

**BIG WORD: 1 Samuel**  
Homework for Chapters 18—20  
Discussion Dates: 25 April 2012 (in house)  
and 26 April 2012 (online)

---

**DAY ONE: Overview**

PRAY for the Holy Spirit to clear your mind so that you may focus on God's Word without distractions or preconceptions. Ask Him to help you discern only what He wants for you in this reading and for this day.

READ: 1 Samuel 18—20.

If possible, read all three chapters in one sitting. Make notes of any details that stick out to you, questions that rise and/or personal insights God gives you while you read.

---

**DAY TWO: Life After Goliath**

Chapter 18 begins immediately after David's battle with Goliath and the Israelites' victory over the Philistines. At the end of chapter 17 we see Saul his commander inquiring about David's identity. Just a few verses later, they give him authority over the whole army. Saul doesn't really care about David's faith in God but, as is his M.O., the king aligns himself with men whom he believes to be the strongest.

David's victory over Goliath results in a while new life for the shepherd boy. Based on 18:1—7, what changes did he face?

David was probably a teenager at the time. Numbers 1:3 tells us that men entered the Israelite army at age twenty. Only David's three eldest brothers qualified for this particular battle with the Philistines. As the youngest of eight boys – and we don't know the birth order of his sisters – David could not have been much more than fifteen, if he was even that old. Yet here Saul gives him a position in the army with authority over others. His resume may have been diverse, but none of it warranted the grand roles thrust upon him.

What challenges might he have faced as a result of being such an exception to the rule?

How did the people respond to his rapid promotion?

---

### **DAY THREE: Saul's Change of Heart**

READ 1 Samuel 18:6—15.

Describe the return of the armies. How did the people respond?

Scripture doesn't tell us of Jonathan or David's response to the parade. How do you think they felt at this welcome?

We do know Saul's response. It is quite different from his previous adoration.

It shouldn't surprise us that Saul exhibits inconsistency in his favor of David. We've seen Saul evidence more than a little bi-polarity over the course of his life, and this trend continues with this new relationship. How quickly the king forgets who just saved him and his people!

What sparked the change in Saul's heart this time?

Warren Wiersbe wrote this:

*“From the beginning of his new assignment [as a high-ranking officer in the Jewish army], David found himself in a life-threatening conflict with King Saul. David didn’t create problems for Saul; he revealed the deep-seated problems that were already there.”*

Do you agree with this statement? What “deep-seated problems” did God bring to light through David?

When we read of yet another harmful spirit from God, we may immediately think God cruel and inconsistent. But we know that God is loving and that His intentions are always kind. Reconciling these two truths – a good God with a harmful spirit -- what reason may God have for doing this?

Can you think of a time when God used something painful to turn you back to Him? Was it effective?

---

#### **DAY FOUR: Marrying a Princess**

Staring at Goliath, his huge brothers and the whole Philistine army behind him, Saul got a bit desperate. He made an offer to anyone who would fight the towering giant. Not only did Israel's king promise great riches and a life free of taxes for the warrior's whole family, but he also offered his daughter's hand in marriage. Who wouldn't want to be rich, tax-exempt and married to a princess?

David may have wanted that, but he clearly remembered who he was. How did he respond when Saul offered his daughter?

David's response is curious. He likely didn't know about Saul's ulterior motives. What do you think about David's answer? Was it humble or insulting to the royal family? Why?

Saul had two daughters: Merab and Michal. Merab was offered first, but, after David's response to the king's offer, she was suddenly given to Adriel the Meholathite instead.

We know nothing about Adriel except that ...

1. He was married to one of Saul's daughters.
2. He was from Meholah, also called "Abel-Meholah" or "the meadow of the dance" in 1 Kings 19:16. Most believe this place was west of the Jordan near the borders of Issachar and Manasseh.
3. He had at least five children, all of whom David eventually sacrificed to the Gibeonites (2 Samuel 21:8).

When Saul learned that his second daughter, Michal, loved David, he agreed to give her to him, believing her to be a snare. That is, if the wedding ever actually took place. Saul set a dangerous bride price hoping that the pursuit of it would cost David his life. What price did Saul demand?

David not only acquired the price for Michal, he doubled it. Has his perspective about marrying the king's daughter changed? What might have made the difference?

READ 1 Samuel 18:28-29. Whom did Saul fear? Why?

Whom should he have feared?

---

### **DAY FIVE: Saul's Pursuits**

Saul's pursuits of David began with a flinging spear, but soon transformed into superficial offers of marriage to his daughters. He didn't truly desire to reward David; he wanted to snare David and invite his death by the hands of the Philistines. When those plans didn't succeed, Saul's plotting grew more intense and personal.

Whom does Saul claim as his ally against David?

What advice does he receive?

Who defends and protects David? Whom does he trust with his life?

READ 1 Samuel 19:20—24. The Spirit of God comes upon – first, Saul's many troupes of men – but then upon Saul again, this time compelling him to lie naked and prophesy before the whole town. What do you make of this?

In chapter 20 we read of the famous encounter between David and Jonathan, the last evidence, so to speak, of Saul's malicious intent against David. Note any specific observations you make of this passage.

READ Psalm 59.

This psalm was written by David when Saul sent men to watch over his house in order to kill him. What does it reveal of David's mindset?

What of his character can we apply to our own lives?

---

## **DAY SIX: Jonathan's Devotion**

READ 1 Samuel 18:1—5.

As we learn from Numbers 1:3, men entered the Israelite army at age 20. Jonathan was a champion and a commander long before David came on the scene. Based on the timelines and the laws, we can easily surmise that Jonathan was at least twenty years older than David. Some scholars believe their age difference was closer to thirty years.

What was Jonathan's motivation for befriending young David?

What significance is there to Jonathan's gifts toward David? Is it just an act of kindness or is there symbolic meaning?

Consider Saul's perspective. What would he have thought of his son's new friendship?

READ 1 Samuel 21.

Clearly Jonathan's devotion to David was stronger than his devotion to his father and earthly king. In fact, this loyalty threatened Jonathan's own future as heir to the throne. We don't know whether he was privy to Samuel's proclamation against Saul or David's private anointing as the throne's successor. If he did know, it's possible Jonathan was simply aligning with the side of God. If he didn't, however, his commitment to David is more than selfless. It's to his demise.

Many have criticized this relationship as unnatural, even homosexual. What is your response to this?

READ Proverbs 18:24. Have you ever had a friend that sticks closer than a brother?

What creates or fosters such a relationship? What inhibits it?

---

## **DAY SEVEN: The Humble Fugitive**

READ Psalm 27.

By his own words, we can affirm where David put his trust. His faith seems unshakable. For sure he was human, as is evidenced clearly in his later life, but his

spiritual perspective remained steadfast. He knew who was Lord. He consistently upheld God's rightful position over him.

David also knew he would be king one day, but he didn't know when. God used all the trials and triumphs of his waiting to prepare him for the throne.

How could each of these factors have prepared David for a successful kingship?

- Love and friendship:
- Praise and popularity:
- Military leadership:
- Marriage:
- Observing the royal family closely:
- Being the object of envy and hatred:
- Living in exile: