

# The Grace To Step Aside

(I Samuel 18:1-4)

*"The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."*

## INTRODUCTION

There are some battles in life that are easier to fight than to surrender.

- It is easier for many people to fight for a position than to release it.
- It is easier to compete than to celebrate another man's rising.
- It is easier to protect personal ambition than to submit to divine purpose.

Very few people can watch someone else step into what looked like it should have been theirs and still say,

**"God's will is more important than my personal desire."**

That was the greatness of Jonathan. Jonathan was born close to a throne, but never sat on it.

- He was not an outsider.
- He was not a servant.
- He was not a stranger to royalty.

Jonathan was the son of Saul, the firstborn of a king, the natural heir to Israel's throne.

By birth, the crown belonged to him. By custom, the sceptre should have passed into his hands. By human expectation, his future had already been written.

Then David appeared. A shepherd. An unknown young man. A man carrying no pedigree, no royal bloodline, and no political inheritance.

Yet Jonathan saw something others missed:

- He recognized that what was legally his had prophetically been given to another.
- And instead of fighting for what he could have claimed, he surrendered to what God had ordained.

That is what makes Jonathan extraordinary.

Many men can fight for a crown. Few men can release one. Many can lead in public. Few can decrease in private. Many can celebrate their own promotion. Few can rejoice in another man's elevation.

Jonathan teaches us a painful but holy truth: ***Sometimes true greatness is not found in taking the throne, but in knowing when to step away from it.***

## THE NATURAL RIGHT TO THE THRONE

### Who Was Jonathan?

Jonathan was:

- A prince by birth
- A warrior by character
- A covenant man by spirit
- A discerner by revelation

He had every natural reason to resent David.

David represented:

- His replacement
- His lost inheritance
- His surrendered future

Yet Jonathan chose love over rivalry. Only a man who loves God's will more than personal ambition can do that.

### WHY DID JONATHAN RELEASE WHAT WAS HIS?

#### Jonathan Discerned The Hand OF God

*1 Samuel 23:17 "Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee."*

Jonathan recognized what Saul refused to accept. Saul saw David as:

- competition
- danger
- disruption

Jonathan saw David as:

- God's choice

That distinction changed everything.

Many people become enemies of what God is blessing because they cannot separate personal loss from divine purpose.

Jonathan understood: **"If God has chosen him, I must not fight him."**

#### Lesson

Spiritual maturity is revealed when you can discern grace on another person without becoming threatened by it.

#### Jonathan Released Position For Purpose

*1 Samuel 18:4 "Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David..."*

VERY MANY NIGERIAN MOTHERS WOULD HAVE SHOUTED **"MUMU"**

The robe was not ordinary clothing. It represented:

- identity
- authority
- inheritance
- future kingship

Jonathan did not merely give David a garment. He handed him a symbol of succession.

He was saying: **"I will not become an obstacle to what God has decided."**

Some people cannot enter purpose because they are still clinging to position.

Jonathan teaches: **There are moments when surrender is greater than possession.**

#### Jonathan Refused The Poison Of Jealousy

*1 Samuel 18:7 "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousand."*

David became celebrated. Jonathan remained overlooked.

The same song that exposed Saul's true Weakness revealed Jonathan's true Greatness.

Ability to rejoice with others when they are in the **spotlight**

Saul became bitter. Jonathan remained pure. Same atmosphere. Different heart.

**The Saul spirit says:** "Why him?"

**The Jonathan spirit says:** "If God is with him, I will stand with him."

*Proverbs 14:30 "Envy is the rottenness of the bones."*

Jealousy destroys many people silently. Jonathan refused to let another man's blessing become his personal torment.

In the entire Bible, Jonathan's name was mentioned just **50-55** times depending on the translation while David's name was mentioned **1000-1100** times depending on the translation.

Does that mean that Jonathan was not a great man?

#### JONATHAN CHOSE COVENANT OVER SELF-PRESERVATION

*1 Samuel 18:3 "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant..."*

Jonathan did not build a convenient friendship. He entered a costly covenant. He defended David even when it endangered himself.

**1 Samuel 19:4** Jonathan spoke for David before Saul.

He risked:

- family approval
- personal safety
- future inheritance

for the sake of righteousness.

## Lesson

Anyone can stand beside you when your life is easy.

Only those close to your heart will stand beside you when loyalty becomes expensive.

## JONATHAN CHOSE LEGACY OVER POWER

Jonathan never wore the crown. Yet his name still speaks. Why?

Because some people rule for a season, but others live in memory for generations.

Kings sat on thrones. Jonathan lives in Scripture.

Because: **Power can make you visible. Humility can make you unforgettable.**

## LESSONS FOR THE CHURCH TODAY

Jonathan teaches believers to:

### 1. Celebrate grace on others

Not every SPARKLE in the room belongs to you.

**Romans 12:15** "Rejoice with them that do rejoice."

### 2. Serve without recognition

Some only serve when they are noticed. Jonathan served without needing applause.

### 3. Submit to God's choices

Even when God's decision costs your comfort.

The hidden qualification of David is seen in his statement to Goliath... "You

*have come against me with sword, spear and Javelin but I come against you in THE NAME OF THE LORD".*

It takes someone who has a very close relationship with God and had experienced what His powerful name can do privately to still depend upon that name publicly but in a more critical situation.

## 4. Value Purpose Above Personal Ambition

Not every opportunity should be pursued. Some should be surrendered.

IN THE ABSENCE OF DAVID, SAUL DIDN'T WIN ANY BATTLE RATHER HE DIED DURING A BATTLE.

## THE REWARD OF JONATHAN'S SPIRIT

Jonathan died, but his covenant did not die. Years later **David** asked:

**2 Samuel 9:1** "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

Jonathan was gone, but his faithfulness still spoke. His son Mephibosheth, who was:

- broken
- forgotten
- hidden
- disabled

was brought from Lo-debar to the king's table.

**2 Samuel 9:7** "Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."

Jonathan never sat on Saul's throne, but his son sat at David's table.

## Powerful truth

Your humility today can become your children's favour tomorrow.

**WHAT EXACTLY WILL YOUR CHILDREN REAP FROM YOUR TODAY'S CHARACTER WHEN YOU'RE GONE**

### THE CROWN YOU MUST RELEASE

Some people lose their destiny not because they lacked ability, but because they could not release what God never intended them to keep.

Jonathan teaches us that there are moments in life when the greatest proof of spiritual maturity is not what you can hold, but what you can release.

Can you still worship when someone else is chosen?

Can you still serve when someone else is elevated & celebrated?

Can you still love when another man walks into a place you feel should be yours?

Because in the kingdom of God, the greatest people are not always those who seek the spotlight— sometimes they are the ones who quietly step away from them.

And sometimes the holiest crown is the one you were willing to lay down for God.

### CONCLUSION

#### JONATHAN POINTS US TO CHRIST

Jonathan is a shadow of Christ. Jonathan laid down a robe. Jesus laid down glory. Jonathan surrendered a throne. Jesus left heaven.

***Philippians 2:6-7*** "He made Himself of no reputation..."

Jesus showed us that the highest form of power is voluntary surrender.

Why not surrender yourself for water baptism and enjoy sweet fellowship with God?