

## LOVE AND DEVOTION TO OTHERS

Bible Background – 1 SAMUEL 19:1-7, 23:1-18; 2 SAMUEL 9

Printed Text – 1 SAMUEL 19:1-7

**19** <sup>1</sup> Saul now urged his servants and his son Jonathan to assassinate David. But Jonathan, because of his strong affection for David,

<sup>2</sup> told him what his father was planning. “Tomorrow morning,” he warned him, “you must find a hiding place out in the fields.

<sup>3</sup> I’ll ask my father to go out there with me, and I’ll talk to him about you. Then I’ll tell you everything I can find out.”

<sup>4</sup> The next morning Jonathan spoke with his father about David, saying many good things about him. “The king must not sin against his servant David,” Jonathan said. “He’s never done anything to harm you. He has always helped you in any way he could.

<sup>5</sup> Have you forgotten about the time he risked his life to kill the Philistine giant and how the LORD brought a great victory to all Israel as a result? You were certainly happy about it then. Why should you murder an innocent man like David? There is no reason for it at all!”

<sup>6</sup> So Saul listened to Jonathan and vowed, “As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be killed.”

<sup>7</sup> Afterward Jonathan called David and told him what had happened. Then he brought David to Saul, and David served in the court as before.

-----New Living Translation

### Lesson Introduction

In the previous four lessons our study took us through the epic story of Joseph, the eleventh son of Israel, patriarch of the twelve tribes that founded the nation of Israel. Joseph demonstrated constant faith and through a series of extremely difficult trials, Joseph rose to great power in the land of Egypt. Because of his position, and through God’s divine plan, Joseph was able to save his father, eleven brothers and their families during the seven-year famine in the land and preserve what would be the beginning of the nation of Israel. Fast forward ten generations later, we meet David, a descendant of Joseph’s brother Judah. David, like Joseph, was among the youngest in his family, and was chosen by God with a mission to save and preserve their nation.

Today’s story of David centers on his friendship with Jonathan, the son of Israel’s first and current king, Saul. It wasn’t sibling rivalry and jealousy that threatened David, but the King’s bitter envy that endangered the life of God’s chosen leader. This lesson explores how Jonathan defended David against King Saul’s murderous rage by serving as a loving mediator and a voice of reason. His devotion to justice for his friend David gave him the courage to challenge his father to refrain from violent action toward his servant, David.

**Background:** God stripped the kingdom of Israel from Saul because he did not follow God’s direct orders and sought to justify his decision with half-hearted obedience (1 Samuel 15). But God is never without or in lack, so He raised and anointed David to succeed Saul as the next king of Israel (1 Samuel 16). David was the least likely among his brothers to be king. Although a young boy, David had a heart for God, and because he was a shepherd, David spent many hours alone with His Creator in intimate fellowship. Also, as a shepherd, he fought to protect his sheep, and God developed his skill as a warrior. David went from fighting animal predators tending his father’s flock, to the battlefield as a man of war, fighting most notably the Philistines starting with their nine-foot champion Goliath (1 Samuel 17). As a reward for his brave fight in the name of the Lord, King Saul asked David to live in the palace, where he played the harp for him and served in his army (1 Samuel 18). Feelings of love and honor would soon shift as King Saul exhibited irrational behavior because of David’s growing success in battle and fame.

-----*Precepts for Living*, the UMI Annual Commentary 2020-2021, p. 60

### **Love Tested**

**1 Samuel 19:1-3:** God had prospered David as a skillful military leader and David had become very popular among the nation’s people. The people sang songs about his prowess—“Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands” (1 Samuel 18:7). As a result, Israel’s first anointed king, King Saul, felt very threatened and fearful that David would take his kingdom from him and his descendants. Saul developed such a jealous rage toward David that he had tried to kill him multiple times (1 Samuel 18:6-11, 21-25). Saul made it known to his son, Jonathan and his servants that David should be killed.

However, Jonathan was very fond of David and would have been very pleased for David to rule Israel after his father’s reign. Not wanting any harm to come to his friend, Jonathan developed a plan to intervene hoping to talk sense to his father. It undoubtedly took great courage for Jonathan to do this. His father was the king, the family patriarch and family ties were very strong. But Jonathan knew that his father was wrong and he was willing to take considerable risk to step outside of his social role as a son to ensure that justice was done. He took his father out in the field, away from the influence of his court officials and any other distractions, giving the king space to reconsider and save face concerning his previous pronouncements.

◆ *Should you confront someone you love when they are wrong?*

### **Love Intercedes**

**1 Samuel 19:4-7:** Jonathan courageously made the case before his father, Saul. David was innocent of any wrongdoing against the king, so to kill him would be a sin. David has been very useful to the king and to the nation in the service that he has rendered. As a warrior, he killed “the Philistine”, Goliath. He soothed Saul with his music when the king was plagued by an evil spirit. As a military commander he brought the nation honor in the battle with the Philistines. Jonathan

pointed out that God had blessed Israel through David and even the king had rejoiced at the victories when they occurred. So, why kill an innocent man for no reason except for petty jealousy?

Jonathan spoke to his father from the heart to defend his friend and to prevent his father from committing a grave evil. He made an emotional appeal hoping that King Saul would change his mind. And it worked, for the moment. Saul listened to Jonathan's argument and swore that he would not kill David and that he would not make appeals for anyone else to kill David. Jonathan successfully mediated between King Saul and David, openly sharing with David his conversation with the king. After securing David's safety, he brought David back into Saul's presence and things were like they had been before. David was welcome back in the royal house, restored to his position of playing his harp for Saul.

Jonathan's action of love and devotion have impacted both men. Even though we know that the peace he brokered was temporary, it was still worthwhile. Jesus taught, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). Jonathan had shown through his efforts that being a child of God in this instance was far more important than his position as child of Saul.

◆ *Recall a situation where you had to be the peacemaker and settle disputes with a relative or church members. How did you handle it?*

### **Conclusion**

As believers, our first loyalty should be a devotion to biblical principles in our relationships. Therefore we must not remain silent when someone is wrong. It is a disservice to the offender not to call attention to the offense. Without being judgmental and self-righteous, we should be able to correct in a loving and respectful manner. If there is a communication breakdown, we can lovingly step in and bridge that gap. Remember, the foundation of every relationship should be love for God and one another.

### **Sources:**

Banks, M. (Ed.). (2020). Love For One Another. *Precepts for Living*, 23(Fall Quarter), 57-65. The Urban Ministries, Inc. Annual Commentary 2020-2021.  
*Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation, Carol Stream, Illinois.

## **Lesson for Next Week – October 11, 2020 – Study Guide 6**

# **LOVE YOUR ENEMIES**

Bible Background ◆ LUKE 6:27-36

Printed Text ◆ LUKE 6:27-36

Devotional Reading ◆ ISAIAH 1:12-17