

FIRST SAMUEL
A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 18

- Vv. 1- 4 *David's covenant with Jonathan.* David's spirit was of such nature that Jonathan was immediately attracted to him. David made a covenant with Jonathan which was later renewed. The effect of the covenant was that David and Jonathan agreed not to harm each other. In case of the death of either the other agreed not to harm the descendants of the deceased.
- Vv. 5- 9 *Saul's jealousy of David.* David carried out all of his responsibilities with effectiveness. He won such favor in the eyes of the people that he became a national hero. The song which the people sang concerning the exploits of Saul and David aroused the jealousy of Saul because it was more favorable to David than it was to Saul.
- Vv. 10-16 *David driven out of Saul's court.* Saul's jealousy became so intense that he tried to kill David, not once but twice. Finally David was sent from the court to serve with the army in a distant outpost.
- Vv. 17-30 *David, the king's son-in-law.* It was understood by the men in the army that whoever slew Goliath would become the king's son-in-law, but Saul shamed David in the sight of Israel by giving his oldest daughter Merab to another man. When Saul found out that Michal loved David, he attempted to ensnare David by having him kill 100 Philistines as a dowry. When David did twice what was expected of him, Saul could hardly refuse to give Michal to him as his wife. This Saul did

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although he knew that all Israel loved David greatly and he himself feared David more and more.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Kindred spirits are attracted to one another.* Though Saul was afraid of David, Saul's son Jonathan was a good man and found a fast friend in David. David's speech before Saul after David had killed the giant was of such humble nature that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David immediately. Men today often find their closest friends among fellow workers in the church. Such ought to be the case with God's people. Their closest friends ought to be those who are of like precious faith.
2. *Two wrongs do not make a right.* David did what was expected of him even though Saul treated him shamefully. He must have been tempted to retaliate against Saul's injustices, but the idea of gaining revenge never gained the upper hand in David's thinking. It seemed that the more Saul oppressed David the more faithful David was to the tasks assigned him by Saul. David's actions remind us of the injunction of the apostle Paul to "overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

Saul's Reception of David Into His Court, 18:1-30.

David's Covenant With Jonathan. 18:1-4

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.

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

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.

1. *What took place between David and Jonathan when he told about his family? 18:1-4*

David's victory over Goliath was a turning-point in his life, which opened the way to the throne. This deed brought him out of the rural shepherd life to the scene of Israel's wars. In these wars Jehovah blessed all his undertakings with success. It also brought him, on the other hand, into such a relation to the royal house, which had been rejected by God, though it still continued to reign, as produced lasting and beneficial results in connection with his future calling. In the king himself, from whom the Spirit of God had departed, there was soon stirred up such jealousy of David as his rival to whom the kingdom would one day come, that he attempted at first to get rid of him by stratagem. When this failed, and David's renown steadily increased, he proceeded to open hostility and persecution. Jonathan, however, clung more and more firmly to David with self-effacing love and sacrifice. This friendship on the part of the son of the king not only helped David to bear the more easily all the enmity and persecution of the king but awakened and strengthened in him a pure feeling of unswerving fidelity towards the king himself.

2. *Why did David remain permanently with Saul? 18:2*

When David first came to Saul's court, he went to and fro to feed his father's sheep (17:15). His habit must have been to spend some time with Saul, then as Saul would show improvement, David would be free to go back to his father's house. If Saul's condition deteriorated, David would be called again to the court. After David slew the giant he vaulted into such a prominent place in the life of Israel that Saul kept him with him permanently.

This change of his schedule must not have been because of the worsening of Saul's condition, but rather the fact that his courage had been demonstrated in such a way as to make his services in constant demand.

3. *Why did Jonathan give his armor to David? 18:4*

As a sign and pledge of his friendship, Jonathan gave David his clothes and his armor. This seems to have been a common custom of very ancient times. The manifestation of Jonathan's love is seen in the covenant. Saul had earlier been willing to clothe David in his armor, but his was a temporary measure. Jonathan's gift was a permanent bestowal of honor and favor.

4. *When did David become Saul's armor-bearer? 18:4*

When Absalom was brought back from Gilead, he prepared a chariot of horses and fifty men to run before him (II Samuel 15:1). Saul did not have as much equipage, but he must have had several armor-bearers. When David first came to be with Saul, Saul loved him greatly, and David became his armor-bearer (16:21). Since David came and went and was not constantly at Saul's court, David was probably not his only armor-bearer. After he killed Goliath, it would appear that David was made Saul's personal armor-bearer. Saul set David over his men of war. This prominent position given to David was pleasing in the sight of the people. The servants who were under David's jurisdiction were also pleased with his leadership.

Saul's Jealousy of David. 18:5-9

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.

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 music.

7 And the women answered *one another* as they played, and said,

Saul hath slain his thousands,
and David his ten thousands.

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?

9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

5. *What caused Saul's anger after David had defeated the Philistines? 18:7, 8*

The eulogies of the women who greeted the returning army roused the jealousy of Saul. He therefore removed David from service near his person and appointed him over a band of soldiers in the field. David's activity and discretion were such that his hold on the people increased, which increased also Saul's jealousy. Michal, the younger daughter of Saul fell in love with David; and Saul made this an occasion for exposing David to new dangers. David's success in this instance added to the king's dislike, which became a settled hatred. At one point we are told of Saul's attempt to murder David. At another point, we are told of Saul's unfulfilled promise to give his older daughter to David. All these are but expressions of Saul's growing hatred.

6. *What is the meaning of Saul's eyeing David? 18:9*

Saul was so jealous of David that he kept him under constant surveillance. He was especially cognizant of all honors bestowed on him and heard with displeasure the songs that the women sang about David. From that day forward, Saul watched David's every move. He was evidently watching to see if he could find some flaw in him. Had David made a wrong step, Saul would have been

quick to condemn him and perhaps dishonor him or even kill him. Each of David's victories must have brought added displeasure and jealousy for Saul. Every favor bestowed on David must have given him acute mental anguish. He was indeed filled with an evil spirit.

David Driven Out of Saul's Court. 18:10-16

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.

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.

12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.

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.

14 And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord *was* with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

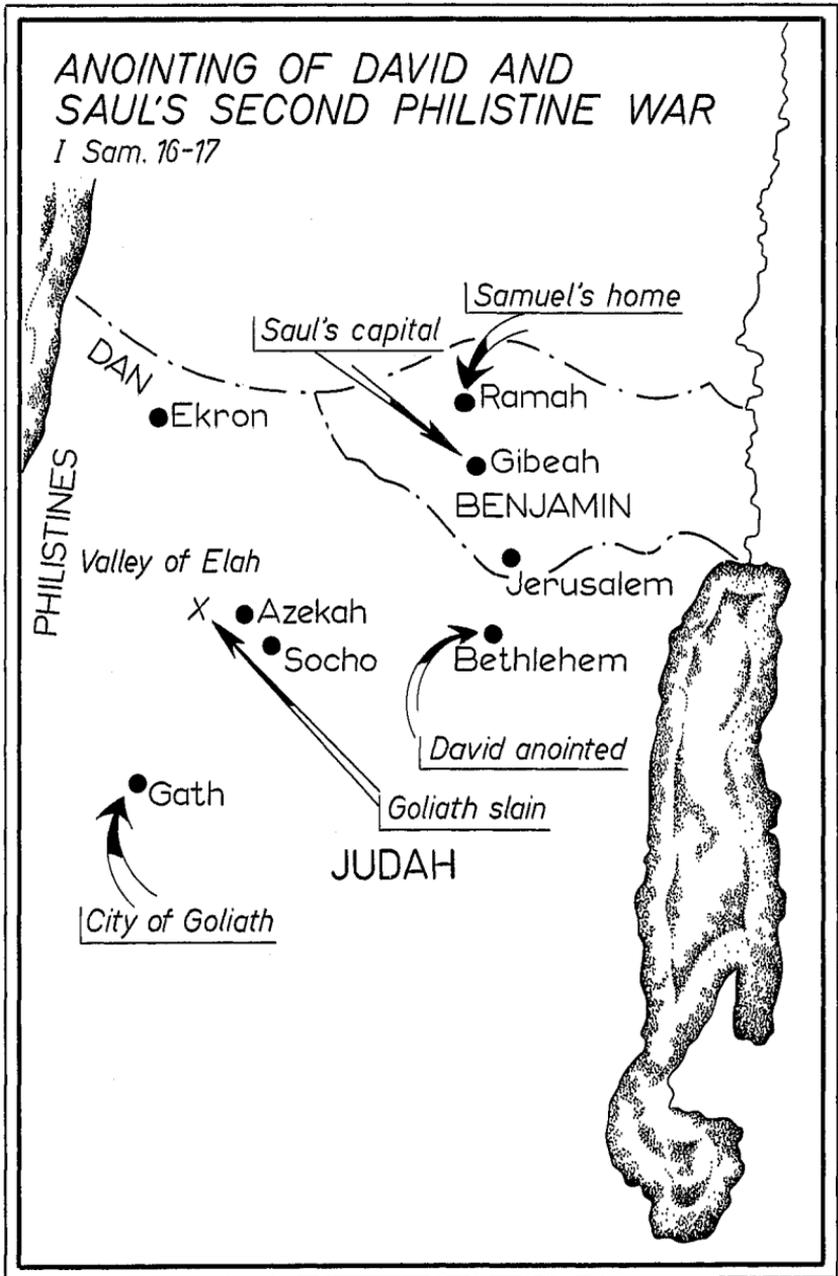
16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

7. How could Saul prophesy? 18:10

The evil spirit that came upon Saul was a supernatural influence. It was more than jealousy. Saul may have left himself open for the seizure of the evil spirit by falling into moods of melancholia. His condition may have been aggravated by the nearly insane jealousy he felt towards David. His condition was quite unnatural. The spirit of the living God not only filled his servants that they might reveal the truth, but Satan worked with all power and signs and lying wonders among his servants (II Thessalon-

ANOINTING OF DAVID AND SAUL'S SECOND PHILISTINE WAR

I Sam. 16-17





General view of the valley of Elah

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ians 2:9). Saul was filled with an evil spirit, and his prophesying was not done in truth.

8. *How did David escape twice? 18:11*

The exact nature of Saul's attack on David is not made clear from this verse. He did have a javelin in his hand as David played before him. Saul threw the javelin, intending to pin David to the wall with it. The fact that David escaped once would be enough, but the statement is made that he escaped twice. Some commentators feel that Saul swung the javelin. If this were the case, David ducked and escaped the blow. Saul may then have swung again, and David dodged again. This kind of action does not fit the description of Saul's intention to pin David to the wall. It would be better to view this as a statement that this kind of an attack was made not only once but twice.

9. *Why did Saul make David captain over a thousand? 18:13*

Saul's jealousy of David turned into fear. The Lord was with David and blessed him, but an evil spirit was in possession of Saul. Saul removed David from being his armor-bearer, not because he thought David would seek revenge, but because the constant aggravation and irritation of his presence was more than Saul could take. He also felt that David would be in great danger out in the field of battle. He made him a captain over a thousand men (18:16). David never made a wrong step. He behaved himself very wisely. He gave Saul no occasion to find fault in him. David's blameless conduct caused Saul to be more and more afraid of him. For this reason Israel and Judah loved David. Once again a distinction is made between the eleven other tribes and the leading tribe of Judah. Such a reference is not an indication of the books being written after the schism, but rather a manifestation of the fact that God had chosen Judah to be the leading tribe. David's conduct brought him into

such a place of prominence that he was like Joshua, who was chosen to take Moses' place as Israel's leader. As Moses was laying down the reins of government, he prayed that the Lord would set a man over the congregation who would go out before them and come in before them. This man's responsibility was to lead them out and bring them in. As Moses said, he had this responsibility so that the congregation of the Lord "be not as sheep which have no shepherd" (Numbers 27:17). Solomon used this same kind of reference to indicate his place of leadership as their wise king. Solomon said that he did not know how to "go out and come in" (II Chronicles 1:10). David must have had a place of very great prominence as his irreproachable character and wise conduct won much favor for him.

David the King's Son-in-law. 18:17-30

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.

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?

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.

20 And Michal Saul's daughter loved David. and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.

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.

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.

23 And Saul's servants spake these 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?

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner spake David.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but a 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.

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.

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.

28 And Saul saw and knew that the Lord *was* with David, and *that* Michal Saul's daughter loved him.

29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

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.

10. *Who was Merab?* 18:17

Merab was Saul's oldest daughter by Ahinoam, Saul's wife (14:50). Saul's men understood that whoever killed Goliath would become the king's son-in-law. Since Merab was his older daughter and as yet unmarried, he promised

to give her to David as his wife. He asked additional service on David's part as he entered into this covenant. He charged him to be valiant for Saul and to fight the Lord's battles. Saul was not at all anxious for David to continue his valiant service, but he was hoping that if David went into battle against the Philistines, the Philistines might kill him. Saul would thereby be freed from the threat to his throne. David was humbled by this promised honor. He did not count himself worthy of being the king's son-in-law. He did not count his life to be of much effect and evidently fought the Philistines without regard for his own safety.

11. *Why was Saul's promise not kept? 18:19*

Saul showed himself to be a very wicked king. He not only set David in positions where his life would be endangered and threatened his life on a number of occasions, but he failed to keep his word to David. A character study of Saul would reveal that he was jealous, fearful and dishonorable. He became a complexity of evil motives and deeds. When it was time that he should be married to Merab, Saul betrayed him and gave Merab to be the wife of Adriel, a Meholathite.

12. *Who was Michal? 18:20*

Michal was Saul's younger daughter. Her mother was also Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz (14:50). Michal loved David, and this information was brought to Saul. He saw in Michal's association with David an opportunity to lay a snare for David. He proposed that David would be his son-in-law by marrying Michal, but he demanded a dowry of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. The servants of Saul were sent to find out David's reaction to such a proposal. David felt that he was being mocked by the king and said, "seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law" (18:23). He evidently believed that Saul was toying with him, and he did not think it was a laughing matter. In other words, David took the proposal

seriously and was willing to do whatever was honorable to be given the hand of Michal in marriage.

13. *Why did Saul demand the foreskins of David? 18:25*

Jacob worked for seven years in order to receive the hand of Rachel in marriage (Genesis 29:28). Saul demanded a very unusual dowry from David in the form of 100 foreskins of the Philistines. Hardly any personal advantage came to Saul by demanding such a dowry. He was evidently trying to place David in such a dangerous situation that David could not escape. If David went out to kill one hundred Philistines and one of them killed him, then Saul would have removed this constant source of aggravation. Once again David showed himself willing to give more than could be expected of him. He not only killed a hundred Philistines, but doubled the number. He killed two hundred men and brought their foreskins to Saul.

14. *What is the meaning of the phrase, "in full tale"? 18:27*

There was no lack of any in the total of two hundred foreskins. The number was not one hundred ninety-nine. It was a full two hundred, just twice as many as Saul had demanded. This phrase is an old English phrase from which we sometimes get the expression, "all told." We may make reference to there being two hundred people, "all told," at some kind of meeting. This expression has persisted in our language from the old English way of saying that a number was fully counted.

15. *Why did the princes of the Philistines go forth? 18:30*

The princes of the Philistines probably went out to avenge the killing of two hundred of their men by David as he satisfied the beastly whim of king Saul. They went forth to battle against the Israelites as they probably did on a number of occasions. David behaved himself wisely as ever. His behavior was better than that of any of the other servants of Saul so that his reputation grew better

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and better. His reputation even spread into Philistia, and all the Israelites came to depend upon him greatly. The Philistines feared him as a mighty man of war, and the Israelites looked to him as a champion of their cause.

CHAPTER 18 IN REVIEW

1. What was the name of Saul's son? _____
2. What items did Saul's son give David? _____
3. How many slain did the people ascribe to David? _____
4. How many slain did the people ascribe to Saul? _____
5. To whom did Saul give his older daughter in marriage? _____
6. What was the name of the daughter of Saul whom David married? _____
7. What rank did David hold in Saul's army? _____
8. How many men did he have under him? _____
9. How many foreskins of Philistines did Saul demand of David as a dowry? _____
10. How many foreskins did David secure? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 19

- Vv. 1- 7 *Jonathan intercedes for David.* Jonathan spoke kindly to Saul on David's behalf. He brought the two together again.