

# 1 Samuel 31:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, Saul's sons.

## Analysis

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The Philistines' pursuit specifically targets Saul's sons, eliminating the succession. Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchi-shua fall together. The Hebrew 'wayyabhiqqu' (followed hard, stuck close to) indicates determined pursuit, not random battlefield death. Jonathan's death creates particular pathos: David's closest friend and covenant partner dies fighting against the Philistines David was supposed to have joined. The prince who loved David dies while David is providentially absent.

## Historical Context

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The naming of three sons indicates the battle was a targeting operation against the royal family. Ish-bosheth (called Esh-baal in Chronicles) survived, apparently not present at the battle, to provide brief opposition to David's reign.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How do you process the loss of righteous people in circumstances connected to others' sin?
2. What does Jonathan's death, faithful to the end, teach about faithfulness regardless of outcome?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּדְבֹק ו'	פְּלִשְׁתֵּי יָם	אֶת	שָׁאוּל:	וְאֶת	בְּנֵי י'	וַיַּכּוּ
followed hard	And the Philistines	H853	Saul's	H853	and upon his sons	slew
H1692	H6430		H7586		H1121	H5221
פְּלִשְׁתֵּי יָם	אֶת	יְהוֹנָתָן	וְאֶת	אַבִּינָדָב ב	וְאֶת	מַלְכִּישׁוּא וַע
And the Philistines	H853	Jonathan	H853	and Abinadab	H853	and Malchishua
H6430		H3083		H41		H4444
בְּנֵי י'	שָׁאוּל:					
and upon his sons	Saul's					
H1121	H7586					

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Chronicles 8:33** (Parallel theme): And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal.

**1 Samuel 14:49** (Parallel theme): Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger Michal: