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*“Open Church – Open Bible”*

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# *Sunday Church School*

*August 23, 2020*

“David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan”— II Sam. 1:11-12; 17-27

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“II Sam. 1:11-12; 17-27”

<sup>11</sup> Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and tore them, and so *did* all the men who were with him.

<sup>12</sup> And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

<sup>17</sup> Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son,

<sup>18</sup> and he told *them* to teach the children of Judah *the song of the Bow*; indeed *it is* written in the Book of Jasher:

<sup>19</sup> “The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen!”

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**“II Sam. 1:11-12; 17-27”**

<sup>20</sup> Tell *it* not in Gath, Proclaim *it* not in the streets of Ashkelon-- Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

<sup>21</sup>“O mountains of Gilboa, *Let there be* no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

<sup>22</sup>From the blood of the slain, From the fat of the mighty, The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, And the sword of Saul did not return empty.

<sup>23</sup>“Saul and Jonathan *were* beloved and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions.

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**“II Sam. 1:11-12; 17-27”**

24" O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you in scarlet, with luxury; Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

25" How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan *was* slain in your high places.

26" I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; You have been very pleasant to me; Your love to me was wonderful, Surpassing the love of women.

27" How the mighty have fallen, And the weapons of war perished!"

All of us have experienced the truth that life is filled with both joy and sorrow.; and the degree to which we suffer or have joy is one of the enigmas of the human condition.

- Obviously, sin, either directly or indirectly, is at the root of many of the sorrows we experience.

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## David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan

While some sorrow can be traced to bad choices on our part, there may be times when even (Book of Job) the righteous may suffer greatly.

Job tragically lost his children, his health, and his wealth even though he was one who was **blameless** (KJV “perfect” pious) and **upright** (*yāshār – yaw-shar – Jasher*), and one who **feared God** (*yārē – revered*) and **shunned** (KJV eschewed – *çûwr = turn off; decline*) **evil**.

- Even so, he would not “curse God, and die” (Job 2:9), as his wife suggested.

Since sorrow is the common lot of human beings, how we usually **work through** grief is fairly predictable and is a process.

Those who have experienced deep sorrow will probably recognize the five stages of grief: **denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance**.

[Kubler Ross Grief Cycle -- <https://grief.com/the-five-stages-of-grief/>]

# Kübler– Ross Model



1



## DENIAL

- Avoidance
- Confusion
- Elation
- Shock
- Fear

2



## ANGER

- Frustration
- Irritation
- Anxiety
- Overwhelmed
- Hostility

3



## BARGAINING

- Helplessness
- Flight

4



## DEPRESSION

- Struggling to find meaning
- Reaching out to others
- Telling one's story

5



## ACCEPTANCE

- Exploring Options
- New Plans
- Moving on

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## David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan

**There are several factors which are the causation of grief:**

- ✓ Loss of job
- ✓ Loss of job friendship
- ✓ Loss of beloved pet
- ✓ Loss of personal dream
- ✓ Loss of romantic relationship

• The loss of anything important to you can cause feelings of grief.

When one is unable to cope with that grief over a long period of time, they may be at risk for a **grief disorder**.

The setting of II Samuel I is over nine years after David’s introduction to the national scene (Post Giant Slaying) and David has suffered the loss of:

- Loss of appreciation from King Saul (I Sm. 19)
- Lost the trust of his nation (I Sm. 29)
- Saul gave his wife to another man (I Sm. 25)
- Loss of family to Amalekites (I Sm. 30)
- Nabal has disrespected his labor (I Sm. 25)
- Loss of trust of his soldiers (I Sm. 30)
- He lost his dignity lying to Achish (I Sm. 27)
- Now the loss of his best friend (I Sm. 31)**



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## David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan



During this time David wrote songs about the adverse circumstances of his life:

- **Psl. 23:4** Yea though I walk through the valley and shadow of death
- **Psl. 5: 8** Lead me, O Lord in thy righteousness because of mine enemies
- **Psl. 12:1** Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail among the children of men
- **Psalm 11:1-2** In the LORD I put my trust; How can you say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain"? <sup>2</sup> For look! The wicked bend *their* bow, They make ready their arrow on the string, That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart.
- **Psalm 59:1-2** Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Defend me from those who rise up against me. <sup>2</sup> Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, And save me from bloodthirsty men.
- **Psalm 7:1-2** O LORD my God, in You I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; And deliver me, <sup>2</sup> Lest they tear me like a lion, Rending *me* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.



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## **David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan**



**Yes, even people who are “after the heart of God”  
suffer sorrow, death, sickness and grief.**

### **LESSON OUTLINE:**

**I. MOURNING THE HOUSE OF SAUL —II Sam. 1:11-12**

**II. LAMENTATION FOR THE FALLEN —II Sam. 1:17-18**

**III. DEEP SORROW EXPRESSED —II Sam. 1:19-27**

**I. MOURNING THE HOUSE OF SAUL —II Sam. 1:11-12**

- At the end of last week’s lesson, David had fled into the night to avoid being murdered by Saul.
- For nearly a decade, he was a fugitive, moving from place to place while being hunted down by the king. His pursuers were often so close that David said, “There is but a step between me and death” (I Sam. 20:3).
- For a time, David even sought refuge among the Philistines (chap. 27)



# *“Open Church – Open Bible”*

## **David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan**



### **I. MOURNING THE HOUSE OF SAUL —II Sam. 1:11-12**

- King Saul strayed farther and farther from the Lord even as the Israelites continued to battle the Philistines.
- And with the death of the Prophet Samuel (I Sam. 28:3), Saul had no one from whom to seek spiritual guidance.
- So, when Israel confronted a large Philistine army, Saul “was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled” (v. 5).
- Realizing his need of guidance, “Saul inquired of the Lord,” but “the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets” (v. 6).
- With the Divine distancing, Saul sought out the witch of Endor to try to ascertain the future (I Sam. 28:8-19).
- Rather than being comforted with a message of hope, Saul was told that Israel would be defeated and that he and his sons would die.
- The very next day the two armies met on the field of battle, Israel was defeated and Saul and his sons were killed (31:1-7)

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## **David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan**

### **I. MOURNING THE HOUSE OF SAUL —I Sam. 1:11-12**

- A few days later, a man from the battlefield arrived at David’s camp and informed him of the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul and his sons.
- As David mourned the loss, “he took hold on his clothes, and tore them” (II Sam. 1:11) as a sign of grief.
- His men did likewise, and all of them “mourned, and wept, and fasted” (v. 12).
- Despite the fact King Saul considered David his enemy, David nevertheless mourned for him – for he was **“the Lord’s anointed”** (v. 16)

### **II. LAMENTATION FOR THE FALLEN —I Sam. 1:17-18**

- The bible is comprised of various kinds of literature (a) OT law, history, poetry, and (b) NT biography, history, epistles, and prophecy.
- But within specific books, there may be various genres- i.e., the Psalms contain:
  - Instructional Psalms (maschil)       Thanksgiving Psalms – praising God for gracious acts
  - Royal Psalms       Enthronement Psalms – describing God’s sovereignty
  - Wisdom Psalms       Imprecatory Psalms       Pilgrimage Psalms
  - Lamentation Psalms – prayers for God’s deliverance in moments of despair

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## **David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan**

### **II. LAMENTATION FOR THE FALLEN —II Sam. 1:17-18**

- Beyond the general mourning on the day David learned of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, he continued to lament their deaths.
- This lamentation was not just personal, for David wanted it to be taught to the people, to “the children of Judah” (II Sam. 1:18).
- The phrase “the use of the bow” could be rendered “the ode of the bow” or “the lament of the bow.”
- Although little is known about it, the book of Jasher (literally, “the book of the upright”) apparently was a known collection of early poetry, commemorating outstanding events and providing a source-book for later writers of our Bible books.
- The only two references to the book, are found in:
  - (1) Joshua 10:13 the words of Joshua which he spake to the Lord at the crisis of the battle of Beth-horon and
  - (2) I Sam 1:18 in the reference to “the Song of the Bow” as a beautiful and touching mournful elegy composed by David



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## David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan



### III. DEEP SORROW EXPRESSED

—II Sam. 1:19-27

- The word “**beauty**” (sebî- tseb-ee) can reference something visually pleasurable, or it can mean something prominent, pleasant, or glorious.
- Many think the expression is better rendered “The glory of Israel is slain,” and in this reference pointing to Saul and his army.
- “**High places**” (v. 19) is a reference to Mt. Gilboa, where the battle took place.
- The “**mighty**” (ghibbôr) is parallel to the “beauty of Israel” – a typical application in OT poetry
- It is understandable that Saul’s defeat was lamented in Israel and celebrated in the cities of Philistia (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron)
- How regrettable it is for the enemies of the Lord to celebrate at the falling and failure of the ensigns of God’s glory
- As somewhat typical in poetry, even inanimate objects such as mountains, dew, rain, and fields are addressed and here called upon to join in the weeping (v.21).



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## David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan



### III. DEEP SORROW EXPRESSED

—II Sam. 1:19-27

- The “mountains of Gilboa” (II Sam. 1:21) are mentioned specifically because this is where the fateful battle took place (I Sam 31:1)
- As David lamented, he called upon the very forces of nature to withhold their blessings as a sign of grief, “so that its landscape mourns in sympathy by becoming dry and unproductive.
- David did not refer to Saul specifically but rather to his shield being “vilely cast away” (II Sam. 1:21) – because the shield was anointed with oil [both to keep them shiny and to make them more likely to deflect arrows].
- And the word “anointed” also calls to mind the fact that, despite his iniquitous and transgressive life, Saul was God’s anointed king.
- Either way, “the shield is pictured as lying on the mountains, worthless and neglected, **no longer oiled and ready for action**”
- While we might expect David to extol the battlefield accomplishments of his friend Jonathan, he does so with equal honor concerning Saul.



# *“Open Church – Open Bible”*

## **David’s Grief for Saul and Jonathan**



### **III. DEEP SORROW EXPRESSED**

**—II Sam. 1:19-27**

- The picture painted by David was one of Saul and Jonathan bravely fighting to the very end.
- To be sure, Saul and Jonathan were united in life and death. But for Jonathan, being loyal to his father presented a challenge.
- David was both his brother-in-law and his best friend but also the object of his father’s hatred.
- Most families have their interpersonal conflicts, and maintaining peace and harmony is often difficult.
- Jonathan can therefore be a role model for us in this regard.
- While David hoped that the Philistine women would not even learn of Israel’s defeat, he called upon the “daughters” of Israel” to “weep over Saul.”
- In verse 25 we again have the refrain that David began with in verse 19, as he lamented the fall of the mighty and especially grievous to him was the death of Jonathan his dear friend (V 26 an often misinterpreted verse)



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## **“LESSONS FROM THE LESSON”**



How should believers respond when something bad happens to one of their enemies? Do you gloat about it, or say something like “It serves them right”? See Matt 5:43-48.

**Facts:** to learn that God calls us to love our enemies and learn not to rejoice when bad things happen to them.

**Principle:** to recognize that the only way to truly love our enemies is to see them as Christ sees them.

**Application:** to ask the Lord to help us see our enemies through His eyes and to be able to love them as He does.



# *“Open Church – Open Bible”*

## **“ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE”**



1. What was David’s immediate reaction to the news of Saul’s death and Israel’s defeat?
2. Where else do we find lamentation in the Bible?
3. What is the significance of Philistine cities like Gath being mentioned in David’s lament?
4. What did David’s lament call upon nature to do? Why?
5. What words did David use to describe Saul and Jonathan?
6. How is David and Jonathan’s relationship described? Is there other beliefs about their relationship and what does the bible say about it?

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