

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## 1 SAMUEL 16-18

Israel desired a king for all the wrong reasons. Even so, God would've appointed a king on His own terms if the people had not forced the issue.

Before the nation's establishment God had a king in mind for Israel. As far back as Genesis 49, Jacob prophesied that a scepter (*or ruler*) would rise from Judah. In Deuteronomy 17 God anticipated a king by providing rules for his conduct.

I believe God already had a man picked out to be king of Israel. It was to David that God made incredible promises - ultimately fulfilled by His heir, King Jesus.

But here's an important lesson. So often, our desires and God's desires are not so far apart. We want a good job - we're seeking meaningful relationships - we're working to accumulate necessary resources - God wants the same for us...

The conflict comes in *why* we want these blessings - and *how* we go about getting them - and whether we're willing to *wait* on God to bring them about.

Our desires can run unchecked - spin out of control - or they can be governed by faith. By forcing the issue, Israel's *desire for a king* led to an *undesirable king*. Be careful forcing God's hand. *Uncontrolled desires lead to undesirable ends.*

It didn't take Saul long to prove that he was unfit to be king. His failure to obey God after his victory over the Amalekites caused God to reject Saul's kingdom.

I believe it was God's intention all along to give them a king... but a godly king, a spiritual king, a king with character, a king with faith... *all that Saul was not.*

Chapter 16, "Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons." God has rejected Saul, and is about to choose a replacement.

"And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me."

Chapter 15:34 tells us that Samuel was in Ramah, and Saul was in Gibeah.

To travel from Ramah to Bethlehem you had to pass through Gibeah – right by Saul's house. And Samuel knew if the king learned the purpose of his mission he would try to kill him. Saul had become an impulsive, paranoid, egotistical tyrant...

In chapter 14 Saul proved how far he'd go to protect his ego. Rather than admit a rash vow, he tried to kill his own son, Jonathan. Saul had become a madman.

God provides Samuel a cover... "The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' "Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."

When Saul hears the phrase "sacrifice to the LORD" he'll lose interest. Saul is all about Saul. Jesse, on the other hand, will be happy to join in an act of worship.

“So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"

And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice."

Then he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him." Samuel took one look at Jesse's oldest boy – and thought, *"This has got to be God's choice - he's so strong and handsome."*

But that's exactly what they said of Saul. Once again, Samuel is about to choose a king for all the wrong reasons. He's looking only as far as his eyes can see.

Construction experts claim that today's homebuyers use the wrong criteria when they search for a house.... They agonize over the wrong features - *the size of the bathtub, and the width of the crown molding...* rather than the stuff that's really important – *the size of the floor joists and strength of the foundation.*

Usually their decisions are based on stuff they can see – surface elements.

They want a home with flash and splash. This may be how people choose a home, but it's not how God chooses servants to bless and use. God looks at foundational issues. Man looks at appearance. God looks at substance.

The Lord rescues Samuel from his shallow evaluation in verse 7... "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." God rips off the veneer, and cuts right to the core.

Image, stature, wardrobe, physical attractiveness, pious posturing never factor into God's analysis. When God sizes a person up He puts the tape measure not around the person's brain, or biceps, or waistline - but around their heart.

In one of Arthur Conan Doyle's novels, the hero, Sherlock Holmes, makes the statement, "The most attractive woman I ever knew was hanged for poisoning three little children for their insurance money." So much for appearance...

The book "*The Faces of Greatness*" contains photographs of the faces of 90 famous people. Of the 90 faces... 70 have noticeable blemishes - 35 have moles or warts - 13 have multiple freckles or liver spots - 20 have obvious acne or other pimples - and 2 have highly visible scars. Yet, each one of these 70 people overcame a *flawed appearance* by a possessing a *courageous heart*.

God doesn't care about a person's appearance... *and neither should we*. The color of the skin - or cost of the clothes - or cut of the hair is irrelevant to God.

If a guy comes into our church with a purple Mohawk - a facial tattoo - and a hardware store full of body-piercings let's not sit back with a judgmental attitude. Let's reach out in love,

and look beyond the outward appearance to the heart.

Our job is to represent God, not our own bias and preference.

Sometimes God uses people who don't fit the mold – or don't look the part - just to remind us His qualifications and requirements are different from our own.

I'll never forget the night I made a hospital call on my motorcycle. I parked my bike in the clergy parking lot. The attendant couldn't believe a pastor would wear a black jacket, and ride a motorcycle. She was sizing me up based on the outward appearance. That's how man judges... but God looks deeper - at the heart.

Verse 8 “So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."

Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." Jesse has seven strikes against him.

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here."

God is about to choose the runt of the litter – the kid brother - the caboose of the family! Imagine God rejects a line-up of Wallys in order to pick the Beav...

“So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with

bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!"

"Ruddy" means he had a rugged complexion. He probably had zits and a few acne scars. "Bright eyes" could be a reference to blue-eyes – unusual for a Jew. Imagine a Middle School age, blue-eyed, pimped-face Jew with wavy black hair. He'd been in the fields for days, and no doubt stunk and smelled like sheep...

This is God's choice to be king... *What you see is not always what you get.*

It's been said, "Saul had the appearance of a king, but the heart of a peasant - while David had the appearance of a peasant, but the heart of a king."

When it comes to the people God uses – *you can't just a book by its cover.*

Church history is full of examples of men used greatly by God who were initially passed over by mission boards and pulpit committees. They lacked training, and experience, and credentials – but God saw in them the intangibles. God saw qualities the gift inventories and the psychological exams didn't measure.

It's interesting to me that God Himself seems to emphasize that David had little to offer on his own. The text doesn't even mention David's name until after he's been anointed king... *not until verse 13, when the Holy Spirit comes upon him.*

When David strolls in from the fields, God tells Samuel, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and

the Spirit of the LORD came upon *David* from that day forward.”

In September 1993, the second place Montreal Expos were chasing the first place Philadelphia Phillies. Trailing 7-4 the Expos had two men on base, when the manager decided to pinch hit. He sent to the plate a rookie named *Curtis Pride*.

On the first pitch, Curtis laced a double, driving in both runners. It was Curtis Pride’s first big league hit, and the 47,000 fans were screaming their lungs out.

That’s when the third base coach motioned for Curtis to tip his hat to the crowd. But Curtis didn’t understand. He thought there was a problem with his helmet.

You see Curtis is 95% deaf. Finally, it dawned on him, he should tip his hat.

After the game, a reporter asked Curtis if he could hear the cheering of the crowd. Curtis pointed to his heart - and said, “Here... I could hear it here.”

This is why God chose David. Saul was governed by circumstances and other people’s opinions. David followed his heart. He was motivated by conviction.

He *listened* and *loved* and *longed* for God with his heart.

He *prayed* and *petitioned* and *praised* God with his heart.

He *feared* and *followed* and *fought* for God with his heart.

David is forever known as *a man after God’s own heart*. This is what God looks for in a leader.

Verse 13 “So Samuel arose and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit

from the LORD troubled him.”

God removes the hedge of protection from Saul. The Holy Spirit comes upon David. But an “evil”, “demonic”, “distressing spirit” begins to torment Saul.

And it’s interesting how this distressing spirit is corralled...  
“And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you. Let our master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp; and it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well." So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me.”

The antidote to the distressing spirit was a skillful musician who could play the praise of God. Praise and worship can drive out the evil spirit that torments Saul.

One author writes, “Satan is allergic to praise, so where there is massive, triumphant praise, Satan is paralyzed, bound, and banished.” I agree.

To Satan, praise is like the sound of fingernails clawing a chalkboard. When we worship God it grates at him. It causes him to cover up his pointed-ears, and flee.

“Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him.”

Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." And Jesse took a



donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them by his son David to Saul. So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer.”

David is brought to Gibeah to serve in the royal court. “Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, “Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight.”

“And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul” Notice God sent the evil spirit. Even evil spirits, or demons, are under God’s control. Whenever the demon tortured Saul “David would take a harp and play it with his hand.”

Evidently, David was a skilled musician. 2 Samuel 23:1 refers to David as “the sweet psalmist of Israel.” David wrote at least 73 psalms – that’s almost half of the Hebrew hymnbook. David played the harp or lyre – the guitar of his day.

And when David played his lyre and sang praises to God... “Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.”

We don’t usually think of *worship and warfare* as going together, but they do.

Praise to God reminds Satan of his inferiority and the folly of his insurrection. When we glorify God, Satan must either stop the praise, or drop his diabolical work, and run. This is what happened when Saul went into one of his funks.

David was called in to praise the Lord, and as he did, the demon departed.

On occasion an emotional cloud will roll in on me like a sudden summer storm. I've learned to recognize such moods as spiritual attacks, and a sure cure against them is to stop what I'm doing, and spend some time worshipping the Lord. When you do the cloud will roll out as quickly as it rolled in.  
*Praise is powerful!*

Chapter 17 “Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered together at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.” The Valley of Elah is one mile wide. And there's a brook – about 20 feet wide – that cuts through the valley, and overflows during the rainy season.

On our trips to Israel we visit the Valley of Elah. Today, wheat rises where armies stood. The picture on the back of your AS is from the Valley of Elah.

Verse 4 “And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.” About 9'9” tall...

Goliath was three inches shy of bumping his head on a basketball goal. Here's an artist's rendition of Goliath... oops, wrong Goliath. How about this one...

It's interesting that non-biblical historians have also reported men of enormous height. Herodotus, Diodorus, Siculus, and

Pliny all mentioned people 7 cubits tall.

A man named Robert Wadlow was 8'11" when he died on July 15, 1940.

Goliath's enormous height seems strange to us, but it's not without precedent.

**“He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was 5000 shekels of bronze.”** Goliath's body armor weighed 150 pounds. A coat of mail consisted of metal strips sewn together with leather. Goliath's armor had the strength of steel and flexibility to fight.

**“He had bronze greaves on his legs”** These greaves were like a catcher's shin guards. And he had **“a bronze javelin between his shoulders.”**

**“Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam.”** This was a stout timber, 2½ to 3 inches in diameter. Throwing this spear was like hurling a balance beam... **“And his iron spearhead weighed 600 shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him.”** Goliath carried a huge spear - its head alone weighed 20 pounds.

Imagine the strength it took to junk his spear. If Goliath were around today we'd all accuse him of taking steroids. And he may've been guilty of far worse...

The word translated *“giant”* is the Hebrew word *“nephilim”*. And it's used in Genesis 6 for the offspring of the *sons of God*, and *daughters of men*.

In the Old Testament, *“sons of God”* refers to angels.

It's possible that fallen angels, or demons, had taken human form, and had sexual relations with women on earth. Jude calls them, "the angels who did not keep their proper domain". The flood wiped out a widespread perversion.

Apparently though, isolated outbreaks of the same perversion also occurred later in Palestine. The spies reported nephilim in the land. Deuteronomy 3 notes a Canaanite king named "Og", who also was a giant. Still later, in Joshua 14 Caleb fought the sons of Anak – who Numbers 13 says were related to the nephilim.

And guess where the Anakim lived in the days of the Judges? Joshua 11:22 says they dwelled in Goliath's hometown of Gath. Hey, Goliath may've been the product of spiritual performance enhancers - a sort of, demonic steroids.

If this is true, Goliath was more an agent of Satan, and an enemy of God, than we might assume. The encounter in the Valley of Elah was a spiritual showdown.

*Goliath not only had size – but a mouth.* He talked smack! He's a trash-talker.

One extra-biblical Jewish source - the Targum of Jonathan - claims that Goliath boasted of being the Philistine who killed the sons of Eli - Hophni and Phinehas – and drug the Ark to the temple of Dagon. He claimed to have killed countless Hebrews. Apparently, Goliath was the Philistine counterpart of Samson.

Verse 8 "Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for

battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us."

Ancient warfare was hand-to-hand combat. It was bloody and brutal. Even the victorious army suffered thousands of casualties. Often rather than fight a battle armies would send out a champion to square off in a winner take all death match.

In verse 4, Goliath is called the Philistine's "champion" – the Hebrew means "*middle man*". Goliath was the Philistine's representative. And he taunted Israel to send out a man of their own brave enough to fight him. It was a daily challenge.

Verse 10 "And the Philistine said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid." It's interesting, who was the tallest man in Israel? It was Saul. The king was the one man who came closest to matching Saul physically, but spiritually speaking he was a midget – a coward.

"Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name was Jesse, and who had 8 sons. And the man was old, advanced in years, in the days of Saul. The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle.

The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest.

And the three oldest followed Saul." They'd joined the army.

“But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. And the Philistine drew near and presented himself 40 days, morning and evening.

Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah (about a bushel) of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

“So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army.”

David arrives just in time for some action. “And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers.

Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid.

So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up?

Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will

give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel." Saul had sweetened the pot.

He's offering a three-fold reward to the man who defeats Goliath – *great riches, his daughter in marriage*, and perhaps the most attractive perk of all, *a lifetime tax exemption* for the champion and his extended family. That's quite a windfall.

Yet nobody is courageous enough to step out and take on Goliath.

Verse 26 “Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” David wasn't motivated by Saul's reward. He understood God's honor was at stake! He cared about the glory and honor of the God he loved.

“And the people answered him in this manner, saying, “So shall it be done for the man who kills him.” Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?”

In other words, he's questioning his little brother's motive. Eliab sneers, “I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.” Eliab accuses David of being a show-off. “*He's just grandstanding...*”

Hey, the older brother was jealous of his younger brother's courage and faith.

It's sad when your own brother tries to dowse your faith. At times the biggest opposition to faith is not the scorn of the enemy, but the skepticism of a friend.

“And David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause?"

Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did. Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him.”

Saul finally has a willing warrior. He immediately sends for David. “Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." *David is just a kid. He'll be slaughtered by the battle-tested Goliath.*

But David is not without his own experiences. He “said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God."

Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

God delivered David from the mouth of hungry lions and



bears – why can't God deliver him from a big-mouthed Philistine. David's confidence was in the Lord.

**“And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"**

**“So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor, and he tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off.”**

Saul isn't brave enough to fight Goliath, but he sends his armor with David.

Yet when David suits up – Saul's armor doesn't fit. When God calls you to fight take what you know will work. Don't trust in somebody else's program or gimmick.

When you're up against a giant you don't start looking for different techniques and tactics. Faith rests on what it knows is true. Faith doesn't get desperate.

It doesn't canvass the self-help stores for the newest and the latest...

David takes a couple of steps in Saul's armor - and starts shedding it. He says in verse 39, **“I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them.”** David trusts in what he's tried and tested. A simple slingshot killed bears and lions – it'll drop a giant. David will fight clothed in faith – not in somebody else's oversized armor.

And here's the lesson for me... If the Bible, and prayer, and the Holy Spirit has strengthened saints for centuries –

sustained believers in the throes of death – worked miracles – won victories – even slain giants in Jesus’ name...

Why do I think I need to adopt the latest Christian fad? For 2000 years the church did just fine without Rick Warren’s Purpose Driven Church - or Bill Hybel’s Seeker Sensitive Model... God has used these methods with Rick and Bill...

But rather than strap on their armor I need to trust what God shows me.

This is what David does... verse 40 “Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.” The question arises, “why does David pick up five stones?”

*Was he afraid he would miss?* No. We learn in 2 Samuel 21 that Goliath had four brothers. Evidently, David wanted to be ready for all four if they jumped in.

“So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking.

So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.” One commentator has suggested that when Goliath lifted his head to his supposed gods his helmet fell off - leaving his forehead unprotected - and providing David a clear shot.

“And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you.” David is certainly not intimidated. “And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.”

Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands." David went to battle with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the spikes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit which is God's Word. David is clothed – not with Saul's armor – but with the armor of God.

Here're a few pictures of David and Goliath... it seemed a classic mismatch.

Verse 48 “So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hastened and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth.” David took aim - twirled his sling - then slung the stone through the air – *and I don't think it was just that David*

*was a good shot...*

At that point I believe God took over the trajectory of that rock to insure that it landed right between the two eyeballs David had looked into so squarely.

I bet the thud was heard all the way back in Bethlehem. Mighty Goliath didn't know what hit him, "the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face."

"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David.

Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword..." It probably took both hands for David, the Middle School warrior, to even pick it up. "And drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it." With one swoop of Goliath's sword, David chopped off the giant's head. God had given the victory!

The camp of Israel was supercharged by David's victory. The Philistines were deflated. David's triumph had definitely got Israel *a head*. A Hebrew rout was on.

"And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron.

And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. And David took the head of the

Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.”

When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man is." Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.”

What a picture, David holding Goliath’s head by his hair, blood dripping from his severed aorta... “And Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?"

So David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

Chapter 18, “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.”

Jonathan was also a man of faith. Remember his venture of faith in chapter 14.

With David’s victory over Goliath, Jonathan saw in David a kindred spirit. They both loved God, and were jealous for His glory. Aristotle once wrote, “Friendship is a single soul dwelling in two bodies.” This was the case with David and Jonathan.

“Saul took (David) that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore.” David becomes a permanent member of Saul’s court.

Verse 3 “Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 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.” This was a deeply devoted friendship – but one fraught with complications...

As Saul’s son, Jonathan had a natural right to the throne. He was Saul’s successor. But David was God’s choice. David had a spiritual claim.

Despite the potential conflict, Jonathan never resented God’s appointment of David. Here Jonathan submits to David’s authority by surrendering his sword...

It’s a credit to both men that they remained friends, and never became rivals.

Verse 5 “So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely.

And Saul set him over the men of war...” David was head of the IDF – Israel’s department of defense. “And he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul’s servants. 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.

So the women sang as they danced, and said: “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” David grows so popular he develops a fan club.

They’re singing and dancing in the streets...” “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” But how do you

think Saul reacted to second billing?

Verse 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?” Saul is now on the under-card! David is now more popular than the king, and Saul is jealous.

“So Saul eyed David from that day forward.” Guys, beware of jealousy.

FB Meyer warns us, “Jealousy is one of the worst temptations that can beset us. It arises in the most unexpected ways and times. When everyone around us is possessed by a common joy, it steals in like a ghost and settles down on some heart, which it scourges with whips of fury. Resist its first entrance!” While I’m glorifying God, I notice the work wasn’t done through me... I can get jealous.

“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.”

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Saul erupts in a demonically inspired rage...

“And Saul cast the spear, for he said, “I will pin David to the wall!” But David escaped his presence twice.” Saul chucks the spear at David’s head.

Which teaches us, *never put a javelin next to a jealous person...* don’t even put a telephone. There’re a lot of ways to pin an innocent person to the wall.

It's amazing, that David never tried to do to Saul, what he did to Goliath. He could've pulled Saul's spear out of the wall and chunked it back.

But Saul was not an uncircumcised Philistine – he was Israel's king, God's anointed. David knew that one day he'd be king, and if he expected others to honor his appointment, he needed to honor Saul. Again, David was a man motivated by principle rather than convenience, or anger, or revenge.

Verse 12 “Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from his presence... The royal court was no longer big enough for both Saul and David... “And made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him.

Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

“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." Recall, Saul was in David's debt. He'd promised his daughter to the man who killed Goliath.

But Saul's motive here is not to keep a promise or pay off a debt...

“For Saul thought, "Let my hand not be against him, but let



the hand of the Philistines be against him." Let the Philistines do the dirty deed – not Saul.

“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?" 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.” This may’ve been a hurtful act on Saul’s part. Promise David your daughter then give her to another man at the last minute.

But Saul has another daughter, and Saul is shrewd. Maybe he can use Michal to put an end to his rival. “Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 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."

“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.' "

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?" David is concerned he can’t afford the dowry of a princess.

“And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "In this manner David spoke." Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any dowry but 100 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.”

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that no red-blooded Philistine is going to give up his foreskin without a fight. I've never been in such a fight - but I would imagine the fighting gets fierce when a man is fighting to keep his foreskin.

Saul figures surely one out of a 100 angry Philistines will win over David. By the way, for the golfers in the crowd this is the first *Skins Game* in history.

Verse 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; therefore David arose and went, he and his men, and killed 200 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.”

Saul had asked for 100 foreskins. He pays double the dowry – 200 skins.

And this makes Saul furious. “Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually.

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.” All that Saul does to harm David backfires on Saul. David grows in stature while Saul shrinks.