

Got Faith?

1 Samuel 18:12-30 Part II

Paul Cannings, D.Phil.

A. Regardless (vs. 12-13):

1. Saul was afraid of David – Saul knew that God’s anointing was withdrawn and saw God’s blessings on David, making him think that David could harm him, especially after he saw David kill Goliath (1 Samuel 24:16-22).
 - a) Proverbs 14:30 rightly calls it “the rottenness of the bones.” Envy is the pain that we feel within when somebody achieves or receives what we think belongs to us. Envy is the sin of successful people who can’t stand to see others reach the heights they have reached and eventually replace them. ^[1]
2. Saul was afraid of David – No matter how much Saul sought to destroy David, David was not afraid of Saul. David’s commitment was to obey God and to live by faith and not by sight; faith conquers fear (Joshua 1:5-9).
3. The Lord was with him – The Lord was completely and forever committed to empower, protect, and bless David (1 Samuel 16:1-13), so there was no possibility that He would ever return to Saul.
 - a) The Lord protected His servant David from Saul’s murderous hand, a fact that frightened Saul even more (vv. 15, 29). Surely Saul knew he was fighting a losing battle, for the Lord was on David’s side but had departed from him. ^[2]
4. The Lord had departed from Saul - The Lord had completely turned away from Saul, removing His protection, power, and blessings from him. An evil spirit having full access to Saul to do what he wanted with him is evidence that the Lord no longer covered him. It was only a

matter of time before he went from a lot of success (1 Samuel 14) to defeat (1 Samuel 24:1-15; 26, 31).

5. The Lord had departed from Saul. God may allow an evil person to live, but it is only after the full measure of their sins is accounted for (1 Thessalonians 2:14). Once that is complete, there will be a day of accountability.

6. Appointed David over thousands- he went out and came in before the people – Saul, knowing that the Lord was now with David, understood that David could not be touched, so he established David to be a commander of a thousand men and because of the Lord’s protection over David he was able to freely move about without anyone being able to harm him.

a) If David was killed in battle, it was the enemy’s fault; and if he lost a battle but lived, his popularity would wane. But the plan didn’t work because David won all the battles! After all, the Lord was with him and the power of God was upon him. Instead of eliminating David or diminishing his popularity, Saul’s scheme only made him a greater hero to the people, and this increased Saul’s fear of David all the more.^[3]

b) David is said to be given rule over “one thousand,” but the term probably refers to the military division supplied by a clan, with the number varying depending on the size of the clan. Later in history these companies were standardized as having a thousand, but early on there may have been as few as ten in a division. Apparently Israel’s army was divided into these “clans” (Num 31:5; Josh 22:21, 30; Judg 5:8). The army was further divided into “hundreds” (1 Sam 22:7) and even fifties (see comment on 1 Sam 8:12). David is now being put on active duty with a field command.^[4]

7. The people loved David – The people of Israel had an unspeakable affection, a covenant relationship with David.

a) While David spoke to Saul, Jonathan listened and fell in love (vs. 4) with David. This is after David killed Goliath and routed the Philistines. One of the attributes of a friend is that when God blesses you, they rejoice with you. A person who is an enemy but acts like a friend becomes more angry at you.

b) “Going out” and “coming in” are common cliches meaning to fight battles, and to go out and come out “before” someone means to be the leader in fighting (cf. Num

27:17; 1 Sam 8:20; 2 Sam 5:24). Imagine Saul's disappointment when the new and presumably more dangerous position led to greater success (vv 14 and 15; cf. 18:5 and 30). David detected a gradual escalation in Saul's anxiety from mere fear (v 12) to awe (v 15) to yet more fear (v 29). Not only David's own tribe of Judah, but all Israel (v 16; cf. vv 6 and 28) hailed David for his military prowess. Reference to Israel and Judah may express the two main constituencies of the United Kingdom. These tribes' love for David is a kind of de facto recognition of him as king (cf. Moran, *CBQ* 25 [1963] 77–87, and the love of Jonathan noted in 18:1).¹⁵¹

8. The people loved David. When we maintain our commitment to do the will of God, no matter who may be against us, it stimulates respect and admiration from others.

a) God's blessings became the enemy of Saul. It was not that David did anything to hurt Saul; it was David's success that caused Saul to be jealous of David.

9. The people loved David – People may never like us, but our steadfast commitment to the will of God should cause them to respect us, and for this, the Lord will bless us.

10. David was prospering in all his ways – David was constantly making wise decisions that blessed those around him, and whatever he put his hands to, the Lord blessed it. This is because David chose to make decisions based on the divine will of God, even when it came to how to respond to Saul (1 Samuel 24).

11. The Lord was with David – When we are saved, the Lord's presence is continually in us because He lives inside us (1 Corinthians 6:19; Titus 3:4-8). When we abide in His Word no matter what the external pressures, the Lord loves us (John 15:7-1), and disciplines us (Hebrews 12:4-11). Practicing the Word causes us to experience the full movement of the Holy Spirit so that we no longer walk in the flesh but in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-18). So, no matter what external pressures we may experience, the power within strengthens us so that we can overpower the attacks of the enemy (Ephesians 3:14-21; 1 John 4:4). What David experienced is no longer unique to him.

12. When Saul saw – With the people loving on David, David continuously made prudent decisions that benefited those around him; Saul fixed his attention back on David with no intention of ever completely engaging himself in what David was doing.

13. When Saul saw – Our good behavior may not only bless us, but it can also attract negative attention. Christ did good every day but was nailed to a cross.
14. Supposed to be dreaded but strong give us, Sojourn – David’s success caused Saul to find ways not to be around David continuously.
15. All Israel loved David – It does not matter what evil a person may intend for us to experience; when the Lord decides to bless us, there is nothing they can do to prevent blessings from being bestowed on us.

B. Faith Is Victory Guaranteed (vs. 17-18, 28-30; Hebrews 11:6):

1. Then Saul said here is my daughter Merab – Because Saul could not get to David (the people loved him), Saul approached David differently by constantly telling him to have his daughter as his bride. Please note this was supposed to have already been completed when David killed Goliath, but Saul did not fulfill his promise to David (1 Samuel 17:25). Saul was now focused on a new strategy in his attempt to kill David.
 - a) David was entitled to have Saul’s daughter as his wife because of his victory over Goliath (17:13). This promise had not been kept and is now conditional on further military service, in which Saul hoped David would be killed.
 - b) God’s favor on David is revealed not only in his military accomplishments but also in Michal’s love for him, which is now added to that of Jonathan. Everything Saul seeks to use against David turns to David’s advantage.
2. Then Saul said here is my daughter Merab – Satan never backs off. Remember Peter, who Christ said was being sifted like wheat (Luke 22:31) Well, because Peter did not remain sober (1 Peter 1:13-16), Satan got to him. This is why Peter says, “Satan is a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.” Notice Peter did not say ‘seeking someone to tell a white lie;’ no devour. Satan had an evil spirit influencing him.

a) David's status as the king's son-in-law is repeatedly emphasized throughout the rest of the chapter (vv 21, 22, 23, 26, 27). Ahimelech also refers to David as the king's son-in-law, via Michal, in 22:14. ^[6]

b) Saul's ulterior motive for offering his daughter (again probably a thought and not a word spoken aloud, cf. vv 11 and 21) is repeated in v 21. Saul wanted to put David in danger with no blame coming to himself (cf. the appointment of David as a commander over a thousand, v 13). ^[7]

c) David meets Saul's challenge twice over, presenting two hundred foreskins (v. 27). Saul views this success as evidence that Yahweh is with David (v. 28), and his fear of him grows into full-blown enmity (v. 29). ^[8]

3. Be a valiant man for me and fight – Saul compliments David and then commands him to go and fight the Philistines when there is no need. Saul acted as if he had confidence in David's ability.

4. Be a valiant man for me and fight – Satan's strategy is to get us to depend on our strength rather than the inner power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16-17; 6:10). Remember what Satan said to Christ when tempting Him: "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here...." (Luke 4:9). The same with Eve. He told her she could be just like God (Genesis 3:1-7).

5. When Saul saw and knew – God's timing (2 Peter 3:8) can seem insensitive to our pain, but it's a process of refinement (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:3-9) that leads to victory. David became a leader of 400 hundred mighty warriors that dominated the world (2 Samuel 22:2, 25:13; 30:10; 2 Samuel 23:8-39) and loved him dearly (2 Samuel 23:16).

6. When Saul saw and knew – Saul carefully inspected all that David accomplished and clearly understood that all David achieved was empowered by God (the same took place for him; 1 Samuel 14:47-52).

7. Saul was afraid of David – Saul, a tall, strong, and valiant warrior (1 Samuel 9:2; 10:23-27) was now terrified of David.

a) David never considered Saul to be his enemy (Ps. 18 inscription), but Saul remained David's enemy until the day he died on the battlefield. ^[9]

8. Saul was afraid of David – It does not matter what evil people seek to bestow on us. The Lord “*is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.*” (Ephesians 3:20).

9. Saul was afraid of David – It does not matter what traps people set for us; “....greater is He who is in us..... ” (1 John 4:4). This may infuriate some, cause others to become more sophisticated with their traps against us but remember; “in all things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loves us.” (Romans 8:37) Even if they mean it for evil, the Lord can turn it for good (Romans 8:28). “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31)

^[1] Wiersbe, W. W. (2001). [Be successful](#) (pp. 101–102). Victor/Cook Communications.

^[2] Wiersbe, W. W. (2001). [Be successful](#) (p. 102). Victor/Cook Communications.

^[3] Wiersbe, W. W. (2001). [Be successful](#) (pp. 102–103). Victor/Cook Communications.

^[4] Matthews, V. H., Chavalas, M. W., & Walton, J. H. (2000). [The IVP Bible background commentary: Old Testament](#) (electronic ed., 1 Sa 18:13). InterVarsity Press.

^[5] Klein, R. W. (1983). [1 Samuel](#) (Vol. 10, pp. 188–189). Word, Incorporated.

^[6] Klein, R. W. (1983). [1 Samuel](#) (Vol. 10, p. 189). Word, Incorporated.

^[7] Jamieson, R. (n.d.). [A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Joshua–Esther: Vol. II](#) (p. 184). William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited.

^[8] Walton, J. H. (2009). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary \(Old Testament\): Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#) (Vol. 2, p. 354). Zondervan.

^[9] Wiersbe, W. W. (2001). [Be successful](#) (p. 104). Victor/Cook Communications.