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SAUL, DAVID, JONATHAN, 1 SAMUEL

## THE ROMANCE OF THE ROYALS

### David in Saul's House

David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was very old. Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: David was the youngest. David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

Saul's attendants said to him, "Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better."

So Saul said to his attendants, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me."

One of the servants answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man."

Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a wineskin and a kid and sent them with his son David to Saul.

David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armor-bearers. Then Saul sent word to Jesse, saying, "Allow David to remain in my service, for I am pleased with him."

Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and from that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family.

Now Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they (who?) told Saul about it, he was pleased. So Saul said to David, "Now you have a second opportunity to become my son-in-law." Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

And Jonathan said to David, Whatever you should ask for, I will do for you. And Jonathan again put David under oath, because he loved him. And he said, tomorrow is the new moon, and your absence will be noticed, because your seat will be empty.

And as for the thing that you and I have spoken about, know that Yahweh is between me and you forever.

And David hid himself in the field, and when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat bread. And Saul did not say anything, because he thought, Something has happened to him, and he is no longer ritually pure. Then on the second day, David's place was empty. Saul said, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, neither yesterday nor today?"

And Jonathan replied, "David urged me to let him go to Bethlehem."

And Saul's rage ignited against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a whore! I know you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness. Now, send for him and have him brought to me, because he is a dead man!"

In the morning, Jonathan went out to the field at the time set by David. And he fell on his face to the ground, and he bowed three times, and they kissed, and both wept, David all the more.