

David and Jonathan

“A Model of Deep and Loyal Friendship”

Key Characters in the Story:

Samuel: a prophet of God who reliably spoke the word of God (I Samuel 3:19-21)

Saul: Jonathan’s father and King of Israel. He was a large and good looking man, and had some leadership and military successes. Became king when 30 years old, reigned 42 years. Was a moody man who suffered from depression and jealousy. Disobeyed God, and lost his right to his kingship. Committed suicide during a losing battle that also cost Jonathan his life.

Jonathan: Saul’s son and heir to the throne. Jonathan was a mighty soldier in his own right. Jonathan was a constant friend of David, even when Saul insisted that David was his arch-rival and tried to hunt David down. Jonathan put David ahead of his own interests and literally saved David’s life, yet was never disloyal to his father Saul.

David: A lowly shepherd boy who eventually becomes King of Israel. He married Saul’s daughter Michal and became brother-in-law to Jonathan. When Saul decided to kill David, David did not respond in kind and in fact did not kill Saul when he had golden opportunities to do so.

Mephibosheth: The last surviving member of the house of Saul and was Jonathan’s son.

Much can be learned from the friendship of Jonathan and David. They were both princes of Israel – one by birth, one by marriage. They were both in line to assume the throne of Israel. Both were mighty men of valor, and were respected and trusted by the men they led into battle. Each had accomplished great feats, relying on God for victory. They were zealous, driven, resourceful, courageous, bold, meek, humble and so much more. They knew and respected government, wielded authority and zealously served those under and over them. They were loyal to one another *and* to their king.

Jonathan and David could have become enemies and rivals, yet they set aside jealousy, resentment, bitterness, competition and lust for power, choosing instead to become the closest of friends. They knew how and when to laugh together, cry and show their emotions together, sharing hopes and dreams, thereby cementing their friendship forever. They were real “manly” men and at the same time able to show the true, proper and right love of a brotherly friendship, willing to lay down their lives for one another.

Some of the story:

I Samuel chapter 16 & 17:

- Samuel anoints David as the future king
- David comes to live with Saul and serves him
- David comforted Saul, and Saul liked David very much (16:21-23)
- David killed Goliath and became a great military leader and national hero

I Samuel 18:

- David became very close with Jonathan (18:1-4)
- Saul becomes jealous of David and his success and popularity
- David marries Saul's daughter Michal

I Samuel 19:

- Saul tries to kill David, but Jonathan has David's back (19:1-7)

I Samuel 20:

- David and Jonathan cement their deep friendship and make a covenant between themselves and their descendants (20:12-17, 41-42)

I Samuel 31:1-4: Saul & Jonathan die

2 Samuel 9:1-13:

- David sought out Jonathan's descendants so that he could show kindness to them. He found Jonathan's son Mephibosheth and showed him great honor, respect and kindness

2 Samuel 19:24-30:

- Mephibosheth was very appreciative of David and had great loyalty to him

SOME KEY RELATIONSHIP PRINCIPLES:

- Great relationships are built on Kindness
- Great relationships are built on Loyalty
- Great relationships are built on Commitment
- A true friendship stands the test of trials and time
- A true friendship rises above potential resentment, bitterness, competition and lust for power
- A true friend is willing to sacrifice and put other's interests above her own
- Jealousy destroys relationships
- Great relationships last beyond the grave
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