

1 Samuel 18:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

Analysis

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

The phrase 'the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David' (niqsherah benephesh) describes the deepest possible human bonding. This instant, profound connection arose from witnessing David's faith rather than natural attraction or self-interest. Jonathan, Saul's heir, recognized in David something he loved 'as his own soul' (nephesh) - a love transcending self-interest that would later cost him his throne. Such covenant friendship reflects God's design for human community.

Historical Context

Jonathan had demonstrated similar faith-based courage at Michmash (1 Samuel 14), likely recognizing a kindred spirit in David. Royal heirs typically viewed potential rivals with suspicion; Jonathan's immediate love stands as exceptional. The 'knitting' metaphor suggests souls woven together like fabric.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What qualities in others draw your soul toward deep spiritual friendship?
2. How does Jonathan's selfless love model what Christian brotherhood should look like?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי	וְכָלָתָו	לִבְבָּשׂ	שָׁאַל
H1961	And it came to pass when he had made an end	of speaking	H413
	H3615	H1696	H7586
בְּנֶפֶשׁ	בְּנֶפֶשׁ	לְבָבָ	בְּנֶפֶשׁ
him as his own soul	and Jonathan	was knit	him as his own soul
H5315	H3083	H7194	H5315
בְּנֶפֶשׁ	בְּנֶפֶשׁ	לְבָבָ	בְּנֶפֶשׁ
loved	and Jonathan	him as his own soul	of David
H157	H3083	H5315	H1732

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 18:24 (Parallel theme): A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

1 Samuel 20:17 (Love): And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

Colossians 2:2 (Love): That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

1 Samuel 18:3 (Love): Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

2 Samuel 1:26 (Love): I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

Genesis 44:30 (Parallel theme): Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

1 Chronicles 12:17 (References David): And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.

Deuteronomy 13:6 (Parallel theme): If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

1 Samuel 19:2 (References David): But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself:

Psalms 86:11 (Parallel theme): Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.