

Lecture 6 — Jonathan; or, A good start

1 Samuel 17, 1 Samuel 18: 1-4.

Young Men of Scripture.

Nine addresses to young men.

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I call the action of Jonathan here a fine start. You have a picture here of the way in which a man soundly converted to Christ starts, — there is complete surrender. The Old Testament is full of pictures. David is a type of Christ — Jonathan of the delivered sinner. We have a lovely picture of that which takes place when the soul learns what deliverance is, and when the heart is attracted to and bound to a deliverer. It is an immense thing to have the heart completely surrendered to the One who has blessed you and delivered you; and that is what I find here. Jonathan is delivered absolutely by David, and he makes a complete and full surrender of himself. All that he is and has he surrenders absolutely to David. It is a simple figure of what takes place in the soul and in the heart when we find Christ. Only learn the love of Jesus, who He is, and what He has done, and there will be in your case a full surrender of your heart to Him.

What I have read in 1 Samuel 17 is very interesting. It opens with the hosts of Philistia and those of Israel gathered together in battle array against each other. The valley of Elah lay between them. It appears that the Philistines had a champion, — Goliath of Gath, "a man of war from his youth," — whose height was six cubits and a span, or about ten feet. A good tall man that! This man had "an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of his coat was five thousand shekels of brass. . . . And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and one bearing a shield went before him" (vers. 4-7). In plain language, the leader of the hosts of Philistia, to man's eye, was invulnerable. No man dared to meet him in conflict, or respond to his challenge. "And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? *Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.*" That was a challenge, — a fair, bold, downright challenge. "Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day: *give me a man that we may fight together.*" I don't think there is a man in this hall would care to measure arms with a ten-footer; and so was it in Jonathan's day, for "when Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid" (vers. 8-10). Discretion is generally the better part of valour, and it was so in this case. No one responded to the challenge, as morning and evening he presented himself. The test was very complete, for "the Philistine

drew near every morning and evening, and presented himself *forty days*." Every morning and evening he stood between the two hosts, and said, "Give me a man," and looks all round for him. But no one ventured into single conflict with him. No one would come. They were wise; I commend their wisdom. They knew perfectly well it only meant certain death, — absolute defeat for them, — and they stood in the ranks.

Do you say, What cowards? You and I would have done just the same, I expect. That is the real truth. They knew it was no use. It was certain death for them to face the giant. With his enormous weapons, and corresponding strength to wield them, opposition only meant certain defeat. "They were sore afraid," — and I don't call them a pack of cowards. I think the men were wise. They feared to put their lives in jeopardy to no purpose; and it would be better for you if you feared the devil more than you do.

Now, my friends, do you think nobody is challenging you now-a-days after this sort? Yes. Goliath, as the enemy of the Lord's people, is but the figure of the power of Satan; and Satan is more than a match for you or me. Satan is crafty, as well as powerful. The devil knows full well how to get over a man. I know perfectly well that people say, I don't believe in him, or his power. That is just the evidence of his power; he blinds men's eyes to their true state; they are really captive, but think themselves free. Ask any converted man whether he believes in the power of Satan. You ask your comrade, who is a converted and saved man, about the power of Satan, and he will tell you, "When I was unconverted, I did not believe in the devil, nor in his power; but when I got anxious I found how terrible was his power. And now that I have come to Christ, and know the grace and saving power of the Lord Jesus, I know the devil is an enemy whose power is broken, but whose wiles are to be feared; but I know One who is stronger than he."

When Paul was converted, he was sent by the Lord Jesus to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26: 18). The truth is this, you and I are no match for the devil. He has overcome every man save One — the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of men, — and he holds every man in his hand who has not been brought by grace to know the Lord Jesus Christ. And if a man does not believe the Gospel, what is the reason? God tells us. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world (the devil) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4: 3, 4). That witness is very solemn, and should awaken every careless, unsaved man to bethink him of his awful condition.

At this juncture we read: "And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge." This father sending his son down to see how his brethren fared, reminds one of that lovely verse, "And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4: 14). God has looked down upon this scene, where the devil has overcome every man, and has sent into it, as a Saviour, His own blessed Son. Without doubt, in the scene before us, David is a striking type of Jesus. The previous chapter tells us a little about him. I read

about this blessed one, who is the figure of Christ, "He was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to" (1 Sam. 16: 12). Samuel, instructed by God, anointed David as king over Israel; but the anointed king was unknown of his people. The one who was to be the deliverer of Israel did not come on the scene till this moment, when the whole of Israel was in desperate straits on account of the power arrayed against them. The father then sends the son, and David, taking in his hand the pledge of a father's love and care, comes into the camp, and salutes his brethren. "And as he talked with them, behold there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words; and David heard them." But David saw as well as heard, for "all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid" (vers. 22-24). David now learns the true state of affairs. "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up; and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel" (ver. 25). That was a fair promise to any one who would enter the lists; but none would go out against the giant. "And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

While David was thus speaking, his eldest brother Eliab has his anger kindled against him, and he said, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." Battle! There was no battle to see; no one would fight. Battle! do you think there is a battle between you and the devil when he has got a firm hold of you? No, there is no battle. Until you are converted to God, he will lead, not tempt you. Till then he is your superior. Why did not Eliab go out? He was afraid to, but when a deliverer comes on the scene, he refuses him. His was surely a strange query, "Why camest thou down hither?" Ah! my friends, this is but a picture of the treatment Jesus received. God sent His Son into the world, and what did men do? "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1: 10, 11). The Son of God has come into this world, and men don't want Him. But He wants you. He wants your heart. He has come down not to see the battle, but to save man, who would certainly be eternally lost if He had not come. He has come to be a deliverer. Into the scene where sin has ruined every man God has sent His Son — His own eternal Son — that "whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You must perish if you have not everlasting life. Whoever you be, rich or poor, learned or illiterate, you must perish. But what do you mean by "perish"? God grant that you may never know what it means. It is something dreadful, or the Son of God would not have stepped into the scene to deliver me from perishing. It is the outer darkness — the place where "the worm never dies," and where "the fire is not quenched." Perish not, I pray you. Do not perish through folly, through unbelief, through scorning the grace of God now. Eliab scorned the deliverer; do not walk in his footsteps.

David's reply to his brother is very touching, "What have I now done? *Is there not a cause?*" Why, he says, should I not have come? Go you out and meet the giant, Eliab. Go you out and meet the giant, Saul. Go you and meet the giant, Jonathan But no, not one of them would do so, and David simply says, "Is there not a cause?" Was there not a cause, a need-be for Jesus' coming? There was.

Brought now before Saul, David says, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (ver. 32). How like this word is what is written of Jesus, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3: 8). The blessed Son of God has come into this scene, and become a man in the very spot where man has sinned, and where Satan has got power over him because of his sins; and on that account can bring the power of death to bear upon man. Into this scene the Son of God has come in grace, and has become a man that He might die for those who were under sentence of death. We die because we are men, sinful men. He became a man — a sinless man — in order that He might die for others, and relieve them from the consequences of their sin. "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

Assured of victory, David now goes forth to meet the giant. "And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail, and David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him" (vers. 38, 39).

Saul rigs him out with all his latest armour; but David says, No, that won't do for me. Man's armour won't do to fight God's battles in, and man's mind will not apprehend God's truth. David then "took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine" (ver. 40).

How the onlookers must have wondered as they saw him go out with only those five smooth stones to meet yon enormous man. Remember he was but a stripling — a lad of tender years, yet in faith in God he goes out to meet this tremendous man that is coming forth to meet him. I do not wonder that Goliath, when he saw him, his sling, and his five smooth stones, disdained him. We are told, "And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance." The giant, so to speak, snuffed at him. What could that youth do? Ah! my friends, do you know that God always uses simple instruments, and by ways and means that man does not approve, He saves man. God's way of giving you life is that another man should go into death for you. God's way for us to get into heaven is quite opposed to man's idea. Man's thought is that it is by his own works, God's way is by another Man — His own Son — going down into the depths of death for you.

But those five smooth stones, what could they do? Saul, no doubt, when he saw David take them up and put them into his bag, said, What a fool! The idea of that stripling going out to meet that giant with those five stones is absolute folly. One stone was enough, however, to slay the giant with. But, to apply this, — How can men be saved? Only by the cross. Now-a-days men scout the idea of salvation by the cross of Christ. This is nothing new, for, wrote the apostle Paul, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor. 1: 23). In these days as then, the preaching of the cross is to the learned Gentile downright folly. Folly! Ah! but what is it really? "Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks," it is "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." I fully admit that "the preaching of the cross is to *them that perish* foolishness; but unto *us which are saved*, it is the power of God." Do you think it foolishness to believe that the dying agonies of Christ can be the

eternal safety of those who believe in Him, and by His atoning work are thus righteously brought to God?

Men say the cross is folly. But believe me, it has brought me to God. It brought Paul to God. It brought the dying thief to God, and it has brought millions to God. Thank God, for the cross! "God forbid," says Paul, "that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." So say I with all my heart! I know very well it is despised. But don't you forget this — that Christ crucified is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, and there is only one thing which can lift men out of their sins, and bring them to glory, and that is the death of the sinless Son of God. It was for sinners that He died on Calvary's tree, and there is no other name whereby we must be saved. There is no other way to glory but the blood-stained pathway thus opened up through the dying agonies of Christ. You may smile at David's stone, and laugh at Christ on the cross, but be fully assured of this, that you will spend eternity in hell unless you are born of God, and washed in the blood of the Son of God. I speak plainly. You have immortal souls. Eternity is before you, and I ask you, Where will you spend it? You are spending your life in sin, and the wages of sin is death. Where will you spend eternity? God would have you at His side, and would have you know the value of the cross of His Son now. God grant that you may know it.

Here, then, we have the truth of the cross in figure. David took the five smooth stones, and the giant, seeing the youth of ruddy and fair countenance, disdains him. "Am I a dog," says the champion, "that thou comest to me with staves? and the Philistine cursed David by his gods" (ver. 43). The idea of that youth coming out to him with such childish weapons was more than he could stand. So spake the foe of Israel then, and so did Satan think when he led on man to put Christ on the cross. He looked for easy and absolute victory. He met with utter defeat "And the Philistine said unto David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." David, in effect, says to the giant, "The battle is really not between you and me; it is between you and God. I am here for God." That is the point. Jesus is God's man. What a fool the man is who will choose to be the devil's man! It is better to be God's man. I recollect some one writing to me once, "If you take that path, you will never be God's man in Edinburgh." Extraordinary title! I would rather be "God's man" than have anything that the world could give me.

As the giant presses forward, David says: "This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that THE LORD SAVETH not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands" (vers. 46, 47). Mark that! the Lord saveth. You cannot save yourself; I cannot save myself. It is the Lord who alone can save me. God alone can meet the need and ruin of man as a sinner, and I am shut up to accept God's Saviour. "And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth" (ver. 49). He did not think of such a weapon as a sling. He was looking for arrows, and had protected himself with a great big shield; but the stone slung by David went up with a curve, and just struck the giant on the forehead, — on the spot he

least expected it. Satan little thought that the death of Jesus would annul death, and that by His being made sin, so sin would be put away, or he would not have plotted for His death. "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith" (vers. 50, 51). That was absolute victory. He cut off his head with his own sword. Christ too has, so to speak, cut off Satan's head with his own sword. Do you know what death is? It is the wages of sin consequent on man's sin and guilt, and Satan can wield it as a sword over man's conscience. Death is the judgment of God upon man as a sinner, and when it suits his purpose, the devil can hold over man the solemn truth that he is going to die. To the young he usually says: "You won't die for a long time yet. There is plenty of time, so you need not think about your soul yet." When man is middle-aged, he says: "You have to labour and work, and get on in the world, and you are really too busy to think about your soul." When men get old, and they must die, then the devil will tell them, "You have lived a good life, so you need not be afraid to die." And if then, or at any time, men get anxious about 'their souls, then he alters his tactics, and holds over them the sense of what death is, and presses the fear of death upon them.

It is complete deliverance to a soul in bondage to see that although the wages of sin is death, yet death is the doorway to life — death is the pathway to peace and blessing. You and I can only be delivered by death; you and I can only be saved by death. The gates of hell are closed, and the gates of glory are opened for us, by death. Our death? Thank God, no! but the death of the sinless Man, upon whom death had no claim, yet who died "the just for the unjust."

When Satan led the world on to put Jesus to death, he committed the most senseless and short-sighted act that he ever could have done. But he is not the only actor at the cross, for Jesus voluntarily goes into death, and having so done, He meets the claims of God on man, sustains the judgment due to him in righteousness, and then He rises from the dead, and that, you will observe, on the ground that there has been a wonderful victory accomplished. In the spot where every other man has been defeated, Christ has won the victory. Death has claimed and held every other man. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from among the dead" (1 Cor. 15: 21). He went into death, and then came up out of it, victor over it, and thank God He is my Saviour. I wish He were yours. You may have Him tonight.

There is a remarkable New Testament scripture bearing on this point, I should like you to notice. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise took part of the same (that is, he became a man), that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death — that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2: 14, 15). Wonderful tidings! You and I die because we are men. He became a man that He might be able to die. He could have passed up into glory from this earth at any moment of His history, for death had no claim on Him, He being sinless, but then He would have left every man behind Him. He says to the one who believes in Him, I came down and died for you. I bore your judgment, and died your death, and I bring you to God in righteousness. I bore your judgment that I might deliver and redeem you. just as David cut off Goliath's head with his own sword, so by death — which is what the devil terrifies a man with — does Jesus deliver the soul that trusts in Him. Death, which was the wages of sin, has now

opened the way of life for me, for "AS it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9: 27, 28). Death opens the pathway to glory for the believer now, because in the death of the Saviour atonement has been made. That atonement has been presented, and God has accepted it, and what has been the result? God has raised from the dead, and glorified the blessed Man, who died on the cross. His exaltation is God's answer to the sufferings of the Saviour, and is the proof of His absolute victory over every foe of God and man. Hallelujah!

Now observe what follows the giant's death in the scene before us. "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled," and Israel "spoiled their tents" (vers. 51-53): The enemies are dispersed, and nothing remains to the men of Israel and Judah but to possess the spoil which David's victory has gained for them. David then comes back, and is led before Saul. And what has he got with him? He has the head of the Philistine in his hand. He is the victor, and has the proof of his victory in his hand as he goes to the king, and walks through the ranks of Israel. He has the giant's sword in one hand, and his head in the other. He does not say a word; he does not need to. The sword and the head that he carried told the tale of his victory more eloquently than any words, and at this point Jonathan's heart was captured.

There are five points about Jonathan here which are worthy of note. When David came into the camp, do you know what Jonathan was doing? He was *trembling*. Oh, you say, how do you know? Well, verses 11 and 24 tell me they were all afraid and fled; and Jonathan though he is not named, was in the camp. At that point he was Jonathan *anxious*. When David went forth to meet the foe, and when Jonathan fixed his eye upon him, he was in a *hopeful* mood — he was Jonathan *hopeful*. As he looked on that wonderful conflict, and presently saw the giant fall, and his head lopped off with one stroke of his own sword, he was immensely relieved. "Thank God!" I am sure he would say, "*I am delivered*," and he would draw a long breath. Don't you tell me he did not take a long breath, as he got the sense that the foe was overcome. Then he was Jonathan *delivered*. What is the next thing? As they brought in the spoil of the tents, he was Jonathan *enriched*. The climax is soon reached, for his heart is completely captured, and Jonathan became *devoted*. I wonder whether any of you have become devoted? "And it came to pass, when David 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" (1 Sam. 18: 1). What attracted Jonathan? It was the sense he had of the personal charms and self-sacrifice of David. Here is one of whom I knew nothing, but who, seeing our distress and misery, has "put his life in his hand" — as he says in the next chapter — and at the risk of his life has saved my life. Love to David sprang up in his heart, until, as Scripture says, "he loved him as his own soul." It was the love of David that begat love — "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4: 19). I don't ask you tonight to love Jesus, but I can tell you that Jesus loves you. I never ask a man to give his heart to Jesus; I would not ask you to do it, because you will not do it; but if your heart gets attracted by a sense of the love of Christ for you, then you will yield it without effort. You can't help loving Him, because He has loved you.

Ah! get hold of this, ye who have served lust and sin and the devil, and are forging ahead in sin's pleasures to certain and everlasting judgment. Young man, you who are going on in your sin, the Saviour has come, and died for such as you. Oh, get hold of the truth that so affected

Paul, "He loved me, and gave himself for me." Attachment to Christ is a most blessed, even as it is a personal thing, and don't you be ashamed to own it if it really exists in your heart. Do you think it is a poor thing to be a Christian? Away with such a thought. It is the grandest thing in the world to be a Christian. I don't mean the Brummagem kind of thing of which we have so much — a profession of Christ without the knowledge of Christ — a mere head profession of the Lord — without any heart for Him. By a Christian I mean a man who really knows and loves Christ. A Christian is a man whose heart has been touched by the love of Christ, who has seen the Saviour agonising and dying on the tree in his room and stead. Well said the poet: —

"He suffered in the shadow

That we might see the light."

He was forsaken that you and I might be accepted. Let it be with you just now towards Jesus, as it was with Jonathan "And it came to pass, . . . that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David." And I look up to heaven tonight and I see a risen Saviour, an ascended Saviour, a living Man at the right hand of God tonight, and that Man is my Saviour in glory, and I would that the whole world could hear me testify of His love, and victory, and worth. Listen, O earth! In glory there is a Man alive, who once died upon the tree, and He died for me, and has delivered me and saved me, and that Man in glory is my Saviour, and my Lord and Master. Ah! would to God you could say the same, every one of you here tonight! Then would you imitate Jonathan who, "because he loved him as his own soul, . . . stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow and to his girdle" (1 Sam. 18: 3, 4). I think that was a fine sight — a grand start. Before that mighty assembly the king's son steps up, in the sight of all Israel, to the simple shepherd lad, and strips off his own robe. His heart belongs to David. He loves him as his own soul, and he gives him his robe, sword, and girdle. What does he say? David, I am thine; thy love has won mine in return. What do you say tonight? If you are converted to the Lord, is such your language? "Jesus, I am Thine." Thank God if, indeed, you can so speak, and from the bottom of your heart can say, "Jesus, I am Thine — spirit, soul, and body. Thine, Lord, to live for Thee, Thine to serve thee, and Thine to die for Thee, by grace, if need be." Do you think the Lord has no heart? Does not the Lord like to see our hearts true to Him? He says, "Lovest thou me?" Jonathan showed his love to David. It took a practical form; so should ours to Christ.

We greatly need to be a little more like poor Joe, who used to play the banjo in public-houses. He was going into the country one day, when he heard a voice. He looked over the hedge, and saw a crowd. He jumped over the hedge — what was this? Not a football match, forsooth! It was a field-preaching, and he thought he would like to hear what was being said. He got to the edge. He was convicted, interested, and heard of Jesus and the Saviour's love. Poor Joe heard, believed, and was saved. He got Christ for his Saviour, and his heart was filled with joy. What took place? He went straight home, and going to the fireside where the banjo hung, he took it down and broke it across his knee. His wife asked him what he was doing. "I am converted, wife, and I can't use the banjo in the public-house for the Lord," and he threw the broken banjo into the fire. It was a simple act, but it showed that Joe felt his life would be changed now that he was converted.

When a man is really on the Lord's side, there will always be some evidence of it. He begins to follow the Lord. He is like blind Bartimaeus, who when cured, "followed Jesus in the way." Jonathan surrendered heart and everything to David. It was a complete surrender of himself to the Deliverer. That is what is wanted today in the case of every young man converted to Christ. I beseech you to be whole-hearted in your surrender to the Lord. Devotedness pays; halfheartedness is a profound mistake. Alas! there are some believers who have too much of Christ to enjoy the world, and too much of the world to really enjoy Christ. That class is to be studiously avoided. They are no use in the Church, and get no respect from the world.

From this time Saul, doubtless angered by Jonathan's charming devotedness to David, begins to dislike and to persecute him. Thrice does he seek to slay him with a javelin. Then David disappears from the scene; and "Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to theeward very good: for he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine" (1 Sam. 19: 4, 5). The result is that Saul flings a javelin at Jonathan 1 Sam. 20: 33). Three times had he attempted to slay David, but when he is out of sight, Saul attempts to kill Jonathan who stood up for him. That is just like the Christian; when Christ is out of sight, he has to stand up for his Lord, and is persecuted. I don't expect anything else than persecution. The Lord Jesus said: "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John 15: 20).

This persecuting action of Saul should have opened Jonathan's eyes to the true state of matters. David was God's king, and he should have fully identified himself with him, no matter at what earthly loss. Jonathan ought to have been downright He goes out into the field and speaks with David, but he does not accompany him to the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. 22: 1, 2). He is bound by his home ties, by natural affection, like too many a faint-hearted Christian today. A little later Jonathan "went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God." And he said unto him, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth." He, as it were, says to David, Thou shalt be king, and I am delighted that thou shouldst be first, and I shall be second. "And they two made a covenant before the Lord; and David *abode in the wood*, and Jonathan *went to his house*" (1 Sam. 23: 16- 18). He ought to have flung in his lot with him absolutely, and have followed David fully. Had he done so he would have been preserved, and he would have had the second place in the kingdom. As it was, he was ingloriously slain at Gilboa, and when David came to the throne, Jonathan's body is found nailed to the walls of Bethshan (1 Sam. 31: 12).

It is to be carefully noted that when David speaks of his mighty men, and records the deeds of those who were faithful to him in the time of his rejection, the name of Jonathan is conspicuous by its absence (2 Sam. 23). David could not righteously put his name among those of his mighty men as one who had been outstandingly true to him in the day of his exile. And I learn this lesson, that the Lord counts upon our hearts being true to himself. Jonathan's finish was not as bright as it might have been, and this sad fact God records as a warning to us.

The Lord grant now that your heart may be surrendered to Christ. Make a good start — start this evening — start for glory, start among the company of the redeemed. Make up your mind for the Lord this evening. Surely He is worthy. The love of Christ is a charming thing, and had I ten thousand hearts, I would yield them all up to Jesus. He died for me. May you be enabled by grace to yield yourself to the Saviour from this hour, and serve Him faithfully till He comes.