A Biographical Study of Jonathan

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Jonathan

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

I. Jonathan and his foes—the Philistines
   A. He bravely attacked a Philistine outpost at Geba, thus triggering an all-out
      Israelite and Philistine war (1 Sam. 13:3-5)
   B. He attacked another Philistine outpost and, aided only by his armor bearer,
      killed 20 enemy troops. God then sent a panic among the Philistines which
      routed their entire army (1 Sam. 14:1-15).

II. Jonathan and his father—Saul
    A. In pursuing the enemy, Saul issued a stupid order forbidding his troops to eat
       any food until final victory had been won. Unaware of this command, Jonathan
       ate some honey (1 Sam. 14:24-27).
    B. Upon discovery of this, Saul ordered the death of Jonathan. However, the
       Israelite soldiers stepped in and refused to allow this national hero to die (1
       Sam. 14:43-45)

III. Jonathan and his friend—David
    A. He honored his friend.
       2. He warned and defended David.
          a. He told David about the threat of Saul to kill him (1 Sam. 19:1-3).
          b. He attempted to change his father’s mind concerning David and
             succeeded, but only for a brief time (1 Sam. 19:4-9).
          c. In spite of the evidence at hand, Jonathan still found it difficult to believe
             Saul would actually murder David (1 Sam. 20:1-2).
          d. Finally, upon being convinced of Saul’s evil intentions, Jonathan warned
             David by a previously agreed upon signal (1 Sam. 20:10-40).
          e. At this time, the beloved friends said goodbye (1 Sam. 20:41-42).
          f. Saul cursed Jonathan for befriendng David and actually attempted to kill
             his own son (1 Sam. 20:30-33).
       3. He encouraged David—Jonathan and David met for a final time at Horesh,
          during which time he encouraged David in the Lord and reassured him that
          he (David) would someday indeed rule over all of Israel (1 Sam. 23:16-18).
    B. He was honored by his friend.
       1. The death of Jonathan
          a. Jonathan, along with his two brothers and father, was killed in a battle
             with the Philistines (1 Sam. 31:2-6).
b. Upon hearing of this, a broken-hearted David lamented the death of his
dear friend, especially referring to his courage, saying he was swifter
than an eagle and stronger than a lion (2 Sam. 1:17, 22-26).
c. David later secured the bones of Jonathan and buried them near
Jerusalem (2 Sam. 21:11-14).

2. The descendant of Jonathan
a. Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth who was crippled as a result of
an accident when he was only five years old (2 Sam. 4:4).
b. David tracked down Mephibosheth and showed great kindness to him
for Jonathan’s sake (2 Sam. 9:1-13).
c. David later protected Mephibosheth from the Gibeonites, who demanded
the blood of all Saul’s descendants for past injustices on the part of the
wicked king. Remembering his covenant with Jonathan, David refused
to allow Mephibosheth to be harmed (2 Sam. 21:7).

STATISTICS
Father: Saul (1 Sam. 14:1)
Mother: Ahinoam (1 Sam. 14:49-50)
Son: Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 4:4)
Brothers: Ishui, Melchi-shua, and Abinadab (1 Sam. 14:49; 1 Chron. 8:33)
First mention: 1 Samuel 13:2
Final mention: 1 Chronicles 10:2
Meaning of his name: “God has given”
Frequency of his name: Referred to 91 times
Biblical books mentioning him: Three books (1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles)
Place of death: On a battlefield at Mt. Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:1-2)
Circumstances of death: He was killed by Philistine soldiers (1 Sam. 31:2)
Important fact about his life: He was Saul’s son and David’s closest friend (1 Sam. 14:1;
18:1-4)