

# JONATHAN'S GARMENTS

## Lesson 5

### I. The Israelites Wanted To Be Like The Nations Around Them

- A. Last week we talked about Samuel, who was a Prophet, a Priest, and a Judge over Israel.
1. While Samuel was a great servant to God, his sons were not.
    - a. **I Samuel 8:1-3** – *"Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup> The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. <sup>3</sup> But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice."*
    - b. Unfortunately, Samuel's sons were like the evil sons of Eli, the Priest who raised Samuel in the service of God in the Tabernacle.
      - a. Because of the evil ways of Samuel's sons, the Israelites decided they wanted a king to govern them.
  2. **I Samuel 8:4-5** – *"<sup>4</sup>Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, <sup>5</sup> and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."*
    - a. Samuel was very unhappy about this request so he prayed to God.
    - b. God answered Samuel saying:  
**I Samuel 8:7** – *"And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."*
    - c. God also told Samuel to warn the people about what their life would be like when a king was their ruler. (**I Samuel 8:10-18**)
      - He will take your sons for his army and to make weapons of war.
      - He will take your sons to plow his fields and reap his harvest.
      - He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks and bakers
      - He will take the best of your fields, your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants.
      - He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage and give it to his officers and servants.
      - He will take your male and female servants, your finest young men and your donkeys to do his work.
      - You will all be his servants.
      - When you tire of this and cry out to the Lord, He will not hear you.
  3. Even with this warning, the people still wanted a king. God identified Saul as His choice to be the king of Israel. (**I Samuel 9:17**)
    - a. Samuel invited Saul to go to the high place for a sacrifice to God and to eat with him. (vs. 19)

- b. Saul could not understand why a man of God would invite Him to this special event.
  - c. Saul said in verse 21 – “And Saul answered and said, “*Am* I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?”
  - d. Samuel told Saul to go ahead of him to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel to come to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then Samuel would show Saul what he should do next.
- B. Samuel anointed Saul in private the next day. (**I Samuel 10:1**)
1. Some of the people accepted that Saul was God’s choice and brought him gifts, but some rejected Saul and refused to bring him gifts.
  2. However, when Saul was able to organize an army that defeated the Ammonites who threatened them, the people then accepted Saul as their king. (**I Samuel 11**)
  3. After that victory Samuel gathered the people at Gilgal and made Saul (officially) the king of Israel and made peace offerings to the Lord.

## II. When Saul Had Reigned Two Years He Led His Army Against The Philistines. (**I Samuel 13**)

- A. Saul chose three thousand men to attack the Philistines.
1. 2,000 men were with Saul
  2. 1,000 men were with Jonathan, Saul’s son.
  3. The Israelites heard that Saul had attack a garrison of the Philistines and that Israel was now an abomination to the Philistines.
- B. Saul called all of the people together at Gilgal.
1. By this time the Philistines had gathered all of their forces and were preparing to fight Israel. The Philistines had:
    - a. 30,000 chariots
    - b. 6,000 horsemen
    - c. foot soldiers were as many as the sand on the seashore.
  2. When the army of Israel saw the size of the Philistine army, they were trembling in fear.
- C. Saul was waiting seven days for Samuel to come to offer sacrifices so they would have God’s blessing for the battle.
1. Saul became impatient when Samuel did not come.
  2. Saul decided to make the burnt offering himself.
- D. This decision was the beginning of the end of Saul’s reign.
1. When Samuel arrived, he asked Saul, “What have you done?”, since only priests were qualified to offer burnt offerings on such occasions.

2. Saul explained that his army was beginning to desert out of fear and he was afraid the Philistines would attack before he could *"make supplication to the Lord"*. Saul said he felt "compelled" to do it himself.
  3. **I Samuel 13:13-14** – *"Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."*
  4. Saul continued to have war with the Philistines as long as he was king.
- E. Samuel gave instructions to Saul regarding the destruction of the Amalekites, who had laid an ambush for Israel while they were still in the desert with Moses. (**I Samuel 15**)
1. Utterly destroy all that the Amalekites have (vs. 3)
  2. This was to include all people and all animals.
  3. However, Saul decided to spare King Agag and captured him alive.
  4. Saul also saved the best of Agag's sheep, oxen, and lambs.
- F. God pronounces judgment on Saul.
1. **I Samuel 15:10-11** – *<sup>10</sup> Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, <sup>11</sup> "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments."*
  2. This message from God brought grief to Samuel and he went immediately to find Saul.
  3. When Samuel met Saul, Saul said (vs. 13): *"Blessed are you of the LORD! I have performed the commandment of the LORD."*
  4. Samuel replied (vs. 14): *"What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"*
  5. Saul justified these sounds by saying, *"They brought back the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to the Lord."*
  6. Samuel said to Saul: *"Be quiet! I will tell you what the Lord said to me last night."*
  7. Samuel reminded Saul that he was to utterly destroy everything of the Amalekites. Then he asked why Saul had disobeyed God and done evil in the sight of the Lord by taking these as spoils of war?
  8. Saul apparently didn't get Samuel's point since he said (vs. 20-21): *"I have obeyed the voice of the Lord. I utterly destroyed the Amalekites. **But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord in Gilgal.**"*

9. Samuel had to get more specific to get Saul to understand the seriousness of his disobedience. Samuel said:
  - to obey is better than sacrifice
  - rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft
  - stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry
10. Because Saul rejected the word of the Lord, Saul was also rejected from being king.
  - a. Saul finally understood and begged Samuel to pardon his sin, but Samuel said the Lord's decision was final.
  - b. As Samuel started to leave, Saul grabbed his robe and it tore.
  - c. Samuel said: "*The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today.*"

### III. God Selects A Replacement for King Saul – A Man After God's Own Heart.

- A. God send Samuel to a man named Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, because one of his sons would be the next king. (**I Samuel 16**)
  1. When Samuel saw Eliab, Jesse's son, Samuel said, "Surely this is the one.", but the Lord said (vs, 7-8): "*Do not look at his appearance or at his physical 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.*"
  2. Samuel discovered that the chosen one was Jesse's youngest son who was still a boy and a shepherd – David.
- B. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and a "distressing spirit" possessed him (also sent by God). (vs. 14)
  1. Saul's servants suggested finding someone who could play the harp to soothe the king.
  2. Saul agreed so one servant recommended David, the son of Jesse, and David was brought to play for Saul when he required it.
  3. It was during this time that David faced and defeated the giant, Goliath of the Philistines. (**I Samuel 17**)

### IV. David And Jonathan Form An Indestructible Bond

- A. **I Samuel 18** begins the connection between David and Jonathan
  1. Verse 1 tells us that immediately after the conflict with Goliath, Jonathan's "soul was knit to the soul of David".
  2. From that day Saul would not permit David to go back to his home.
  3. Jonathan and David made a covenant because Jonathan loved David as his own soul.
  4. **Jonathan took off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his armor and his sword and his bow and his belt.**
  5. Saul set David as commander over the men of war and everyone accepted his authority.

- B. The trouble started when David's popularity among the people surpassed Saul's.
1. Vs. 12 – Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with David.
  2. Saul began to plot against David:
    - a. Saul offered his daughter to David as a wife if he would be valiant in battle against the Philistines.
    - b. Saul hoped that David would be killed by the Philistines and solve his problems with David.
    - c. However, God blessed David in everything he did and he was victorious over the Philistines and Saul's daughter loved David – so Saul became more angry at David and considered him as an enemy.
- C. Saul was so desperate to get rid of David that he tried to enlist his own son Jonathan and Saul's servants to get them to kill David. (**I Samuel 19**)
- a. But remember that Jonathan loved David as his own soul, so he went to David and warned him that Saul wanted to kill him.
  - b. Jonathan told David to go out to a certain field and hide near by while Jonathan tried to talk Saul out of his hatred for David.
  - c. So Jonathan spoke well of David to his father. He said in verses 4-5: *"Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you. <sup>5</sup> For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause."*
  - d. Saul listened to Jonathan and **swore an oath to the Lord** that David should not be killed. (vs. 6)
  - e. Things went well between David and Saul for a while, then there was war with the Philistines again – and David was successful in defeating them again.
  - f. The "distressing spirit" came upon Saul again and as David was with him playing his harp, Saul took his spear and threw it at David in an attempt to kill him, but the spear struck the wall and David ran away.
  - g. Saul sent men to David's house to kill him, but David's wife let him down through a window and he escaped.
  - h. David went to Samuel and told him all that Saul had done to him.
- D. David then sought Jonathan and asked him why Saul wanted to kill him?
- a. Jonathan said that his father would never do such a thing without telling him so it could not be so.
  - b. David said, *"Your father knows that I have found favor in your eyes and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this because it would grieve him.'"* (**I Samuel 20:3**)

- c. Then Jonathan assured David that he would help him however he could.
- d. David told Jonathan his plan:
  - 1) The next day was to be a New Moon celebration where David would be expected to eat with the king.
  - 2) David asked Jonathan to allow him to hide in the field again for three days to see if Saul would miss him.
  - 3) If Saul asked for David, Jonathan would say: *"David earnestly asked permission of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family."*
  - 4) If Saul says that all is well, then Jonathan was right and Saul did not want to kill David; but if Saul became very angry, then Jonathan would know that Saul did indeed want David to be killed.
- e. David reminded Jonathan of the covenant between them and said, "If you believe that I have been evil, then kill me yourself."
  - 1) Jonathan assured David that if he found that his father was planning evil against David, he would tell David so.
  - 2) Jonathan then tells his plan to David.
    - Jonathan would find out if Saul's feelings toward David were good, then he would send word to David letting him know.
    - But if Saul's intentions were evil then Jonathan would come to David personally and send him away.
    - On the third day Jonathan would come to the field to shoot arrows. He would bring a boy to fetch the arrows.
    - If he said to the boy, "The arrows are on this side of you." then all would be safe for David.
    - But if he said to the boy, "The arrows are beyond you." then you must go away from here.
  - 3) Jonathan made another covenant with David that he would be kind to Jonathan as long as he lived and that he would not cut off his descendants when all of the enemies of David were dealt with.
    - Jonathan **knew** that David had been selected to replace Saul as king and Jonathan feared that his descendants would be in danger at that time.
    - Jonathan should have been the next king, but he loved David so much that he would not stand in the way of David fulfilling the plan that God had already made. What humility this takes!
  - 4) When Saul came to the New Moon feast and David was not present, he thought that perhaps David was delayed because he was "unclean"

- On the second day of the feast when David was still absent, Saul said to Jonathan, *"Why has David not come either yesterday or today?"*
  - Jonathan answered saying, *"David earnestly asked permission of me to go to Bethlehem for a family sacrifice."*
  - Saul became violently angry with Jonathan because he knew that Jonathan had chosen David over him.
  - Saul asked Jonathan, **"Don't you know that as long as David lives, you will never be established as king?"**
  - Saul demanded that Jonathan bring David to him, but Jonathan refused saying, *"Why should he be killed? What has he done?"*
  - With that, Saul threw a spear at Jonathan and proved that he intended to kill David.
  - Jonathan left the feast in anger. Even the next day he would not eat because his father had treated him shamefully
- 5) On the third day, David hid behind the same rock as before and Jonathan shot the arrow saying, *"The arrows are beyond you."* then you must go away
- Jonathan sent the boy back to the city with his weapons.
  - When the boy was gone, David came out and bowed down to Jonathan.
  - They expressed their love for each other and confirmed the covenant which obligated David to protect Jonathan's descendants.
  - David left with about 400 men supporting him. He was constantly being sought by Saul.
- 6) Some time later both Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle.
- Abner, the commander of Saul's army took Ishbosheth, Saul's younger son, and made him king to replace Saul.
  - The tribe of Judah (David's tribe) refused to accept Ishbosheth as king because God had anointed David. Ishbosheth was 40 years old.
  - So David reigned as king in Hebron for seven years with Joab as his commander, while Ishbosheth continued to reign with Abner as his commander.
  - There was a great war between the house of David and the house of Saul. **(II Samuel 3:6)**
- 7) Eventually, Ishbosheth was murdered by two captains of his own troops.
- When David heard that Saul's son Ishbosheth was murdered, he became concerned for any descendants of Jonathan, since when monarchs are killed, all of their relatives are also killed to

keep any of them from claiming the right to ascend to the throne. (**II Samuel 9**)

- David learned that Jonathan had one son who had become crippled when Saul and Jonathan died. His nurse was running with him to hide him from anyone who might try to kill him. She fell with him and he was crippled from that time.
- Jonathan's son's name was Mephibosheth. He was five years old when Jonathan was killed. But when David was looking for him, he was grown.
- David sent a servant to bring Mephibosheth to him.
- David promised to show kindness to Mephibosheth all the days of his life. He would live in the palace with David and be treated as a member of David's family.
- This was all done because of the covenant between David and Jonathan.

**V. We Have Covered Quite An Extensive Period of History In Israel In Order To Examine A Very Small Event In This Historical Period.**

A. Remember the title of this lesson? **Jonathan's Garments.** So far, we have only slightly mentioned any of his clothing.

1. **I Samuel 18:1-4** – "<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. <sup>3</sup>Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. <sup>4</sup>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.**"
  - a. Jonathan was the son of a King and a commander of the army.
  - b. His robe would have been very regal, identifying him as royalty.
  - c. We know that Jonathan was well over twenty years old at this time because **Numbers 1:3** tells us that in Israel a man must be at least twenty years old to go to war – and Jonathan was a commander in the army when Saul had reigned only two years.
  - d. David was still considered a boy, most likely in his mid teens since he was old enough to be responsible for his father's sheep and to fight lions and bears to protect those sheep.
2. Verse 1 of chapter 18 in I Samuel tells us that Jonathan's and David's "souls were knit together" on their very first meeting.
  - a. Apparently Jonathan was an unusual man, even though we get a very small window into his life.
  - b. Jonathan was aware of the judgment that God had pronounced upon Saul that his kingdom would not endure.

- c. At some point Jonathan became aware that David was the man God selected to replace Saul.
- d. One would expect that Jonathan would be jealous of David on this account, but he was not.
- e. By giving David the very royal robe he was wearing, Jonathan was in effect showing that he accepted that David would be the next king.
- f. What a pure heart Jonathan must have had.
  - Most people who were heirs to the throne of their fathers would be eagerly looking forward to the time they would receive such power.
  - Long ago it was not uncommon for the heir to defend his position by eliminating anyone who would challenge it.
  - Jonathan somehow understood that David was chosen by God because of a statement Jonathan made when he met David during the time David was trying to stay away from Saul.  
**I Samuel 23:16-17** – <sup>16</sup> *Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.*  
<sup>17</sup> *And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that."*
- g. Jonathan was so sure of God's plan and so sure that he could trust David that he planned to be available to help David when he was king.
- h. Apparently Jonathan was far more devoted to God than his father Saul since he was willing to accept God's choice as king – even when it meant that he would never be king himself.

B. We Can Learn Some Valuable Lessons From Jonathan

1. We can learn to accept the will of God even when it causes us pain.  
**James 4:13-15** – <sup>13</sup> *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";* <sup>14</sup> *whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.* <sup>15</sup> *Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."*
2. Since God has given mankind the gift of free will, it is obvious that not everyone will be striving to please God
  - a. Those who choose evil over good will always be responsible for causing tragedy to innocent people around them. (drunk drivers, armed robbers, terrorists, embezzlers, identity thieves, etc.)
  - b. When we are forced to suffer because of the actions of others, we must remember Bible examples like Joseph who was the victim of his envious brothers. But God used the tragedy that Joseph faced to lift him to places of influence and power beyond Joseph's imagination.

- c. When innocent people are hurt or killed by the actions the irresponsible actions of others, we all want to say "It is not fair!"
- d. But Jonathan did not claim that it was unfair that he was disregarded as the next king of Israel. He simply trusted that God knew what was best for Israel.
- e. Jesus is our best example of accepting the will of God.
  - When He prayed in the garden just before His arrest, He asked God to "Let this cup pass from Me."
  - Who in their right mind would not ask this when faced with the end of their life.
  - However, Jesus immediately followed that request with *"...nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."* (**Matthew 26:39**)
  - Jesus continued His prayer ready to face the painful and humiliating events awaiting Him.
  - Our job is to develop our faith in God to the point that we can head into the face of disaster and not let it shake our faith.
  - It is when we face the worst disasters of our lives that we will know if our trust in God is more than lip service.
4. Since God put in place the laws of nature on earth, some of us will necessarily suffer tragedy and loss from violent storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, volcano eruptions, lightning strikes, etc.
  - a. As Christians we cannot assume that the very fact that we are children of God will exempt us from all such tragedies.
  - b. When we face such tragedies we must not ask "Why me?", after all, we don't ask "Why me?" when we are blessed with all of the good gifts that God provides for us.
  - c. What we can ask is "How do I use this to make me a stronger Christian." Or, "How do I use this to be a good example for others." Or "How can I use this experience to encourage others facing similar tragedies?"
  - d. Jonathan certainly didn't ask God, "Why don't I get to be king?" He simply accepted the will of God and pledged that he would stay by David's side to help him however he could."
5. While is it very difficult to face the tragedies that come into our lives, we simply must realize that God is not the author of sin and pain, but He is capable of taking even the most awful situations and using them to point to something good.

**Romans 8:28-29** – *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."*

- a. Perhaps the most important thing to remember when we are suffering the pain of tragedy is that Jesus Christ was innocent of any sin, yet he suffered extreme torture and a humiliating, painful death, which provides us with the greatest gift of all – salvation.  
**I Peter 3:17-18** – <sup>17</sup> *For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.* <sup>18</sup> *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit;*
- b. If God did not spare His only begotten son from suffering, why should we think that we deserved to be spared any suffering in our lives?
2. The second lesson we can learn from Jonathan is humility.
  - a. God has always wanted his people to be humble:  
**2 Chronicles 7:14** – *"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*
  - b. **James 4:10** – *"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."*
  - c. **I Peter 5:6-7** – *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."*
  - d. Jonathan exhibited this humility when he took his own royal robe and put it on David.
    - 1) This action proved that he did not think himself above David, a young shepherd boy.
    - 2) It may also have been his first indication that he knew that David would be the next king and therefore, entitled to wear royal garments.
    - 3) Jonathan's humility was exactly what God desired from his people.
3. The third lesson we can learn from Jonathan is to be brave enough to stand up for God even against the most powerful man in the nation.
  - a. Saul was not only Jonathan's father, but the king of Israel.
  - b. Many people find it very difficult to stand up for the right against their own father, because we respect our father so much – and so did Jonathan
  - c. But only the very brave will go against the king of the nation who has the power of life or death to all in his kingdom.
  - d. This is the very example that the apostles set for us in **Acts 5:27-28**:  
*"And the high priest asked them, <sup>28</sup> saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on*

*us! <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."*

- e. Many of us are afraid to defend the gospel even to those who have no power over us. We fear that we will offend them with the truth, but the Parable of the Sower (**Mark 4**) teaches that our responsibility is to "sow the seed" (spread the word of God). We are not responsible for their reaction to hearing the gospel, so why should we be afraid of what they might think.
- f. Even those who reject our message won't likely have a negative attitude toward us personally as long as we are teaching the truth of the gospel in a loving way that says, "We care about your soul."