

Advancing In Wisdom (1 Sam. 18:1-30)

Jonathan And David Make A Covenant (1 Sam. 18:1-4)

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. 2 Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. 3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 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.

- Saul had loved David immediately, and now Jonathan did also.
- Saul now took David into his service, permanently.
- In ancient cultures, you became friends by making a covenant together. This likely meant sharing a sacrifice together.
 - In primitive cultures, people would mix their blood together, or mingle their blood together and drink it. Because the blood stands for the life, this was a way to symbolize that your lives had become intertwined.
 - A covenant created a relationship, but it was also a contract that created obligations. Blood covenants were much more powerful than simply giving your word or signing a document could ever be.
- Jewish people were forbidden to consume blood, so the making of a covenant allowed you to become one by consuming a sacrifice together instead. There was also a covenant of salt that was an eternal and unbreakable bond.

- With the making of a covenant, there might also be exchanges of gifts or of clothing, such as happened here.
- Unfortunately, some people today accuse David and Jonathan of having a homosexual relationship. There's no evidence to support this, and in fact homosexual acts were punishable by death in the Torah.

And David His Ten Thousands! (1 Sam. 18:5-9)

5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved 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. 6 Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. 7 So the women sang as they danced, and said:

"Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

8 Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9 So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

- Notice David's continuing growth as time is passing. Growth, or progress is an important theme in 1 Samuel. David will continue to grow in wisdom and favor.

- Now, we see that David was obedient to Saul. Not only this, he behaved wisely.
- Saul gave him some position of responsibility in the army, although we're not sure what it was. It might have been an administrative position.
- David's acceptance speaks well of his personality and his heart.
- Saul's jealousy is triggered off by the famous song about David killing tens of thousands. Saul quickly jumps to the conclusion that the only additional thing David can have is the kingdom.

Casting Spears (1 Sam. 18:10-11)

10 And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand. 11 And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.

- Again we see the distressing spirit. We shouldn't think that this was a godly prophecy. "Prophecy" can also be used for false prophets.
- Saul seems to be going downhill even further, and he now seems to be engaging in the behavior of demonized people. David is able to escape from him twice.

Saul Afraid Again (1 Sam. 18:12-16)

12 Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul. 13 Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. 14 And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him. 15 Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

- Saul sees that David is being protected by God, and he seems to have been convicted or irritated by David’s very presence.
- Saul gets David out of the palace and makes him a captain of a thousand.
- Now we have this statement that David *went out and came in before the people*. This is a Jewish figure of speech, drawn from how a shepherd would go out and come in in front of his sheep to lead them. It means to be a leader and to act like one, visibly, in front of people.
 - When Solomon became king, he said he didn’t know how to go out and come in.
- See the powerful progression in David’s life. He behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and Yahweh was with him, which made Saul afraid.

A Promise Broken (1 Sam. 18:17-18)

17 Then Saul said to David, “Here is my older 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, “Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him.”

18 So David said to 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?” 19 But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul’s daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

- Watch Saul begin to scheme against David.
- Merab means *increase*, or *multiplication*. Saul’s purpose for this marriage was that David would be killed in battle, and he even pretends to be pious.

- David’s response is humble. But for whatever reason, Saul reneged on this promise and gave her to another man.
- This was a true test for David’s character, as he must continue to work for the king and give the king complete loyalty.

A Plot (1 Sam. 18:20-25)

20 Now Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21 So Saul said, “I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” Therefore Saul said to David a second time, “You shall be my son-in-law today.”

22 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.’”

23 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?” 24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, “In this manner David spoke.”

25 Then Saul said, “Thus you shall say to David: ‘The king does not desire any dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king’s enemies.’” But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

- Michal (“Who is like God?” or “brook, stream”) really loved David. Saul saw it as a way to ensnare David and keep him devoted. He wants to see if David is still favorably disposed to him, and David is still humble. Saul makes a crafty plan!

David Prevails And Grows In Wisdom (1 Sam. 18:26-30)

26 So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law. Now the days had not expired; 27 therefore David arose and went, he and his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife.

28 Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; 29 and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. 30 Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

- David sees it as a great blessing from God to be the king's son-in-law, and he is probably also excited to believe that Saul is zealous. Before the time was up, David fulfills the request, so Saul gives Michal in marriage to him. Saul sees even more clearly that Yahweh is with David, so now he's even more afraid.
- The Philistines then make war, perhaps because of their losses. David's name became highly esteemed in this time period.
- The progression: he behaved wisely; then he behaved wisely in all his ways; finally, he behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul.
- Notice also that this wisdom doesn't grow in a vacuum. It says that ***whenever they went out***, David behaved more wisely than all of them.

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