

Two Responses to The Victorious Messiah

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Date: 02 November 2025

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[0 : 00] Our sermon passage is 1st Samuel. We'll start reading at 1st Samuel 17 verse 57. And I'll read this out loud. You follow along and we do this trusting that it is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient word.

It's God's powerful word that the Holy Spirit uses to pierce through to the inner man. We pray that he will do that. At the end, I'll say the word of God for the people of God. And if you receive it that way, you can please respond. Thanks be to God.

Then as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

And Saul said to him, Whose son are you, young man? So David answered, I am the son of your servant, Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David. And Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

[1 : 09] Saul took him that day and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul.

And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. So David went out where so wherever Saul sent him and behaved wisely.

And Saul sent him over the men of war. And he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. Now it happened as they were coming home when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing to meet King Saul with tambourines, with joy, with musical instruments.

So the women sang as they danced and said, Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands. When Saul was very angry and the saying displeased him and he said, They have ascribed to David ten thousands and to me they have ascribed only thousands.

Now what more can he have but the kingdom? So Saul eyed David from that day forward. And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul and he prophesied inside the house.

[2 : 41] So David played music with his hand and at other times. But there was a spear in Saul's hand and Saul cast the spear for he said, I will pin David to the wall.

But David escaped his presence twice. Now Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him, but he had departed from Saul.

Therefore, Saul removed him from his presence and made him the captain over a thousand. And he went out and came in before the people. And David behaved wisely in all his ways.

And the Lord was with him. Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David because he went out and came in before them.

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever.

[3 : 50] Let's pray. Let's pray. Oh, Lord, you speak.

And you speak so clearly through Jesus Christ. And when you speak, Lord, it puts people like us in a position of having to respond.

We confess, Lord, that without your Holy Spirit stirring our hearts and turning us to you and giving us the gift of faith, we are incapable of responding the way we are.

So we ask, Lord, that your Holy Spirit will minister powerfully. That Christ will be lifted up so clearly. And that you will cause, Lord, people like us to put our faith in Christ and to strengthen our faith in Christ and respond to you the only way that is worthy of our great King Jesus.

We ask this, Lord, for your glory. Amen. Well, in 1945, when the Allies had turned the tide of World War II, here come the Americans joining the British and the French.

[5 : 07] There were two very different responses to these invading armies. To some, this rising U.S. nation was a great threat to their power.

I was reading how the Nazi field marshal named Erwin Rommel, who was in charge of the Nazi tanks, he commented this, The enemy, referring to these Americans, win their battles from the air. They knock out my panzers, that's the Nazi tanks, with American armor-piercing shells. His boss replied to him, That's impossible. The Americans only know how to make razor blades. They'd converted all their factories now to be geared up for war. And the field marshal responded to his boss, We could do with some of those razor blades.

We need to catch up our military to them. To the Nazis, the Allies were a threat to their power. They were advancing and dominating unstoppable. And now as these American soldiers were arriving on the concentration camps, where people were starving, they had been tortured, they'd seen their loved ones torn away from them and killed, these same soldiers got a very different response from those prisoners inside these camps.

[6 : 28] They were viewed as liberators. To see these same soldiers was not a threat to their power. These soldiers represented hope, a new start, and the end of a nightmare.

Two very different responses. Eva Korg recounted a woman in one of these concentration camps that got liberated, running through the barracks, even though she was weak and frail and skinny, of Auschwitz, yelling three simple words over and over, We are free.

We are free. We are free. In 1 Samuel 18, we see two very different reactions to this great victory that God gave through David.

And isn't it true how the word of God is a mirror? We read the words of scripture, but God's word reads us in our soul. There are only two responses you and I can have to the victorious Messiah. Two responses to the victorious Messiah. The first is Saul's response. After the victory that God gave Jonathan, Saul built a monument to himself.

[7 : 47] Do you remember that a few chapters back? And then remember how after parading wicked King Agag around, even though God said, kill that king, kill everything, Saul pretended that he was praying to God and going through the motions of worship.

And God said, I want obedience, not sacrifice. Well, what was Saul's reaction now? What will his response be after this great victory that God gave the nation of Israel through David, the anointed one?

Remember, the word anointed means shepherd. Look at chapter 17, verse 57 one more time. Then as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

The stage is set. This is your big moment, King Saul. How will you respond to what God has done? There he is, a shepherd boy.

He had been offered the clothes of King Saul, remember? But God did this great victory without him wearing the armor that King Saul offered him. This victory was given to a peasant looking young man, maybe 15 year old boy, you could say, without any help from Saul.

[9 : 10] This is incredibly humbling. So it requires an appropriate response now from Saul. God loves to humble the man who views himself as most powerful, doesn't he?

Later on in redemptive history, remember the great King Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of the entire world. Oh, the Lord humbled him. What will Saul's response be? Nebuchadnezzar responded this way in Daniel 434.

Blessed be the Most High. Praise and honor be unto him who lives forever. For his dominion is an everlasting dominion. And his kingdom is from generation to generation.

All the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing. He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. No one can restrain his mighty hand.

That's what the uncircumcised pagan King Nebuchadnezzar declared of God. That's an appropriate response. What will Saul say in response to what God has accomplished before all Israel and all Philistia?

[10 : 20] In verse 58, Saul said to him, David, whose son are you? Some of your English translations get it literally, boy.

No prayer lifted up. No doxology for the whole nation to hear. No Ebenezer or a memorial of God's faithfulness like Samuel built up after another great defeat.

God gave them over the same people, the Philistines. No honor even given to the faithful servant that God equipped to win. See, David was God's anointed shepherd.

David was a Messiah figure. And he had just crushed the head of this scale-covered accuser, Goliath. This was a victory that was remarkably symbolic.

And unfortunately, this story ends with a remarkably anticlimactic response from the King of Israel. Well, next, this passage sets up two bookends.

[11 : 34] This is called an inclusio. And then it works its way to the center. And it points out what we're supposed to focus on. I'd love to do this with you.

If you've got God's word open there, this will be helpful for you. You're going to have to use two fingers, okay? Two index fingers to trace it together. Here are the bookends. Put one finger on verse 1.

And what these two verses have in common is that David was loved. So look at verse 1. Jonathan loved him. Now put your other finger at the other inclusio, the other end, the other bookend, which is verse 16.

All Israel and Judah loved David. You see how the common language sets these up as bookend. Now keep your fingers there. Here's the second step of the four. David is promoted and behaves wisely.

So look at verse 5 now. Take your first finger and put it on verse 5. Wherever Saul sent David, he behaved himself wisely. And Saul sent him over the men of war.

[12 : 36] And take your second finger and put it on verse 13. Saul made him his captain over a thousand. Verse 14. And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways. And the Lord was with him.

And Saul was afraid of him. You see the linguistic tie between those two? You see how your fingers are moving closer and closer to the center. Here's the third step. Music and anger.

Music and anger. Put your first finger again on verse 6. Women played musical instruments, but then Saul is wrought with anger. Now look at verse 10.

David played music with his hands. And Saul in his mad rage. And Saul in his mad rage throws his javelin at David twice. So now your fingers are almost close together.

We finally arrived at the literary center of this structure of this passage. What did the spirit-inspired author intend for us to find? To ponder as the isolated focus.

[13 : 35] Look at verse 9. Here's what this passage points to. Saul eyed David from that day forward. That's what it's marking out for us.

Isn't that cool? To eye David. It means he jealously gazed at him. Or he viewed him with suspicion. See how the very literary structure of this Hebrew narrative, the way God breathed it out, it acts as walls closing in, squeezing, suffocating this panicked man, Saul, who's enslaved to his idol.

His idol is his throne. After God delivered the kingdom from death and slavery to the Philistines, Saul's eyes don't go up to heaven in praise.

They are low. He eyed David. He's gazing down from his tall height, head and shoulders above every other man in the nation, looking down at this boy.

A threat to his idol, his throne. A simple shepherd dressed like a peasant. A simple shepherd threatens the most powerful man in Israel. It's a very sad picture we have.

[14 : 53] He's surrounded by all of God's people, the whole nation. He's in the midst of joyful singing, dancing, celebrating. They've gotten a wonderful display of God's mighty power over the world.

And there is Saul all alone. God's people are joyful. But not Saul. God's people are singing all around him.

But not Saul. God's people know the Lord of hosts is with him, with them. And they trust him by faith. And they see him working mightily within the kingdom.

But not Saul. So sad. So tragic. Yet it's also such a common response to the work of the Messiah.

A person can be in the midst of God's people. Hearing them sing with tears in their eyes. That's part of Robert Murray Mishane's testimony. He's seeing everybody else worshipping God, but doesn't know Jehovah Sidkenu, the Lord, my righteousness.

[16 : 00] You see everyone else marveling at God's amazing grace to save wretches like us. We're delivered. We're secured forever by the victory of God over sin, Satan, death, and judgment by the

finished work of Christ.

Yet in the midst of the congregation. It's so sad to admit it. It's very possible to remain unmoved. Ice cold. Suspicious of God still.

And enslaved to the idol. To hold on to that throne. The throne of our lives. To remain in control. To remain believing that I'm my own king.

Even at the cost of our own souls. Brothers and sisters and dear friends. Jesus Christ is portrayed to you and me. By his help, Lord willing, every time we meet, it's Christ.

Lift it up. The greater David. The one who crushed Satan's head. Who's ransomed and delivered his people. So don't cling to your throne.

[17:13] Be moved by the spirit. The cross was the most massive mystery. Most massive moment in human history. It was Jesus Christ's supreme victory.

His death and resurrection. That's the theme of all the Bible. The Old and the New Testament.

Every time we hear of the work of God to redeem. By the death and resurrection of his son.

We need to be moved. Don't respond to the picture of the Messiah like Saul did. Give up that throne. Let it all down at the foot of Christ.

Let him melt your heart. Put your faith in him. By God's grace, we do have a contrasting response given to us in this same passage.

I did have to wrestle for a while. Why was it structured this way? Why was it set up that way?

Because the chapter begins with this wonderful response. And I think the reason has to be so that the context of these two will be a foil one to another.

[18:22] Contrast. A juxtaposition. And the rejection of Saul. Rejecting the grace of God. The glory of God. Clinging to his throne for himself as an idol.

Is set up in stark contrast with the response of Jonathan. At that scene where David walks up holding the Goliath's head. And he speaks with Saul.

There was another character. It was the noble crowned prince of Israel. Jonathan. Remember many chapters ago. Jonathan already stormed the garrison of the Philistines with his armor bearer. And the Lord gave a great victory. To be of age to fight. You had to be over 20. And many years have passed. So commentators have estimated over 20 years. Some would say even closer to 30 years age gap between David and Jonathan.

John pointed out this morning. It's almost more of a father-son relationship. If the father is 42. And the son is 15. That's exactly the relationship or the distance between Jonathan and David.

[19:22] So Jonathan now in his 40s most likely. Everyone views him as the new king of Israel. The one that would be an honor to follow and serve. He has faith in God.

He's valiant. And only him and King Saul are the only two men in all the kingdom that have weapons. This is the man who God has already blessed. A man of faith.

But after Jonathan sits there watching David carrying Goliath's head. What God just did. And then speaking with Saul. We read in verse 57.

As David returned from the slaughter. With the head of the Philistine in his hand. Now you pick up in verse 1 of chapter 18. When he had finished speaking to Saul.

The soul of Jonathan. Prince Jonathan. Was knit to the soul of David. And Jonathan loved him as his own. That expression to love him as his own.

[20:24] It's describing the quality of this bond. It was a selfless love. It was a self forgetting love.

Jonathan saw in David. Something that God had done. That freed him up from the flesh. Or anything he wanted to cling on to. And it became a self forgetting love.

For something much bigger God is doing. I have to add this clarification. Despite Satan's best attempts to distort God's pure word.

And the scripture doesn't try to gloss over these characters. We're given gross sins that people in the Bible commit. This is not one of those cases. This is no woke text.

No twisted perversion is here. The meaning of this exchange is informed by the contrast. While Saul kept back the reward from David that he had promised him.

[21:24] We'll open that up more next week. Jonathan's response to David's work and words is the opposite. David did not receive from King Saul what he had held out there as the carrot for whoever would go fight.

But instead God himself gave David a wonderful gift. With Jonathan he gave him biblical friendship. David's victory and David's words were what knit Jonathan's soul to this anointed king.

This Messiah shepherd. Did you catch those details? It was after Jonathan saw David come up with the work being done. Holding Goliath's head. And after he heard them finish speaking. There was something in David's demeanor. Surely by the anointing of the spirit that the Lord ministered to Jonathan in that moment. We're not given more details than that. What we do know is that Jonathan rejoices in David's victory. A true friend. And Jonathan rejoices at David's words.

[22 : 33] Look at verse 3. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant. Because he loved him. Meaning Jonathan loved David as his own soul. This is a covenant between people.

A covenant is an oath bound commitment between people and before God. What makes a covenant so special. Is that it's more loving than a mere contract. And it's also more binding than a mere promise. That's what a covenant is. More loving than a mere contract. More binding than a mere promise.

Here's my interpretation. Take it for that. For what it is. Jonathan was born a sinner like everyone after Adam. At some point the Lord regenerated Jonathan.

Working in a way differently in the old covenant. But giving him a faith. To believe in the promise of a coming seed. A Messiah. Yeah. And then.

[23 : 31] When the Holy Spirit in Jonathan. Though it's different in the old covenant. When he saw the anointed one. He saw in David. God's anointed king.

He was putting his faith. In David as a figure pointing to Christ. It's a powerful thing that the Lord can work. In that way. I believe that Jonathan expressed to God's servant David.

What every true believer is moved to express to Jesus Christ. Saul made himself an enemy of God's servant. But Jonathan was stirred up to be a friend.

A true friend. Self forgetting friend. Out of love for the future Messiah. Jesus Christ. In verse 4 we read that Jonathan then took off his robe.

That was on him. And gave it to David. With his armor. And even his sword. And his bow. And his belt. I think that the Holy Spirit of God. Was so evidently on this young man.

[24 : 34] That the grace that God put in Jonathan's soul. Could not help but view. This shepherd warrior. As an ambassador. Of the Lord of hosts. Jonathan now.

If he had thought about the kingdom. Or the throne. Becoming the next king of Israel. I believe the Lord. Showed him an even greater joy. An even greater kingdom.

He takes off the royal robe. He puts it on this shepherd. You wear it. I won't idolize the throne. I've seen how empty that is.

In my dad's life. God is the Lord of his people. Let me be a simple man. Simple foot soldier. For God. He gives him the sword.

David. The kingdom. Symbolically is yours. You will wield. The sword. You will bend. The bow. I don't need to be recognized. I don't need to be recognized. As a hero.

[25 : 35] In this world. It's God who clearly gives the victory. And God gave you the victory. Without any armor. Without any help. From these Philistine made. Pieces of metal.

So God can also use me. However he pleases. For his glory. Jonathan's watching the whole scene. How the women from across the nation are coming.

Singing and celebrating. Full of joy. I can't help but think of the connection. The exact words of John the Baptist later.

Who is a noble warrior. Preparing the way for the Messiah. In John 3.29. John the baptizer says. He who has the bride.

Is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom. Who stands and hears him. Rejoices greatly. At the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this.

[26 : 33] My joy is fulfilled. He must increase. I must decrease. This is what we see. In Jonathan. Well in this passage.

We're also left with a question. And the beauty of. Hebrew literature. But more importantly. One divine author. Of all the scriptures. The Holy Spirit. Is that it's so layered.

And beautiful. And rich. And the question. We're left with is this. Who points. To Christ here. Is it Jonathan. Pointing to Christ. Or is it David. Pointing to Christ.

I've had to. Just accept. I think it's both. In the love. That this. Noble Jonathan. Shows to the simple. Shepherd David. I think we see a picture of Christ. Showing love to his church. This is how

Jonathan. Points to Christ. God's victory.

[27 : 33] Not only secured. A great freedom. For the kingdom. God also secured. Something. More precious. He secured. A covenant bond. Between Christ. And the church.

A true friendship. An eternal covenant. Think of it. Our Lord Jesus Christ. The eternally. Begotten. God. The son.

The everlasting. Prince of peace. Like a greater Jonathan. He took off. His majesty. The robe of his glory. In heaven. He was despised. Made low. They esteemed him not.

And his active obedience. Secured for men and women. Boys and girls. You and me. Made in the flesh. A righteousness. That is not our own.

A righteousness. Accomplished by God. Himself in the flesh. Our Lord Jesus Christ. Gives his righteousness. To us. His royal robes. He clothes. His church with.

[28 : 30] What a beautiful picture. We have. Of this free gift. And it's not a covenant. Among equals. It's the prince of peace. With peasants.

Like us. We receive Christ's. Righteousness. Freely. We wear it. And he puts his armor on us. We're raised up. As his army. We are identified.

With him. Remember. David wouldn't. Wouldn't be identified. With Saul. He would not go to. To battle. Looking like Saul. But David. Would joyfully.

Now wear. The armor. And the robe. Jonathan. The church now. Puts on Christ. We are bound. To Christ. By an everlasting covenant.

More loving. Than a contract. More binding. Than a mere promise.ise. just as the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, the soul of God's people is knit to the soul of Christ.

[29 : 32] We can say the two become one. That's how tight our union with Christ is. We're in covenant with him forever. Well, not only does Jonathan point to Christ, David also points to Jesus Christ in this passage.

In the last chapter, in chapter 17, think how David defeated the enemy, just as Jesus disarmed the dragon when he was crucified, when he died and was buried as a simple shepherd.

But now, the next turn of the page, Jesus Christ is raised, ascended, seated, and he's ruling in session, dressed in glory and majesty, in his glorified, resurrected body.

The splendor of heaven, beholding God, a visible manifestation of God's attributes, somehow clothing now, God the Son, incarnate, glorified.

just as David is taking on the robe and the armor now, having accomplished the great victory that God gave him. David did not go to war looking like the world.

[30 : 46] He would not be mistaken for that type of worldly king. But now, at God's right hand, our Lord Jesus Christ, he is rightly dressed. He's robed in royal splendor.

Philippians 2.9 says, God now has also highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name. I love how we sing this in our song today.

This great exchange. There in my place, he stood condemned. Here I stand now justified. My guilt is his and his grace is mine. In verse 3, When I stand before the throne one day, they are dressed in beauty, not my own.

Then, Lord, shall I fully know, not till that day how much I know. And there will be a day where we stand in the presence of God and we will get to see the Lord and behold him in his splendor with glorified eyes.

The Lord has given a glimpse of that glory to several in the scriptures. One is Revelation 19, how John reported using broken human language.

[32 : 01] He said, I saw heaven opened up and behold a white horse and he who sat on him was called faithful and true. And in righteousness, he judges and makes war.

And his eyes were like a flame of fire and his head were many crowns. And he was clothed with a robe dipped in blood. And his name is called the word of God.

And the armies in heaven are clothed in fine linen, white and clean. They followed him on white horses. Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword with which he will strike the nations.

And he himself will rule with a rod of iron. And he himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. He has on his robe and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Respond to this glorious King. His name is above every other name. That's the only response worthy of him is to lay down everything that we would hold on to.

[33 : 10] Forsake the idol, forsake the throne, cast it all upon him and he will exalt you on the last day and seat you with him in the armies of heaven.

Let's pray. Amen. Oh Lord, please help us to respond to you. We thank you for how you have revealed yourself in all of scripture, glorified, risen, the almighty God.

And yet you're the good shepherd. You so tenderly call your sheep by name. Lord, I pray that we will hear your voice. I pray that you'll show us how fleeting these things of this world are that we want to cling to and hold on to, that we'll turn around and leave those behind and come to you instead.

We thank you, Lord, that we can rest in this everlasting covenant. It's you who hold us fast. We thank you that you are victorious. You are clothed in majesty and splendor.

And we thank you, Father, that we belong to you. We pray that your kingdom will advance, that you will cause those who are once your enemies now, Lord, to declare like Nebuchadnezzar, blessed be God most high.

[34 : 30] Praise and honor be unto him who lives forever. For his dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation. That all the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing.

And that you do, Lord, according to your will, both in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, that nothing can restrain your mighty hand.

And it's with that same mighty hand that you hold your people fast so that no one can pluck us out of your mighty hand. We praise you for your work, Lord. Help us to trust you, to follow you.

We pray that your kingdom will come, Lord, among this church for your glory. Amen.