

Jonathan 4

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[0 : 00] Now, as most of you will be aware, we're looking in previous weeks at the character of Jonathan, the Prince of Israel, and we'll come this evening to the beginning of his relationship with the future King David.

Last week we saw how one possible reason why in God's providence Jonathan would not end up inheriting the throne, the kingdom, was because of the curse which his father had pronounced and of which Jonathan had partaken of the honey when Saul had said, Cursed be any man that ate anything that day on the day of the battle. Jonathan hadn't known. Jonathan took part of the honey and therefore the curse rested upon him.

And we saw how God owned the curse, given how it had been uttered lawfully by the lawful civil magistrate, albeit a most regrettable one.

And just as you know, as we read in Proverbs, at the 26th verse 2, as the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

This curse ends up being overruled by God for his glory. Jonathan still does not inherit, but he is still able to do good for the Lord's cause and to the one who is the Lord's anointed.

[1 : 23] And we see this at the beginning now of chapter 18. We've moved on a few chapters from where we last left Jonathan, and that was at the end of chapter 14, where the people had intervened to stop him from being put to death.

And in the meantime, Saul has had his battle with the Amalekites. He has fallen out with Samuel, and the kingdom has been prophesied that it's going to be taken away from him and given to another.

We have had, in the interim, the anointing of the future King David, who at this time must be a boy of no more 16 or 17 than at this stage.

It's really impossible to imagine David being too much younger than, say, about 17 or thereabouts, because if he was younger than that, it wouldn't matter how much of a hero he was.

The soldiers and the army and the people still wouldn't accept him as a commander over them if he was still just a mere boy. So he must have been about 17, 16, 17, on the cusp of manhood, as it were, and having proved himself, of course, against Goliath.

[2 : 32] If he had been much older than that, then he wouldn't still have been tending his father's sheep in the wilderness and fighting off bears and lions and so on.

He would have been in the army with his older brothers. So he is young and just on this sort of borderline between not quite old enough to be called up, but not quite young enough to be still a complete child such as the army would not accept.

So here he is just sort of on the borderline of manhood. So we can only speculate that he's about 16, 17 or thereabouts.

He can't be much older than that. Jonathan, by contrast, as we saw when we looked at the first week when we began to look at Jonathan, is by now well into his 40s.

He must be. Because as we looked at then, Acts 13, verse 21 tells us, They desired a king that is Israel, and God gave unto them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of 40 years.

[3 : 43] So Saul reigned 40 years. Those 40 years came to an end with his death in battle against the Philistines. That is when David became king.

He began to reign in Hebron and then later on in Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 5 tells us, verse 4, So David is 30 at the end of Saul's 40-year reign, which means that Saul has reigned 10 years before David is even born.

And if we turn back a couple of pages, we see that Jonathan was beginning his military exploits in chapter 13, the beginning of it, when Saul had reigned two years.

So when Jonathan is attacking and defeating the garrisons of the Philistines in chapters 13 and 14, he is, again, almost certainly a young man, maybe 19, maybe 20-ish.

If that is the case, then, you know, he's at least 28 or thereabouts by the time David is born. So he's like 26 years older than David.

[5 : 04] So if David is, say, 17, then Jonathan is about 43. In other words, these are not two youngsters of like age.

They are not two pals knocking about together, but rather Jonathan is old enough to be David's father. And that's the context of the relationship here, where we see that his soul was knit to the soul of David.

And Jonathan loved him as his own soul. We might speculate here that he loved him as a son. Now, we know that Jonathan had at least one son of his own later on, that when Jonathan was already dead, his son was five years old, Mephibosheth, who was laying in both his feet.

The tragedy, he was dropped by his nurse when she was running after all the wars that followed after the death of Saul. And so he was laying in both his feet. He was Jonathan's son.

Perhaps he was his only son. That's less likely. There were probably other children from earlier in his life. But maybe at this stage, Jonathan doesn't have a son.

[6 : 19] Maybe at this stage, if Mephibosheth is five at the time when Jonathan dies, then at this stage, probably Jonathan doesn't have a son of his own. And David is maybe like the son that he wished he had.

Or maybe he sees in David something of himself and his own gallantry that he had when he was young. And how he's got all his life before him.

And he recognises in him the piety, the faithfulness to God. Remember that when David kills Goliath, he gives all the glory to God. He says, you know, you come against me with a sword and a spear and a shield.

But I come to you in the name of the living God, his armies you have defied. He brings the Lord into his military attack. Just as Jonathan did years before.

Of course, some of you will be aware that in this day and age, the current obsession with unnatural relations has attempted to portray David and Jonathan as though they were a homosexual sort of couple in that sense.

[7 : 22] Now, aside from the fact that one is much, much older than the other, that wouldn't of itself disprove the fact. But bear in mind that Jonathan has at least one son and almost certainly others.

So he married with children by the end of his life. David for his part. David, we go back to 2 Samuel, we see in chapter 3.

And we begin at verse 2. Unto David were sons born in Hebron. And his firstborn was Amnon of Ahinoam, the Jesuitess. Wife number one. His second, Cleabal Abigail, the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

Wife number two. The third, Absalom, the son of Machah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Gesher. Wife number three. The fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith. Wife number four.

The fifth, Shephethiah, the son of Abital. Wife number five. The sixth, Ithriam, Baieglah, David's wife. Wife number six. These were born to David in Hebron.

[8 : 23] Turn a page, chapter 5, verse 13. David took in more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem after he was come from Hebron. And they were born yet sons and daughters born to David.

And these were the names of those that were born unto them in Jerusalem. Shammuah and Shobab and Nathan and Solomon. Ibar also and Elishua and Nepheg and Japhia and Elishamah and Elishamah and Elishamah and Elishamah and Elishamah.

David, that's 11 children. Not counting the six that are mentioned in the previous chapters. David, of course, also had Saul's wife, Michael.

Saul's daughter, Michael, as another wife. Wife number seven. Wife number one, technically. And, of course, later on, he had Bathsheba, wife number eight.

Not counting the concubines and all the kids from them and so on. So it's not exactly the behavior of somebody who felt attracted to men.

[9 : 18] The idea that this is some kind of unnatural or sodomite relationship is just pure filth imposed by a modern outlook that's obsessed with that particular behavior.

And looks desperately for it in any kind of nook or cranny of the Bible that they think they can possibly find. They can't find it. The evidence is completely to the contrary.

So we have this relationship, however, between Jonathan and David. A relationship of more like uncle and nephew or father and son or much, much older brother to much, much younger one.

We can only speculate about the age of David, but assuming he's about 17 or thereabouts, Jonathan must be at least 43 or thereabouts.

So a huge difference in age. But we read that the soul of Jonathan, chapter 18, verse 1, was knit with the soul of David. Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul did him that day, wouldn't let him go home anymore to his father's house.

[10 : 23] Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul. There's a covenant being made, but from whom is this covenant being initiated? It's being initiated by Jonathan.

Because he, out of the two, despite David's heroics against Goliath, is certainly the senior, more powerful partner in this covenant. He is the one who needs must initiate it.

He is the one who needs must make the approach. Name order is always significant in the Bible. Jonathan and David made a covenant. Not David and Jonathan.

Jonathan and David. Jonathan is making the initial suggestion here, entering into a covenant. Now, this is one of the first instances where, again, we see him, again, taking something of a Christ-like role.

He's not obviously a Christ figure as such, but he does point us onwards to Christ. He shows characteristics of Christ's relationship to his people here.

[11 : 26] In that he is initiating this covenant. He is the one in the position of power and authority and regal dignity. And he is initiating this covenant with David.

At this stage, he's the poor shepherd boy who has had a spectacular victory over Goliath. Yes, by the Lord's grace. But this is Jonathan himself initiating the covenant.

Just as Christ the king initiates the covenant with his people. David, at this stage, has nothing to give. He has nothing with which to return the favor that Jonathan is showing him.

Just as we have nothing to return to Christ. He gives and he gives all to us. Just as Jonathan is the one doing all the giving here.

Jonathan, as we've said, is not in the direct ancestry of our Lord. Unlike David. But still, like so many characters and situations in the Old Testament, it points us on to Christ.

[12 : 29] And we see Christ-like characteristics here. First of all, that he is the one who initiates this covenant. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him, his outer robe.

Gave it to David. And his garments even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle. Now, the girdle, in that sense, it's not that the undergarments. It's almost certainly, almost like the sword belt.

And that which is connected with the sword and the bow. Sort of like that later on would be that gun belt in 19th and 20th century military wear.

So it's that which his sword would hang on it. His bow would probably have a pocket that would tuck into the edge of it. So he's giving him his weapons. He's giving him, effectively, his armor, his garments, everything.

David would have nothing, remember? And to be clothed thus by a prince of the royal house. This is to put the ultimate honor upon him.

[13 : 27] It's not just, here's some money, go and get yourself some clothes. But rather to wear something which had been worn already by the king or by a prince of the royal house.

Was to confer the ultimate dignity. You know how nowadays people perhaps go a little bit silly over things that have belonged to maybe their hero or their idol or their sporting hero or a pop idol or something like that.

They'll bid thousands for something or a jacket they wore or a shirt they wore once on some famous occasion. And they say, this is the thing that so-and-so wore. Look, here it is hanging up in my wardrobe.

And it's a big deal to people who have this celebrity worship nowadays. In those days it was a genuine big deal. Because even if somebody was wealthy, how do you confer honor on somebody who is already rich and famous and wealthy?

This is how you do it. You give them something that belonged to and had been worn by the king or the prince. And we've got evidence of this.

[14 : 36] You know, Esther, the book of Esther in chapter 6. Remember when the king has his dream and then he says to Haman who comes in. He says, what shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor?

Now Haman thought in his heart, to whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself? And Haman answered the king, for the man whom the king delighteth to honor, he doesn't say, give us a bag of gold.

Or he doesn't say, you know, make me rich. He's already rich. He's already the top official in the kingdom. There's nothing the king can add to him by way of titles or money or wealth that will increase his favor.

Let the royal apparel be brought, which the king used to wear. And the horse that the king rideth upon.

A horse the king has already ridden on in the past. And the crown royal, which is set upon his head. And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor.

[15 : 40] And bring him on horseback through the street of the city and proclaim before him, thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor. That which has been touched by the royal person.

That conferred honor when it was given. So we find David who would be basically in shepherd boy's garments and not have much else. He can't give Jonathan anything back.

He is being gifted these symbols of enormous honor. This is something that nobody, no money could buy. You know, armor or clothing or whatever with this level of honor.

No matter how rich they might have been, they wouldn't have been worn by the prince of Israel. But this confers huge honor on David. This covenant into which Jonathan enters with them means he's not just somebody who was providentially blessed in battle.

This is somebody who now, the heir to the throne, as it seems, takes under his wing as his own, as though he is his own son. As though certainly he is his younger brother or nephew or whatever.

[16 : 52] He is looking after him. He is blessing him. Nobody who wants to keep Jonathan as a friend is now going to slight David. He's now going to give him a heart. And David is well in with the royal family now.

And it just gets more and more so as we see as the chapter unfolds if we have read the rest of it. Now here again is another symptom of Christ-like grace. What does Jonathan do for David?

He clothes him with his own garments. He clothes him with his own, his armor is implied there. His clothing is certainly implied.

What do we have? What does David have in and of himself? What do we have in and of ourselves? Nothing. We are earnestly desiring, as 2 Corinthians puts it in chapter 5, to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

[18 : 00] This is what Christ does. He doesn't, as it were, strip us naked in that sense. Our filthy rags are stripped away of our own righteousness. Our uncleanness is washed away.

But we are not left naked. We are clothed, not just with a fresh version of what we had before, but rather with the robe of his righteousness.

He gives that to us. And what does he get from us in exchange? He takes our sin upon himself. Just as he took the curse, and we saw that last week, as he took the curse on behalf of us, and God takes his curse and his blessings very seriously.

So, likewise, his righteousness is given to us. And we are clothed with his righteousness. And he, in exchange, takes our sin.

In the last verse of that chapter in 2 Corinthians, he hath made him to be sin for us. He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, clothed in his righteousness.

[19 : 01] The garments that we have, the garments of praise, of righteousness, are not ours by ownership. They are ours by gift. Gift by the Prince of Glory, who has clothed his people with it, who were of themselves nothing.

As David says elsewhere in the chapter, you know, who am I that I should be the king's son-in-law? You know, I'm nothing. My father's house is poor in Judah, and so on.

We've got nothing of ourselves. We read in Revelation 19, if I'm the bride of Christ. It to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

A righteousness they have not of themselves. It is a gift from the Lord. Just as Jonathan gifts his clothes, his armor, his robe to David.

Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. Now that sword would have been special to Jonathan.

[20 : 10] Remember how there weren't many swords available at the outset, when he first went to war with the Philistines? And Jonathan's sword that would see him through thick and thin would be personal to him, would be special to him.

And just as the Lord gives us ultimately the sword of the spook, which is the word of God, it is personal to him. It is special to him, but he gives it to the one that he loves, into whom he enters into this sacred and holy covenant.

That is the first minute. Secondly, as we see throughout the course of the chapter, Saul is becoming more and more envious of David, and becoming more and more afflicted with the evil spirit, which attacks him from time to time.

And Saul gets to the stage now that he wants to do away with David. And Saul spake to Jonathan, now we're in chapter 19 now, spake to Jonathan and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David, and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul, my father seeketh to kill thee. Now therefore I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, abide in a secret place.

[21 : 17] I will go out, and stand beside my father in a field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee. What I see, that I will tell thee. Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul, his father, and said, and delight not the king, sin against his servant.

And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swear, as the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain. What have we got here? Another oath. As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain.

And again, God honours that oath, and recognises the truthfulness of it, because David, throughout his whole long life, of many battles, and conflicts, and struggles, is never slain.

He dies in a good old age. He dies of natural causes, in the end. And Peter says, you know, his sepulcher is with us till this day. But unlike David, who saw corruption, the ultimate son of David, Jesus Christ, doesn't see corruption, when he dies in his bed, but he is raised again.

So, David dies in a good old age. He is not slain. As the Lord liveth, Saul said, he shall not be slain. This is a lawful oath, coming again from, as yet, the Lord's lawfully anointed, civil magistrate.

[22 : 34] And God, recognises the truth of it, God owns, the oath. And despite the fact, that Saul tries to go back on it, several times, God, holds the oath, true.

Just as he held true, the prophecy, by Caiaphas, who was not a particularly, savoury character, but who nonetheless, lawfully held, the office of high priest, in Israel, at the time, when Jesus was crucified, who prophesied, that it was profitable, that one man should die, on behalf of the nation, and not that the whole, nation should perish.

So, we've got a lawful oath here, by the lawful civil magistrate. But we also have here, an intercessor, an advocate, with his father, on behalf of one, whom Saul, in what he perceives, as his justice, would desire to kill.

Because he sees David, as a threat. Saul, of course, is losing, his moral compass, as to what is right, and wrong. But his verdict, of what requires, to be done, whom he will, he slew, and whom he will, he keeps alive.

It is to that sense, an absolute monarchy, in Israel, at that stage. And if Saul says, so and so is to die, he will die. And if he says, they will be spared, they will be spared.

[23 : 53] He has, as it were, the hand, or the power, of God, delegated to him, to decide who lives and dies. But we have here, an advocate, with his father.

We have Jonathan, the royal prince, speaking on behalf, of David. And yes, it is true, that David is innocent, of the things, of which Saul, accuses him.

It is true, that David is innocent, of any plot, or treason, against Saul. But, that's not really, the reason, why Jonathan, is intervening.

Is it? Because all, Saul's servants, know, that David is not, actually guilty, of anything. And yet, as the previous chapters, will tell you, there have been those, who have been sent, to kill him.

And his wife, Michael says, no, he's sick in bed. And she hides, an image in the bed, and says, oh, there he is in his bed. And then, they are prepared, to go and kill him, on Saul's orders. Even though they know, that he's innocent.

[24 : 51] So, Jonathan spake good of David, unto Saul, his father, because, why did he do it? Because, he was dear, to him. Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much, in David.

There is a covenant, between them. And it is for the strength, of that covenant, that Jonathan, has become, the intercessor, the advocate, on behalf, of David, to his father.

Saul, requires, demands, the death of David, but, Jonathan, intercedes. Now, it is not exactly, the same, as our Lord, of course.

Because, what our Lord, offers, is himself, in the place, of the guilty. David is not guilty, to this extent, before Saul. Nevertheless, the punishment, would still, fall on David.

The death penalty, would still, fall on David, if there was not, somebody, to stand in, and plead for him. And the person, who stands in, and pleads for him, is, the beloved son, of the all-powerful father.

[25 : 57] And we see here again, a parallel, a reflection, of the relationship, between the righteousness, of God, whose judgment, would justly, fall on us, as rebellious sinners, which David is not, in that political context, against Saul.

But you've got, the beloved son, who intercedes, on behalf, of those, with whom, he is, in covenant. So we have here again, another illustration, pointing us, to Christ.

What Jonathan, is doing, in a historical context, in a physical, personal context, on behalf, of his friend, David, is exactly, what is done, on a cosmic, spiritual scale, by Christ, on behalf, of his people, with whom he is, in covenant.

Except that they are sinners, and David, at that stage, was not a sinner, in the political, rebellious sense. Jonathan, stands in for David, Jonathan, speaks up for David, Jonathan, turns away, the sentence of death, from David, so that the king, pronounces, as the Lord, loveth, he shall not be slain.

An oath, which proved, to be very much true. What does Christ do? He stands in, for his people. He intercedes, for them, with his father, and he causes, the sentence of death, to be turned, away, from them.

[27 : 24] Such that those, who are in covenant, with him, as the Lord, liveth, they shall not be slain. They will not be, subjected, to eternal death, but rather, clothed, in his garments, of righteousness, protected, by his, intercessions, and his word, on behalf, of the, covenant, beloved, to his, all powerful, father, at this stage.

Jonathan, preserves, the life of David, because he loves him, and because he is, in covenant, with him. And we may think, oh, well, that's just somebody, helping out his friends, on the one of the implications, of this.

Because David, is not put to death, narrow, at this stage. And all the other times, when, when Jonathan, stands in, or helps, or intercedes for him, David's life is spared, again, and again, and again, through many a trial, many a conflict.

David lives, to inherit the kingdom. David lives, to produce a loyal seed. David lives, to perpetuate, the line, which in the legal, eyes of the law, culminates, with the arrival, of our Lord, on the scene of this day.

So Jonathan, is not simply, interceding, for the former shepherd boy. Jonathan, is the tool, the instrument, of the Lord, the Prince, of Israel, who advocates, on behalf, of his covenant, with friend, who saves, his life, time, and again, and who does so, having clothed him first, in his own, royal garments, to honour, the covenant, which he himself, has initiated.

[29 : 15] So, that is,