

LOYALTY AND LOVE

“I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me.” —2 SAMUEL 1:26

Loyalty is one of the noblest qualities we can have in life. It is meaning what we say, and standing by someone through thick and thin. Jonathan was a friend like this to David. Though he was the firstborn son of King Saul and heir to the throne of Israel, he is never on the main stage himself, but plays a crucial role in David's life. Jonathan recognized God's anointing on David, and his loyalty remained first and foremost with God.

From the time Jonathan first appears in Scripture, he is constantly with his father. He has a special place in Saul's care, not only because he is his son, but he is heir to the throne, and Saul had invested time in nurturing him to that end. Jonathan's long time friendship with David, however, was forged in conflict. Saul, having turned from God, and driven by jealousy over David's military success and popularity, conspires to kill him. Faced with the truth, Jonathan is confronted with a choice; standing by his beloved friend and God's anointed, or the father he loved whose throne he was to inherit.

Jonathan knew the sun was setting on his father's reign and his line, but the sun was rising in David's life. He aligned himself with God's agenda, and stood strong with David. The security he knew in his family enabled him to share himself as he did with David, because

undergirding the conflict between himself and his father was the love and respect he had been raised with. Jonathan could say to David, “Don’t be afraid. My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You shall be king over Israel, and I will be second to you” (1 Samuel 23:17). Jonathan died in battle before that opportunity arose, and David greatly mourned his loss. But he knew Jonathan had enough security in God that he did not have to defend any position, but simply allow God to make the decisions and stand by them.

There is only one agenda that is important in our lives, and that is the agenda of God. Jonathan is a beautiful example of following this through. 1 Samuel 23:16 gives a wonderful account of a true and loyal friend. It says, “Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him to find strength in God.” He did not make himself indispensable to David, but encouraged him to draw upon the strength of God. Out of love and loyalty, that is the best thing we can do for a friend – point them to God so they may discover His strength in every circumstance.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, grant me a loyal and discerning heart in directing my loved ones to the strength they may discover in You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I pointing loved ones to God, especially in their time of need?