David’s Success and Saul’s Jealousy

1 Samuel 18:1-30

Key Verse: 18:14

In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him.

**Introduction:**

This passage shows three things; David’s success, Jonathan’s love for David, and Saul’s jealousy. There is great contrast between Jonathan’s spirit and Saul’s spirit. Humanly speaking Jonathan could have envied David. But he loved David. On the other hand Saul ended up envied David. It indicates that our true friendship is not hinged upon our situation or human condition. Rather it is dependent on God-centered heart and Spirit!

I would like to focus on Jonathan’s heart which reflects the heart of our Lord Jesus.

**1.  Read verses 1-4. After David defeats Goliath and reports to Saul, what does Jonathan do? (1, 3, 4) Where does David stay? (2) What do you notice about Jonathan’s good example of being one in spirit with David?**

**1-1) Read verses 1-4.**

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. **2** From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. **3** And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. **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.

**1-2) After David defeats Goliath and reports to Saul, what does Jonathan do? (1, 3, 4)**

a) David loved him as himself.(1)

b) Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. (3)

c) 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. (4) It shows that Jonathon regarded David as his own body.

**1-3) Where does David stay? (2)**

At Saul’s place. Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family.

Saul wants him to serve him.

**1-4) What do you notice about Jonathan’s good example of being one in spirit with David?**

a) Jonathan is also a brave man of faith and spirit who took initiated first attack in 13:3 and the second attack in Micmash in chapter 14 which resulted in great victory. In terms of victorious spirit and faith Jonathan is a lot like David.

b) They are about the same age. Maybe Jonathan is older than David. But one thing is clear. Both of them had a real personal relationship with God.

c) We do not know the reason why Jonathan didn’t step out to confront against Goliath.

i) Maybe he was not available at that moment due to unknown reason.

ii) Maybe his father Saul who knew his son’s character successfully kept him from fighting the giant to save his life.

iii) Or maybe he had lack of faith to challenge the giant.

d) Nevertheless, Jonathan was a man of courage and faith.

But God gave David spirit to win victory against Goliath.

Jonathan is the first born son of a king Saul and David is the last son of a farmer. Jonathan would be expected as the next king by everyone’s anticipation.

e) Notice that it happened after David had finished speaking to Saul.

Jonathan heard David give an explanation of his heart, his faith in the living God, and Jonathan knew that he and David had the same heart; it was heart full of love, and trust in God.

Jonathan saw the same spirit in David—the spirit of believing in the living God and the spirit of fighting for God and God’s people.

He didn’t see David as his rival for fame or the future leader of Israel.

Most people think that Jonathan is the very one who is fearful of David’s success the most. Yet the opposite was true.

He loved David, because what they had in common - a real relationship with the LORD God - was bigger than any difference or throne or human ambition.

f) Then Jonathan and David made a covenant: Jonathan, by all human expectation, would be the next king. David was anointed by the LORD, through the prophet Samuel, to be the next king.

Yet they made a covenant of friendship that would prove stronger than jealousy, envy, and human ambition.

A covenant relationship is a relationship with a binding agreement. Most probably they promised to live for God’s glory and to love each other until death.

They made this friendship covenant before God. But Jonathan’s love for David was not just in words.

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.

When Jonathan gave David the robe and his armor, he meant, “You will be the next king of Israel. You should be dressed and armed as the crown prince. God’s hand is on you, and these rightfully belong to you.”

g) Because Jonathan surrendered to God, he could see the hand of the LORD upon David. He was perfectly willing to set aside his ambition to honor the LORD’s choice.

h) Jonathan took an initiative to love David. He is the image of Jesus Christ who surrendered himself totally to sacrifice him fully on the cross in order to love us. He did not mind to be naked and humiliated to love us.

When Jonathan loved David, he wanted to give him what was most precious and valuable.

This beautiful story reminds us of Jesus’ own perfect love for his people. Jesus called us and made us his friends.

Jesus the prince of heaven stripped his own life to give us eternal life—his eternal gift.

He was naked on the cross in order to have an eternal covenant relationship with us. Jesus became our eternal friend and we, his eternal friends.

Jesus said in John 15:13-14, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”

i) Application: We are Jesus’ friends with special covenant. Let us show our love and friendship to Jesus by offering Jesus our gifts, our genuine love, loyalty and faithfulness to him.

There are known different types of love;

[Agape](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agap%C4%93) -it refers to a "pure," [ideal type](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideal_type) of love. It’s "love of the soul."

[Eros](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eros_(love)) is passionate love, with sensual desire and longing.

[Philia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philia) is loyalty to friends, family, and community. Philia is motivated by practical reasons; one or both of the parties benefit from the relationship.

[Storge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storge) is natural affection, like that felt by parents for offspring.

[Xenia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenia_(Greek)) is a friendship formed between a host and his guest or strangers.

Jonathan has God’s heart and God’s love for his friend (Agape type love)!

j) David couldn’t receive Saul’s armor. It didn’t fit him physically, but more importantly it didn’t fit him spiritually. He and Saul lived for, and were trusting in, different things.

But David could receive Jonathan’s armor, not only because they were more similar in size. More importantly, they shared the same soul. They both loved God, and lived more Him and for others more than themselves.

David and Jonathan both knew that if the circumstances were reversed, David would do the exact same thing for Jonathan - because they had the same soul.

Their positions were exchangeable for God and God’s purpose anytime and anyplace!

k) They loved each other more than the throne of Israel, because they loved the LORD in the same degree more than the throne of Israel per se.

The story of Jonathan and David shows what real love is all about; true selfless and sacrificial love for friends.

Jonathan’s sacrificial love paved the way for David’s kingdom to be established, which is foreshadow of our true King Jesus’ kingdom.

Some perverts say that the relationship between David and Jonathan was homosexual. But this claim can never be supported!

l) Philippians 2:1-10;

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

**6** Who, being in very natureGod, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; **7** rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very natureof a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—

even death on a cross! **9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

**11** and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Another application: We can learn a principle in making true friends and make a true unity in Jesus.

We must make Christian friends who have the same values and faith.

We do not become friends naturally, but we must make friends in God like Jesus and Jonathan.

Like minded, have the same love for God, and having one spirit and the same purpose (same vision/ mission) to serve God’s work together is the principle.

And then we are free from any politically oriented mind and set free from any position or conflicts because our eternal reward is in the Lord Jesus Christ as coheirs in the far world to come!

m) Often times we are surprised at seeing the different value among coworkers!

We are supposed to be different in terms of our opinion but we are godly friends who put God first as our first value in the same mind.

Also Jonathan took an initiative to make friends first. And he sacrificed himself to earn a friend.

May the Lord raise up many Jonathan like servants so that our west coast coworkers are powerfully forming one unit for great spiritual battle!

**2.  Read verses 5-11. How does David carry out what Saul sent him to do? (5a) What was the result? (5b) What sparks Saul’s jealousy? (6-9) How does Saul try to kill David? (10-11)**

**2-1) Read verses 5-11.**

**5** Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul’s officers as well.

**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 timbrels and lyres. **7** As they danced, they sang:

“Saul has slain his thousands,

   and David his tens of thousands.”

**8** Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” **9** And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

**10** The next day an evil**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7687a)**]** spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand **11** and he hurled it, saying to himself, “I’ll pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.

**2-2) How does David carry out what Saul sent him to do? (5a)**

Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful.

**2-3) What was the result? (5b)**

Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul’s officers as well.

**2-4) What sparks Saul’s jealousy? (6-9)**

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**2-5) How does Saul try to kill David? (10-11)**

The next day an evilspirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand **11** and he hurled it, saying to himself, “I’ll pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.

Daviddid not fight back rather he kept his humility before God.

1 Peter 5:6-

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”

**3. Read verses 12-16. Why is David successful? (12, 14)  How does Saul respond to David’s success?  (15)  How do the people of Israel and Judah respond? (16)**

**3-1) Read verses 12-16.**

**12** Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. **13** So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. **14** In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. **15** When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. **16** But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

**3-2) Why is David successful? (12, 14)**

**12** Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. **14** In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him.

**3-3) How does Saul respond to David’s success?  (15)**

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**3-4) How do the people of Israel and Judah respond? (16)**

**16** But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

**4.  Read verses 17-30. What is Saul’s plan for getting rid of David? (17)  What happens as a result? (18-19)  What is Saul’s second plan for getting rid of David? (20-25) What happens as result? (26-27)  What caused Saul to become more afraid of David? (28-29)  What happens as the Philistines and the Israelites continue to fight? (30)**

**4-1) Read verses 17-30.**

**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!”

**18** But David said to Saul, “Who am I, and what is my family or my clan in Israel, that I should become the king’s son-in-law?”**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. **20** Now Saul’s daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they told Saul about it, he was pleased. **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.” **22** Then Saul ordered his attendants: “Speak to David privately and say, ‘Look, the king likes you, and his attendants all love you; now become his son-in-law.’” **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.” **24** When Saul’s servants told him what David had said, **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.

**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, **27** David took his men with him and went out and killed two hundred Philistines and brought back their foreskins. They counted out the full number to the king so that David might become the king’s son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage. **28** When Saul realized that the Lord was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, **29** Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days. **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.

**4-2) What is Saul’s plan for getting rid of David? (17)**

**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!”

**4-3) What happens as a result? (18-19)**

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**4-6) What caused Saul to become more afraid of David? (28-29)**

**28** When Saul realized that the Lord was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, **29** Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

**4-7) What happens as the Philistines and the Israelites continue to fight? (30)**

**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.

**In conclusion:**

Today’s passage is kind of self-explanatory except Jonathan’s extraordinary love. It is remarkable to see Jesus’ like mind and love from Jonathan in loving his friend, David. May the Lord raise up many servants who are selfless and sacrificial before God. Especially we may share the same purpose, vision, and spirit in this Spring and Summer Bible conferences.

One word: Jonathan love David as himself