

The Jaundice of Saul's Soul

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[0 : 00] Let's open your Bibles tonight to 1 Samuel and find chapter 18.

! Always do it that way. Do want to do it this time.

Would you listen or you can read along in your own Bibles silently because you probably have a different translation than some of you. So that would be kind of bedlam in here, wouldn't it, if everybody was reading out loud.

So listen or read along silently as we read the continuing story of David's rise to the kingship of Israel.

So, and it's a pretty bumpy ride here as we shall discover here tonight. So listen as I read, starting with verse 1 of chapter 18.

[1 : 07] Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, all right, he was speaking to Saul after David defeated Goliath, remember. Saul was curious about his father.

Remember we covered that, it's been a few weeks, but we covered that, the reason why Saul asked him about his father. Saul was curious about his father. And so after speaking, finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David.

And Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him, took David that day, would not let him go home to his father's house anymore.

Remember, he had been in the palace already, but just periodically. For short periods of time, then he would go home, take care of the sheep, and come back.

And when he would come, he would play his harp, and that would sue, you know, been over that ground. So, now Saul wants him there permanently. He can't go home anymore.

[2 : 11] Now, Saul doesn't know it, but this is a major step toward David becoming the king of Israel. And Saul could thank himself for that, right?

Actually, he'd thank God for it. All right, 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.

So David went out wherever Saul sent him and behaved wisely. And Saul sent him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. Very popular, wasn't he? Here initially, anyway. And continued to be, really, with the people. Now, it had happened as they were coming home when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, the Philistine, Goliath.

So, now they're coming home. Then, some time has elapsed here. Goliath was destroyed, but also the Philistine army was destroyed. David was involved in that.

[3 : 28] So, they're coming home from the slaughter of the Philistine. And it happened 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.

Oh, boy. 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.

Probably true. Now, what more can he have but the kingdom? So, Saul eyed David from that day forward.

And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house.

[4 : 36] We don't really know what he prophesied. It would be nice if we could figure out that maybe this means something else. But it means what it says. But it's a false prophecy because of

the spirit from which it came.

Okay? So, he's prophesying. He prophesied. So, David played music with his hand, as at other times.

There was a spear in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the spear where he said, I will pin David to the wall. Now, he didn't mean just pin him through his clothes.

Okay. He meant to run him through and all the way through the wall, pin his body to the wall. But David escaped his presence.

Twice. So, it happened more than once. Now, Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul. Therefore, Saul removed him from his presence and made him his captain over a thousand.

[5 : 40] 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. For Saul thought, let my hand not be against him.

But let the hand of the Philistines be against him. Let them deal with this guy. 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?

I don't think he's just being snide here or flipping about this or whatever. He really meant this. Very humble. Who am I to be the son-in-law to the king?

[6 : 47] But by the way, you do remember that this was kind of part of the deal, right? For whoever would slay Goliath, not only would that person's family be exempt from all taxes, but also the one who slew Goliath could marry one of Saul's daughters.

It was part of the deal, even though David apparently was not going to hold Saul to this. So who am I? But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel, the Maholothite, as a wife.

Now, Merab, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. Please Saul. So Saul said, I will give her to him that she may be a snare to him.

It is like advantage of this in some way. 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.

Saul commanded his servants, communicate with David secretly and say, Look, the king has delighted in you, and all his servants love you. Now, therefore, become the king's son-in-law.

[8 : 07] 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?

The servants of Saul told him, saying, In this manner David spoke. And Saul said, Thus you shall say to David, The king does not desire any dowry, but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines to take vengeance on the king's enemies.

Now, this is the dowry. That's the only dowry you have to pay. As if that was something just very light. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

So we understand the motive of it. So when his servants told David these words, It pleased David. 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 two hundred men of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king.

[9 : 17] I'm not sure who would want the job of counting them. That, excuse me, I'm sorry. That he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Merab, his daughter, as a wife.

Thus Saul saw, Saul saw, and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Merab, 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. That is, with everyone above David. Okay. Add that, because that was the truth. John Drayton, or Drayton, I think is how it's pronounced.

Not a man you probably would remember. He was a poet who lived back, an English poet, who lived back in the latter half of the 17th century. 17th century.

[10:22] And one of his poems, he defined jealousy and envy this way. It is as the jaundice of the soul. Think about that.

Pretty descriptive. Jealousy, envy, he said, is the jaundice of the soul. And that is what this story is all about. Really.

I mean, it has other details in there, other things that are going on, things that we'll come back to as we continue with the story of 1 Samuel. Really, introduction to some very significant things that are going to happen, like the relationship between Jonathan and David, and marriage with Michael, and all these things.

But the story in this chapter, and really the story continues, is about Saul's envy, his jealousy. And so here's my title for the message tonight.

The Jaundice of Saul's Soul. Okay. I'm borrowing that from John Drayton. The Jaundice of Saul's Soul.

[11:28] Or we could maybe put it this way, to borrow a phrase from some other famous playwright or poet, Saul the green-eyed giant. Do you like that one better?

That was borrowed from William Shakespeare. The green-eyed giant. All right. Someone has said that envy and jealousy are the most corroding of all vices.

They are coals that come hissing hot from hell. I really like that. I mean, if you think of that, that's quite a description. And that's really what envy and jealousy, how serious these two things are.

Now, I've been quoting some people. I should quote God. God said in Proverbs 14, verse 30, A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.

That's pretty good. It rots the bones. That is, rots the very life of a person. Now, this is what we see happening to King Saul.

[12:39] Saul was jealous toward David. Saul, then Saul, was envious toward David. And all of that led to Saul being murderous toward David.

Those three things. And in progression. And that's the way it usually happens. And so this is what we see in the text. And this is what we also see played out in the lives of many people in the world today.

All three of those things seem always to go together. If unchecked. Begins with jealousy. That's where it first begins.

That's where it began with Saul. And, you know, we need to be very specific in our understanding of this word jealousy. Jealousy is the fear of losing something you have.

Something you value. Usually intangible things. But also tangible things. Jealousy is fear. We need to understand that about jealousy.

[13:50] That doesn't end with jealousy, usually. That can, but often does not. But jealousy is fear of losing something you value. Something you have.

Be it power. Many, you know, risk or see the loss of their power, their influence. Be it a politician or whoever it is.

Loss of power and losing your power, your influence to someone else. And it's a fear. Losing. It could be also popularity.

Being popular with people. Being admired by people. Being kind of viewed as the top. The number one. The best. And, you know, jealousy sets in when you begin to lose that.

Or there's the threat of losing it to someone else. See that kind of thing happening all the time in the workplace. Sometimes it's the loss of the fear of losing possessions.

[14:56] But in the sense of possessions in terms of status. A kind of a status that's based upon what you have. And that you see yourself as having more than others.

And then along comes someone in your life that starts to have more than you have. And you fear. You fear losing that status. That position. That place.

In people's eyes. That's jealousy. And jealousy is, first and foremost, fear. It's fear. And it's a fear of losing something you have.

Or something you are. Or some part of you that people see in you. And admire you about. Or whatever it may be. You fear losing it. And then it continues with envy.

It starts with jealousy. But it continues with envy. If you were to look up in the dictionary, the word jealousy, probably, most likely, the word envy would be a part of the definition.

[16:01] But they're not really the same thing. Not technically. You look up envy in the dictionary, very likely the word jealousy is going to be. But they're not synonymous. Now they're similar.

Similar certainly in the sense that they exist. They coexist together in a person's life. But it always begins with jealousy. And then it moves to envy. And envy is not fear.

Envy is the next step. And that's anger. Envy is anger. The anger you feel towards someone. Because someone else now has what you thought you had.

Or something you want and wanted. Or whatever the scenario may be. Envy is anger. And so, if unchecked, when you have jealousy, you almost always have envy.

One leads to the other. Jealousy is first. And then envy follows very close behind. And then, eventually, it leads to murder. Murder.

[17:03] Murder. Now, perhaps, not actual, physical murder. Though sometimes it happens that way. Sometimes it leads to that.

But certainly, murder in the heart. Feelings of murder towards someone. Hating someone. Being so angry that you hate them.

That they have what either you used to have. Or thought you had. Or want to have. Or whatever it may be. Jealousy is, or envy rather, is anger. And anger always leads to murder.

All right. So, let's see how this plays out in the life of Saul. All three, really, of these are woven together in this story. And so, let's begin with jealous.

Jealousy. The jealous Saul. That's the first thing we see. The jealous Saul. Verse 1. And just to mention this. Verse 1 begins with, of course, this word about the almost immediate friendship between David and Jonathan.

[18:08] Really, it just kind of starts there. Really gives no explanation. It's kind of an introduction to something that we'll come back to in the story.

In fact, we'll come back to it in the very next chapter. And so, it begins with that. The Bible says in verse 1, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David. And Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

Also says in verse 3, skips a verse. And then verse 3 comes back to that. Jonathan and David made a covenant. A covenant because he loved him as his own soul.

Now, I just mentioned that here. Because we're not going to deal with that tonight. This is kind of an introduction to something that will have great significance in the life of David.

And in Saul. His relationship with Saul. And in the rise. David's rise to the kingship of Israel. So, we'll come back to that when we get to chapter 19.

[19:05] Okay? But verse 2 says, Saul took him, took David, that day. Would not let him go home to his father's house anymore.

And the question is, why? Why? Well, I think it's obvious to keep an eye on him. Keep an eye on him.

Remember, Samuel had already told Saul that God was taking the kingdom away from him. He's already told him that. Saul already knows that. Whether he believed it.

I really doubt that he did believe it. He didn't want to believe it. And even if he did believe it, he's going to try to thwart God's prophecy, God's plan.

His promise, really. He wants to hold on to that kingdom. Not going to let anybody take it from him. But he already knew that the kingdom had been torn from him.

[20:05] This is what Samuel told him. And that it would be given to another. A neighbor of his. He doesn't mention any names. Remember, Samuel did go and anoint David as king.

But he did it privately. Saul didn't know that. That was on purpose. Saul suspects something here. Who is this young man? This young upstart.

You know, and look what he did. He defeated Goliath. I'm going to keep an eye on this guy. So I'm going to keep him right here in the palace. Saul feared the loss of his kingdom.

That's what's going on in Saul's life at this point. He's jealous. And perhaps jealous has a jealous eye toward anyone who might potentially take his kingdom.

But at this point, it's David. There's the threat that David is going to be that king. Going to take the kingdom from him. And he fears that more than anything. This is jealousy.

[21:08] And so he keeps David right there. This potential king. Keeps him right there with him so that he can take care of that, squelch that before it becomes an issue.

So Saul was afraid of David. And we see that stated several times in the story. In fact, three specific times. In verse 12, Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul.

Remember what jealousy is? It's fear. Fear of losing something you had and losing it to someone else. And this someone else is David.

Saul could see that. He feared David because of what that represented. The loss of something to Saul. The Lord was with David but he departed from Saul and Saul knew it.

Verse 15, when Saul saw that he, that is David, behaved wisely, what, what, what? He was afraid of him. Afraid of him.

[22 : 12] What, afraid of him physically? No, that's not the issue. He was afraid of him in the sense that David would take his kingdom away from him. He would lose what he valued most, that he wanted most.

His kingdom. Verse 28, toward the end of the chapter. Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David. Saul was still more afraid of David.

So, Saul became David's enemy continually. I think it's from the very beginning. Saul had a suspicion.

And his suspicion was born out of his great fear. Losing his king. Jealousy. Saul's jealousy. Remember, again, jealousy is chiefly the fear of losing what you have and losing it to someone else. Someone comes along, threatens to take what you have great pride in, what really has become the focus of your life, the center of your life.

[23 : 20] And jealousy eats away at the soul until it is joined together with envy. That's the next step. Envy.

Which is what always happens. Jealousy leads to envy. And that is why jealousy and envy, again, seem to be two words for the same thing, but they are not.

Jealousy is fear. Envy is anger. Anger. And so, let's see. Secondly. The envious soul.

The jealous soul. The envious soul. Look at verse 5 again. Following for the next several verses.

Let me read it to you again. David went out wherever Saul sent him.

And he behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. Remember, what was Saul's motive for?

[24 : 23] Keeping David there, so you can keep an eye on him, and sending him out to war. What was his purpose there? Maybe he could kill along the way.

He's beginning to hate David. Because he's envious. Envious anger. Now, it had happened as they were coming home.

Now, several battles have transpired before this. From the battle against the Philistines, and giant Goliath, and David's victory over the giant.

And he cuts off his head, takes his weapons as a trophy. But there are many battles that come after that as they pursue the Philistines. Rout them, and destroy most of them.

David is part of that. Saul is part of that. And so now, it's time to come home. So it 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, and with joy, and with musical instruments.

[25 : 32] This was probably a very normal kind of affair. You know, the king has been away for months on end. He's been in war, been in battle. And now he and the armies are coming home, and they have a great celebration.

Probably just a normal thing. So the women sang, as they would always do. But what did they see? Saul has slain his thousands.

And David his ten thousands. Wow, that just strikes a chord, doesn't it? Saul was very angry.

Remember, jealousy is fear. And jealousy leads to envy. Envy is anger. And so now, full-blown envy has overtaken Saul.

He's angry, very angry. And the saying displeased him. And he said, they have ascribed to David ten thousand to me. They have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?

[26 : 34] So Saul eyed David. That day forward, kept his eye on him. In fact, in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, they use a Greek word that basically means, invideoed him.

They didn't have video in those days. But he had a vision of David. He played over and over in his eye. He had David right there in the forefront of his thinking and his thoughts and his vision.

He's got to do something about David. Because he threatens to take his kingdom. And so jealousy is all about anger.

When someone else gets, or is about to get what you want. About what you have. Alright, so jealousy is all about anger.

And anger when someone else is about to get, or gets what you want. Or what you have had. And in this case, there's actually a number of things for Saul. First of all, it was David's favor with God.

[27 : 51] Saul wanted that. He thought he had it, though he had lost it long ago. But in his mind, he had that. And now he's about to lose that.

And lose that to someone else. He was jealous, envious of David's favor with God. In fact, three times in the text, it says the Lord was with David.

I mean, it just drives home that reality. Not just for us to see and know. But for us to understand that Saul could see that. And it made him angry. It was also envious over David's success in everything that he did.

And that too. We see it throughout the chapter. The Bible says David behaved wisely. Three times it says that. Verse 5, verse 15, verse 30.

In fact, in verse 30, it says David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul. Saul. That is not just to tell us about David. This is to clue us in on what Saul could see.

[28 : 59] What Saul knew. And what was the basis of his anger, his hatred before David. Because this is what he wanted. Now he's losing it. Losing it to David.

And also in terms of his success. The envy they had toward David's success. David, by the way, really did slay his ten thousands. These women who were singing, they weren't just taking poetic license.

This really did happen. And it was clear. I mean, they are stating the facts. The statistics. David slew his ten thousands.

While Saul slew his thousands. If there's any exaggeration, probably on the part of what Saul was able to accomplish. But not only David's favor with the Lord and David's success in all that he did. In fact, isn't it interesting? That very thing that Saul desired to happen to David backfired every time. Give him this job. Send him out to do this.

[30 : 04] Make a commander over these people. Hoping that he'd fail. Hoping he'd be killed. And every time he succeeded resoundingly. And the people respected him.

And all of that. The very thing he wanted. The opposite to this. Which leads to a third thing that he was envious about toward David. And it was David's praise and respect from man.

From the people of Israel. They respected him. They loved him. The Bible says in verse 5 that David had the acceptance of all the people.

The implication being that Saul did not. The Bible says that the women sang David's praises there in verse 7. The Bible says in the chapter in verse 16, all Israel loved David.

And that's the clincher there. They loved him. The implication being again that they did not love Saul. Saul knew that. The Bible also says in the very last verse of the chapter, David's name became highly esteemed.

[31 : 16] See what Saul was envious of? Angry about? David's favor with God? Something he wanted. Now he's lost it to someone else.

David's success in all he did, that's something Saul wanted. Though really never had. He had one, I think, one minor success. David's praise and respect from the people of Israel, that's something Saul very much wanted.

Maybe had initially. Never really had. And, you know, finally it was David's rise to the kingship. He was rising to become king of Israel and Saul knew it.

He knew it. In fact, Saul said it himself. He said, now what more can he have but the kingdom? He said, now what? You see, he's very clear. The picture of Saul's jealousy is fear.

His envy is anger. Fear leads to anger. And that leads to murder.

[32 : 30] And so, finally, the murderous Saul. I keep repeating this. I want to belabor it. But jealousy is fear that leads to envy.

Envy is anger. And anger is, according to Jesus, murder. It's murder. Matthew 5, 21.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgment.

Because he's a murderer. Only with Saul, his envy was actually murder. Jesus is talking about a spirit of murder. That's just as grievous before God.

We better be careful. Not hating a brother or sister without a cause. But with Saul, he really did want to murder David.

[33 : 34] I mean actually murder him. And we see it over and over. Look at verse 10. Verse 10. 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. There was a spear in Saul's hand. David had a harp in his hand. Saul had a spear. And Saul cast the spear.

For he said, I will pin David to the wall. But David escaped his presence twice. This murder. Attempted murder. Why? He hated him. Why did he hate him?

He was angry. Why was he angry? Because he was envious. And all started with jealousy. Fear of losing what he had. And you look at 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 and made him his captain over a thousand.

[34 : 39] And he went out and came in before the Lord. And David behaved wisely in all the ways. And the Lord was with him. Therefore when Saul saw that he had behaved wisely.

He was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David because he went out and came before them.

And Saul was sending him out to do battle. Hoping that he would be murdered. Again, Saul's plan keeps backfiring. Look at verse 17.

Then Saul said to David, here is my older daughter, Merab. I will give her to you, wife. Of course, that didn't work out. And so David said to Saul, who am I?

What is my life or my father's family in Israel that I should be son-in-law to the king? And of course, you know, Merab was promised to someone else.

[35 : 42] Saul was thinking that, you know, I'm not going to put my hand against David. It says in verse 17, not directly, that wouldn't be wise of me, but just let the hand of the Philistines be against him.

He desires to have him murdered. Verse 25. Then Saul said, thus you shall say to David, the king does not desire any dowry. And you know the rest of that part of the story.

Go out and basically kill 200 Philistines. David did it. Saul's plan backfired.

See, it's the murderous Saul. And it's not going to end with the end of this chapter. We're going to see as we get into chapter 19 and 20 and further.

Saul is going to attempt to have David killed over and over again. He's even going to try to use his own son, Jonathan, to do it in the next chapter.

[36 : 44] He's so hated David. The murder of Saul. And we need to learn the dangers of jealousy. Right? I mean, there is a lesson for us. The lesson is clear. Jealousy is the fear of losing what you have.

Losing it to someone else. If unchecked, if undealt with in God's way, a fearful jealousy always leads to envy.

And envy is the anger that suddenly rises up in you. The anger of losing what you want. Losing what you want and losing it to someone else.

If unchecked, anger, an angry envy will always lead to a murderer's heart. That's the lesson.

[37 : 45] Envy is the jaundice of the soul. It really is. Or, again, as God put it, it rots the bones. Yes. Yes. Thank you.