

The Rage of Jealousy and the Beauty of God's Favour

1 Samuel 18:1-30

¹ 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.

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 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.

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.

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.

Saul and David

1. The book of Genesis tells us of the story of Cain and Abel. The Lord rejected Cain's sacrifices and favoured Abel for his sacrifices. Cain was angry. The Lord warned him not to give in to his anger and do the right thing by offering sacrifices that are acceptable to Him. Instead of listening to God, Cain killed Abel. This simple story reveals to us that sometimes we would rather blame others than to take responsibility for our own mistakes.
2. Saul has turned away from God. In spite of being warned several times that God would remove him as king, Saul was determined to hold on to his position even at the cost of losing God's favour. When God favoured David, Saul got jealous and angry, and he wanted to kill David.
 - What would drive a person to react this way?

A Song That Saul Did Not Like (vv. 6-9)

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.

1. David led Israel in their fight against the Philistines. David took the lead because Saul was too afraid to do anything. The Israelite women praised David for his military exploits that surpassed Saul's own. Saul was content with having David fight for him and take all the risk in facing Goliath and the Philistine army, but he got very angry when people started to recognize David for his contributions. Saul wanted the glory and recognition for something he did not do and was angry that he could not get it. To Saul, the song the women sang chimed the end of his rule. It troubled him that he was compared to David and he came out the lesser. David must be dealt with.

1 Samuel 18:5

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.

2. Saul recognized David's success when it suited him. He wanted able men to serve him and was happy to have David do all the hard work. In a way, Saul had handed over his task to David. All the Israelites realized that it was David who was leading the armies in victory over their enemies and they loved him dearly for it. Saul did not like the fact that David is being noticed and recognized for all the good work he was doing. In all this, Saul was not concerned that he had neglected his call as God's appointed king.
 - What does this teach you about jealousy and insecurity?

1 Samuel 18:17

For Saul said to himself, "I will not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!"

1 Samuel 18:28-29

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.

3. First, Saul tries to kill David with a spear and David evades him twice. Then, Saul sends David on missions with the hope that the Philistines will kill him. When that did not work, Saul gave his daughter in marriage demanding a bride price that will surely get David killed. Saul even hoped that his daughter would be a tool he could use to get to David. God protected David and granted him success in all his military campaigns. Saul even found out that his own daughter Michal loved David. Saul now knew that the Lord was with David, he was afraid of David and chose to make David his enemy for the rest of life. Saul considered David a threat to a point even God's support for David did not matter. Even though he was afraid of God, he still plotted to kill David. Saul wanted to put an end to God's work in David by killing him.
 - Think about the plot to kill Jesus. Many saw the miracles and good works Jesus did and yet they wanted to kill Him because He was threat to them.
4. The desire for power and greatness is a dark and powerful force. Satan wanted to overthrow God; and Adam and Eve wanted to be like God. Their desire for power led them to rebel against God. It is important that we always remember that all power, glory, and honour belong to God. We are called to be faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted into our hands. The temptation to pursue worldly things and to hold on to it as if it is ours will eventually push God out of our lives. If the glory we desire comes from this world, we will slowly lose the desire to worship God and oppose those who would give God all the glory.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

*¹⁰ Praise be to you, LORD,
the God of our father Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.*

*¹¹ Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendour,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.*

*Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.*

*¹² Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.*

*In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all.
¹³ Now, our God, we give you thanks,
and praise your glorious name.*

God's Favour (vv. 3, 16, 20)

³ *And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.*

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

²⁰ *Now Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David*

1. The people loved David. God's anointing was with David in such a way that the people loved him. David was not a people pleaser, instead he was a strong leader whose faith in God overflowed with confidence and clarity in leadership. The people recognized that God was with him and they loved him as their leader.
2. God gives David favour in the eyes of the people to such an extent that even Saul's children come to adore him. They would eventually turn against their father to protect David's life.

Acts 2:46-47

⁶ *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

The early church was a small, persecuted community and yet they grew in strength because of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The presence of God the Holy Spirit transformed them to be salt and light; and darkness cannot overcome light, for God is greater and stronger. In the midst of their struggles, they loved and cared for others and proclaimed the gospel because God was with them.

Our position, wealth, and success cannot secure meaningful relationships. It is how we see and treat others that makes relationships rich and meaningful. We do not need to have the constant approval and acceptance of others because the Lord's approval and acceptance is more than sufficient. God invites us to care for others with the love He has given us. In life, the forces of darkness will move people to oppose us, but the Lord will protect us and send His people to stand with us. As we represent Him and do His work faithfully, God will grant us favour in a way that draws others to us.

Prayerfully meditate on the following verses:

James 4:1-10

¹ *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?* ² *You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.* ³ *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

⁴ *You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an*

enemy of God.⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us?⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

*“God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble.”*

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Prayer

1. The Rage of Jealousy and the Beauty of God’s Favour

- Grow to understand God’s favour and His good plans
- We will allow God to examine and shape the desires of our heart
- We will be watchful that covetousness and greed will not consume us
- We will trust God in the midst of adversity

2. Life Church

- Give us a heart for God – hungry for the Word, a desire for His presence, a yearning to grow spiritually, to grow strong in faith and obedience to His Word.
- Give us a heart for the lost – break our hearts for people who are far from God: those who live in hopelessness, depression and loneliness.
- Open doors for the surrounding community of Sg. Way.
- Deepen our love for one another and make us eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

4. Ministries:

- Life Explorers
- Redeeming Roses
- Destiny Kids & Teens
- Sunday School
- Lifeline
- Worship

5. Healing

- Si Yun (colon cancer)
- Jayden
- Lee Kim Sang & Lee Khay Chen (Recco’s dad and brother)

6. Covid-19 Pandemic

- Selangor, Sabah
- Vaccine
- Economy
- Sick, foreigners and the poor

7. Malaysia

- Churches
- Salvation
- Leaders
- Unity