

## David Laments Saul's Death

**Opener:** Share a favorite memory of someone who has gone to be with the Lord.

**Scripture:** The Philistines fought against Israel and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa. <sup>2</sup>They hotly pursued Saul and his sons, and killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. <sup>3</sup>The fighting grew fierce around Saul and he was critically wounded. <sup>4</sup>Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will abuse me." But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it, so Saul fell on his own sword. <sup>5</sup>The armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, so he fell on his sword and died. <sup>6</sup>Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day. I Samuel 31:1-6 (condensed)

David took up this lament concerning Saul and his son Jonathan, <sup>18</sup> and ordered that it be taught to the people of Judah: <sup>19</sup>"A gazelle lies slain on your heights, Israel. How the mighty have fallen! <sup>20</sup>"Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in Ashkelon, lest the Philistines be glad, lest the uncircumcised rejoice.

<sup>21</sup>"Mountains of Gilboa, may neither dew or rain fall on your fields. For there the shield of the mighty Saul was despised. <sup>22</sup>"From the blood of the slain, from the flesh of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, the sword of Saul did not return unsatisfied. <sup>23</sup>Saul and Jonathan— in life they were loved and admired, and in death they were not parted. They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

<sup>24</sup>"Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in finery and adorned your garments with gold ornaments. <sup>25</sup>"How the mighty have fallen in battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights. <sup>26</sup>I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women. <sup>27</sup>"How the mighty have fallen! The weapons of war have perished!" 2 Sam. 1:17-27 (condensed)

### Discussion Questions

1. I Samuel 31 tells us how Saul and Jonathan died in battle. David's deep sorrow over their deaths is expressed in 2 Samuel 1. It's no secret that Saul had made David's life miserable, so why didn't David rejoice when he died? Have you ever had the opportunity to be glad when someone died or had other misfortunes? How did you process what had happened?
2. What David expressed in 2 Samuel 1 is called a lament. It's been said that lament is how Christians grieve. It's expressing how we feel about our suffering while being grounded in God's goodness. How does going to God with our questions and pain help us deal with grief?
3. Other than losing a loved one, what are some losses or disappointments we encounter? How do we deal with them in ways that either separate us from God or bring us closer to Him?
4. 2 Samuel 1:26 says that David considered Jonathan's love "more wonderful than that of women." Note that the Hebrew word translated "love" here appears as "friendship" in other scripture. What's your opinion of how David remembers Jonathan? How do you think God evaluated Jonathan's life?
5. David emphasized that Saul and Jonathan's memory will live on. How does memorializing their deeds and character add to their legacy? Why is it important to remember those who have gone before us?
6. Why is it tempting to isolate when we're suffering and what makes it dangerous to do so? What's been most helpful when you've been suffering? How can we "loan" our faith to those who are hurting?

**Wrap Up:** We often come to know God best in grief. Distractions and superficial things fade away, and we're left with the knowledge that God is real, He's with us, and He cares. Nothing else makes matters. All we know is that His presence and peace fill our hearts. Grief is its own form of prayer. It might have words, it might not. But however it's expressed, God sees it and hears it, and He weeps with us. As David wrote in Psalm 34, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." From *Worried about Everything Because I Pray about Nothing* by Chad Veach.