

## Chapter Twenty – David Becomes the Second King

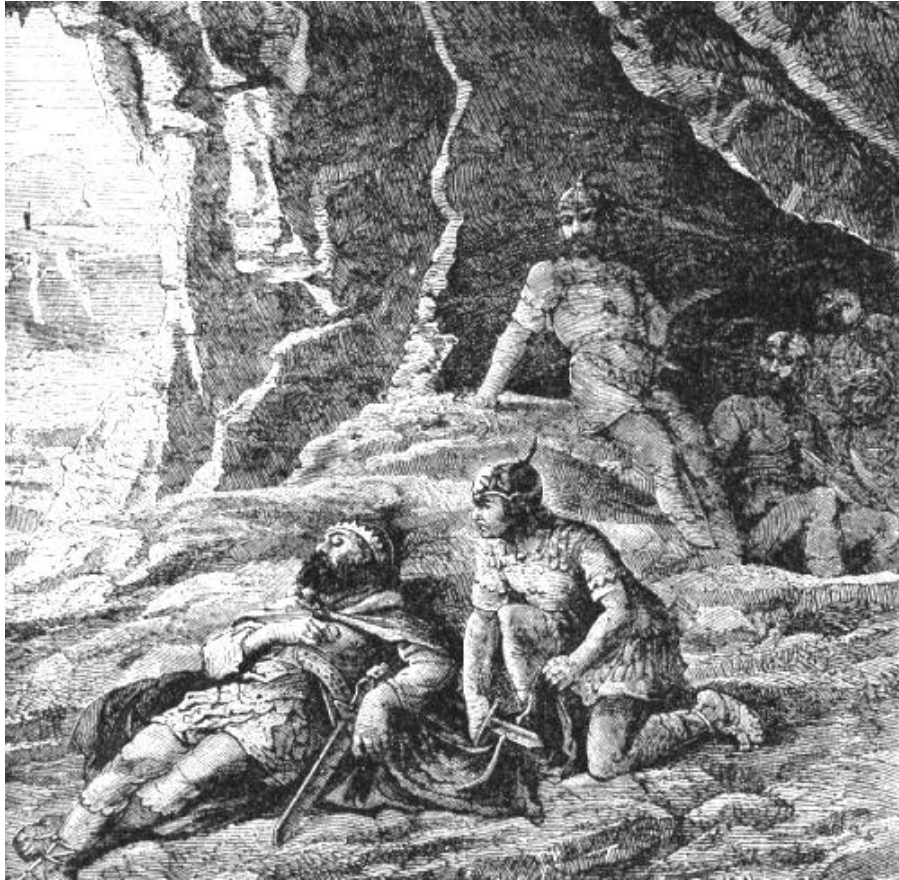
Jonathan, the son of Saul, was a good friend of David. He saw David as his own brother. He persuaded his father not to harm David and made him swear to God that he would not harm him. However, Saul again lost self-control. He threw a spear at David when he was playing the harp for him. Again, David dodged. He could not understand why Saul hated him so much. With the help of his wife, he ran away and escaped to Samuel. The New Moon Festival was approaching and he was supposed to be a guest of Saul but he was not sure if Saul would be calm by then. Therefore, he made a plan with Jonathan.

At the celebration dinner, David was not there. Saul asked Jonathan where he was and Jonathan replied, "David could not be here tonight as his relatives wanted to celebrate the Festival with him in his hometown." Saul became furious because he wanted to kill David on the spot. Jonathan tried to say good things about David but Saul became even angrier and yelled at him, "You will never be the king unless David dies." He then threw a spear at Jonathan to kill him. He could not stand that Jonathan was on David's side. He was so mad that he even wanted to kill his own son. The next morning Jonathan went to meet David and warned him to leave the country.

Saul did not give up chasing after David. He killed the priests who had helped David. One day, by chance, Saul went into the cave where David and his men were hiding. It was a deep cave. Without noticing there were others in the cave, Saul took a rest. David's men tried to convince him to kill Saul while he was sleeping but David could not do it. Instead he cut off a piece of Saul's cloak. When Saul woke up in the morning, he left the cave and David called from behind him, "Your Majesty, I had the chance to kill you last night but I did not do it." David showed him the piece of cloth that he had cut off from Saul's cloak and continued, "I would never do anything to harm you for you are the king chosen by the Lord." At this point, Saul knew that he had misjudged David and promised that he would not harm him ever again. But not long afterwards, Saul broke his promise and sent his men to pursue David. This time David went into Saul's camp and took his spear and water jar right next to his head. The next morning, when Saul realized what had happened, he promised again that he would not try to harm David anymore. Twice, David had spared the life of Saul but he realized that Saul would not give up trying to kill him, so he did not return to him.

War broke out again between the Israelites and the Philistines. This time God was no longer on Saul's side. The Philistines, who had a large army, defeated Saul's army completely. Jonathan and his two brothers were captured and put to death. Saul was now left with his armour-bearer. When he saw that there was no more hope left, he told his armour-bearer to kill him. He refused to do so. Saul then drew his sword and killed himself. When the armour-bearer saw this, he also drew his own sword and killed himself. This was the sad end of the first king of the Israelites. When David heard of the death of Saul and Jonathan, he wept bitterly for them.

As soon as news spread that Saul was dead, the Israelites gathered together and chose David as their new king. God blessed David and he won many battles and defeated the Israelites long-time enemy, the Philistines. He captured Jerusalem and made it his capital. He built a powerful and wealthy kingdom for the Israelites.



*David cuts off a piece of Saul's robe*

Questions:

1. Why did Saul want to kill David?
2. Did Saul love his son Jonathan? Explain your answer.
3. How did Jonathan show his friendship for David?
4. Why did Saul become angry with Jonathan?
5. David could have killed Saul in the cave. Why did he not do so?
6. How can you help if your friends are having a conflict?