

Who was Michal in the Bible?

Michal was the younger daughter of King Saul and is first mentioned in 1 Samuel 14:49. Michal is important in biblical history because she fell in love with David, even though her older sister, Merab, had been promised to David as a wife as a prize for killing Saul's enemies (1 Samuel 18:17). However, when the time came for Merab to be given to David in marriage, Saul double-crossed him and gave her to another man (1 Samuel 18:19). Seeing that his younger daughter, Michal, loved David, Saul considered her a way to ensnare the future king, of whom he was insanely jealous. So Saul agreed to give her to David as a prize for another attack against the Philistines (1 Samuel 18:24-25, 27). Saul hoped that David would be killed in the attack.

David, however, succeeded in defeating the Philistines, and Michal was given to him as a wife. Michal's father's jealousy of his rival escalated, and Saul tried to kill David. Michal helped her new husband escape when King Saul's men came to kill him (1 Samuel 19:7-11). For reasons we are not told, Saul later gave Michal to another man, Palti son of Laish, while David was running for his life. Years later, when Saul was dead and David was preparing to step into his rightful position as king, he ordered that Michal be taken from Palti and brought back to him. David had other wives and children by this time, and there is no indication that he asked Michal's input on this decision. She was forcibly returned to him, while her husband Palti followed after them, crying (2 Samuel 3:14-16).

This act seems to have destroyed whatever love Michal had once felt for David, because the next time we see her, she is caustically critical of David when he dances before the Lord (2 Samuel 6:16, 20). Rather than address the source of her bitterness, which was most likely his heartless act of taking her away from her husband, David defends himself

and puts down her father. Because of her sarcastic and dishonoring attitude, Michal never had any children (verse 23). It can be gathered from this that either she and David did not share intimacy or the Lord closed her womb due to her verbal attack against His anointed servant.

We can learn from Michal's sad story what happens in a marriage when offenses go on for years, unaddressed. Michal's youthful infatuation with Israel's hero turned to bitterness when he treated her like property, tore her away from a loving husband, and apparently never made it right. Even someone like David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), could also be selfish and cause pain in someone he should have loved. Although David was used greatly by God, he was also a sinful human being who made tragic mistakes. God placed stories like Michal's in the Bible to remind us that heroes are also human and bitterness can destroy even a queen.