' is never used in the Old Testament to signify what is clearly (from [context](#)) a homosexual desire or activity. Instead the Old Testament uses the Hebrew verb, [yada](#), which means "to know" to indicate close relationship in a sexual sense in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Thus **yada** refers to homosexual relationships in the following texts.

Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter and they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may **have relations** ([yada](#)) with them." (Genesis 19:4, 5)

While they were making merry, behold, the men of the city, certain worthless fellows (literally "sons of belial", belial being transliterated as a synonym for Satan in 2 Cor 6:15) , surrounded the house, pounding the door; and they spoke to the owner of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who came into your house that we **may have relations** ([yada](#)) with him." (Judges 19:22).

Finally, note that the verb [yada](#) is never used to describe the relationship between Jonathan and David.

**Wiersbe** adds "To make anything more out of their friendship than the mature affection of two manly believers is to twist the Scriptures. Had there been anything unlawful in their relationship, the Lord certainly would never have blessed David and protected him, and David could never have written Psalm 18:19–27 ten years later." (Borrow [Be successful](#))

Even the secular source [Wikipedia](#) gets it correct (mostly correct - they make one off handed allusion to homosexuality but without any support whatsoever - the tenor of their explanation is platonic) - A platonic interpretation for the relationship between David and Jonathan has been the mainstream view found in biblical exegesis, as led by [Christian](#) writers. This argues that the relationship between the two, although strong and close, is ultimately a [platonic](#) friendship. David and Jonathan's love is understood as the intimate camaraderie between two young soldiers with no sexual involvement.[10] The euphemisms the Bible uses for sexual relations are not present, and nothing indicates that David and Jonathan had a sexual relationship.[citation needed] Neither of the men is described as having problems in their heterosexual married life. David had an abundance of wives and concubines as well as an adulterous affair with Bathsheba, and apparently suffered impotence only as an old man, while Jonathan had a five-year-old son at his death.[11]

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**Bob Deffinbaugh's outline:** David is on his way up, and Saul is on his way down.

- 1Sa 18:1-5 David has a "nice day"
- 1Sa 18:6-9)The Musicians Produce a Sour Note, and the Dancers Step on Saul's Toes
- 1Sa 18:10-12 Murder by a Maniac ... Or ... Why can't David get the Point
- 1Sa 18:13-30 Kill 'Em With Kindness or Murder in the Military

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**Knit** ([07194](#))(qashar) essentially means binding or tying something to something else and could be used of binding men. Literally = binding or tying something up (Ge 38:28; Josh. 2:18, 21; Jer.51:63). Figuratively attacking or fastening something on (Isa. 49:18); "bind the chains of the Pleiades" constellation (Job 38:31). Connect a wall (Neh. 4:6, 8). Figuratively of Jacob's soul bound with Benjamin (Ge. 44:30); of Jonathan's soul bound to David's (1Sa 18:1); of forming a conspiracy (translated conspired 19x, conspirators 2x) or an alliance against someone (1Ki. 15:27; 1Ki 16:20; 2Ki. 9:14). Binding of moral or spiritual teachings to oneself (Dt. 6:8; 11:18; Pr. 3:3; 6:21; 7:3). ([The Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament](#))

**Leonard Coppes** - The basic meaning of this root "to bind" emerges clearly in Genesis 38:28 where Zerah's hand was marked by tying with a scarlet thread. Rahab was instructed to tie a scarlet thread to her window to mark it (Joshua 2:18). God instructed Israel to bind his laws (words) to their foreheads and hands (Deut. 6:8). Thus, their thoughts and actions were to be governed by his word. The commandments of godly fathers and mothers (Proverbs 6:21) as well as truth and kindness are to be bound to one's fingers (or neck, Proverbs 3:3), and written on one's heart (cf. Jeremiah 31:31ff.). In the eschaton Zion is to display her restored children as a bride displays jewelry (Isaiah 49:18). Perhaps we might add that thus the pious are to display God's word (H. Leuring, "Finger," in ISBE, II, p. 1111). The Judaism of Jesus' day had certainly fulfilled the commandment to literally bind God's word to themselves, but by adding thereto had changed it from an ornament to a heavy weight (Matthew 23:4). God reminds Job that only he binds the stars in place (Job 38:31) and controls wild (Job 39:10) and possibly mythological beasts (but cf. Job 40:19) (Job 41:5 [H 40:29]). Our word can apply to human relationships. Men can be bound together (inseparably) in love (Genesis 44:30; 1 Samuel 18:1) or conspiracy (1 Kings 16:9). Treasonous pacts if exposed were met with denunciation (2 Chron. 23:13), and even death (2 Samuel 15:12; 2 Kings 17:4). It is noteworthy that in evil days prophets who declared God's counsel were accused of treason (Amos 7:10; Isaiah 8:12) by the real enemies of the theocracy (Young, E. J., Isaiah, Eerdmans, 1967, I, p. 311)—the leaders of Israel (Isaiah 8:13f.; Jeremiah 11:9). ([Here is a link to the TWOT](#))

**Qashar** - 44x/44v - **bind(9), bound(2), carried(1), conspirators(2), conspired(19), joined together(1), knit(1), made(3), stronger(2), tie(2), tied(2)**. Gen. 30:41; Gen. 30:42; Gen. 38:28; Gen. 44:30; Deut. 6:8; Deut. 11:18; Jos. 2:18; Jos. 2:21; 1 Sam. 18:1; 1 Sam. 22:8; 1 Sam. 22:13; 2 Sam. 15:31; 1 Ki. 15:27; 1 Ki. 16:9; 1 Ki. 16:16; 1 Ki. 16:20; 2 Ki. 9:14; 2 Ki. 10:9; 2 Ki. 12:20; 2 Ki. 14:19; 2 Ki. 15:10; 2 Ki. 15:15; 2 Ki. 15:25; 2 Ki. 15:30; 2 Ki. 21:23; 2 Ki. 21:24; 2 Chr. 24:21; 2 Chr. 24:25; 2 Chr. 24:26; 2 Chr. 25:27; 2 Chr. 33:24; 2 Chr. 33:25; Neh. 4:6; Neh. 4:8; Job 38:31; Job 39:10; Job 41:5; Prov. 3:3; Prov. 6:21; Prov. 7:3; Prov. 22:15; Isa. 49:18; Jer. 51:63; Amos 7:10

**Loved** (friend) ([0157](#))([ahab/ahab](#)) means to love and can convey the idea of liking things (like bribes - Isa 1:23, wisdom - Pr 4:6, wine - Pr 21:17, peace and truth - Zech 8:19, food - Ge 27:4, 9, 14). The most important uses in the OT are as an expression of God's love of people (Dt 4:37, Hosea 3:1, Hos 11:1 = God's love for His children), man's love for God (Ex 20:6, Ps 116:1) and man's love for his fellow man (Dt 6:5; Ge 29:32, Ru 4:15, 1 Kings 11:1 = a forbidden love by backslidden King Solomon!!!) The first use of aheb in the OT is instructive as it is found in Ge 22:2 where Yahweh instructed his servant Abraham to ""Take now your son, your only son, whom you **love**, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." Notice that at the outset, we see that **an inherent quality of this love (in many contexts) is that it is costly** God wants us to love Him above EVERYTHING, even our own flesh and blood. Matthews writes that Ge 22:2 "is the final test of the man's faith, the closing bookend to his discovery of God's sufficiency to achieve the promises made at Haran." (New American Commentary) As an aside God frequently "tests" His people to reveal their trust and obedience (cp Ex 15:25, 16:4, Judges 2:22 - in



this last one they failed repeatedly). In Ge 25:28 there is a hint that Isaac's love was at least somewhat conditioned on the fact that Esau provided game for him to eat (cp Ge 27:4, 9, 14 of Isaac's love for the savory dish). In addition, Isaac's love for Esau is contrasted with Rebekah's love for Jacob (not to say of course that Isaac did not love Jacob but that he seemed to have a greater degree for Esau because he was as they say "a man's man!" Compare Jacob's greater love for Rachel than Leah - Ge 29:30, Jacob's greater love for Joseph - Ge 37:3,4) In Ex 21:5 we see one of the great examples of man to man love where a slave willingly stays with his master because he loves him -- now that is surely sacrificial love! In Dt 4:37 we see the first use of aheb to describe God's unconditional love for His chosen people Israel -- He loved them then, He continued to love them in their unfaithfulness (because that is the nature of true love) and He will bring them "from Egypt" (so to speak) at the end of this age when Messiah returns and all the believing remnant are saved (Ro 11:25-27-note)! In short, God's love transcends time and endures throughout eternity for His chosen people and for every Gentile that has been grafted into "the rich root of the olive tree," (Ro 11:17-note). In the Shema Israel is instructed ""You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Dt 6:5)

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**Gene Getz** applies the truths in Jonathan and David's friendship to believers today - Borrow [Becoming God's Man Today - Principles to Live By](#): The relationship between David and Jonathan constitutes an Old Testament picture of a New Testament reality—the relationships God intended to exist in the Body of Jesus Christ. What characterized this unique friendship in Israel was to be a norm in the church.

**THOUGHT** - As you read through these principle's play Michael W. Smith's song in the background "[Friends are Friends Forever](#)." remembering that Jesus has "**called you friends**." (Jn 15:15, cf Jn 15:14).

### **Principle 1. We are to be one in heart and soul.**

The Scriptures clearly teach that David and Jonathan were of "one soul." Compare this experience with the following New Testament references to relationships that should exist in the Body of Christ:

- "All the believers were one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32NIV).
- "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:5NIV).
- "Be of one mind" (2 Cor. 13:11NIV).
- "Stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man" (Phil. 1:27NIV).
- "Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose" (Phil. 2:2NIV).

### **Principle 2. We are to love others as we love ourselves.**

David and Jonathan loved each other as they loved themselves. Again, compare this Old Testament relationship with New Testament injunctions:

- "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love" (Ro 12:10).
- "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Ro 13:9; Gal. 5:14).
- "Follow the way of love" (1Co 14:1NIV).
- "Keep on loving each other as brothers" (Heb. 13:1NIV).
- "Love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Pet. 1:22NIV).

The relationship between David and Jonathan was clearly prophetic. In Jesus Christ, Christian brothers (and sisters) have the potential for true and enduring friendships that can never be equaled on this earth. True, all human beings can experience "friendships" because we are made in God's image. **But only Christians have the potential for the quality of relationship that existed between David and Jonathan.** The reason is that this relationship was focused both in God and man. In Christ, it's possible to experience a deep commitment to each other. (**ED: AND ONE OTHER REASON IS THAT OUR FRIENDSHIPS WILL LAST THROUGHOUT ETERNITY!**)

### **Principle 3. We are to honor one another, be devoted to one another and even be willing to lay down our lives for one another.**

David and Jonathan's friendship parallels New Testament injunctions to members of Christ's Body:

#### **DAVID AND JONATHAN'S RELATIONSHIP:**

1. Jonathan honored David above himself.
2. Jonathan served as a faithful intercessor. He was devoted to David. He served him and did everything he

could to help David build a relationship with his father.

3. Jonathan continued to be faithful to David no matter what the cost to him personally. His life was in jeopardy when he tried to defend David's absence.

#### RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN CHRIST'S BODY:

1. Paul wrote to the Romans: "Honor One another above yourselves" (Rom.12:10NIV).
2. Paul wrote: "Be devoted to one another" (Ro 12:10). "Serve one another in love" (Gal. 5:13NIV). "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it" (1Co 12:26).
3. John wrote in his First Epistle, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16NIV).

#### Accountability Partners

All of us in the Body of Christ are to develop friendships with each other, but it's also important to have one or two people in our lives who are even closer friends. Among men, this can take the form of an accountability partner. I recently returned from a men's retreat sponsored by my own church—Fellowship Bible Church North in Plano, Texas. Two men shared publicly that they had been accountability partners for a long time. However, one of them was moving from Dallas to Houston. With tears, they told what the separation would mean—sadness. However, they both knew the move was best for this man's family. That day we all saw a demonstration of true friendship between two brothers in Christ. They had shared their deepest joys and most difficult struggles. Consequently both men were better husbands, better fathers and better churchmen because of this friendship.

**THOUGHT** - Getz's principles beg the question - Do you have a "Jonathan" or "David" in your life? If not, why not? And if not, then pray for God to send you a man after his own heart! We see years later that David did not have a Jonathan beside him (as Jonathan had hoped would happen) in 2Sa 11:1-2 and as they say "[the rest is history](#)," a tragic history in the family of David! Brothers, we ALL need a "Jonathan" if the man after God's own heart needed a Jonathan!

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**Norman Geisler** - [go to page 149 in When Critics Ask](#) for discussion of 1 SAMUEL 18:1–4—Were David and Jonathan homosexuals?

**PROBLEM:** This Scripture records the intense love David and Jonathan had for each other. Some see this as an indication that they were homosexual. They infer this from the fact that Jonathan "loved" David (18:3); that Jonathan stripped in David's presence (18:4); that they "kissed" each other with great emotion (1 Sam. 20:41). They point also to David's lack of successful relations with women as an indication of his homosexual tendencies. Is this a valid conclusion to draw from these texts?

**SOLUTION:** There is no indication in Scripture that David and Jonathan were homosexual. On the contrary, there is strong evidence that they were not.

**First** of all, David's attraction to Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11) reveals that his sexual orientation was heterosexual, not homosexual. In fact, judging by the number of wives he had, David seemed to have too much heterosexuality.

**Second**, David's "love" for Jonathan was not sexual (erotic) but a friendship (philic) love. It is common in eastern cultures for heterosexual men to express love and affection toward one another. (**ED: RECALL KING SAUL ACTUALLY "LOVED HIM GREATLY"** - 1Sa 16:21+).

**Third**, Jonathan did not strip himself of all his clothes in David's presence. He only stripped himself of his armor and royal robe (1 Sam. 18:4) as a symbol of his deep respect for David and commitment to him.

**Fourth**, the "kiss" was a common cultural greeting for men in that day. Furthermore, it did not occur until two and a half chapters after Jonathan gave David his clothes (1Sa 20:41). (**ED: RECALL SAMUEL "KISSED" SAUL WHEN HE ANOINTED HIM** - 1Sa 10:1+).

**Finally**, the emotion they expressed was weeping, not orgasm. The text says, "they kissed each other and wept together—but David wept the most" (1 Sam. 20:41NIV).

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**John Butler** - **A. THE PASSION FOR DAVID** 1 Samuel 18:1, 3, 4 - from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)

The first reaction of David's victory over Goliath was the affection exhibited by Jonathan for David.

#### 1. The Compatibility for the Passion (1 Samuel 18:1)

"The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David" (1 Samuel 18:1). In our day of perverted passion, it may be difficult for some



to understand this noble affection of two like souls. We note several significant reasons for this affection.

- The gallantry of the two. David showed his gallant spirit with his courageous assault of Goliath. Jonathan had demonstrated the same gallant spirit earlier when he went against the Philistines and won a great victory at Michmash (1 Samuel 14). Noble spirits find good friendship with each other.
- The godliness of the two. Both men were God-conscious. They both looked to God for help and victory in battle. David told Goliath that he was come “in the name of the LORD of hosts” (1 Samuel 17:45) and Jonathan told his armorbearer, “There is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few” (1 Samuel 14:6). David and Jonathan had God much in their thoughts unlike most soldiers. This made for good friendship.

## 2. The Character of the Passion (1 Samuel 18:1, 3, 4)

This passion was noble. It was not some unholy, immoral attraction to each other.

- It was strong in character. “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David” (1 Samuel 18:1). The word translated “knit” means to be “knotted, tied together firmly by indissoluble bonds” (R. Payne Smith). Would that husbands and wives were that way. It would put divorce courts out of business.
- It was selfless in character. “Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Samuel 18:1, 3). Twice we are told of Jonathan’s unselfish affection for David. True affection must be unselfish. Marriages break up because of selfishness.
- It was sacrificial in character. “Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle [belt]” (1 Samuel 18:4). Love gives and Jonathan gave David his robe and military equipment. This greatly honored David. “To receive any part of the dress ... worn by a sovereign, or his eldest son and heir, is deemed in the East the highest honor which can be conferred on a subject” [cp. Esther 6:8] (Jamieson).
- It was steadfast in character. “Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul” (1 Samuel 18:3). A covenant is a commitment. This covenant was not empty words. Jonathan was faithful to David even when Jonathan’s father wanted to kill David, and David was faithful to Jonathan even after Jonathan had died.

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## Friendship With God

I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. —John 15:15

Today’s Scripture: John 15:13-15

Page through an old-time hymnal and notice how often the songwriters referred to the blessing of God’s friendship. Stop and think about what that really means.

Yes, it’s a blessing to have human friends who enrich our lives. A devoted friend, as Proverbs 17:17 tells us, “loves at all times,” standing with us steadfastly through life’s sunshine and storm.

Indeed, some of us know gratefully by our own experience that “there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24). We identify with David and Jonathan when we read about the bond between them (1 Samuel 18:1).

Friendship on a human level is wonderful, but what about friendship with God? It’s an incredible blessing to have the Creator and Sustainer of our universe as a friend. Although worshiped by countless heavenly hosts, He takes great joy in His relationship with us.

Are we neglecting the privilege of walking with God, the greatest of all friends? Today, with gratitude and awe, let’s spend time with Him in prayer and in reading His Word.

Remember that Jesus called His followers friends (John 15:15). What an honor that we can enjoy friendship with God! By: Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I’ve found a Friend, oh, such a Friend!  
He loved me ere I knew Him;  
He drew me with the cords of love,  
And thus He bound me to Him.  
—Small

When you spend time with God, you invest in a forever friendship.

---

## Friends In The Night

The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. — 1 Samuel 18:1

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:30-42

Do you have someone you could call in the middle of the night if you needed help? Bible teacher Ray Pritchard calls these people “2 a.m. friends.” If you have an emergency, this kind of friend would ask you two questions: “Where are you?” and “What do you need?”

Friends like that are crucial during difficult times. Jonathan was that type of friend for David. Jonathan's father, King Saul—who was filled with envy at David's popularity and God's blessing on him—tried to kill him (1 Sam. 19:9-10). David escaped and asked his friend for help (ch. 20). While David hid in the field, Jonathan sat at dinner with his father and quickly realized that Saul did indeed intend to kill David (vv.24-34).

Because of their deep friendship, Jonathan “was grieved for David” (v.34). He warned him of his father's plan and told him he should leave (vv.41-42). David recognized what a good friend he had in Jonathan. The Bible says they wept together, “but David more so” (v.41). Their souls were “knit” together.

Do you have loving Christian friends you can count on in a crisis? Are you someone your friends would call a “2 a.m. friend”?  
By: Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank God for you, good friend of mine,  
Seldom is friendship such as thine;  
How very much I wish to be  
As helpful as you've been to me.  
—Clark

A true friend stands with us in times of trial.

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## True Friends

A friend loves at all times. Proverbs 17:17

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 18:1–4; 19:1–6

In high school, I had a “sometimes friend.” We were “buddies” at our church, and we occasionally hung out together outside of school. But at school, it was a different story. If she met me by herself, she might say hello; but only if no one else was around. Realizing this, I rarely tried to gain her attention within school walls. I knew the limits of our friendship.

We've probably all experienced the pain of disappointingly one-sided or narrow friendships. But there's another kind of friendship—one that extends beyond all boundaries. It's the kind of friendship we have with kindred spirits who are committed to sharing life's journey with us.

David and Jonathan were such friends. Jonathan was “one in spirit” with David and loved him “as himself” (1 Samuel 18:1–3). Although Jonathan would have been next in line to rule after his father Saul's death, he was loyal to David, God's chosen replacement. Jonathan even helped David to evade two of Saul's plots to kill him (1Sa 19:1–6; 20:1–42).

Despite all odds, Jonathan and David remained friends—pointing to the truth of Proverbs 17:17: “A friend loves at all times.” Their faithful friendship also gives us a glimpse of the loving relationship God has with us (John 3:16; 15:15). Through friendships like theirs, our understanding of God's love is deepened. By: Alyson Kieda ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Who do you consider a true friend? Why? How is it comforting to know that God is our truest friend?

Heavenly Father, we long for friends. Please open up doors to true, lasting, and God-centered friendships.

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## Moody's Today in the Word - THE PRICE OF POPULARITY 1 Samuel 18:1-16

Popularity has its attractive side, but it carries with it spiritual dangers. There is always a price to pay for it, and sometimes it is too high. Some can handle popularity and not be hurt by it; others cannot.

Pride arising in the human heart for any reason is not good. Then there are always those who become jealous of anyone who seems to be well liked by others.

Perhaps these dangers, internal and external, help keep a person on the alert. The Lord knows how much any of us can take of these things and always provides a way of escape (see 1 Cor. 10:13).

David knew the source of his strength so that praise only caused him to give God the glory. It did not change his humble attitude toward life. On the other hand, Saul's reaction to the praise given David changed Saul for the worse.

Let us not become discouraged if, after we surrender our lives to God, He permits testings and trials to come. They will always come.

Young people write to me or speak to me in services about this. One of their most common questions is why things are so adverse after they have given themselves completely to the Lord.

We know first from the Scriptures and then from experience that testings are essential for our spiritual training. They are needed before God can trust us with the responsibilities of spiritual leadership.

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2).

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### **1 Samuel 18:1-16 Beware Of Envy!**

Envy may be defined as "resentment at the success or happiness of others." Many cultures regard envy lightly. A home remodeling company in Washington, DC, ran an ad that actually appealed to this vice. It used such phrases as "living room lust" and "kitchen envy." It went on to state that you could become the envy of your neighborhood while enhancing the value of your home.

The Bible views envy quite differently, calling it "rotteness to the bones" (Proverbs 14:30). It was out of envy that the religious leaders sought to kill Jesus (Matthew 27:20). And in Galatians 5:19-26, envy is listed among the life-destroying "works of the flesh."

In 1 Samuel 18, we read that envy contributed to the downfall of King Saul. He had begun his rule well, but because he disobeyed God's command he was rejected as king (15:23). Instead of humbly accepting God's decision, he became consumed with envy and hatred toward David (18:8-9). From then on, Saul distanced himself from God and even sought counsel from a medium (28:7). In the end, he took his own life after a shameful defeat by the Philistines (31:4-5). Envy had destroyed him.

Envy can ruin a life. Never take it lightly! —Herb Vander Lugt [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When other people find success  
But you do not advance,  
Do you congratulate their gain  
Or wish you had their chance?  
—Sper

When you turn green with envy you are ripe for trouble.

### **1 Samuel 18:2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

NET 1 Samuel 18:2 Saul retained David on that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:2 Saul kept David with him from that day on and did not let him return to his father's house.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:2 And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:2 From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father's house.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:2 From that day on Saul kept David with him and wouldn't let him return home.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:2 Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:2 Saul engaged him that very day and would not let him go home to his father.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:2 Saul laid claim to David that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:2 And Saul taketh him on that day, and hath not permitted him to turn back to the house of his father.

- **took him:** 1Sa 16:21-23 17:15
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WHAT SAUL WANTS SAUL TAKES

**Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house** - Samuel had warned the Hebrews that what the kings desired, they would take, including their sons and daughters! (1Sa 8:11-17). Of course, in the sovereignty of God, this would fit into God's plan for David to succeed King Saul.

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**John Butler - THE PROMOTION OF DAVID** 1 Samuel 18:2, 5 - from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)

After killing Goliath, David was promoted into Saul's service.

### 1. It was a Meritorious Promotion (1 Samuel 18:2)

"Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house" (1 Samuel 18:2). Unlike many promotions in society, David deserved his promotion. He had earned the attention of Saul who, after David killed Goliath, took David immediately into his service.

### 2. It was a Major Promotion (1 Samuel 18:5)

"Saul set him over the men of war" (1 Samuel 18:5). This was a major promotion. David was not over Abner who was the chief military officer, but he was nearly as high as Abner. David would now be over Eliab, his jealous brother.

### 3. It was a Manifested Promotion (1 Samuel 18:5)

David's promotion was manifested by his performance and by the acceptance of others.

- He was attentive to his duty. "David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely" (1 Samuel 18:5). Four times in this chapter (1 Samuel 18:5, 14, 15, 30) it is said David behaved himself wisely. David paid more attention to the responsibilities of his position than to the honors of it.
  - He was accepted by the people. "He was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants" (1 Samuel 18:5). Seldom does one have this acceptance when he does well. We should do our duty well whether people applaud or criticize. David was approved by the Israelites and by Saul's servants which would upset Saul, for he wanted the praise.
- 

**James Smith - DAVID AND JONATHAN** 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 2 Samuel 1:26

"All through life there are wayside inns,  
Where man may refresh his soul with love;  
Even the lowest may quench his thirst  
At rivulets fed by springs from above."

—LONGFELLOW.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God" (1 John 4:7). In this little portion of Scripture we have "apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11). The love of Jonathan for David seems a pure unclouded reflection of that love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. It was wonderful.

I. His Love was Real.

"He loved him as his own soul" (v. 1). It was no mere formal business connection. Jonathan had taken David and all his interests home to the secrets and carefulness of his own soul. The love that fails to do this is shallow and selfish. How can we say that we love Christ if His interests do not appeal as powerfully to us as our own. Paul had done this when he said, "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).

II. His Love was Surpassing.

It passed the love of women (2 Sam. 1:26). To say this suggests that it was supernatural. The highest form of human love is found in the true motherly heart. The love that excels this is that "greater love" manifested in the only begotten Son of God (1 John 4:9), and begotten in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:19). The believer's love to Christ is more than mere natural love, for the

carnal mind is enmity against God. The natural heart is an alien to the Holy One.

### III. His Love was Inseparable.

“Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him” (v. 3) True love will always constrain to a closer bond of union; mutual affection culminates in the marriage tie. The love of Christ constrains us. What to do? Why, like Jonathan, to yield our life’s concerns into the hands of Him whom God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour (Chap. 20:14–16). Hear the whisperings of Christ’s dying love in those never-to-be-forgotten words, “Do this in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. 11:24).

### IV. His Love was Self-Sacrificing.

“Jonathan stripped himself ... and gave to David” (v. 4). Love will not hide; “It doth not behave itself unseemly: it seeketh not her own” (1 Cor. 13:5). Love gives till the giving is felt as a sacrifice. It was so with the love of Christ, who for our sakes stripped Himself and became of no reputation, that we through His poverty might be made rich (2 Cor. 8:9). The love of Christ was manifested in that poor woman who, when overtaken by a snowstorm, stripped herself to save her child. In stripping ourselves for the honour and glory of the Christ of God we are proving the reality of our confidence in Him. If He is to triumph for us, let us give Him “even to our sword and our bow.” Self-aggrandisement is always inconsistent with the glory of God.

### V. His Love was Well Deserved.

No doubt there were many personal attractions about David to draw out the full flow of Jonathan’s affections, for David “behaved himself wisely” (v. 5), and was to Jonathan the fairest and chiefest among ten thousand. But the secret of the strength of his love lay in the fact that he knew David as the Lord’s anointed and the coming king of Israel (chap. 20:15). Surely the tenderest affections of his pure soul were well spent when lavished unreservedly on the beloved of God. A greater than David is here! One who spake as never man spake, and whose behaviour has been such that neither God, man, nor devil could find fault in Him. And He says, “Lovest thou Me?”

### VI. His Love was Reciprocated.

“The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David” (v. 1). These two souls were knit together in their desires and motives, as the warp and woof of a web. The knitting together shows that the affections of David responded in full measure to the love of Jonathan, so that the vital interests of the one were intertwined with the vital interests of the other. This is something deeper than mere belief in outward conformity; it is the very essence of “the unity of the Spirit.” Jesus Christ was moved by that yearning fathomless LOVE when he prayed that “they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in them.” This deep spiritual union can only be brought about where there is the entire surrender of all on both sides for mutual advantage through the constraining power of love. This is what Christ has done for us. What response are we making to Him? “He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love” (1 John 4:8). Our Lord is abundantly willing that His life should be knit with our life. Are we equally willing that our life should be knit together with His life, and so become one in heart and purpose for the glory of God?

## **1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

NET 1 Samuel 18:3 Jonathan made a covenant with David, for he loved him as much as he did his own life.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:3 Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as much as himself.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:3 Jonathan made a pact with David, since he loved him like his very self;

NAB 1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan entered into a bond with David, because he loved him as himself.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan maketh -- also David -- a covenant, because he loveth him as his own soul,

RSV 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.

NKJ 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

ASV 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

DBY 1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

GWN 1 Samuel 18:3 So Jonathan made a pledge of mutual loyalty with David because he loved him as much as he loved himself.

BBE 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made an agreement together, because of Jonathan's love for David.

BHT 1 Samuel 18:3 wayyikrôt yühônâtân wüdäwid Bürît Bū´ahábâtô ´õtô Künapšô

NIRV 1 Samuel 18:3 Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him just as he loved himself.

RWB 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

WEB 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

- **made a covenant:** 1Sa 20:8-17,42 23:18 2Sa 9:1-3 21:7
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 15:18+ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

## **JONATHAN CUTS COVENANT WITH DAVID MOTIVATED BY LOVE**

For full grasp of this passage, one must understand that in the ancient world, the cutting of covenant was the most solemn, binding and intimate way by which two parties could come to an agreement. Such agreements were considered to be breakable only by death. See [short excursus below](#).

**Then Jonathan made** ([Karath](#) = cut) **a covenant** ([beriyth](#)) **with David because he loved him as himself** ([nephesh](#) = soul) - Young's = "he loveth him as his own soul," TLB = "Jonathan swore to be his blood brother" **Jonathan** initiated the cutting of **a Covenant** with David because he loved him as himself. He loved David as his soul or as his own life. Now, thinking back on other covenants between men (Ge 21:22-34, Ge 26:26-31, Ge 31:43-55 - see [Summary](#)), it is notable that this covenant differs from most of the other covenants between men. The latter were motivated primarily by fear, but this covenant between Jonathan and David in not based on fear as but on friendship.

Strong's Concordance defines [Karath](#) as 'to covenant i.e. make an alliance or bargain, orig. by cutting flesh and passing between the pieces.'" While this latter ritual is not specifically described, it is still possible they carried it out. We see the prototype for this pattern in Genesis 15:8-18, 17+ when Yahweh Himself passed between the cut flesh of the animals signifying that He initiated this unconditional, solemn, unbreakable covenant with Abram. See this ritual again described in Jer 34:18, 19, 20 where the men of Judah broke the covenant.

The Hebrew word for **himself** or **soul** ([nephesh](#)) can have several nuances in the OT including life in general, a person, or a person's whole being. In the present verse, it would seem to signify Jonathan's person's entire being. For example when David prays "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me" (Ps 103:1<sup>±</sup>) he is blessing the LORD **with his entire being**. The point is that this friendship between Jonathan and David was not just a passing acquaintance (like we use "friendship" in modern culture), but one which reflected the fact that they cared for each other from the depths of their innermost beings (their very souls).

Cutting covenant produced a binding relationship that took precedence over one's own blood relatives!

**Dale Ralph Davis** comments that. "Jonathan was apparently taken with David immediately. "Jonathan loved him like his very self" (NJB). Because of this they made a covenant. Jonathan, so verse 3 indicates, took the initiative: "So Jonathan — along with David — cut a covenant because he loved him as himself." If we press the verb (CUT COVENANT), the bond was inaugurated by severing an animal and by both parties passing between the pieces as if to say, "If I am unfaithful to my word in this covenant, may I end up in pieces as this animal." (Borrow [Looking on the heart](#) Volume 2 - 1 Samuel 15-31)

**Spurgeon** - Yet Jonathan knew that David was to be king, and that he himself would never wear the crown. His was disinterested affection, most beautiful to witness. Such ought to be our love for Jesus; we should be knit to him in bonds of purest love.



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**Made** (Cut [a covenant], cut off, destroy) (03772) **karath** literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action. For example, Zipporah "cut off her son's foreskin." (Ex 4:25) or the Jews "cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24, cf Dt 19:5, 20:19-20, Jdg 9:48-49, 1Sa 5:4, 17:51, 24:4-5,11, 31:9, 2Sa 10:4, 2Sa 20:22) In another literal use as punishment to Israel for breaking the Mosaic covenant (cf Dt 29:25, 31:16), God says He will "cut down (karath) your incense altars" (Lev 26:30, cf Jdg 6:25-26, cf 1Sa 28:9). A sacrificial animal was not to be offered if it was "cut" (karath) (Lev 22:24). Karath means "chewed" (cutting food with teeth) in Nu 11:33.

**Covenant** (01285) **berit/berith/beriyth** means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below beriyth describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44)

**Covenant** can be summarized as follows...

(1) Between two parties (sometimes equal, other times superior to inferior) -- (a) **nations** -- (peace) treaty, alliance of friendship (b) **individuals** -- a pledge or agreement with mutual obligations to each other (c) **monarch and subjects** (2Sa 3:21, 5:3, 1Chr 11:3) -- a constitution (d) **God and man** -- Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenants. **TWOT** adds that...

Apart from blood ties the covenant was the way people of the ancient world formed wider relationships with each other. The accounts of the relationship between David and Jonathan are the only unequivocal mention of a compact between two individuals in the Old Testament (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18). It is spoken of as "a covenant of the Lord" because the Lord witnessed the transaction and protected the legal order.

(2) Accompanied by (a) **signs** (also witnesses, memorials, shared meals) (b) **sacrifices**, (c) **solemn, binding oaths** -- sealing the relationship with promises of blessing for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking the covenant (d) Sometimes with written document on which the words of the covenant, its terms in the form of promises and stipulations were spelled out, witnessed to, signed and sealed. **Behm** (TDNT) notes that in ancient times

There is no firmer guarantee of legal security, peace or personal loyalty than the covenant (e.g., Amos 1:9).

(3) Is depicted in the idiomatic phrase "**make (cut) a covenant**" in which there is was a blood sacrifice as part of the covenant ritual.

**Warren Wiersbe** - The Hebrew word translated "covenant" has several meanings: (1) to eat with, which suggests fellowship and agreement; (2) to bind or fetter, which means commitment; and (3) to allot, which suggests sharing. When God makes a covenant, He enters into an agreement to commit Himself to give what He promises. It is purely an act of grace. (Be Obedient)

**ISBE** says that "In essence a **covenant** is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force. The early Semitic idea of a covenant was doubtless that which prevailed among the Arabs. This was primarily blood-brotherhood, in which two men became brothers by drinking each other's blood. (**Ed**: Now that sounds serious to me!) (**Ed**: See illustration in pagan culture)

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### **A Covenant Friendship 1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.**

Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines a covenant as a "formal, solemn, and binding agreement" and an "agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action." A covenant turns something ordinary into something very special. It is not an act that should be taken lightly.

A covenant relationship existed between Jonathan and David because Jonathan "loved him as his own soul." The word translated "loved" in the original language means "to have an affection for." This was not a sexual relationship, as some misguided people erroneously claim. Instead, it was a friendship rooted in a deep admiration for each other and sealed with a solemn agreement. According to this covenant, no matter what happened David and Jonathan would remain friends. Their relationship was a loyal commitment to look out for each other's welfare.

Today, friendship is approached with a very casual attitude. Friendships are made and broken as the need arises. They are no more substantial than the fizz from a can of pop. It's no wonder that leading psychologists and therapists estimate that only 10 percent of men in the United States have any real friends. It's a shame that we struggle with issues of loneliness while all along God's Word sets forth examples of committed friends like David and Jonathan.

While it's not possible to have a covenant relationship with every friend, ask God to show you a friend who could be more than a casual acquaintance. And remember, if you want to have a friend, you need to be a friend (Prov. 18:24). Establish a covenant friendship in which you commit to look out for each other's welfare. ([Courtesy Back to the Bible](#))

No person is more alone than he who is without a friend.

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#### QUESTION - [What is a covenant?](#)

**ANSWER** - Generally speaking, a covenant is a promise between two or more parties to perform certain actions. The word can also be used as a verb as in "We covenant to work together on this project until it is finished." A covenant is very similar to a promise. The concept of covenant is significant in the Scriptures. In fact, the word *testament* is really another word for *covenant*. The Bible is comprised of two parts, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant (Old Testament and New Testament). Covenant was a well-known concept in ancient times, and covenants could be made between two equal parties or between a king and a subject. The king would promise certain protections, and the subject would promise loyalty to the king. A covenant might be conditional or unconditional.

The Old Testament is more than a history of Israel. It is really a history of the covenant in which God revealed, little by little, His character and His plans and purposes for mankind. Most Bible scholars recognize several [major covenants](#) in the Old Testament in which God promises to do something.

After the flood, God made a [covenant with Noah](#) that He would never again destroy the world by a flood, and He also gave some basic principles for humanity to live by (Genesis 8:20—9:17). Although humanity soon descended into rampant disobedience once again, the promise not to destroy the earth by another flood was unconditional.

God made a [covenant with Abraham](#) in which He promised, "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse, and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:1—3). This covenant was reiterated in Genesis 15 and Genesis 17. This was also an unconditional covenant.

God made a [covenant with Israel](#) regarding their use of the Promised Land (Exodus 19—24). The land had been given to Abraham's descendants unconditionally; however, the use of the land by any specific generation of Israelites was conditional upon their obedience. As a result, at times they lived in the land but were oppressed and not able to enjoy the full benefits of it, as seen in the book of Judges. Later, the Israelites were exiled from the land due to their disobedience and idolatry. However, even though one generation was disobedient, God promised to bring a later generation back to the land (Isaiah 11:11—12). He kept His word, as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah.

God made a covenant with David that he would have a descendant who would sit on his throne forever (2 Samuel 7). This was an unconditional covenant, although the length of reign for any specific Davidic ruler could be limited by his disobedience. Solomon's son Rehoboam lost a large part of the kingdom due to his foolish choices. This covenant is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Son of David.

In Jeremiah 31, God promised a [New Covenant](#) with Israel. Israel repeatedly violated the terms of all the previous covenants, but God promised this would be different because the hearts of the people would be changed so they would want to be faithful. This is fulfilled in the New Testament with the coming of Christ and the indwelling and empowering of the Holy Spirit, who gives the people of God the desire to obey Him. What was a surprise to some is that Gentiles were also included in this covenant.

The concept of covenant has been lost in modern society. Promises are broken when new circumstances arise. Contracts are broken, and one party simply says, "Sue me." Marriage is supposed to be a covenant between a man and a woman for life, but divorce is commonplace today. Regardless of how unfaithful people may be, God will never be unfaithful to His covenant promises. [GotQuestions.org](#)

## BRIEF EXCURSUS ON COVENANT

**Andrew Murray**, the gifted nineteenth century writer in **Two Covenants** speaks to the importance of covenant (speaking of God's covenant with man) writing "Blessed is the man who truly knows God as his God; who knows what the Covenant promises him; what unwavering confidence of expectation it secures, that all its [covenant's] terms will be fulfilled to him; what a claim and hold it gives him on the Covenant-keeping God Himself. To many a man, who has never thought much of the Covenant, a true and living

faith in it would mean the transformation of his whole life. The full knowledge of what God wants to do for him; the assurance that it will be done by an Almighty Power; the being drawn to God Himself in personal surrender, and dependence, and waiting to have it done; all this would make the Covenant the very gate of heaven. May the Holy Spirit give us some vision of its glory. ([Murray, Andrew: Two Covenants](#))

**Covenant** was the most solemn, binding, intimate contract known in the Bible. The Hebrew phrase for **make a covenant** is the idiom "[Karath beriyth](#)" which more literally is translated "**cut a covenant**". The noun [Berit/berith/beriyth \(word study\)](#) is a contract or agreement, one made by passing between pieces of cut flesh. The verb [Karath](#) means to divide or cut in two or to make a covenant.

Covenant was considered a binding agreement among the ancients, and so was **not entered into lightly**. After pieces of the sacrificial animal were laid opposite one another, the individuals who were cutting covenant would walk between the flesh. This walk represented the so-called "**walk into death**" indicating their commitment to die to independent living and to ever after live for their covenant partner and to fulfill the stipulations of their covenant. Furthermore, this "**walk into death**" was a testimony by each covenant partner that if either broke the covenant God would take their life, even as had been done to the sacrificial animal. In short, we see the gravity of entering into and then breaking covenant.

Covenant signified a pledge unto death. Covenant represented a pledge cut in blood. In covenant the shedding of blood demonstrates as nothing else could the intensity and solemn nature of the commitment (cf Lev 17:11). By cutting covenant the two parties were bound for life. Thus the shedding of blood in the cutting of covenant symbolized the solemn, binding nature of this transaction. Both the Old and the New Covenants were inaugurated with blood. As Trumbull notes, the practice of cutting covenant is found throughout history with traces or remnants of covenant truth in every quarter of the globe, and in those remnants we can see that even the pagan world understood the gravity and binding nature of entering into covenant with another party.

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#### Related Resources:

- [Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage](#)
- [Covenant: Why Study It?](#)
- [Covenant: Introduction](#)
- [Lesson 1 Covenant: Summary Table](#)
- [Lesson 2 Covenant: The Exchange of Robes](#)
- [Lesson 3 Covenant: The Exchange of Armor and Belts](#)
- [Lesson 4 Covenant: Solemn and Binding](#)
- [Lesson 5 Covenant: A Walk Into Death](#)
- [Lesson 6 Covenant: The Oneness of Covenant](#)
- [Covenant: Oneness Notes](#)
- [Lesson 7 Covenant: Withholding Nothing from God](#)
- [Lesson 8 Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic](#)
- [Lesson 9 Covenant: New Covenant in the Old Testament](#)
- [Lesson 10 Covenant: Why the New is Better](#)
- [Lesson 11 Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#)
- [New Covenant in the Old Testament](#)
- [Name change](#)
- [Covenant Meal](#)
- [Friend a covenant word \(notes\)](#)
- [Covenant memorial](#)
- [Commingling of blood \(notes\)](#)
- [Common life of covenant](#)
- [Striking of hands](#)
- [Mephibosheth](#)

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#### My Friends And I

Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. — 1 Samuel 18:3

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 23:15-18

John Chrysostom (347–407), archbishop of Constantinople, said this about friendship: "Such is friendship, that through it we love

places and seasons; for as . . . flowers drop their sweet leaves on the ground around them, so friends impart favor even to the places where they dwell.”

Jonathan and David illustrate the sweetness of a true friendship. The Bible records an intimate and immediate bond between them (1 Sam. 18:1). They kept their friendship alive by demonstrating their loyalty to each other (18:3; 20:16, 42; 23:18), as well as nurturing it by expressions of concern. Jonathan gave gifts to David (18:4) and watched out for him through many difficulties (19:1-2; 20:12-13).

In 1 Samuel 23:16, we see the highest moment of their friendship. When David was a fugitive on the run from Jonathan’s father, “Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.” Friends help you find strength in God during the low points of life.

In a world where most relationships are about what we can get, let us be the type of friends who focus on what we can give. Jesus, our perfect Friend, demonstrated for us that “greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13). By: Poh Fang Chia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank You, Lord, for the friends You’ve given me to love me in spite of my failures and weaknesses. Let me treat them as You treated Your friends. Bind us together in You and enable us to help one another.

The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not to be served.

**1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

NET 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with the rest of his gear, including his sword, his bow, and even his belt.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:4 Then Jonathan removed the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his military tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:4 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan sealed the pact by taking off his robe and giving it to David, together with his tunic, sword, bow, and belt.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan took off the cloak which he was wearing and gave it to David, and his armour too, even including his sword, his bow and his belt.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan divested himself of the mantle he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his military dress, and his sword, his bow and his belt.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:4 and Jonathan strippeth himself of the upper robe which is upon him, and giveth it to David, and his long robe, even unto his sword, and unto his bow, and unto his girdle.

RSV 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his girdle.

NKJ 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

ASV 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his apparel, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

DBY 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his dress, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

GWN 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan took off the coat he had on and gave it to David along with his battle tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

BBE 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan took off the robe he had on and gave it to David, with all his military dress, even to his sword and his bow and the band round his body.

BHT 1 Samuel 18:4 wayyitPaššēṯ yūhônātān ʿeṯt-hammūʿil ʿāšer ʿālāyw waḵyitiTṭūnēhū lūdāwid ūmaDDāyw wūʿad-HarBō wūʿad-qašTō wūʿad-Hágōrō

NIRV 1 Samuel 18:4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David. He also gave him his military clothes. He even gave him his sword, his bow and his belt.

RWB 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his belt.

WEB 1 Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that {was} upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

- **stripped** : Ge 41:42 Es 6:8,9 Isa 61:10 Lu 15:22 2Co 5:21 Php 2:7,8
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## TOKENS OF THEIR FRIENDSHIP

**Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.** Note that the text does not say he **stripped himself** to the bare skin! The word **robe** denotes a type of "garment" which was worn by the priesthood and by the elite and was generally worn by those of royal descent. Symbolically, when Jonathan gave David his robe David was "putting on Jonathan". In other words, Jonathan was giving his identity to David in this covenant.

Observe that several of the translations interpret this relationship as friendship, which in the ancient near east was a concept closely related to covenant and generally conveyed a much closer bond than the word "friend" in our modern culture. One ancient writer described friendship as "an entire sameness and one soul; a friend is another self." In our modern vernacular we would call them "soul mates" and in light of cutting covenant we might even say they were "blood brothers".

**Putting on** the covenant partner's robe symbolized putting on the partner's identity. In so doing the **two parties became as one**. When one is seen, then the other was in a sense seen, because the two had become intimately, integrally identified with each other in covenant. In addition, each partner was saying to the other in essence that "I am dying to independent living and to my rights". There was a yielding or surrendering of one's rights. Each partner would swear an oath saying in essence "God, do so to me as to the slain animal we have walked between if I break our covenant!" (see Jonathan's declaration 1Sa 20:13)

**THOUGHT-** Can you see the profound, practical implications for a man and woman entering into the immutable covenant of marriage? That is a rhetorical question. (See [Covenant As It Relates to Marriage](#))

**Matthew Henry** offers the apt description that "David is seen in Jonathan's clothes that all may take notice he is Jonathan's **second self**. Our Lord Jesus has thus shown His love to us, that He stripped Himself to clothe us, emptied Himself to enrich us...He clothed Himself with our rags.

The **Wycliffe Bible Commentary** adds that "Jonathan, the son of the king, gave all the material gifts. David, the poor man's son, gave but love and respect. One is reminded of the gift of God's Son to poverty-stricken humanity (Borrow [Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

**Adam Clarke** - Presents of clothes or rich robes (ED: ALBEIT THIS WAS MORE THAN A SUIT OF CLOTHES BUT JONATHAN'S PERSONAL ROBE AND ARMOR), in token of respect and friendship (**Ed:** Keep in mind that "friendship" was related to covenant), are frequent in the East. And how frequently arms and clothing were presented by warriors to each other in token of friendship, may be seen in Homer and other ancient writers.

**Spurgeon** - Thus should we delight to strip ourselves for Jesus. Let him have all, for he deserves all.

Jonathan giving David his armor symbolized that he would be the defender of David (and we the reality of this in subsequent chapters). The covenant partner was responsible to defend the partner and take on the partner's enemies. In covenant the enemies

of one's partner became that person's enemy. In David's case, his enemy was Jonathan's father King Saul. The fact that Jonathan came to the defense of his covenant partner demonstrates the solemn, binding, indissoluble power of covenant in ancient times -- in this instance it was more important than even paternal ties (see 1Sa 19:1-4 and 1Sa 20:1-4, 9, 13, 32-34, 42). Cutting covenant produced a binding relationship that took precedence over one's own blood relatives!

In addition, the exchange of robes demonstrated that Jonathan's covenant with David superseded even his own personal ambitions. Jonathan of course was first in line to be king, but he in effect yielded his rights when he cut covenant with David. However, the Scripture does not state precisely when Jonathan knew about Samuel's prior anointing of David as the next king (1Sa 16:12-14), but he did become aware of this at some point in their covenant relationship.

**Dale Ralph Davis** comments that "Jonathan also stripped himself of his robe and gave it to David, as well as his war coat or armor, his sword, bow, and belt (v. 4). All this was both significant and surprising; significant because the **clothes signify the person and his position** — hence Jonathan renounces his position as crown prince and transfers, so far as his own will goes, the right of succession to David. No one in the Near East would do that. (It's like telling your real estate agent, "Let's set the price fifteen thousand dollars lower; I'm not concerned to get as much as I possibly can for my house." And his or her reaction is...?) You did not transfer your crown rights to an upcomer, you eliminated him! But Jonathan does not ape the boring expectations of his culture. S. G. DeGraaf is on the right track when he says, "*This deed on his part was an act of faith. Only faith makes us willing to be the lesser. Faith causes us to surrender the rights we pretend to have over against the Christ, who is truly Israel's king.*"

[Davis has this **Note** ...Rummel refers to an Akkadian document discovered at Ugarit in which Utrisharruma, a thirteenth-century king of Ugarit, makes a divorce settlement with his queen. The couple's son, the crown prince, may go with his mother if he wants, but in that case he will abdicate his right to the throne. He must indicate this decision by leaving his clothes on the throne. Compare also Nu 20:22-28 and 1Ki 19:19-21. In the last scene of 1 Samuel 19 Saul, rendered harmless by the power of God's Spirit, strips off (pasat, 1Sa 19:24; same verb as in 1Sa 18:4 of Jonathan) his clothes, which may signify that even Saul, against his will, acknowledges that he has forfeited the kingship (cf. Borrow R P Gordon's [1 & 2 Samuel](#))]. (Borrow Dale Ralph Davis' [Looking on the heart](#) Volume 2 - 1 Samuel 15-31)

## PUTTING ON THE COVENANT PARTNER'S IDENTITY

	Who Initiates Covenant?	What is Motive?	What is the Heart Attitude?	What Happens to Identity?	What Happens to "Rights"?
<b>Jonathan</b>	Jonathan 1Sa 18:3	Love 1Sa 18:1, 3	Humility	David "put on Jonathan"	Jonathan gave up his rights to the throne
<b>Jesus</b>	Jesus Lk 22:20+	Love Jn 15:13, Ro 5:8+	Humility Php 2:5+ Php 2:8+	Believers put on Christ Gal 3:27+ (see below)	Jesus did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped

**1 Samuel 18:5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and prospered; and Saul set him over the men of war. And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

NET 1 Samuel 18:5 On every mission on which Saul sent him, David achieved success. So Saul appointed him over the men of war. This pleased not only all the army, but also Saul's servants.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:5 David marched out with the army and was successful in everything Saul sent him to do. Saul put him in command of the soldiers, which pleased all the people and Saul's servants as well.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:5 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:5 Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:5 Whatever Saul asked David to do, David did it successfully. So Saul made him a



commander over the men of war, an appointment that was welcomed by the people and Saul's officers alike.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:5 David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:5 Wherever David was sent on a mission by Saul, he was successful, and Saul put him in command of the fighting men; all the people respected him and so did Saul's staff.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:5 David then carried out successfully every mission on which Saul sent him. So Saul put him in charge of his soldiers, and this was agreeable to the whole army, even to Saul's own officers.)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:5 And David goeth out whithersoever Saul doth send him; he acted wisely, and Saul setteth him over the men of war, and it is good in the eyes of all the people, and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul.

- **prospered**, 1Sa 18:14,15,30 Ge 39:2,3,23 Ps 1:3 Ac 7:10
- wisely: Mt 10:16 Eph 5:17 Col 4:5
- the men of war: 1Sa 13:2 14:52
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DAVID PROSPERED SAUL PROMOTED**

**So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and prospered** - Why? In a word, the good hand of the LORD was upon him in the form of His Spirit (1Sa 16:13+). I would submit another potential reason is that he was a man of the Word, for Ps 1:2-3 says " his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. "

**And Saul set him over the men of war** - And why not? David the giant slayer was a man who prospered, a Hebrew word which also means he had insight and was prudent, the kind of man you would want leading your army into war.

**And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants**- Here we see the seeds of a future problem which was Saul's jealousy of David.

**Wiersbe** - "The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but a man is tested by the praise he receives" (Prov. 27:21, NIV). Just as the crucible and furnace test the metal and prepare it for use, so praise tests and prepares people for what God has planned for them. How we respond to praise reveals what we're made of and whether or not we're ready to take on new responsibilities. If praise humbles us, then God can use us, but if praise puffs us up, we're not yet ready for a promotion. In his attitudes, conduct, and service, David was a complete success, and Saul's servants and the Jewish people recognized this and praised him publicly (Borrow [Be successful](#))

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### **1 Samuel 18:5, 14–15, 30 David behaved himself wisely.**

There must be some strong reason for the fourfold repetition of this phrase in so short a space. It is as though the Holy Ghost would lay very distinct stress on the Divine prudence and circumspection, which must characterize the man whose life is hid in God. Let us walk with God, abiding in Him, subjecting our thoughts and plans to His communing about all things with Him, talking over our lives with Him, before we go out to live them in the presence of our fellows. Then we too shall have this gracious wisdom, which is more moral than intellectual—the product of the grace of God rather than of human culture.

Our life shall commend itself to men (1 Samuel 18:5).— David's was good in the sight of all the people, and more wonderful still, in the sight of Saul's servants, who might have been jealous. A life lived in God disarms jealousy and envy. He who, as a boy, did His Father's business increased in wisdom, and in favor with God and men.

Our life shall rebuke and awe our foes (1 Samuel 18:15).— Saul stood in awe of him. When traps and snares are laid for us we shall be enabled to thread our way through them all, as Jesus did when they tried to entangle Him in His talk. We shall have a wisdom which all our foes together shall not be able to gainsay or resist.

Our name will be precious (1 Samuel 18:30).— People loved to dwell on the name of David; it was much set by; they noticed and were impressed with the beauty and nobility of his character. We must always view our lives, amusements, and undertakings, in the light of the result which will accrue to Him whose name it is our privilege to bear.

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## Wise Behavior

Four times in 1 Samuel 18, the writer tells us that David "behaved wisely" (vv.5,14,15,30). In fact, he behaved "more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed" (v.30).

The phrase "highly esteemed" suggests an unusual respect. David was honored by all the people, but more significantly he was highly respected by those in Saul's court who were impressed by his noble character.

As Christians come to know Jesus through obedience to His Word, they will begin to display qualities of character that set them apart from others, for true wisdom is to live like Christ. It is more than common sense; it is uncommon behavior.

James said, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (3:17). This gracious way of making our way through the world can come only "from above."

David's experience can be our experience. God's promise to him is also true for believers today. He said, "I will instruct you [cause you to be wise] and teach you in the way you should go" (Psalm 32:8).

Are we learning to behave wisely?—David H. Roper [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Be like Jesus, this my song,  
In the home and in the throng;  
Be like Jesus, all day long!  
I would be like Jesus.

—Rowe © 1912, 1940, The Rodeheaver Co.

**Our character is only as strong as our behavior.**

**1 Samuel 18:6 It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:6 κα ξ λθον α χορε ουσαι ε ς συν ντησιν Δαυιδ κ πασ ν π λεων Ισραηλ ν τυμπ νοις κα ν χαρμους ν κα ν κυμβ λοις

LXE 1 Samuel 18:6 And there came out women in dances to meet David out of all the cities of Israel, with timbrels, and with rejoicing, and with cymbals.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:6 And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.

NET 1 Samuel 18:6 When the men arrived after David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women from all the cities of Israel came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul. They were happy as they played their tambourines and three-stringed instruments.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:6 As the troops were coming back, when David was returning from killing the Philistine, the women came out from all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul, singing and dancing with tambourines, with shouts of joy, and with three-stringed instruments.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:6 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:6 When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:6 When the victorious Israelite army was returning home after David had killed the Philistine, women from all the towns of Israel came out to meet King Saul. They sang and danced for joy with tambourines and cymbals.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:6 As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women

came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:6 On their return, when David was coming back from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with tambourines, sistrums and cries of joy;

NAB 1 Samuel 18:6 At the approach of Saul and David (on David's return after slaying the Philistine), women came out from each of the cities of Israel to meet King Saul, singing and dancing, with tambourines, joyful songs, and sistrums.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:6 And it cometh to pass, in their coming in, in David's returning from smiting the Philistine, that the women come out from all the cities of Israel to sing -- also the dancers -- to meet Saul the king, with tabrets, with joy, and with three-stringed instruments;

- **the women:** Ex 15:20 Jdg 11:34 Ps 68:25 Jer 31:11-13
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## COMING HOME FROM THE WARS

**It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments** - Note David and Saul are both present in this passage. Presumably Saul also went out with the army. In this verse we would say "so far, so good."

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**John Butler - THE PRAISE FOR DAVID 1 Samuel 18:6–9 - from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)**

David was praised much and justly for his victory over Goliath, but Saul did not like David getting so much praise.

### 1. The People Giving the Praise (1 Samuel 18:6)

"When David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine ... the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul" (1 Samuel 18:6). It was customary in that day that after a victorious battle, women and children would often come together and meet the victorious military in singing praises in celebrating the victory of the military. We do not do it this way in our day, but the end of a war causes great celebrations as people gather in cities and towns to celebrate.

### 2. The Partiality in the Praise (1 Samuel 18:7)

"Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7). The praise was partial to David and honored him more than Saul, and rightly so, for David, not Saul, defeated Goliath. In fact Saul at first discouraged David from fighting Goliath (1 Samuel 17:33) then tried to hinder him with armour unfit for him (1 Samuel 17:38, 39).

### 3. The Perturbation from the Praise (1 Samuel 18:8, 9)

"Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day forward" (1 Samuel 18:8, 9). Saul reacted adversely to the praise.

- It was a pathetic reaction. "Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him." This was a pathetic reaction. The song was true, but Saul wanted the praise. He was more interested in the praise than in doing the performance.
- It was a prolonged reaction. "Saul eyed David from that day and forward" (1 Samuel 18:9). Jealous Saul eyed David to do him harm. And he tried to do evil to David till the day of his death. In fact much of the remainder of the book of 1 Samuel is about Saul's efforts to kill David.

**1 Samuel 18:7 The women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands."**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:7 κα ἔρχον α γυνακες κα λεγον πταξεν Σαουλ ν χιλι σιν α το κα Δαυιδ ν μυρι σιν α το

LXE 1 Samuel 18:7 And the women began the strain, and said, Saul has smitten his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

NET 1 Samuel 18:7 The women who were playing the music sang, "Saul has struck down his thousands, but David his tens of thousands!"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:7 As they celebrated, the women sang: Saul has killed his thousands, but David his tens of thousands.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:7 And the women sang to one another as they celebrated, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

NIV 1 Samuel 18:7 As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

NLT 1 Samuel 18:7 This was their song: "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:7 And the women sang to one another as they made merry, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

NJB 1 Samuel 18:7 and as they danced the women sang: Saul has killed his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:7 The women played and sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

YLT 1 Samuel 18:7 and the women answer -- those playing, and say, 'Saul hath smitten among his thousands, And David among his myriads.'

- **women sang as they played:** Ex 15:21 Ps 24:7,8
- **Saul:** 1Sa 21:11 29:5
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1Sa 21:11 But the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of this one as they danced, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?"

1Sa 29:5 "Is this not David, of whom they sing in the dances, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?"

### **SAUL'S SONG NO LONGER #1 ON ISRAELI HIT PARADE!**

**The women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands"** - This verse could result in only one result in the heart of King Saul - envy, jealousy, anger. We see God's sovereignty places David in a position to be hated by Saul and then pursued with a desire to kill. David's fugitive days were the seedbed of the psalms and his wise, godly leadership of the nation of Israel.

[Reformation Study Bible](#) has an interesting note - It is a common feature of Hebrew poetry for one or more terms in the first half of a verse to be increased or intensified in the second half. For the thousand—ten thousand parallelism, see Dt. 32:30; Ps. 91:7; Ps 144:13; Mic. 6:7. Whether the women's song praises Saul and David as equals or implies that David is better than Saul, Saul certainly takes offense to it (v. 8).

**Ray Pritchard** - There are two words you need to keep in mind as you read this sermon. They are almost-but-not-quite identical. One is the word jealousy, the other is the word envy. If you look up both words in the dictionary, you will find definitions that are similar but not identical. Jealousy is the fear that you will lose something valuable to you; envy is the anger you feel because someone else got what you wanted. Jealousy is fear, envy is anger. When you have one, you almost always have the other. Jealousy is usually first with envy trailing close behind. The story is told of two shopkeepers who were bitter rivals. Their stores were across the street from one another, and they spent their days sitting in the doorway keeping track of who had the most customers. If one got a customer, he would smile in triumph at the other. One night an angel appeared to one of the shopkeepers and said, "God has sent me to teach you a lesson. He will give you anything you ask for, but I want you to know that whatever you get, your competitor across the street will get twice as much. Would you like wealth? Ask what you will, only he will get twice as much. Do you

want a long and happy life? It is yours, but he will live twice as long. You can be famous, your children can be famous, whatever you desire. But whatever you get, he will get twice as much.” The man frowned, thought for a moment, and said, “All right. My request is this: Strike me blind in one eye.” That’s jealousy turned into envy. No wonder Shakespeare called jealousy “the green-eyed monster,” no wonder Dryden called envy “the jaundice of the soul.” Taken together, they are the most corroding of all the vices, coals that come hissing hot from hell.....“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones” (Proverbs 14:30). Hundreds of years ago envy was included in the famous list of vices known as the Seven Deadly Sins....

Here are four quick facts that help bring envy into focus:

It is the sin no one will confess. In my 22 years as a pastor, I have listened as people have confessed almost every sin known to mankind, including murder, adultery, theft, abortion, and all sorts of sexual deviation. But no one has ever said, “Pastor, I want to confess the sin of envy.” It’s a sin we don’t like to talk about.

It is a sin with no redeeming features. There is nothing good about envy, nothing to justify its existence. If you lust, you may find some momentary pleasure. If you are a glutton, you may eat a big meal. If you are guilty of sloth, you’ll get plenty of rest. And even if you are angry, you’ll get a few moments of psychological pleasure when you blow your top. But envy brings no rewards at all. It is a self-mutilating sin. It has all the beauty of a trapped rat gnawing its foot off in a desperate attempt to escape.

It is the sin of moderately successful people. While it is true that anyone can envy, this sin especially strikes those who have made it part-way up the ladder of life. You’ve climbed a few rungs up but you still have a long way to go. Envy strikes us when we realize that we’re at least as good as the people ahead of us and many times we’re clearly better than they are, so why are they still ahead of us?

It is a sin that makes us believe the worst about others. Envy causes us to doubt the motives of those who are kind to us and to attack those who succeed instead of us. It is a cancer of the soul that destroys our ability to see others objectively.

Here’s a simple definition. Envy is unhappiness at the success of others and pleasure at the suffering of others. When we envy, we’re sad when others are glad and glad when they are sad. The values of life are turned upside down.

We may be sure we are suffering from envy when ...

- 1) We secretly regret that our friends have succeeded where we have not.
- 2) We believe we would have done better if we had gotten the right breaks.
- 3) We use excuses to explain why someone else did better than us.
- 4) We temper our compliments with the word “but.”
- 5) We complain that others do not appreciate us as they should.
- 6) We walk the other way rather than congratulate a friend on her good fortune.
- 7) We question the motives of those who show kindness to us.
- 8) We secretly gloat when someone else gets caught because “they had it coming to them.”
- 9) When we can’t sincerely rejoice with others on their personal successes.
- 10) We refuse to be friends with someone who excels in our field.
- 11) We can’t bear to hear our friends complimented in our presence.
- 12) We say “I really like so and so but I want to make sure you have all the facts.”
- 13) We are happy to hear that some public figure was caught in sin.
- 14) We keep our eyes on others to make sure no one gets ahead unfairly.
- 15) We’re better at criticism than we are at praise.
- 16) We cannot be around others without complaining how hard life is.
- 17) We have a hard time believing our friends have more talent than we do.

(Read full sermon [The Green-Eyed Monster](#))

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## Overcoming Envy

Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands. 1 Samuel 18:7

Today’s Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 18:5–9

In the film *Amadeus*, aging composer Antonio Salieri plays some of his music on the piano for a visiting priest. The embarrassed priest confesses he doesn’t recognize the tunes. “What about this one?” Salieri says, playing an instantly familiar melody. “I didn’t know you wrote that,” the priest says. “I didn’t,” Salieri replies. “That was Mozart!” As viewers discover, Mozart’s success had caused deep envy in Salieri—even leading him to play a part in Mozart’s death.

A song lies at the heart of another envy story. After David's victory over Goliath, the Israelites heartily sing, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7). The comparison doesn't sit well with King Saul. Envious of David's success and afraid of losing his throne (vv. 8–9), Saul begins a prolonged pursuit of David, trying to take his life.

Like Salieri with music or Saul with power, we're usually tempted to envy those with similar but greater gifts than we possess. And whether it's picking fault with their work or belittling their success, we too can seek to damage our "rivals."

Saul had been divinely chosen for his task (10:6–7, 24), a status that should've fostered security in him rather than envy. Since we each have unique callings too (Ephesians 2:10), maybe the best way to overcome envy is to quit comparing ourselves. Let's celebrate each other's successes instead. By: Sheridan Voysey ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Whom are you most tempted to envy? How can you celebrate their success?

**Loving God, I thank You for my friends' and colleagues' successes.**

**1 Samuel 18:8 Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?"**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:8 κα πονηρ ν φ νη τ μα ν φθαλμο ς Σαουλ περ το λ γου το του κα ε πεν τ Δαυιδ  
δωκαν τ ς μυρι δας κα μο δωκαν τ ς χιλι δας

LXE 1 Samuel 18:8 And it seemed evil in the eyes of Saul concerning this matter, and he said, To David they have given ten thousands, and to me they have given thousands.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

NET 1 Samuel 18:8 This made Saul very angry. The statement displeased him and he thought, "They have attributed to David tens of thousands, but to me they have attributed only thousands. What does he lack, except the kingdom?"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:8 Saul was furious and resented this song. "They credited tens of thousands to David," he complained, "but they only credited me with thousands. What more can he have but the kingdom?"

ESV 1 Samuel 18:8 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?"

NIV 1 Samuel 18:8 Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?"

NLT 1 Samuel 18:8 This made Saul very angry. "What's this?" he said. "They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they'll be making him their king!"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:8 Saul was very angry, for this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; what more can he have but the kingdom?"

NJB 1 Samuel 18:8 Saul was very angry; the incident displeased him. 'They have given David the tens of thousands,' he said, 'but me only the thousands; what more can he have, except the throne?'

NAB 1 Samuel 18:8 Saul was very angry and resentful of the song, for he thought: "They give David ten thousands, but only thousands to me. All that remains for him is the kingship."

YLT 1 Samuel 18:8 And it is displeasing to Saul exceedingly, and this thing is evil in his eyes, and he saith, 'They have given to David myriads, and to me they have given the thousands, and more to him is only the kingdom;'

- **saying:** Es 3:5 Pr 13:10 27:4 Ec 4:4 Jas 4:5
- **displeased him:** Nu 11:1 22:34
- **and what:** 1Sa 13:14 15:28 16:13 20:31 1Ki 2:22
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## Related Passages:

1 Samuel 15:28+ So Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you."

## LIGHT BEGINS TO DAWN IN SAUL!

One could subtitle this passage "Poison Envy" punning on the horrible plant "Poison Ivy!" If you have ever had a "good" case of poison ivy, you know how miserable it makes you feel as the pruritus causes you to scratch until you even bleed! As bad as poison ivy makes us feel, poison envy is far worse and as Saul proves can even lead to murderous feelings!

**Then** - When? When he heard them playing "David's song" on the Hebrew stations (women singing)! Watch what Saul's jealousy does as we progress through vv8-29. He goes from jealousy to anger (v8) to suspicion to fear (v12), and finally more fear (v29). And where did this lead? To attempted murder! Five times he attempts to murder David - spear (twice) (1Sa 18:10-11), Philistine foreskin trap (1Sa 18:12-30), spear (1Sa 19:9-10), in bed (1Sa 19:11-17), at Ramah (1Sa 19:18-24). Saul was consumed with the evil desire to get rid of David once and for all! Saul was far from God at this time and did not understand that no weapon that formed against him would prosper! (Isa 54:17) What was root that led to Saul's progressive spiritual decline? Envy.

**THOUGHT- Pritchard** writes "When we envy, our struggle is not with the person we envy. Our real struggle is with God. When we envy, we're saying, "Lord, you made a mistake when you gave that person so many blessings. I deserve some of what you gave him." More than that, we're really accusing God of unfairness. The envious man believes that in the game of life, God has rigged the system so that he can never win. Until you come to grips with God, you can never be free of envy." (Read [The Green-Eyed Monster](#) for how to be set free.)

**Saul became very angry** (CSB = "furious"; Heb = [charah](#)) - Here Saul goes past envy and jealousy to outright anger and a lot of it ("very")! Note this verb for anger ([charad](#)) emphasizes the kindling and burning aspects of anger. What a change from 1Sa 11:6 (which uses same word [charah](#)) - "Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily when he heard these words, and he became **very angry** ([charah](#))." This latter was righteous anger enabled by the Spirit, but in this passage it was sinful anger.

**for this saying displeased him** - **For** explains the root of Saul's anger. Literally the Hebrew says that the acclamation of David over himself "was evil in his eyes,"

Envy is the devil's little hammer, bending our hearts  
until it turns us against anyone who possesses what we want.

- [Today in the Word](#)

**and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands.**

**Now what more can he have but the kingdom** - The lights were beginning to going off in Saul's mind that David might just be the "neighbor" Samuel had predicted would replace him (1Sa 15:28+).

**Dale Ralph Davis** - "There were, therefore, two fundamental reasons for Saul's deep jealousy regarding David's success. The first was the fact that David had captivated the imagination of the Israelites throughout the land, and had risen so rapidly in popularity. The folk song was quite clearly a thorn in Saul's side (v. 8). The other reason for Saul's jealousy is detected in verse 12, and that was Saul's great fear of David. It was quite evident to Saul that David was, indeed, especially blessed of God, and at the same time he was probably cognizant of the fact that the Spirit of God had departed from him, thus leaving him without the skills and abilities necessary for successful rulership." (Borrow [Looking on the heart](#) Volume 2 - 1 Samuel 15-31

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**Became angry** (02734) [charah](#) means to burn or be kindled with anger, and in the Hithpael, charah is used 4x (Ps 37:1, 7,8, Pr 24:19) always meaning "to worry" and describing the agitation, irritation or vexation resulting from active worry. Charah is used in reference to the anger of both man and God.

**Charah in 1-2 Samuel** - 1Sam. 11:6; 1Sam. 15:11; 1Sam. 17:28; 1Sam. 18:8; 1Sam. 20:7; 1 Sam. 20:30; 2 Sam. 3:8; 2 Sam. 6:7; 2 Sam. 6:8; 2 Sam. 12:5; 2 Sam. 13:21; 2 Sam. 19:42; 2 Sam. 22:8; 2 Sam. 24:1

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## The Poison of Envy

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.—1 Peter 2:1 Read 1 Samuel 18:1–

When I was growing up, my parents used to buy my shoes at a little shop at the end of our block. Getting a new pair of shoes was always a big deal, an event that warranted a family expedition. Maybe that's why I remember being very upset when the new shoes were intended for my brother or sister instead of me.

**Envy is the devil's little hammer, bending our hearts until it turns us against anyone who possesses what we want. Envy poisons our desires and weaponizes them. Envy is the indignation we feel toward those who have what we think should have been ours. But ultimately, it is an outrage that is directed at God Himself. This sense of outrage is fueled by a conviction that the prosperity, opportunity, or blessing that we desire has gone to the wrong person.**

Satan used envy to turn Saul against David after he had won the hearts of Saul's son and the people of Israel. When Saul heard the women singing of David's victory over Goliath (v. 7), he became angry. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" (v. 8). At that point Saul began to distance himself both emotionally and physically from David. His actions turned against him, and he sent David out to fight in the hope that the Philistines would kill him (v. 25). David's success was a reminder to Saul that the Lord's favor was no longer on him. Envy gave way to fear. Saul "remained [David's] enemy the rest of his days" (v. 29). Envy not only made Saul David's enemy but God's as well.

**Recovery from envy requires that we redirect our focus and re-prioritize our desires** We don't need to stop desiring. Our desires need a conversion. Envy cannot be tamed (**ED: IT'S LIKE OUR TONGUE** - Jas 3:5-7,8+); it can only be put to death by the Cross. Today's Scripture warns about the consequences of envy and reminds us to confess hidden sin. Praise God for our freedom and forgiveness of sin, given to us as a gift by Christ's victory on the cross. (Courtesy of [Today in the Word](#))

#### 1 Samuel 18:9 Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

BGT 1 Samuel 18:9 καὶ ὁ Σαουλ προβλεπόμενος τὸν Δαυὶδ πᾶσι τοῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις

KJV 1 Samuel 18:9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

NET 1 Samuel 18:9 So Saul was keeping an eye on David from that day onward.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:9 So Saul watched David jealously from that day forward.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:9 And Saul eyed David from that day on.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:9 And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:9 So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:9 So Saul eyed David from that day on.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:9 And Saul watched David jealously from that day onwards.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:9 (And from that day on, Saul was jealous of David.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:9 and Saul is eyeing David from that day and thenceforth.

- **looked at David with suspicion** David: Ge 4:5,6 31:2 Mt 20:15 Mk 7:22 Eph 4:27 Jas 5:9
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### SAUL'S SUSPICIONS START TO SIMMER!

**Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on - Literally** = "Saul is eyeing David" The Septuagint uses a verb hupoblepo (present tense - continually) which means to look up from under the brows at, eye suspiciously or angrily, Lat. limis oculis suspicere. What a great word picture of Saul's face and eyes continually "eyeing" David! **NET** = "keeping an eye", **NLT** = "Saul kept a jealous eye on David." **NJB** and **CSB** = "watched David jealously" Saul's heart began to sprout the evil fruit of jealousy, the **green eyed monster**". From what **day**? What was the catalyst for this evil fruit sprouting in Saul's heart? It was clearly when David received **"top billing"** from the people, the very ones who were supposed to be Saul's loyal subjects (not David's)!

**Pritchard** - This is a crucial turning point not only for Saul but also for David. Never again would he know peace until Saul is dead. In the space of a few days he has gone from unknown shepherd to national hero to hated enemy. Soon he will be hunted like an

animal, soon he will leave Saul's court never to return. Soon he will make the hills his home and the caves his refuge. Soon he will become a fugitive. The fact that David is innocent of any wrongdoing doesn't matter to Saul. Jealousy has consumed him. Soon envy will rot his bones. That's what happens to all of us when we begin to envy. All perspective is gone. ([The Green-Eyed Monster](#))

**Wiersbe** - During the ten years or so that David was a fugitive, the Lord not only thwarted Saul's plans repeatedly, but He even used the king's hostility to mature David and make him into a man of courage and faith. While Saul was guarding his throne, David was being prepared for his throne....Envy is a dangerous and insidious enemy, a cancer that slowly eats out our inner life and leads us to say and do terrible things. Proverbs 14:30 rightly calls it "the rottenness of the bones." Envy is the pain we feel within when somebody achieves or receives what we think belongs to us. Envy is the sin of successful people who can't stand to see others reach the heights they have reached and eventually replace them. By nature, we are proud and want to be recognized and applauded; and from childhood we have been taught to compete with others. Dr. Bob Cook often reminded us that everybody wears a sign that reads, "Please make me feel important." (Borrow [Be successful](#))

**Suspicion** is found only here the Bible and means "to eye someone enviously," "to watch someone suspiciously." The word is used to describe King Saul's reaction when he heard some women celebrating David's triumphs more than his own in their song.

O beware, my lord, of jealousy;

It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on."

-- Shakespeare in Othello

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### **G Campbell Morgan - And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.—1 Sam. 18.9**

Saul became suspicious and jealous of David. The reason is given later (verse 12): "Saul was afraid of David, because Jehovah was with him, and was departed from Saul." This is an inexpressibly sad and tragic story. This man was set aside from a position of trust, through his own sin, and now was filled with hatred of the man who was called to assume the position, and fulfil the responsibilities from which he had been rejected. The processes of sin are terrible indeed. Out of the first act, others inevitably grow, until the whole nature becomes corrupted. Saul stooped to the basest acts in his hatred of David, and sought every method to rid himself of the man whom he considered his rival. In all this, we see the blindness which results from sin. Saul seems to have had no consciousness that in his persecution of David he was still fighting against God. Here we need to watch and pray. If through our failure, the Divine discipline operates, we deepen our sin by fighting against it. Our true attitude should be that of accepting it, and yielding to it. What a different story would that of Saul have been if he had submitted to the chastisement of God, and received David as the appointed king! Through such acquiescence in the chastening of, the Lord the soul may be restored to fulness of life. Even though the opportunity of some special service is lost for ever through disobedience, the life of fellowship may be restored and maintained; and in some other way God may still make use of those who, thus having failed, are yet responsive to the deepest intentions of His discipline. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

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### **The Remedy for Jealousy**

So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David. 1 Samuel 18:9 nlt

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 18:5–15

I gladly agreed to babysit my grandkids while their parents went out for the evening. After hugs, I asked the boys what they did over the weekend. (Both had separate adventures.) Bridger, age three, recounted breathlessly how he got to stay overnight with his aunt and uncle—and he had ice cream and rode a carousel and watched a movie! Next it was five-year-old Samuel's turn. When asked what he did, he said, "Camping." "Did you have fun?" I asked. "Not so much," he answered forlornly.

Samuel experienced the age-old feeling of jealousy. He forgot how much fun he had camping with his dad when he heard his brother excitedly tell about his weekend.

All of us can fall prey to jealousy. King Saul gave in to the green-eyed monster of jealousy when the praise David received exceeded his: "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!" (1 Sam. 18:7 nlt). Saul was outraged and "from that time on . . . kept a jealous eye on David" (v. 9 nlt). He was so incensed he tried to kill David!

The comparison game is foolish and self-destructive. Someone will always have something we don't or enjoy experiences different from ours. But God has already given us many blessings, including both life on this earth and the promise of eternal life to all who believe. Depending on His help and focusing on Him in thankfulness can help us to overcome jealousy. By: Alyson Kieda ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, You have given us life and the promise of life eternal if we trust in You as our Savior. For that—and so many other blessings—

we give You praise!

The remedy for jealousy is thankfulness to God.

**1 Samuel 18:10 Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was playing the harp with his hand, as usual; and a spear was in Saul's hand.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

NET 1 Samuel 18:10 The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within his house. Now David was playing the lyre that day. There was a spear in Saul's hand,

CSB 1 Samuel 18:10 The next day an evil spirit sent from God took control of Saul, and he began to rave inside the palace. David was playing the lyre as usual, but Saul was holding a spear,

ESV 1 Samuel 18:10 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:10 The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand

NLT 1 Samuel 18:10 The very next day a tormenting spirit from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did each day. But Saul had a spear in his hand,

NRS 1 Samuel 18:10 The next day an evil 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;

NJB 1 Samuel 18:10 The following day, an evil spirit from God seized on Saul and he fell into a frenzy while he was indoors. David played the harp as on other occasions; Saul had a spear in his hand.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:10 (The next day an evil spirit from God came over Saul, and he raged in his house. David was in attendance, playing the harp as at other times, while Saul was holding his spear.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:10 And it cometh to pass, on the morrow, that the spirit of sadness from God prospereth over Saul, and he prophesieth in the midst of the house, and David is playing with his hand, as day by day, and the javelin is in the hand of Saul,

- **evil spirit:** 1Sa 16:14-15 1Sa 19:9 1Sa 26:19
- and he prophesied: {Wyyithnabbai,} rather, "and he pretended to prophesy; for the verb is in {Hithpael,} the signification of which conjugation is not only reflex action, but also affectation of the action: Jer 29:26, 27. 1Sa 19:24 1Ki 18:29 22:12,20-23 Jer 28:2-4,11 Zec 13:2-5 Ac 16:16 2Th 2:11
- played: 1Sa 16:16,23
- and there was: {Wehachaniith beyad Shaool,} rather, "and the javelin was in the hand of Saul;" for the javelin or spear was the emblem of regal authority; and kings had it always in their hand, as may be seen represented on ancient monuments. In ancient times, says Justin, kings used a spear instead of a sceptre.
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 16:14-15 Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. Saul's servants then said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you.

1 Samuel 19:9 (Now there was an evil spirit from the LORD on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing the harp with his hand.

## THE RETURN OF THE EVIL SPIRIT

**Now it came about on the next day** - What day would this be? The day after Saul began to watch David like a [green eyed](#)

[monster](#)".

**That an evil** (troubling, annoying, harmful) **spirit from God came mightily upon Saul** - Note the description of this return visit by the evil spirit adds **came mightily upon Saul**. NET says the evil spirit "rushed upon" Saul. NJB = "seized on Saul." The sequence appears to be significant - first Saul grew jealous of David and THEN the evil spirit came rushing in on Saul's heart and mind.

**and he raved** ([naba](#) - same word used in 1Sa 19:20, 21, 23, 24+) **in the midst of the house**- **Raved** is the same verb for prophesy. "and he pretended to prophesy; for the verb is in {Hithpael,} Depending on the context "to prophesy" can refer to anything from the frenzied ecstasism of a false prophet (which would seem to be the case in this passage) to the cold sober proclamation of God's judgment by an Amos or an Isaiah. Saul was controlled by the **evil spirit** (we are not saying he was possessed but he was manipulated or controlled) and the result of his root of jealousy and fermentation by the evil spirit was the fruit of raving. NIV and NET translate it as Saul was prophesying. Clearly he was not speaking the future, but as [MacArthur \(borrow\)](#) says "Saul's speeches in the midst of the house were the ravings of one troubled by an evil spirit like other false prophets (cf. 1Ki 22:19-23)."

**TSK on raved** suggests "The meaning seems to be, that Saul, influenced by the evil spirit, feigned to be prophesying, the better to conceal his murderous intentions, and to render David unsuspecting.

[Reformation Study Bible](#) - Ecstatic experiences could be caused by God's Spirit (1Sa 10:6, 15), but also by evil spirits or false prophets (1Ki 18:29).

**while David was playing the harp with his hand, as usual**- What a contrast, evil spirit controlled Saul raving and Spirit filled David playing the harp!

**and a spear was in Saul's hand** - Saul is preparing again to make a point! Saul had lost control and about to make a play with his spear.

**Spurgeon** - This shows how envy will destroy a man's own peace of mind, as well as make him plot against the one of whom he is envious. Instead of being thankful to God for sending him such a valiant champion as David to deliver both himself and his people, Saul is full of malice towards the young hero simply because he receives his due need of praise for his victory over the giant. "Saul eyed David" with an evil and envious eye; looked askance upon him, and determined to do him mischief whenever he could.

#### Related Resources:

- For a thorough treatment of the Holy Spirit's role in the OT I would strongly recommend Dr Leon Wood's book [The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament](#) which can be borrowed. He has an entire chapter on [Saul and Evil Spirits](#)
- [An Evil Spirit from the Lord'-Demonic Influence or Divine Instrument?" The Evangelical Quarterly 70.1 \(Jan.-Mar. 1998\): 3-22. \[1 Samuel 16:14\]](#) Robin Routledge
- [Why did God send an evil spirit to torment King Saul? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are evil spirits? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Raved** (prophesied) ([5012](#))([naba](#) from [nabiy](#) = prophet) means prophesy, to speak by inspiration, often of the Holy Spirit, but in 1Sa 18:10 to speak by inspiration by the evil spirit! **W E Vine** notes that "the first appearance is in 1Sa 10:6, where Saul is told by Samuel that when he meets a certain band of ecstatic prophets, he too will "prophesy with them, and ... be turned into another man." This incident points up the fact that there is a certain amount of ambiguity in the biblical use of both the verb and the noun forms, just as there is in the English "to prophesy" and "prophet." Thus, there is a wide range of meanings reflected in the term in the Old Testament. **Most frequently nābā' is used to describe the function of the true prophet as he speaks God's message to the people, under the influence of the divine spirit** (1Ki 22:8; Jer. 29:27; Ezek 37:10). "To prophesy" was a task that the prophet could not avoid (Amos 3:8; cf. Jer. 20:7, where Jeremiah says that he was both attracted to and forced into being a prophet). While the formula "The word of the Lord came [to the prophet]" is used literally hundreds of times in the Old Testament, there is no real indication as to the manner in which it came, whether it came through the thought-processes, through a vision, or in some other way. Sometimes, especially in the earlier prophets, it seems that some kind of ecstatic experience may have been involved, as in 1 Sam. 10:6, 11; 1 Sam. 19:20. Music is sometimes spoken of as a means of prophesying, as in 1 Chron. 25:1-3. The false prophets, although not empowered by the divine spirit, are spoken of as prophesying also: "I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied" (Jer. 23:21). The false prophet is roundly condemned because he speaks a non-authentic word: "Prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord; ... Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!" (Ezek. 13:2-3). The false prophet especially is subject to frenzied states of mind which give rise to his prophesying, although the content of such activity is not clearly spelled out (1 Kings 22:10). The point is that in the biblical context "to prophesy" can refer to anything from the frenzied ecstasism of a false prophet to the cold sober proclamation of God's judgment by an Amos or an Isaiah. "To prophesy" is much more than the prediction of future

events. Indeed, the first concern of the prophet is to speak God's word to the people of his own time, calling them to covenant faithfulness. The prophet's message is conditional, dependent upon the response of the people. Thus, by their response to this word, the people determine in large part what the future holds, as is well illustrated by the response of the Ninevites to Jonah's preaching. Of course, prediction does enter the picture at times, such as in Nahum's prediction of the fall of Nineveh (Nah. 2:13) and in the various messianic passages (Isa. 9:1-6; Isa. 11:1-9; Isa. 52:13-53:12). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

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## **John Butler - THE PROBLEMS FOR DAVID 1 Samuel 18:10–16 from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)**

Praise does not always bring good things. Often praise brings more problems than criticism. We note two major adverse things which came into David's life because of this praise.

### **1. The Danger of the Spear (1 Samuel 18:10, 11)**

The first adversity David experienced because of the praise given him was Saul throwing a spear at him several times.

- The prompting of the spear. "The evil spirit from God came upon Saul" (1 Samuel 18:10). It is important to note when this problem of the evil spirit showed up again in Saul. It was the day after his jealous rage. Evil begets more evil.
- The prophesying before the spear. "He prophesied in the midst of the house" (1 Samuel 18:10). This prophesying was not Saul doing something good. The meaning of the word translated "prophesied" refers more to the mannerisms of a person prophesying than it does to the message. "Saul was in a frenzy—violent raving" (Jamieson); hence, call David with his harp.
- The purpose of the spear. "Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it" (1 Samuel 18:11). Saul wanted to kill David with the spear.
- The protection from the spear. "David avoided out of his presence twice" (1 Samuel 18:11). David was able to escape from Saul, for God helped him.
- The persistency of the spear. "David avoided out of his presence twice" (1 Samuel 18:11). Like temptation, Saul did not give up his evil intentions. He tried to kill David a second time as David played his harp but failed. Evil will attack repeatedly.

### **2. The Demotion of the Soldier (1 Samuel 18:12–16)**

Another problem David experienced after he was given much praise was to be demoted in his military position.

- The cause of the demotion. "Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand" (1 Samuel 18:12, 13). David's escapes from Saul's spear put fear in Saul's heart, for Saul recognized that the escapes indicated God was with David. Saul feared retaliation, so Saul demoted David from serving in Saul's court and from being over so many in the army, and Saul moved him away from himself. Evil does not like to keep company with good.
- The conduct after the demotion. "David behaved himself wisely in all his ways" (1 Samuel 18:14). Rather than complain about the injustice he had received from Saul, David focused on his new duties and did them with excellence.
- The consolation in the demotion. "The LORD was with him" (1 Samuel 18:14). David was removed from the king's presence but not from the Lord's presence. It is better to have the Lord with you and be demoted in man's eyes than to have high position in the world and be without the Lord as was the case with Saul.
- The company after the demotion. "Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him" (1 Samuel 18:15). The word translated "afraid" is a different word than the one translated "afraid" in 1 Samuel 18:12. This word means "to turn aside" (Gesenius). In this text it means Saul endeavored to avoid David's company. He did not want to meet up or keep company with David.
- The commendation after the demotion. "All Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them" (1 Samuel 18:16). "Went out and came in before them" refers to David doing his duty. Though Saul demoted him, it did not deter David's esteem in the people's eyes but appeared to raise it instead. The evil of Saul backfired and did the opposite that he intended. Saul was fighting God and losing big time.

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**Norman Geisler - [go to page 150 in When Critics Ask](#) for discussion of 1 SAMUEL 18:10—How could a good God send an evil spirit to Saul?**

**PROBLEM:** According to this passage, the evil ("distressing," NKJV) spirit came upon Saul so that he prophesied in his house, and



then tried to kill David with a spear. However, the verse clearly states that the evil spirit was from God. How could a good God send an evil spirit to bring distress to Saul?

**SOLUTION:** Because God is absolutely sovereign, the actions of any evil spirit would be subject to the authority of God. Therefore, it was according to God's permission that the spirit was allowed to come upon Saul to bring him distress. Saul had already rejected God, and God had rejected him from being king. God had a special reason for allowing this spirit to incite Saul to action against David. Saul's attempt to kill David only made Saul realize that God was with David. By sending David away and making him captain over a thousand, Saul inadvertently increased David's popularity with the people and hastened his own demise. The sending of the evil spirit upon Saul is similar to God's allowing Satan to afflict Job. God allows evil, but always uses it to accomplish His own good purposes ([see comments on page 169](#) on How could God use "lying spirits" to do His will since He forbids lying? 1 Kings 22:22).

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**Walter Kaiser - [go to page 211 in Hard Sayings of the Bible](#) for discussion of the question - 1 Samuel 16:14 An Evil Spirit from the Lord?**

Just as the prophet Samuel anointed David as the next king, King Saul became bereft of the Spirit of God and fell into ugly bouts of melancholia, which were attributed to an evil spirit sent from the Lord.

The Spirit of God had overwhelmed Saul when he had assumed the role of king over the land (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6). Exactly what the Spirit's presence with Saul entailed is not explained, but it seems to have included the gift of government, the gift of wisdom and prudence in civil matters, and a spirit of fortitude and courage. These gifts can be extrapolated from the evidence that after Saul was anointed king, he immediately shed his previous shyness and reticence to be in the public eye. It is obvious that Saul did not have a natural aptitude for governing, for if he had, why did he hide among the baggage when he knew already what the outcome would be? But when the Spirit of God came upon him in connection with the threatened mutilation of the citizens of Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam 11), and Saul sent out word that all able-bodied men were to report immediately for battle, the citizens of Israel were so startled that this had come from the likes of Saul that they showed up in force. God had suddenly gifted him with the "Spirit of God" (1 Sam 11:6), and Saul was a great leader for twenty years (1 Sam 14:47–48).

But all of this was lost as suddenly as it had been gained—the Spirit had removed his gift of government.

But what was the evil spirit mentioned here and in 1 Samuel 18:10 and 19:9? The ancient historian Josephus explained it as follows: "But as for Saul, some strange and demonical disorders came upon him, and brought upon him such suffocations as were ready to choke him" (Antiquities 6.8.2). Keil and Delitzsch likewise attributed Saul's problem to demon possession. They specified that this

was not merely an inward feeling of depression at the rejection announced to him, ... but a higher evil power, which took possession of him, and not only deprived him of his peace of mind, but stirred up the feelings, ideas, imagination, and thoughts of his soul to such an extent that at times it drove him even into madness. This demon is called "an evil spirit [coming] from Jehovah" because Jehovah sent it as a punishment.

A second suggestion is that this evil spirit was a messenger, by analogy with the situation in 1 Kings 22:20–23. This unspecified messenger did his work by the permission of God.

A third suggestion is that this evil spirit was a "spirit of discontent" created in Saul's heart by God because of his continued disobedience.

Whatever the malady was, and whatever its source, one of the temporary cures for its torments was music. David's harp-playing would soothe Saul's frenzied condition, so that he would once again gain control of his emotions and actions (1 Sam 16:14–23).

All this happened by the permission of God rather than as a result of his directive will, for God cannot be the author of anything evil. But the exact source of Saul's torment cannot be determined with any degree of certitude. The Lord may well have used a messenger, or even just an annoying sense of disquietude and discontent. Yet if Saul really was a believer—and I think there are enough evidences to affirm that he was—then it is difficult to see how he could have been possessed by a demon. Whether believers can be possessed by demons, however, is still being debated by theologians.

**1 Samuel 18:11 Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:11 And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

NET 1 Samuel 18:11 and Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I'll nail David to the wall!" But David escaped from him on two different occasions.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:11 and he threw it, thinking, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David got away from him twice.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:11 And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David evaded him twice.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:11 and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:11 and he suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David escaped him twice.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:11 and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:11 Saul brandished the spear; he said, 'I will pin David to the wall!' David evaded him twice.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:11 Saul poised the spear, thinking to nail David to the wall, but twice David escaped him.)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:11 and Saul casteth the javelin, and saith, 'I smite through David, even through the wall;' and David turneth round out of his presence twice.

- **hurled the spear:** 1Sa 19:9,10 20:33 Pr 27:4 Isa 54:17
- **And David:** Ps 37:32-33 Isa 54:17 Lu 4:30 Joh 8:59 10:39
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Proverbs 27:4 Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, But who can stand before jealousy?

"Saul Tries to Kill David"  
by [Julius Schnorr von Karolsfeld](#)

## SAUL ATTEMPTS TO MAKE A POINT WITH DAVID

**Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall."** - Where did this potentially murderous (if he missed pinning, he might strike a vital organ) **thought** emanate from? Surely the evil spirit has stirred Saul to the verge of insanity in attempting to pin the man he had loved, the one who slayed the giant (and kept all Israel from becoming enslaved), and had been mighty in his wars.

**Pritchard** quips "One day while David is playing his harp, an evil spirit comes over Saul. Suddenly, and without warning, Saul decides to play his favorite parlor game—Pin the Spear on David. David makes like Walter Payton, looks left, runs right, and is out of there." ([The Green-Eyed Monster](#))

**But David escaped from his presence twice** - We are thankful for the term of contrast in this passage! Saul appears to have made at least a second attempt to pin David. Note that this indicates David returned after the first attempt and also indicates that David was in his immediate presence.

**1 Samuel 18:12 Now Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:12 κα φοβθη Σαουλ π προσ που Δαυιδ

LXE 1 Samuel 18:12 And Saul was alarmed on account of David.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.

NET 1 Samuel 18:12 So Saul feared David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul was afraid of David because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul was then afraid of David, for the LORD was with David and had turned away from Saul.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul feared David, since Yahweh was with him and had withdrawn from Saul.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:12 Saul then began to fear David, (because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul himself.)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:12 And Saul is afraid of the presence of David, for Jehovah hath been with him, and from Saul He hath turned aside;

- **afraid:** 1Sa 18:15,20,29 16:4 Ps 48:3-6 53:5 Mk 6:20 Lu 8:37 Ac 24:25
- **the Lord:** 1Sa 16:13,18 22:13 Ac 7:9
- **departed:** 1Sa 16:14 28:15 Ps 51:11 Ho 9:12 Mt 25:41
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Sa 16:18+ Then one of the young men said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and **the LORD is with him.**"

1 Sa 16:14+ Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him.

### THE ONE WITH THE EVIL SPIRIT IS AFRAID!

**Now Saul was afraid of David** - The antithesis of faith is fear. Saul had no faith, so by default fell into fear. Saul was fearful of David because he knew God's hand was upon him. But he did not fully understand how fully God was with David, for if he had he would have given up trying to kill him. But Saul was too proud to admit he was fighting a losing battle. After all he was king and had to put up a good front to his soldiers and subjects.

**Spurgeon** - David was not afraid of Saul, although Saul was the man with the javelin, and with the murderous, malicious spirit, which prompted him to hurl it at the young harpist. David, guileless, brave, honest, trustful, was not afraid of Saul, but "Saul was afraid of David,"-

**for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul**- How do we know **the LORD was with** David? Clearly by his supernatural acts, especially in warfare. Who did Saul fear? Clearly David, but behind David was the LORD whom he feared. His fear was not reverential but a terrifying fear.

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#### Henry Blackaby - Signs of God's Presence ([The Experience](#)) 1 Samuel 18:12, 14

Why would God abandon Saul and bless David? Wasn't it God who chose Saul to be king in the first place? It looks as if God was playing favorites; why wouldn't he bless both men? The answer is in the verses that precede today's passage (1 Samuel 18:6-11). Saul had himself to thank for losing God's blessing. His downfall was assured when he became jealous of David. That led to anger, hatred, and bitterness. All of this came because Saul took his eyes off God and grew envious of the way God blessed David. Saul couldn't tolerate David being more successful than he was. After all, he was king; David was not. Ultimately, Saul completely lost perspective and became separated from God, and his misguided sense of entitlement cost him the very thing he coveted—the crown.

David, on the other hand, was busy doing what God asked him to do. He didn't assume it was his right to become king. Even Saul had to admit God took care of David. Saul could see the obvious difference in David's life because of God's blessings. When David went through hard times, as he often did, God took care of him. When Saul saw the way God blessed David's life, he should have learned his lesson, but pride prevented him from returning to God. Instead, he grew even more self-centered and fearful of David. David was not spared from experiencing hardship, but going through the hard times with God's presence made all the difference to him. David grew closer to God, even as Saul grew more distant.

Jealousy can start out as a small thing. You notice that your friend seems to have something you don't have (success, talent,

possessions). You pay closer attention, looking for differences in the way God blesses your friend, compared to you. You have an increasing sense of entitlement—Don't I deserve to have what my friend has? Before you know it, you're headed down the same path Saul took; you grow angry, bitter, and suspicious of your friend, and you look for ways to even the score. In the end, though, the one who gets hurt is you. Learn from Saul's mistake. Saul had plenty of reasons to be thankful, but his jealousy blinded him to his own blessings. Don't take your eyes off God to compare your blessings with anyone else's. Choose the path David took—the path of thankfulness—and you'll enjoy God's blessings throughout your life.

**1 Samuel 18:13 Therefore Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him as his commander of a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:13 κατὰ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπέστησεν αὐτὸν ἑκατὰ χίλων ἀρχὸν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ λαοῦ

LXE 1 Samuel 18:13 And he removed him from him, and made him a captain of a thousand for himself; and he went out and came in before the people.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:13 Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

NET 1 Samuel 18:13 Saul removed David from his presence and made him a commanding officer. David led the army out to battle and back.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:13 Therefore, Saul reassigned David and made him commander over 1,000 men. David led the troops

ESV 1 Samuel 18:13 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:13 So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:13 Finally, Saul sent him away and appointed him commander over 1,000 men, and David faithfully led his troops into battle.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:13 So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:13 So Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him commander of a thousand; he led the people on campaign.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:13 Accordingly, Saul removed him from his presence by appointing him a field officer. So David led the people on their military expeditions,

YLT 1 Samuel 18:13 and Saul turneth him aside from him, and appointeth him to himself head of a thousand, and he goeth out and cometh in, before the people.

- **removed:** 1Sa 18:17,25 8:12 22:7
- **he went out:** 1Sa 18:16 Nu 27:16,17 2Sa 5:2 Ps 121:8
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL SENDS DAVID INTO WAR

**Therefore Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him as his commander of a thousand** - Saul was hoping for out of sight, out of mind, but such would not be the case. Some suggest this military appointment was a demotion.

**and he went out and came in before the people**- NRSV = "David marched out and came in, leading the army."

**Warren Wiersbe** - "Faith is living without scheming," but Saul was better at scheming than at trusting God. If Saul disobeyed God, he always had a ready excuse to get himself out of trouble, and if people challenged his leadership, he could figure out ways to eliminate them. Possessed by anger and envy, and determined to hold on to his crown, Saul decided that young David had to be killed. (Borrow [Be successful](#))

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## John Kitto - Snares—I Samuel 18:13–30

Saul, under the first influence of good feeling towards David, had “set him over his men of war,” by which it is understood that he made him captain of his guard, and this post he appears to have occupied at the time the attempts were made upon his life. That this attempt should twice have failed when the object was so near, and when a hand so strong and skillful aimed the stroke, must have seemed to Saul a divine interposition in favor of Jesse’s son. Such an interposition it was natural to think had some extraordinary object; and what object so likely as his designation to the kingdom? When this impression arose, all the circumstances which Saul could recollect must have tended to confirm it; and it would be no satisfaction to him to find that the object of this preference over himself was in all respects worthy of it. By whatever means his elevation was to be brought about, it was clear that it would not be attempted through any such disloyal acts or low intrigues as might give the king an advantage over him, and enable him to effect his destruction with a show of public justice; and as yet Saul’s mind was not so steeled in wrong-doing, or so indifferent to public opinion, as openly to destroy without apparent cause, and by his mere arbitrary act, a man who was daily growing into higher favor with the nation, which owed to him such essential benefits.

Alarmed to see the progress David was making in the affections of the notable persons at court, and that even his son Jonathan had become entirely subject to the fascination by which the son of Jesse gathered to him the hearts of men like summer fruits, he deemed it wise to remove him from this sphere of influence by sending him into a sort of honorable exile. He was entrusted with the command of a thousand men, and sent upon the dangerous service of guarding the frontier, in the hope that his daring spirit would lead him into such hazardous enterprises as would soon accomplish his destruction by the sword of the Philistines. But this only afforded David the better opportunities of showing that he possessed not only the qualities of a champion, but the talents, the sagacity, and prudence of a military leader, while he was thus also enabled to gather that experience in war which availed him much in later years. Still further dismayed at the rapid growth of David’s popularity with the people, Saul next thought of making him a prop to his family by uniting him to his eldest daughter Merab. The hand of the king’s daughter had been promised beforehand to the conqueror of Goliath, but Saul had conveniently forgotten this promise and David had been too discreet to press for its fulfillment. Now the king proposed it as a new matter, and caused it to be intimated to David that such an alliance was not beyond his hopes, in case he proved himself worthy by renewed exertions against the enemies of his country. The manner in which he received this intimation is well worthy of attention. He did not decline the honor proposed,—both prudence and respect forbade that; but he was careful to make it appear that not only did he not claim or accept it as a matter of right, but disavowed all pretences to it on the score of merit. Such greatness as David possessed is but little conscious of its own deservings; and we have reason to suppose that David spoke with no less sincerity than prudence when he said, “Who am I? and what is my life, or my father’s family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?”

By what increased exertions David showed his worthiness of this honor, and by what escapes from the perils into which his daring spirit threw him, he defeated the king’s secondary, no longer primary, object of effecting his destruction, we do not learn; but we know that when the time for the fulfillment of the promise arrived, Saul shamefully violated his word, and bestowed his daughter upon another man. This harsh indignity and disappointment must have been deeply felt by David. Many men would have been exasperated by it into some act of outrage or some indiscreet expressions. Perhaps the act was intended to produce this effect, that advantage might be taken of David’s indiscretion to effect his ruin. But from this snare he was delivered. It was well that it thus happened, and that his submission under injuries is so much more apparent than his resentments, as to have caused it to be questioned whether he might not well have manifested a little more of what is very improperly called “proper spirit.” But it has been acutely remarked by an old writer, that retired students are not always the best judges of what best becomes a truly heroic spirit. We are glad that David’s conduct took this direction, for had it been otherwise—had he, even under strong temptation, swerved from his loyalty to the right hand or to the left, much would have been made of it to the discredit of his rectitude in these latter days, when the whole of his conduct has been so searchingly and unsparingly investigated.

Some time after this—and it is a loss to us that the intervals of time are not distinctly marked—it came to the knowledge of Saul that his daughter Michal cherished a tender regard for David. It might have displeased him to hear that the heart of another of his children had gone over to one whom he had by this time learned to hate and to dread. But it happened to please him; as he hoped to be able to use her as an instrument for his destruction. We all know that in the East, the husband is expected in some sort to purchase his bride, by a payment to her father. One who cannot pay this in money, may do it by his services, as Jacob did, or by some exploit fixed by the father, as was done by Othniel. David had a clear claim to one of Saul’s daughters; but this, as a matter of right, he did not urge, and his family was not in such circumstances as to afford such “gift and dowry,” as a king had a right to expect when he gave a daughter. To meet this difficulty, the king was graciously content to accept some great exploit against the public enemy, as a sufficient equivalent for his daughter’s hand. Thus understood, that which Saul required was not, as the difference of manners has led many to take it, a gratuitous task, the real object of which might have been even at the first view very obvious; but it was in appearance a generous and considerate mode of enabling the son of Jesse to contract this match on somewhat equal terms, by the acceptance of a service that he could render; in lieu of payments beyond his power. For Saul to give his daughter

without any consideration, would have been a slur upon her; and to accept her on such terms would have been, according to eastern notions, dishonorable in David. It was, therefore, not without the appearance of generosity on the part of the king, that he offered to accept a public service in lieu of a private benefit; and it was right that he should make that service bear some proportion in hazard and difficulty to the value he act upon his daughter. This, as we take it, was the aspect in which Saul intended the transaction to appear, and in which it probably did appear in the eyes of all, but the few who were prepared to see through it the deeper design to compass the ruin of Jesse's son. Whether David himself was of the number is not clear—probably not, if we may judge from the alacrity with which he undertook the proposed enterprise; and if we consider that, to his heroic spirit, there were few achievements which would seem difficult or dangerous.

This enterprise was, that he should, probably within a given time, destroy with his own hand a hundred of the Philistines, and bring to the king such proofs of their deaths, as might assure him that they were Philistines and no others who had been slain. This demand, so much in unison with the spirit of the age, and of which we have a subsisting example in the scalps which the North American Indians take from their slaughtered enemies as trophies of their valor—was undertaken by David, and when the time expired, he appeared before the king with not only an hundred, but with two hundred, such proofs of his prowess as the king had required. This was another great exploit—far more arduous, although less renowned, than the overthrow of Goliath. It must, however, have attracted great attention at the time, and have conduced in no small degree to the public estimation in which David was held. Thus, whatever the as yet concealed aversion of Saul devised for his destruction, led only to his greater honor, and materially advanced the results which the king desired to avert. So shall it be with every one who blindly and foolishly endeavors to frustrate the counsels of God.

## 1 Samuel 18:14 David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD was with him.

BGT 1 Samuel 18:14 καὶ ἠσφαλιώθη ὁ Δαυὶδ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Κύριος μετ' αὐτοῦ.

LXE 1 Samuel 18:14 And David was prudent in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:14 And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him.

NET 1 Samuel 18:14 Now David achieved success in all he did, for the LORD was with him.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:14 and continued to be successful in all his activities because the LORD was with him.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:14 And David had success in all his undertakings, for the LORD was with him.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:14 In everything he did he had great success, because the LORD was with him.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:14 David continued to succeed in everything he did, for the LORD was with him.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:14 David had success in all his undertakings; for the LORD was with him.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:14 In all his expeditions, David was successful and Yahweh was with him.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:14 and prospered in all his enterprises, for the LORD was with him.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:14 And David is in all his ways acting wisely, and Jehovah is with him,

- **prospering**, 1Sa 18:5
- **the Lord**: 1Sa 10:7 1Sa 16:18 Ge 39:2,3,23 Jos 6:27 Mt 1:23 28:20 Ac 18:10
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

**Related Passages:** Following are passages where **God** is **with** someone

Genesis 21:22 Now it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "**God is with you in all that you do**;

Genesis 26:24 The LORD appeared to him (ISAAC) the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for **I am with you**. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham."

Genesis 39:2 **The LORD was with Joseph**, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.



Genesis 39:21-23 But **the LORD was with Joseph** and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. 22 The chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible for it. 23 The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph's charge because **the LORD was with him**; and whatever he did, **the LORD made to prosper**.

Genesis 48:21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but **God will be with you**, and bring you back to the land of your fathers.

Exodus 3:12 And He said, "Certainly I will be with you (**MOSES**), and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."

Deuteronomy 2:7 "For the LORD your God has blessed you in all that you have done; He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness. These forty years **the LORD your God has been with you**; you have not lacked a thing."

Deuteronomy 20:4 for the **LORD your God is the one who goes with you** to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for **the LORD your God is the one who goes with you** He will not fail you or forsake you."

Joshua 1:5 "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, **I will be with you**; I will not fail you or forsake you.

Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for **the LORD your God is with you wherever you go**."

Judges 2:18 When the LORD raised up judges for them, **the LORD was with the judge and delivered them** from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.

Judges 6:12 The [Angel of the LORD](#) appeared to him and said to him, "**The LORD is with you**, O valiant warrior."

1 Samuel 3:19 Thus Samuel grew and **the LORD was with him** and **let none of his words fail**.

1 Samuel 10:7 "It shall be when these signs come to you, do for yourself what the occasion requires, for **God is with you**.

1 Samuel 16:18 Then one of the young men said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the LORD is with him."

Isaiah 41:10 'Do not fear, for **I am with you**; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Amos 5:14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live; And thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you, Just as you have said!

Zechariah 8:23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for **we have heard that God is with you**.'"

## **YAHWEH WAS WITH DAVID AND PROSPERED HIM**

**David was prospering** ([sakal](#); Lxx - [suniami](#)) **in all his ways for the LORD was with him** - This verse is the secret for an abundant life in Christ, for such is only possible when the LORD is with us.

**THOUGHT** - One might say "Well, sure God was with David, because he was destined to be king." There may

be something to that, but the truth is clearly discerned by looking at several other uses of "prosper" (sakal) in the OT. You will see that what was true in David's life could also be a reality in your life! [See note below.](#)

**Spurgeon** - And, young man, you also will be wise if God is with you, and you will be able to behave yourself wisely, discreetly, prosperously, as the word seems to mean. Even when malicious eyes are fixed upon you, they will not be able to find any fault in you if the Lord is with you. You will win favor where you least expect it, if you do but so live that God can be with you, if you keep the vessel of your nature so pure that the Master can use it. May it be your portion and mine to have it said of each of us, "The Lord was with him"!

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**Prospering** (success, prudent, wise) (07919) [sakal/sākhā](#) primarily means to act with insight, to be prudent, to give insight, to teach, to prosper, to consider, to ponder, to understand, to act prudently, to act with devotion. The primary sense of [sakal/sākhā](#) is to be **prudent**, which means "marked by wisdom or judiciousness, shrewd in the management of practical affairs, marked by circumspection." One who manifests prudence is more likely to have success. The **Septuagint (LXX)** translates [sakal/sākhā](#) with Greek verb "[suniemi \[see word study\]](#) meaning **to understand**, the idea being that one is able to "put together the pieces" (so to speak) and make sense out of a set of facts presented to one's mind. In simple terms, suniemi conveys the idea of putting "2" and "2" together. In other words, one has the ability to assess a situation and decide what practical course of action is necessary. This is a quality which was especially valuable for Joshua who was daily faced with decisions as he led Israel into enemy territory where the nation might possess their (divinely given) possessions.

**Observe how anyone can experience the LORD being with them...YOU WILL DISCERN A CLEAR PATTERN! NOW WALK ON THIS ROAD ALL THE REST OF THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE EMPOWERED BY HIS WORD AND HIS SPIRIT...**

Deuteronomy 29:9 "So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper ([sakal](#); Lxx - [suniemi](#)) in all that you do. (OBEDIENCE)

Joshua 1:7 "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success ([sakal](#); Lxx - [suniemi](#)) wherever you go. (OBEDIENCE)

Joshua 1:8 "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success ([sakal](#); Lxx - [suniemi](#)). (WORD IN HEART & OBEDIENCE)

1 Kings 2:3 "Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed ([sakal](#); Lxx - [suniemi](#)) in all that you do and wherever you turn, (OBEDIENCE)

Sakal - 61v - act wisely(1), acts wisely(3), behaved himself wisely(1), comprehend(1), consider(1), considers(2), discern(1), expert(1), failed\*(1), gain insight(2), give you insight(1), give heed(1), gives attention(1), giving attention(1), had...regard(1), have insight(4), have success(2), insight(1), instruct(2), instructed(1), instructs(1), intelligence(1), prosper(2), prospered(3), prospering(2), prospers(1), prudent(2), show discernment(1), showed(1), showing intelligence(1), succeed(1), understand(4), understanding(2), understands(2), understood(1), wisdom(1), wise(6), wise behavior(1). Gen. 3:6; Deut. 29:9; Deut. 32:29; Jos. 1:7; Jos. 1:8; 1 Sam. 18:5; 1 Sam. 18:14; 1 Sam. 18:15; 1 Sam. 18:30; 1 Ki. 2:3; 2 Ki. 18:7; 1 Chr. 28:19; 2 Chr. 30:22; Neh. 8:13; Neh. 9:20; Job 22:2; Job 34:27; Job 34:35; Ps. 2:10; Ps. 14:2; Ps. 32:8; Ps. 36:3; Ps. 41:1; Ps. 53:2; Ps. 64:9; Ps. 94:8; Ps. 101:2; Ps. 106:7; Ps. 119:99; Prov. 1:3; Prov. 10:5; Prov. 10:19; Prov. 14:35; Prov. 15:24; Prov. 16:20; Prov. 16:23; Prov. 17:2; Prov. 17:8; Prov. 19:14; Prov. 21:11; Prov. 21:12; Prov. 21:16; Isa. 41:20; Isa. 44:18; Isa. 52:13; Jer. 3:15; Jer. 9:24; Jer. 10:21; Jer. 20:11; Jer. 23:5; Jer. 50:9; Dan. 1:4; Dan. 1:17; Dan. 9:13; Dan. 9:22; Dan. 9:25; Dan. 11:33; Dan. 11:35; Dan. 12:3; Dan. 12:10; Amos 5:13

**1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly, he dreaded him.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:15 κα ε δει Σαουλ ς α τ ς συν ει σφ δρα κα ε λαβε το π προσ που α το

LXE 1 Samuel 18:15 And Saul saw that he was very wise, and he was afraid of him.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

NET 1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul saw how very successful he was, he was afraid of him.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul observed that David was very successful, he dreaded him.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:15 And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul recognized this, he became even more afraid of him.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:15 When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:15 And Saul, seeing how very successful he was, was afraid of him.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:15 Seeing how successful he was, Saul conceived a fear of David:

YLT 1 Samuel 18:15 and Saul seeth that he is acting very wisely, and is afraid of him,

- **prospering:** Ps 112:5 Da 6:4,5 Col 4:5 Jas 1:5 3:17
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **FIRST SAUL FEARS NOW SAUL DREADS!**

**When Saul saw that he was prospering** ([sakai](#); Lxx - [suniemi](#)) **greatly, he dreaded him** - His envy progressed to **dread** which means to anticipate with great apprehension or fear, to be extremely worried about something that might happen!

**1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, and he went out and came in before them.**

LXE 1 Samuel 18:16 And all Israel and Juda loved David, because he came in and went out before the people.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

NET 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he was the one leading them out to battle and back.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was leading their troops.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was so successful at leading his troops into battle.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:16 All Israel and Judah loved David, however, since he was their leader on campaign.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:16 on the other hand, all Israel and Judah loved him, since he led them on their expeditions.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:16 and all Israel and Judah love David when he is going out and coming in before them.

- all Israel: 1Sa 18:5 Lu 19:48 20:19
- he went: Nu 27:17 2Sa 5:2 1Ki 3:7
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ALL ISRAEL LOVED DAVID**

**But all Israel and Judah loved David** - While not everyone agrees, may feel his name means "beloved" and here that is certainly being manifest before the people.

**and he went out and came in before them** - NET = "for he was the one leading them out to battle and back" NLT = "because he

was so successful at leading his troops into battle."

**Reformation Study Bible** - Saul's removal of David from the court (1Sa 18:13), with an accompanying demotion in military rank, may be intended to decrease David's visibility and popularity, as well as to increase the risk of his dying in battle. The effect of Saul's scheming, however, is actually the reverse. David is brought into closer contact with the people, so that "all Israel and Judah loved David" (v. 16).

**1 Samuel 18:17 Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife, only be a valiant man for me and fight the LORD'S battles." For Saul thought, "My hand shall not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:17 And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

NET 1 Samuel 18:17 Then Saul said to David, "Here's my oldest daughter, Merab. I want to give her to you in marriage. Only be a brave warrior for me and fight the battles of the LORD." For Saul thought, "There's no need for me to raise my hand against him. Let it be the hand of the Philistines!"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:17 Saul told David, "Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I'll give her to you as a wife, if you will be a warrior for me and fight the LORD's battles." But Saul was thinking, "My hand doesn't need to be against him; let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

ESV 1 Samuel 18:17 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 18:17 Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab. I will give her to you in marriage; only serve me bravely and fight the battles of the LORD." For Saul said to himself, "I will not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!"

NLT 1 Samuel 18:17 One day Saul said to David, "I am ready to give you my older daughter, Merab, as your wife. But first you must prove yourself to be a real warrior by fighting the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "I'll send him out against the Philistines and let them kill him rather than doing it myself."

NRS 1 Samuel 18:17 Then Saul said to David, "Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "I will not raise a hand against him; let the Philistines deal with him."

NJB 1 Samuel 18:17 Saul said to David, 'This is my elder daughter Merab; I shall give her to you in marriage; but you must serve me bravely and fight Yahweh's wars.' Saul thought, 'Better than strike the blow myself, let the Philistines do it!'

NAB 1 Samuel 18:17 (Saul said to David, "There is my older daughter, Merob, whom I will give you in marriage if you become my champion and fight the battles of the LORD." Saul had in mind, "I shall not touch him; let the Philistines strike him.")

YLT 1 Samuel 18:17 And Saul saith unto David, 'Lo, my elder daughter Merab -- her I give to thee for a wife; only, be to me for a son of valour, and fight the battles of Jehovah;' and Saul said, 'Let not my hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.'

- **will give:** 1Sa 17:25 Ps 12:2 55:21
- **the Lord's:** 1Sa 17:47 25:28 Nu 32:20,27,29
- Let not mine: 1Sa 18:21,25 De 17:7 2Sa 11:15 12:9
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL'S DECEPTIVE PLOY

**Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife, only be a valiant man for me and fight the LORD'S battles."** - Recall in 1Sa 17:25 Saul had promised to give his daughter to the giant's slayer. Apparently Saul had

not yet made good on that promise, so now offers her to David with the qualifying condition that he would actively engage in war, adding (I think hypocritically) that these were the **LORD'S battles**. Saul is clearly seeking to entice and deceive and destroy David, in such a way that no blame falls on him. What is fascinating is that David himself successfully carried out a similar maneuver to kill Bathsheba's husband Uriah (2Sa 11:15)!

**For Saul thought, "My hand shall not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him-** Saul would not dare kill David for he knew the people love him and would rebel at such an act. His plan is to send him into battle and let the Philistines slay him.

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### **Spurgeon - Fight the LORD's battles. 1 SAMUEL 18:17**

The Christian is involved in a continual war, with Jesus Christ as the Captain of their salvation. He has said, "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."<sup>1</sup> Listen to the battle cries! Now let the people of God stand firm in their ranks, and let no man's heart fail him. We may feel in these days that we are losing the battle and unless the Lord Jesus shall lift His sword we do not know what may become of the church of God in our time; but let us be courageous and bold. Seldom has there been a time like this as biblical Christianity trembles on the brink of capitulation to pluralism and empty religious routine. We are in great need of a bold voice and a strong hand to preach and publish the Gospel for which martyrs bled and confessors died. The Savior is, by His Spirit, still on earth; let this encourage us. He is always ever in the middle of the fight, and therefore the outcome of the battle is not in doubt. And as the conflict rages, what a deep satisfaction it is to know that the Lord Jesus, in His office as our great Intercessor, is prevalently pleading for His people! Turn your anxious gaze from the battle below, where, enshrouded in smoke, the faithful fight in garments rolled in blood. And lift your eyes above where the Savior lives and pleads, for while He intercedes, the cause of God is safe. Let us fight as if it all depended upon us, but let us look up and know that it all depends upon Him.

On the basis of our Savior's atoning sacrifice and in the strength of the Holy Spirit's power, we charge you who love Jesus to fight bravely in this holy war, for truth and righteousness, for the kingdom and the crown. Onward! The battle is not yours but God's, and you will yet hear Him say, "Well done, brave warrior, well done!" 1Matthew 28:20

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### **John Butler - THE PARTNERS FOR DAVID 1 Samuel 18:17–29 from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)**

Saul schemed to kill David through marriage to his daughters.

#### **1. The Offer of Merab for a Wife (1 Samuel 18:17–19)**

The first marriage proposal was the older daughter, Merab.

- The design in the offer. "Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him" (1 Samuel 18:17). Saul's first offer was contingent upon David being "valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles" (1 Samuel 18:17). Saul hoped this peril would result in David's death.
- The deference regarding the offer. "David said unto Saul, Who am I?... that I should be son in law to the king" (1 Samuel 18:18). David argued that he was unworthy to be married to Saul's daughter. Unlike Saul, David was a humble man.
- The defrauding in the offer. "When Merab Saul's daughter should have been given to David ... she was given unto Adriel the Meholathite to wife" (1 Samuel 18:19). Saul broke his word, suspiciously because of a high dowry offer (R.P. Smith).

#### **2. The Offer of Michal for a Wife (1 Samuel 18:20–29)**

Another marriage proposal involved Saul's other daughter.

- The prompting of the offer. "Michal Saul's daughter loved David ... the thing pleased him [Saul]" (1 Samuel 18:20). Michal had a crush on David and Saul saw opportunity in this to ensnare David.
- The purpose of the offer. "I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him ... that ... the Philistines may be against him" (1 Samuel 18:21). Saul is still plotting the death of David and will use his daughter Michal for the purpose.
- The parleying about the offer. "Saul commanded his servants ... Commune with David ... say, Behold the king hath delight in thee ... be the king's son in law" (1 Samuel 18:22). Saul tries cleverly to get David to marry his daughter.
- The politeness towards the offer. "Seemeth it ... a light thing to be a king's son in law ... told him" (1 Samuel 18:23, 24). Saul is told by his servants that David is still reticent about marrying into the royal family.
- The price in the offer. Saul's had a crafty price for Michal.

First, the dowry in the price. "The king desireth not any dowry" (1 Samuel 18:25). David's reticence involved his inability to pay the usual dowry that was needed to marry royalty.

Second, the description of the price. "The king desireth ... but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines" (1 Samuel 18:25). This was a substitute for the dowry.

Third, the design in the price. "Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines" (1 Samuel 18:25). Saul thought David would be killed trying to get the foreskins.

Fourth, the delight in the price. "It pleased David well to be the king's son in law" (1 Samuel 18:26) The price appealed to David's warrior instincts and meritorious need.

Fifth, the delivering of the price. "Slew of the Philistines two hundred men ... brought their foreskins ... to the king" (1 Samuel 18:27). David doubled the requirement and did it in the time required ("the days were not expired"—1 Samuel 18:26).

Sixth, the deduction after the price. "Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David" (1 Samuel 18:28). David's success in getting the foreskins evidenced to Saul that God had helped David.

Seventh, the dread after the price. "Saul was yet more afraid of David (1 Samuel 18:29). Evil fears godliness like a criminal fears the policemen.

Eighth, The dislike after the price. "Saul became David's enemy continually" (1 Samuel 18:29). Saul had alienated himself from Samuel and now David. Like many governments, he opposed his best people of his nation.

**1 Samuel 18:18 But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my life or my father's family in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?"**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:18 And David said unto Saul, Who am I? and what is my life, or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son in law to the king?

NET 1 Samuel 18:18 David said to Saul, "Who am I? Who are my relatives or the clan of my father in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:18 Then David responded, "Who am I, and what is my family or my father's clan in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

ESV 1 Samuel 18:18 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?"

NIV 1 Samuel 18:18 But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my family or my father's clan in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

NLT 1 Samuel 18:18 "Who am I, and what is my family in Israel that I should be the king's son-in-law?" David exclaimed. "My father's family is nothing!"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:18 David said to Saul, "Who am I and who are my kinsfolk, my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?"

NJB 1 Samuel 18:18 David replied to Saul, 'Who am I and what is my lineage -- and my father's family -- in Israel, for me to become the king's son-in-law?'

NAB 1 Samuel 18:18 But David answered Saul: "Who am I? And who are my kin or my father's clan in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

YLT 1 Samuel 18:18 And David saith unto Saul, 'Who am I? and what my life -- the family of my father in Israel -- that I am son-in-law to the king?'



- Who am I: 1Sa 18:23 9:21 Ex 3:11 Ru 2:10 2Sa 7:18 Pr 15:33 18:12 Jer 1:6
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID'S HUMBLE RESPONSE

**But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my life or my father's family in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?"** - David is protesting that since he is from common stock, lacks the social standing and does not have sufficient funds for a bridal price. David appears to be somewhat naive at this point, for after all the same man by the name of Saul had twice sought to pin him with his spear. One would have thought David would have walked warily around King Saul as a result of past "indiscretions"?

**1 Samuel 18:19 So it came about at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.**

KJV 1 Samuel 18:19 But it came to pass at the time when Merab Saul's daughter should have been given to David, that she was given unto Adriel the Meholathite to wife.

NET 1 Samuel 18:19 When the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she instead was given in marriage to Adriel, who was from Meholah.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:19 When it was time to give Saul's daughter Merab to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:19 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:19 So when the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel of Meholah.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:19 So when the time came for Saul to give his daughter Merab in marriage to David, he gave her instead to Adriel, a man from Meholah.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:19 But at the time when Saul's daughter Merab should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:19 When the time came for Merab daughter of Saul to be given to David, she was given to Adriel of Meholah instead.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:19 However, when it was time for Saul's daughter Merob to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel the Meholathite instead.)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:19 And it cometh to pass, at the time of the giving of Merab daughter of Saul to David, that she hath been given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.

- **Adriel:** Jdg 14:20 2Sa 21:8
- **Meholathite:** Jdg 7:22
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL RENEGES ON HIS PROMISE

**So** - Since David opted out of the offer to marry Merab because of his small bank account, Saul withdraws the offer and gives her to Adriel.

**it came about at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife** - Why would Saul turn around after offering his daughter to David and give her to another? The [ESV Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) suggests "Saul used David's humble reply as an excuse to give Merab to another man."

It is interesting that **Merab** had children with **Adriel**, and 5 of their sons were executed by King David because they failed to honor the solemn covenant (2Sa 21:8) Joshua had made with the Gibeonites (Josh 9:20).

**1 Samuel 18:20 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul, the thing was agreeable to him.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:20 κα γ πησεν Μελοχολ θυγητηρ Σαουλ τ ν Δαυιδ κα πηγγ λη Σαουλ κα η θ νθη ν φθαλμο ς α το

LXE 1 Samuel 18:20 And Melchol the daughter of Saul loved David; and it was told Saul, and the thing was pleasing in his eyes.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:20 And Michal Saul's daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.

NET 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul about this, it pleased him.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David, and when it was reported to Saul, it pleased him.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they told Saul about it, he was pleased.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:20 In the meantime, Saul's daughter Michal had fallen in love with David, and Saul was delighted when he heard about it.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. Saul was told, and the thing pleased him.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Michal daughter of Saul fell in love with David. When Saul heard this he was pleased.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David, and it was reported to Saul, who was pleased at this,

YLT 1 Samuel 18:20 And Michal daughter of Saul loveth David, and they declare to Saul, and the thing is right in his eyes,

- **loved David:** 1Sa 18:28, Ge 29, 18, 20 34, 3 Jdg 16, 4, 15 2Sa 13, 1 1Ki 11, 1, 2 Ho 3, 2
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**

2 Samuel 6:16 (MICHAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD DAVID YEARS LATER) Then it happened as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

**SAUL'S DAUGHTER  
MICHAL LOVED DAVID**

**Now Michal** ("Who is like God?"), **Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul, the thing was agreeable to him** (Lit = was right in his eyes) - Who is **they**? **They** presumably is not Michal and David but some of Saul's servants or courtiers. Saul's was pleased that Michal loved David.

**Holman Study Bible: NKJV Edition** on how **Michal** might have been a **snare** to David - Perhaps Saul thought Michal would be a snare because she might distract David's attention from his military duties, or that the bride price Saul intended to request (v. 25) would put David in a life-threatening situation. Yet another possibility is that Saul thought Michal would lead David away from the Lord. First Samuel 19:13 has been cited to support this, but the context is uncertain.

**1 Samuel 18:21 Saul thought, "I will give her to him that she may become a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David, "For a second time you may be my son-in-law today."**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:21 κα ε πεν Σαουλ δ σω α τ ν α τ κα σται α τ ε ς σ κ ν δ α λ ο ν κα ν π Σαουλ χε ρ λλοφ λων

LXE 1 Samuel 18:21 And Saul said, I will give her to him, and she shall be a stumbling-block to him. Now the hand of the Philistines was against Saul.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son in law in the one of the twain.

NET 1 Samuel 18:21 Saul said, "I will give her to him so that she may become a snare to him and the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Today is the second time for you to become my son-in-law."

CSB 1 Samuel 18:21 "I'll give her to him," Saul thought. "She'll be a trap for him, and the hand of the Philistines will be against him." So Saul said to David a second time, "You can now be my son-in-law."

ESV 1 Samuel 18:21 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 18:21 "I will give her to him," he thought, "so that she may be a snare to him and so that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Now you have a second opportunity to become my son-in-law."

NLT 1 Samuel 18:21 "Here's another chance to see him killed by the Philistines!" Saul said to himself. But to David he said, "Today you have a second chance to become my son-in-law!"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:21 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."

NJB 1 Samuel 18:21 He thought, 'Yes, I shall give her to him; she can be the snare for him, so that the Philistines will get him.' (On two occasions, Saul told David, 'Today, you shall be my son-in-law.')

NAB 1 Samuel 18:21 for he thought, "I will offer her to him to become a snare for him, so that the Philistines may strike him." (Thus for the second time Saul said to David, "You shall become my son-in-law today.")

YLT 1 Samuel 18:21 and Saul saith, 'I give her to him, and she is to him for a snare, and the hand of the Philistines is on him;' and Saul saith unto David, 'By the second -- thou dost become my son-in-law to-day.'

- **a snare:** Ex 10:7 Ps 7:14-16 38:12 Pr 26:24-26 29:5 Jer 5:26 9:8
- **the hand:** 1Sa 18:17 19:11,12
- **this day:** 1Sa 18:26
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL'S DECEPTIVE DESIRE TO KILL DAVID CONTINUES

**Saul thought, "I will give her to him that she may become a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David, "For a second time you may be my son-in-law today."** - The **NLT** rendering is interesting ""Here's another chance to see him killed by the Philistines!" Saul said to himself. But to David he said, "Today you have a second chance to become my son-in-law!" It is not clear from this verse exactly how Saul thought Michal could serve as a snare or trap for David. The probable answer is Saul knew David still did not have funds for a bridal price and Saul calculated in his evil heart that 100 Philistine foreskins would be a good price!

**1 Samuel 18:22 Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David secretly, saying, 'Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'"**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:22 κα νετε λατο Σαουλ το ς παισ ν α το λ γων λαλ σατε με ς λ θρ τ Δαυιδ λ γοντες δο βασιλε ς θ λει ν σο κα πι ντες ο πα δε ς α το γαπ σ ν σε κα σ πιγ μβρευσον τ βασιλε

LXE 1 Samuel 18:22 And Saul charged his servants, saying, Speak ye privately to David, saying, Behold, the king delights in thee, and all his servants love thee, and do thou becomes the king's son-in-law.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:22 And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son in law.

NET 1 Samuel 18:22 Then Saul instructed his servants, "Tell David secretly, 'The king is pleased with you, and all his servants like you. So now become the king's son-in-law.'"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:22 Saul then ordered his servants, "Speak to David in private and tell him, 'Look, the king is pleased with you, and all his servants love you. Therefore, you should become the king's son-in-law.'"

ESV 1 Samuel 18:22 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.'"

NIV 1 Samuel 18:22 Then Saul ordered his attendants: "Speak to David privately and say, 'Look, the king is pleased with you, and his attendants all like you; now become his son-in-law.'"

NLT 1 Samuel 18:22 Then Saul told his men to say to David, "The king really likes you, and so do we. Why don't you accept the king's offer and become his son-in-law?"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:22 Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David in private and say, 'See, the king is delighted with you, and all his servants love you; now then, become the king's son-in-law.'"

NJB 1 Samuel 18:22 Saul gave instructions to his servants, 'Have a private word with David and say, "Look, the king is fond of you and all his servants love you -- why not be the king's son-in-law?" '

NAB 1 Samuel 18:22 Saul then ordered his servants to speak to David privately and to say: "The king is fond of you, and all his officers love you. You should become the king's son-in-law."

YLT 1 Samuel 18:22 And Saul commandeth his servants, 'Speak unto David gently, saying, Lo, the king hath delighted in thee, and all his servants have loved thee, and now, be son-in-law to the king.'

- **commanded:** Ps 36:1-3 55:21
- **servants:** 2Sa 13:28,29 Pr 29:12
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DO YOU WANT TO KNOW A SECRET?

**Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David secretly, saying, 'Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; now therefore, become the king's son-in-law"**

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### True Humility

1 Samuel 18:22-23 And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'" So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I am a poor and lightly esteemed man?"

Sammy Morris was a devoted Christian from Africa who came to America to go to college. Although his pathway to service for Christ was not easy, his difficulties never deterred him. Perhaps this was because he had learned genuine humility. When Sammy arrived at a Christian college in the United States, the school's president asked him what room he wanted. The African believer replied, "If there is a room nobody wants, give it to me." How many other Christians would show such a humble spirit?

David felt this way about his relationship to King Saul. Saul had promised him his daughter Merab, but the king went back on his commitment and gave her to Adriel the Meholathite (1 Sam. 18:17-19). Yet instead of becoming angry, David professed his unworthiness to be the son-in-law of the king. Then he was promised Michal, another of Saul's daughters, and the king's servants urged him to accept this offer. But again, David did not manipulate circumstances for his own gain. He humbly questioned his suitability to join the king's family. David refused to promote himself by marrying the king's daughter. He was content to let God honor him, if He so chose.

Christians sometimes view their relationship with a person or an organization as an opportunity for their own advancement. They look for ways to turn their circumstances to their advantage. To them, people are stepping-stones to personal glory. This leads to pride, and pride leads to destruction (Prov. 16:18).

Take care that you do not use others for your own advancement. Be willing to wait and let God provide success in His time and His

way. You'll be glad you did. ([Courtesy of Back to the Bible](#))

Pride drives us to advance ourselves; humility bids us to wait.

**1 Samuel 18:23 So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. But David said, "Is it trivial in your sight to become the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man and lightly esteemed.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:23 κα λησαν ο παδες Σαουλ ες τ τα Δαυιδ τ ματα τα τα κα επεν Δαυιδ ε κο φον ν φθαλμο ς μ ν πιγαμβρεσαι βασιλε κ γ ν ρ ταπειν ς κα ο χ νδοξος

LXE 1 Samuel 18:23 And the servants of Saul spoke these words in the ears of David; and David said, Is it a light thing in your eyes to become son-in-law to the king? Whereas I am an humble man, an not honourable?

KJV 1 Samuel 18:23 And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son in law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

NET 1 Samuel 18:23 So Saul's servants spoke these words privately to David. David replied, "Is becoming the king's son-in-law something insignificant to you? I'm just a poor and lightly-esteemed man!"

CSB 1 Samuel 18:23 Saul's servants reported these words directly to David, but he replied, "Is it trivial in your sight to become the king's son-in-law? I am a poor man who is common."

ESV 1 Samuel 18:23 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?"

NIV 1 Samuel 18:23 They repeated these words to David. But David said, "Do you think it is a small matter to become the king's son-in-law? I'm only a poor man and little known."

NLT 1 Samuel 18:23 When Saul's men said these things to David, he replied, "How can a poor man from a humble family afford the bride price for the daughter of a king?"

NRS 1 Samuel 18:23 So Saul's servants reported these words to David in private. And David said, "Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man and of no repute?"

NJB 1 Samuel 18:23 Saul's servants repeated these words in David's ear, to which David replied, 'Do you think that becoming the king's son-in-law is a trivial matter; I have neither wealth nor position.'

NAB 1 Samuel 18:23 But when Saul's servants mentioned this to David, he said: "Do you think it easy to become the king's son-in-law? I am poor and insignificant."

YLT 1 Samuel 18:23 And the servants of Saul speak in the ears of David these words, and David saith, 'Is it a light thing in your eyes to be son-in-law to the king -- and I a poor man, and lightly esteemed?'

- a light: 1Jn 3:1
- a poor man: 1Sa 9:21 Pr 14:20 19:6,7 Ec 9:15,16
- and lightly: Ps 119:141
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **IT'S NOT CHEAP BECOMING A KING'S SON-IN-LAW!**

**So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. But David said, "Is it trivial in your sight to become the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man and lightly esteemed** - The NLT conveys the sense of David's reply "When Saul's men said these things to David, he replied, "How can a poor man from a humble family afford the bride price for the daughter of a king?"

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**Robert Hawker** - Did David indeed set by so high an honour in being allied to the family of an earthly prince; what then must be the dignity to which believers are called, in being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ? The apostle was so lost in the contemplation of this unspeakable mercy, that he cried out with holy rapture, Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! My soul, art thou begotten to this immense privilege? Ponder well thy vast inheritance. Not a barren title; not an empty name; this relationship brings with it a rich revenue of all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings. Sons-in-law and in grace to God in Christ, believers are born to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They

have the spirit of adoption, and of grace: and because they are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into their hearts, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. Are they poor in outward circumstances? bread shall be given, and water shall be sure; and their defence shall be the munitions of rocks. Are they afflicted in body or in mind? their back shall be proportioned to their burden; and as their day is, so shall their strength be. Every child shall have his own portion, and the Father's blessing sanctifying all. Yea, death itself is in the inventory of the inheritance of a child of God: for so far is death from separating from God, that it brings to God. What sayest thou, O my soul! to these things? Art thou, like David, a poor man, and lightly esteemed? Look up and enjoy thy relationship in Jesus, and from this time do thou cry out, in the words of the Prophet, and say unto God, "My Father! thou art the guide of my youth."

### 1 Samuel 18:24 The servants of Saul reported to him according to these words which David spoke.

BGT 1 Samuel 18:24 κα π γγειλαν ο πα δεσ Σαουλ α τ κατ τ ματα τα τα λ λησεν Δαυιδ

LXE 1 Samuel 18:24 And the servants of Saul reported to him according to these words, which David spoke.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner spake David.

NET 1 Samuel 18:24 When Saul's servants reported what David had said,

CSB 1 Samuel 18:24 The servants reported back to Saul, "These are the words David spoke."

ESV 1 Samuel 18:24 And the servants of Saul told him, "Thus and so did David speak."

NIV 1 Samuel 18:24 When Saul's servants told him what David had said,

NLT 1 Samuel 18:24 When Saul's men reported this back to the king,

NRS 1 Samuel 18:24 The servants of Saul told him, "This is what David said."

NJB 1 Samuel 18:24 Saul's servants then reported back, 'This is what David said.'

NAB 1 Samuel 18:24 When his servants reported to him the nature of David's answer,

YLT 1 Samuel 18:24 And the servants of Saul declare to him, saying, 'According to these words hath David spoken.'

- On this manner: Heb. According to these words, 1Sa 18:24
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SERVANTS REPORT TO SAUL

The servants of Saul reported to him according to these words which David spoke.

### 1 Samuel 18:25 Saul then said, "Thus you shall say to David, 'The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.' " Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

BGT 1 Samuel 18:25 κα ε πεν Σαουλ τ δε ρε τε τ Δαυιδ ο βο λεται βασιλε ς ν δ ματι λλ ν κατ ν κροβυσται ς λλοφ λων κδικσαι ε ς χθρο ς το βασιλ ως κα Σαουλ λογ σατο α τ ν μβαλε ν ε ς χε ρα ς τ ν λλοφ λων

LXE 1 Samuel 18:25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye speak to David, The king wants no gift but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to avenge himself on the kings enemies. Now Saul thought to cast him into the hands of the Philistines.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

NET 1 Samuel 18:25 Saul replied, "Here is what you should say to David: 'There is nothing that the king wants



as a price for the bride except a hundred Philistine foreskins, so that he can be avenged of his enemies." (Now Saul was thinking that he could kill David by the hand of the Philistines.)

CSB 1 Samuel 18:25 Then Saul replied, "Say this to David: 'The king desires no other bride-price except 100 Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.'" Actually, Saul intended to cause David's death at the hands of the Philistines.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:25 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:25 Saul replied, "Say to David, 'The king wants no other price for the bride than a hundred Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.' " Saul's plan was to have David fall by the hands of the Philistines.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:25 he told them, "Tell David that all I want for the bride price is 100 Philistine foreskins! Vengeance on my enemies is all I really want." But what Saul had in mind was that David would be killed in the fight.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:25 Then Saul said, "Thus shall you say to David, 'The king desires no marriage present except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged on the king's enemies.'" Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:25 Saul replied, 'Tell David this, "The king desires no bride-price except one hundred Philistine foreskins, in vengeance on the king's enemies.' ' Saul was counting on getting David killed by the Philistines.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:25 Saul commanded them to say this to David: "The king desires no other price for the bride than the foreskins of one hundred Philistines, that he may thus take vengeance on his enemies." Saul intended in this way to bring about David's death through the Philistines.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:25 And Saul saith, 'Thus do ye say to David, There is no delight to the king in dowry, but in a hundred foreskins of the Philistines -- to be avenged on the enemies of the king;' and Saul thought to cause David to fall by the hand of the Philistines.

- dowry: Ge 29:18 34:12 Ex 22:16,17
- but an hundred: That is, Thou shalt slay one hundred Philistines, and thou shalt produce their foreskins as a proof, not only that thou hast killed one hundred men, but that these are of the uncircumcised Philistines.
- foreskins: 1Sa 17:26,36 Ge 17:11-14 Jos 5:3
- to be avenged: 1Sa 14:24
- thought: 1Sa 18:17 2Sa 17:8-11
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **SAUL'S "PLAN B" TO USE DOWRY DECEPTION TO DESTROY DAVID**

**Saul then said, "Thus you shall say to David, 'The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies. Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. -**

Plan A (1Sa 18:17) was to use his other daughter Merab to lure him into a fatal battle with the Philistines. Now Saul's deceitful "plan B" is like "[blood money](#)" which is money paid to a hired killer. So crafty Saul proposes the "bridal price" could be paid by David with 100 Philistine foreskins and of course his deceitful plan (and hope) is that they kill him. Saul reasons that surely David cannot kill 100 Philistines successfully.

The ESV note has a surprising comment stating that "since David could not afford what was due a king's daughter, the king **graciously** let him display his valor instead." I hardly think Saul was being gracious to the man he wanted dead. He was clearly being deceptive! (Borrow [ESV Study Bible](#))

**MacArthur** - Such mutilations of the bodies of slain enemies were commonly practiced in ancient warfare. The number indicated the extent of the victory. (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**1 Samuel 18:26** When his servants told David these words, it pleased David to become the king's son-in-law. Before the

BGT 1 Samuel 18:26 κα παγγ λλουσιν ο πα δες Σαουλ τ Δαιιδ τ μαπα τα τα κα ε θ νθη λ γος ν φθαλμο ς Δαιιδ πιγαμβρεσαι τ βασιλε

LXE 1 Samuel 18:26 And the servants of Saul report these words to David, and David was well pleased to become the son-in-law to the king.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son in law: and the days were not expired.

NET 1 Samuel 18:26 So his servants told David these things and David agreed to become the king's son-in-law. Now the specified time had not yet expired

CSB 1 Samuel 18:26 When the servants reported these terms to David, he was pleased to become the king's son-in-law. Before the wedding day arrived,

ESV 1 Samuel 18:26 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,

NIV 1 Samuel 18:26 When the attendants told David these things, he was pleased to become the king's son-in-law. So before the allotted time elapsed,

NLT 1 Samuel 18:26 David was delighted to accept the offer. Before the time limit expired,

NRS 1 Samuel 18:26 When his servants told David these words, David was well pleased to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired,

NJB 1 Samuel 18:26 When his servants repeated this to David, David thought it would be a fine thing to be the king's son-in-law. And no time was lost

NAB 1 Samuel 18:26 When the servants reported this offer to David, he was pleased with the prospect of becoming the king's son-in-law. (Before the year was up,)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:26 And his servants declare to David these words, and the thing is right in the eyes of David, to be son-in-law to the king; and the days have not been full,

- the days: 1Sa 18:21
- expired: Heb. fulfilled
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID PLEASED AT PROSPECT OF JOINING THE ROYAL FAMILY

**When his servants told David these words, it pleased David to become the king's son-in-law.**

**Before the days had expired** - NIV = "before the allotted time elapsed," These words (1) imply Saul had given David a "deadline" and (2) are words that preface the next passage.

**1 Samuel 18:27 David rose up and went, he and his men, and struck down two hundred men among the Philistines. Then David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter for a wife.**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:27 κα ν στη Δαιιδ κα πορεθη α τ ς κα ο νδρες α το κα πα ξεν ν το ς λλοφ λοι ς κα τ ν νδρας κα ν νεγκεν τ ς κροβυστ α ς α τ ν τ βασιλε κα πιγαμβρεεται τ βασιλε κα δ δωσιν α τ τ ν Μελχολ θυγατ ρα α το α τ ε ς γυνα κα

LXE 1 Samuel 18:27 And David arose, and went, he and his men, and smote among the Philistines a hundred men: and he brought their foreskins, and he becomes the king's son-in-law, and Saul gives him Melchol his daughter to wife.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:27 Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two

hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son in law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

NET 1 Samuel 18:27 when David, along with his men, went out and struck down two hundred Philistine men. David brought their foreskins and presented all of them to the king so he could become the king's son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:27 David and his men went out and killed 200 Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented them as full payment to the king to become his son-in-law. Then Saul gave his daughter Michal to David as his wife.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:27 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:27 David and his men went out and killed two hundred Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king so that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:27 he and his men went out and killed 200 Philistines. Then David fulfilled the king's requirement by presenting all their foreskins to him. So Saul gave his daughter Michal to David to be his wife.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:27 David rose and went, along with his men, and killed one 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. Saul gave him his daughter Michal as a wife.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:27 before David got up to go, he and his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. David brought their foreskins back and counted them out before the king, so that he could be the king's son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:27 David made preparations and sallied forth with his men and slew two hundred Philistines. He brought back their foreskins and counted them out before the king, that he might thus become the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:27 and David riseth and goeth, he and his men, and smiteth among the Philistines two hundred men, and David bringeth in their foreskins, and they set them before the king, to be son-in-law to the king; and Saul giveth to him Michal his daughter for a wife.

- his men: 1Sa 18:13
- slew: Jdg 14:19 2Sa 3:14
- two hundred men: The Septuagint has only [                    . ] one hundred men; and as Saul covenanted for a hundred, as David himself says, (2 Sa 3:14,) that he espoused Michal for a hundred, it is very probable that this is the true reading.
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DAVID DOUBLES THE DOWRY!**

**David rose up and went, he and his men, and struck down two hundred men among the Philistines. Then David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law** - David made sure Saul would be satisfied by doubling the number of Philistine foreskins.

**So Saul gave him Michal his daughter for a wife** - Surely frustrated at failure of his ruse to result in David's death, he is forced to give David Michal and thus David effectively joins the royal family!

**1 Samuel 18:28 When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him,**

BGT 1 Samuel 18:28 κα ε δεν Σαουλ τι κ ριος μετ Δαυιδ κα π ς Ισραηλ γ πα α τ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 18:28 And Saul saw that the Lord was with David, and that all Israel loved him.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:28 And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal Saul's daughter loved him.

NET 1 Samuel 18:28 When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David,

CSB 1 Samuel 18:28 Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved him,

ESV 1 Samuel 18:28 But when Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him,

NIV 1 Samuel 18:28 When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David,

NLT 1 Samuel 18:28 When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and how much his daughter Michal loved him,

NRS 1 Samuel 18:28 But when Saul realized that the LORD was with David, and that Saul's daughter Michal loved him,

NJB 1 Samuel 18:28 Saul could not but see that Yahweh was with David, and that the whole House of Israel loved him;

NAB 1 Samuel 18:28 Saul thus came to recognize that the LORD was with David; besides, his own daughter Michal loved David.

YLT 1 Samuel 18:28 And Saul seeth and knoweth that Jehovah is with David, and Michal daughter of Saul hath loved him,

- 1Sa 24:20 26:25 Ge 30:27 37:8-11 39:3 Rev 3:9
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL SEES THE LIGHT

**When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David**- Even spiritually obtuse Saul realized that David was being protected and prospered by the LORD.

**and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him** - Their marriage gets off to a good start and from the beginning she is loyal to David.

**1 Samuel 18:29 then Saul was even more afraid of David. Thus Saul was David's enemy continually.**

LXE 1 Samuel 18:29 And he was yet more afraid of David.

KJV 1 Samuel 18:29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

NET 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul became even more afraid of him. Saul continued to be at odds with David from then on.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:29 and he became even more afraid of David. As a result, Saul was David's enemy from then on.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy continually.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul became even more afraid of him, and he remained David's enemy for the rest of his life.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy from that time forward.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul became more afraid of David than ever, and became his inveterate enemy.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:29 Therefore Saul feared David all the more (and was his enemy ever after).

YLT 1 Samuel 18:29 and Saul addeth to be afraid of the presence of David yet; and Saul is an enemy with David all the days.

- yet the: 1Sa 18:12,15 Ps 37:12-14 Ec 4:4 Jas 2:19
- Saul became: Ge 4:4-8 Joh 11:53 1Jn 3:12-15
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SAUL'S INCREASING FEAR OF DAVID

**then** - When is then? Clearly when his eyes were opened to the fact that the good hand of the LORD was on David.

**Saul was even more afraid of David** - This is the third time Saul is described as afraid of David and undoubtedly afraid of David's LORD! (1Sa 18:12, 1Sa 18:14-15, 1Sa 18:28-29) Surely Saul knew his days were numbered!

**Thus Saul was David's enemy continually** - Saul became David's inveterate enemy. Saul had a way of separating himself from good people, for earlier Samuel had departed from him. David alludes to this in Psalm 18:1 "For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song in the day that **the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.**"

### James Smith - SAUL, THE ENEMY 1 Samuel 18:29

"Fool that I was! I will rehearse my fault:  
I, wingless, thought myself on high to lift  
Among the winged! I set these feet that halt  
To run against the swift."

—INGELOW.

Lowell hath said that "Best things perish of their own excess, and quality overdriven becomes defect." Who would have thought that the beautiful and childlike life of Saul would so soon be transformed and degraded into a purely selfish and God-dishonouring career He began in the Spirit and ended in the flesh. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. Like every other case of backsliding, it had its source in turning aside from the revealed will of God (1 Sa 15:11–26). One step out of the path of faith is enough to put us on the way to a self-ruined life. Saul now becomes the open and avowed enemy of David, the Lord's anointed. A man possessed by an evil spirit will rush his head against the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler. Saul in becoming the enemy of David became—

**I. A Sinner against his own Family.** See his dastardly conduct with Michal, his own daughter, who loved David; how he presses and schemes for their union in marriage, in the hope that she might speedily be made a widow (1 Sa 18:20, 21). Think how often the tender heart of Jonathan was grieved—for he too loved David—at his father's heartless and cowardly behaviour. When any father takes up an attitude of opposition to Jesus Christ, who is the Lord's anointed, he is always fighting against the best interests of his own household. Godliness is profitable for the life that now is as well as for the life which is to come. The love of Christ is meant to sweeten the home life by enabling us joyfully to bear one another's burdens.

**II. A Sinner against the Testimony of the Holy Spirit.** The scene at Naioth must have been an exciting one (1 Sa 19:19–24). Saul hears that David is there and sends messengers to apprehend him, but as soon as they come within the holy atmosphere of the prophetic band they are influenced by the Spirit and begin to prophesy. A second, and even a third company were sent, with the same result. Then Saul himself went thither, "and the Spirit of God was upon him also." Surely if ever a man had evidence that the Spirit of God was opposed to his present actions that man was Saul, and the time was now. It would seem as if the Holy Ghost lingered over Saul, as the Shekinah glory hovered near Jerusalem ere it finally departed (Ezek. 11:23). Oh, how loath our God is to give us up! But this last manifestation of the Spirit of prophecy fails to turn him from the error of his way. The effect was only like the morning cloud. Grieve not the Holy Spirit.

**III. A Sinner against the Servants of God.** Saul commanded that the priests of the Lord be slain, "because their hand also is with David (1 Sa 22:17, 18). Saul, in refusing to give David his God-appointed place, is compelled to become the enemy of all who favour him. It is so still. Our relationships to Christ determine our attitude toward our fellowmen. The interests of Jesus Christ and His people are so vitally connected that they cannot be divided. "He that touched you touched the apple of Mine eye." The priestly house of Ahimelech are the first to suffer martyrdom for the cause of David. But the blood of the holy is never spilt in vain; the cause for which it is shed will surely prosper.

**IV. A Sinner against the Best Interests of the Nation.** It is worthy of special note that while Saul was pursuing after David, "the Philistines invaded the land" (1 Sa 23:27, 28). While he was resisting and opposing the clearly revealed purpose of God the enemy came in like a flood. The will of the Lord was to bless the nation of Israel through David, whom He had chosen. To despise and dishonour him was to obstruct the divinely-appointed channel of blessing and rob the people of the grace of God. Is it otherwise

now? God hath sent His Son to bless us, nationally as well as individually. Infidelity and indifference to Christ and His cause will always be a menace and a hindrance to a nation's highest good. Men are slow to acknowledge this, but God is not mocked. In our pride and self-will we may despise and set aside the Lord's anointed, but God knows no other channel through which we can be blessed (1 Tim. 2:5).

**V. A Sinner against his own Conscience.** Now when David had shown the kindness of God to his would-be murderer, Saul wept, and said, "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil" (1 Sa 24:16, 17). Yet for all this the bitterness of his heart against David constrained him to play the fool yet again (1 Sa 26:21). A man is always playing the fool when he is warring against the revealed will of God, because he is also fighting against the deeper and truer instincts of his own nature. He that sinneth against the light sinneth against his own soul. In submitting to Christ as our King we justify our own conscience, and there is peace.

**VI. A Sinner against the Providence of God.** To be out of sympathy with God and His Christ (anointed) is to be out of harmony with the gracious providence of God. In 1 Sa 26 we see the powerful Saul falling once more into the hands of the poor despised David. Oh, the solemn irony of such circumstances! Philip II. of Spain said, after the destruction of the Armada, "I was prepared to conquer England, but not the elements." But the elements in the hands of an overruling God have to be reckoned with. Those who are at enmity with the Son of David and His kingdom will certainly find out some time that the unerring providence of the Eternal One has ruled them outside His saving grace (Rom. 8:28).

**VII. A Sinner against the Purpose of God.** If the mind was not blinded by the Devil, and maddened by the force of a rebellious self-will, no one would ever expect to succeed who was striving against the "determinate counsel of God" (Acts 2:23). "Why do the heathen rage, and imagine a vain thing?" (Ps 2:1). It was the fixed purpose of God to exalt David to the throne of Israel, so it is his settled determination that Jesus shall yet become the "Blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). Those that fall on this stone shall be broken, and those on whom it shall fall it shall grind them to powder. "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye shall perish" (Ps. 2:12). Fall in line with the revealed purpose of God in Christ Jesus, and you will save your soul from death and your life from failure and everlasting shame.

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## Hidden Fears

In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. — Psalm 56:11

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 18:28-19:12

John Matuszak was a 6'8", 280-pound football player for the Oakland Raiders. His public image was that of a havoc-wreaking, heavy-drinking, hard-hitting player who was as much of a threat off the field as on. But friends knew "Tooz," as they called him, as a 280-pound puppy dog just begging to be loved.

According to Los Angeles Times writer Mark Heisler, John Matuszak was "beset by fears he couldn't acknowledge." As a young boy, he was ridiculed for his gawky, beanpole appearance. And he had two brothers who died of cystic fibrosis. The tough-guy image that Tooz had created was a fortress for him to hide in. But he got trapped there. After years of alcohol and drug abuse, John died of a massive heart attack at age 38.

The story of King Saul bears some striking similarities. He too was a monster of a man, a fighter. He was also driven by fears (1 Samuel 18:29). Because he tried to cope with them in his own strength instead of turning to the Lord for help, his life came to an untimely end (31:4).

Father, no matter how big we may appear on the outside, sometimes we feel very small on the inside. Forgive us for putting up a false front and pretending we're strong enough to handle life on our own. Help us to trust You more. By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Our weakness and fears can often be hid  
Beneath an exterior tough and strong;  
But it's best to admit that we're scared and weak,  
And trust in the Lord to whom we belong.  
—Fitzhugh

Fear fades as faith grows.

**1 Samuel 18:30** Then the commanders of the Philistines went out to battle, and it happened as often as they went out, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul. So his name was highly esteemed.



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KJV 1 Samuel 18:30 Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by.

NET 1 Samuel 18:30 Then the leaders of the Philistines would march out, and as often as they did so, David achieved more success than all of Saul's servants. His name was held in high esteem.

CSB 1 Samuel 18:30 Every time the Philistine commanders came out to fight, David was more successful than all of Saul's officers. So his name became well known.

ESV 1 Samuel 18:30 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 18:30 The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul's officers, and his name became well known.

NLT 1 Samuel 18:30 Every time the commanders of the Philistines attacked, David was more successful against them than all the rest of Saul's officers. So David's name became very famous.

NRS 1 Samuel 18:30 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 fame became very great.

NJB 1 Samuel 18:30 The Philistine chiefs kept mounting their campaigns but, whenever they did so, David proved more successful than any of Saul's staff; consequently he gained great renown.

NAB 1 Samuel 18:30 (The Philistine chiefs continued to make forays, but each time they took the field, David was more successful against them than any other of Saul's officers, and as a result acquired great fame.)

YLT 1 Samuel 18:30 And the princes of the Philistines come out, and it cometh to pass from the time of their coming out, David hath acted more wisely than any of the servants of Saul, and his name is very precious.

- the princes: Of this war we know no more than that David, whose military skill was greater, was more successful in it, than all the other officers of Saul.
- went forth: 2Sa 11:1
- behaved himself: 1Sa 18:5 Ps 119:99 Da 1:20 Lu 21:15 Eph 5:15
- set by: Heb. precious, 1Sa 2:30 26:21 2Ki 1:13 Ps 116:15 1Pe 2:4,7
- 1 Samuel 18 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID'S "STOCK" CONTINUES TO RISE IN VALUE

**Then the commanders of the Philistines went out to battle, and it happened as often as they went out, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul** - ESV = "David had more success than all the servants of Saul"

**So his name was highly esteemed.** - Young's Literal = "his name is very precious." **Arthur Pink** - AT the close of 1 Samuel 18 there is a striking word recorded which supplies a most blessed line in the typical picture that was furnished by the man after God's own heart. There we read, "David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by"—the marginal reading is still more suggestive: "so that his name was precious." What a lovely foreshadowing was this of Him whose "Name" is "as ointment pouted forth" (Song of Solomon 1:3)! Yes, both to His Father and to His people the name of Christ is "much set by." He has "obtained a more excellent name" than angels bear (Heb. 1:4); yea, He has been given "a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9). "Precious" beyond description is that Name unto His own: they plead it in prayer (John 14:13); they make it their "strong tower" (Prov. 18:10).

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**John Butler - THE PERFORMANCE OF DAVID 1 Samuel 18:30** from [Analytical Bible Expositor - 26 volumes](#)

David's performance is again noted after this incident (cp. 1 Samuel 18:5, 14, 15).

### 1. The Essentialness of his Performance (1 Samuel 18:30)

"The Philistines went forth" (1 Samuel 18:30). David's slaying of two hundred Philistines for their foreskins would provoke Philistia to war. Afflict the enemy and he will counterattack. This attack would call upon David to fight the Philistines and show how essential he was to the army of Israel.

## **2. The Excellence of his Performance (1 Samuel 18:30)**

“After they went forth ... David behaved himself ... wisely” (1 Samuel 18:30). Countering the Philistine attack showed David’s excellent performance as a soldier and citizen.

## **3. The Excelling of his Performance (1 Samuel 18:30)**

“Behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul” (1 Samuel 18:30). Yet Saul disliked David greatly. Saul was an enemy of the best soldiers in his army. Earlier he tried to kill Jonathan who had gallantly started the rout of the Philistines (1 Samuel 14:44). A poor relationship with God will lead to a poor relationship with all that is good.

## **4. The Esteem of his Performance (1 Samuel 18:30)**

“His name was much set by” (1 Samuel 18:30). Much to the consternation of Saul, David was highly esteemed by the Israelites because of his performance. He was very valuable (“much set by” means precious) to his nation.