

# 1 SAMUEL 18

## 1 Samuel 18:1–30

## David and Saul's Children

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**Introduction:** 1Sam. 18 is a roller coaster of a chapter. After Saul finds out the name of David's parents, Saul's son Jonathan immediately develops a love and respect for David—probably because they are about the same age and on the same spiritual wavelength. Saul also has an abiding respect for David, and he places him in high authority over his army. However, during one of the civilian receptions for Saul and his army, the women sing something which really rubs Saul the wrong way, and his respect for David turns to suspicion and suspicion turns to hatred. Then Saul attempts to kill David on several occasions. In the final third of this chapter, it appears as though David is going to become the king's son-in-law, although the proposed marriage between David and Saul's eldest daughter does not come to pass; however, Saul does agree to let David marry his younger daughter, and this time Saul allows that marriage to occur.

To give you a little more detail: this chapter picks up right after David has killed Goliath (1Sam. 17:31–51). Saul calls David to him to determine who his parents are, as he had made a promise to free his family from taxes (a promise which I suspect was never fulfilled). In their post-battle, one-on-one interview, Saul and David are apparently observed by Jonathan, Saul's son, who would have had high ranking in Saul's army (and not simply because he was Saul's son, but because his great bravery was legendary—see 1Sam. 14). During this interview, David and Jonathan developed a strong bond which became a marvelous friendship. Jonathan pledged his loyalty and love to David, and outfitting David with his own equipment. Furthermore, Saul no longer allowed David to return to his father's home, his presence being much too valuable to the throne. And Saul placed David over his men of war, which possibly even placed him over Jonathan. 1Sam. 18:1–4.

The citizenry of Israel also became enthralled with David—particularly the women. Even in the public's eye, he had no missteps. After every successful campaign, the women would gather themselves to the army and sing.

However, on one occasion, they really pissed Saul off by singing, “Saul has slain his thousands and David has slain his tens of thousands.” (1Sam. 18:7b). From that time on, Saul looked upon David with suspicion (vv. 5–9).

Saul realized that God had replaced him; however, the actual replacement had not yet come to pass. David’s wisdom, his actions, and his popularity first made Saul suspicious and then he seemed to realize that David was his replacement. Although this is not stated outright, Saul’s behavior is indicative of one who feels threatened by David. Saul first tries to kill David himself. While David is in the palace playing his instrument, Saul loses the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit influences him, and Saul tries to kill David with his spear. After David twice eludes his direct attack, Saul recognizes that God is with him (vv. 10–12).

Then Saul apparently demotes David (although this demotion is not specifically so presented). The result of this demotion is that David would probably be more likely to be involved in fighting the enemy himself—again, not directly stated but an inference of this chapter. However, what is stated is that, regardless of the circumstances that David finds himself in, he still prospers. He becomes even more of a popular hero, and Saul’s suspicion of David, turns to fear, which later turns to dread (vv. 13–16).

Saul then offers David the hand of his eldest daughter Merob in marriage, which offer is accompanied by the need for David to fight against the Philistines (v. 17). It is possible that this is coterminous with David’s demotion (v. 13), and it is possible that this occurred afterwards (as our Gentile minds might initially conclude, given the order of the verses). David is very successful in battle, but Saul gives his daughter Merob to another man on the day that she is to be married to David (v. 19).

Saul’s actions, however, backfire on him, and his youngest daughter Michal tells him that she is in love with David. Saul quickly determines how to use this to his advantage. He promises David once again to make him part of the family by marrying one of his daughters, but requires a dowry of 100 Philistine foreskins. Now, you may wonder, *how does Saul offer up one daughter, not fulfil this promise, and then offer up a second daughter, and yet David falls for it a second time?* When we get to that, **I will explain it to you**. David does fulfil Saul’s dowry requirement and he does marry Michal (vv. 20–30).

Finally, four times in this chapter, David is said to act wisely (vv. 5, 14, 15, 30); three times in this chapter, Saul will be said to be afraid of David (vv. 12, 15, 29); and three times in this chapter, Jehovah is said to be with David (vv. 12, 14, 28). I don’t know as of right now if there is any significance in the repetition of these statements other than an emphasis being placed upon their meaning. One of the approaches which I tend to avoid, but might be forced to in this situation, is that we have two separate accounts of the events which have been woven together. My reason for avoiding this approach is that the JEPD crowd has taken this to a ridiculous extreme (see the Doctrine of **Documentary Hypothesis** in my Introduction to the book of Exodus). However, there is no reason to assume that one person wrote each and every word to this book or that. It is reasonable to assume that some authors used the sources available to them, and that God the Holy Spirit guided them to write only that which was accurate. It is also reasonable that, rather than take liberties with one’s sources, that some might quote them at length—so what we may have here is the weaving of two (or more) sources, which would account for the repetitiousness. It is clear that the events in the past three chapters are not laid out end to end in chronological form (this topic will be covered several times throughout this chapter); and several great exegetes, Keil and Delitzsch<sup>1</sup> among them, point out that this lack of chronology is due, in part, to there being two traditions that are preserved here. It should not bother us that there were several accounts of David’s life, considering that he was so well-liked and respected; and it should not concern us if a later author made use of those accounts to piece together the events of David’s life. It is even possible that David himself recorded many of these events, and that a later editor edited in another account (or, other accounts).

As in the previous chapter, LXX β and the MT are considerably different, LXX β presenting a much shorter version of the text. Therefore, at the end of this chapter, we will look at the LXX texts as a whole.

<sup>1</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 490–491.

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## David has Jonathan's Love and Saul's Respect

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

And so he is as his completion to speak unto Saul and a soul of Jonathan was knit in a soul of David and so loves him Jonathan as his [own] soul. 1 Samuel 18:1

And so it was as he finished speaking to Saul that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as [he loved] his own soul.

And after he [David] finished speaking to Saul that Jonathan's became the closest of friends with David; in fact, Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so he is as his completion to speak unto Saul and a soul of Jonathan was knit in a soul of David and so loves him Jonathan as his [own] soul.

Alexandrian Septuagint

And it came to pass when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. [The first five verses of this chapter are not found in the Septuagint version which I use, which I have called Septuagint β, but they are found in the Alexandrian Septuagint (LXX α)—this was discussed in great detail in the previous chapter]

Significant differences: No significant differences.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV David and Saul finished talking, and soon David and Jonathan became best friends. Jonathan thought as much of David as he did of himself.

NAB By the time David finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan had become as fond of David as if his life depended on him; he loved him as he loved himself. [The first five verses of this chapter are in brackets, as there are two primary Septuagint versions of 1 Sam. 16–18, and this is lacking in Septuagint β]

NJB When David had finished talking to Saul, Jonathan felt an instant affection for David; Jonathan loved him like his very self.

NLT After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond of love between them, and they became the best of friends.

TEV Saul and David finished their conversation. After that, Saul's son Jonathan was deeply attracted to David and came to love him as much as he loved himself.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ David finished talking to Saul. After that, Jonathan became David's closest friend. He loved David as much as [he loved] himself.

JPS (Tanakh) When [David] finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan's soul became bound up with the soul of David; Jonathan loved David as himself.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as himself.

Young's Updated LT

And it comes to pass, when he finished to speak unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan has been bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Jonathan felt an almost instant affection for David and they became close friends.

Recall that chapter divisions were divisions made long after the text had been written and finalized. 1Sam. 18:1 continues 1Sam. 17:58 (in the Hebrew and in the Alexandrian Septuagint). David and Saul speak, and Jonathan is apparently looking on, and he and David will develop a close relationship. Recall that the conversations recorded are often severely edited? This is obviously the case here. That is, Saul doesn't say, "Who is your father?" David answers, "Jesse." And, because of this, Jonathan decides that David is a wonderful person. Obviously, there was a great deal which was discussed in David and Saul's conversation, which Jonathan was likely privy to. Based upon this conversation (and upon what David said to Saul prior to facing Goliath in 1Sam. 17:32–39) which we do not have access to, Jonathan's soul became knit to David's.

You know I don't mind speculating now and again.

### What Did David and Saul Talk About?

1. Saul asked David the name of his father; [David told Saul, "I am the son of your servant, Jesse, the Bethlehemite."](#) (1Sam. 17:58b). This is the only part of this conversation that we are aware of. What follows will be speculative.
2. Saul probably tells David, "I know a good place for you to display Goliath's head; how would you like to take a trip to Jerusalem?" It is possible, in fact, that David and Jonathan went together to Jerusalem to display this head. David would have no standing whatsoever in Jerusalem; however, Jonathan, as the king's son, would have a great deal of authority. Therefore, it makes sense for David to travel with someone, which would logically be Jonathan. This may have been why David and Jonathan became close.
3. When David stood up against Goliath, he made it very clear that [the Battle is the Lord's](#). He makes several statements aloud to Goliath, so that everyone else can hear. All of his statements are clearly divine viewpoint. Therefore, when he speaks to Saul, after the fact, it is very likely that David is going to be expressing divine viewpoint as well. In some interviews, we might expect Saul to say, "How did you know how to get Goliath?" And then David rattles off, "Well, I looked the situation over carefully; figured Goliath was all talk and no show; saw that there was a space of his forehead that I could hit; and I knew I was really accurate with this here sling." But, you see, David is not like that. He is not going to tell you how great and intelligent that he is. He is not going to tell you his great strategy and thought process and take the glory for this victory—he is going to credit God with the victory over Goliath, which is correct and proper. I am sure that Jonathan observes that aspect of their conversation and is impressed by that, as Jonathan thinks very similarly.
4. It is probably at this point that Saul asks David to be his armor bearer, and he may even send out to get a message prepared for Jesse.

Since Jonathan forms a strong bond with David, apparently early on, then he must have observed David's conversation with Saul before and after Goliath.

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## 1Samuel 18:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כֶּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAWH</i> ]	<i>to complete, to finish, to accomplish, to be fulfilled; to be consumed, to be wasted, to be destroyed, to annihilate, to perish</i>	Piel infinitive construct affixed to the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** *And so it was as he finished speaking to Saul...* Saul has called David in to conference over his defeat of Goliath and to draft him into the king's army. He is probably simultaneously reevaluating the promises that he made prior to Goliath's defeat, as we will see later on. Meanwhile, Jonathan, his son and a high ranking officer in Israel's army, is on hand, and he observes David, his commitment to and trust in God, and his demeanor.

## 1Samuel 18:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 18:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i> ]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
There are two primary ways of spelling <i>Jonathan</i> : Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN</i> ], which is found 83 times, and Yōwnâthân (יְוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>yoh-naw-THAWN</i> ], which is found 42 times.			
qâshar (קָשַׁר) [pronounced <i>kaw-SHAHR</i> ]	<i>was bound, to be bound together; compacted [and therefore] finished</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7194 BDB #905
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** ...that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David,.. David has reported to Saul, as Saul requested; and David, without bravado, speaks to Saul. Jonathan, Saul's son is listening, possibly in attendance as part of Saul's executive staff; and David's bravery, spiritual perspective and honest modesty appeal to Jonathan. On at least one occasion, we have seen how incredibly brave Jonathan was, and that the basis of his confidence was trust in God. David is the one of the very few people that Jonathan knows who has the same divine perspective. Therefore, he feels an immediate kinship to David.

We have the exact same phrase (but a different stem) in Gen. 44:30, where the soul of Jacob is bound up or knit together with the soul of his son, Benjamin. The idea is that the happiness of one soul is tied to the other soul. The feelings of one soul are in close connection to the feelings of the other soul. However, the relationships were much different. With Jacob and Benjamin, the love was much more selfish, even though it was a father's love for his youngest child. The happiness of his soul was very much tied to the soul of Benjamin, but it was the sort of love which takes. On the other hand, Jonathan's soul was knit to David was different, as Jonathan had a great deal more character—therefore, his love was more giving.

## 1Samuel 18:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâhêb (אָהַב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV<sup>h</sup></i> ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12



## 1Samuel 18:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yôwnâthân (יֹונָתָן) [pronounced <i>yoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3129 (& #3083) BDB #220
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i> ]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

**Translation:** *and Jonathan loved him as [he loved] his own soul.* Jonathan recognizes that David is a man of great spiritual character. Therefore, Jonathan loves David. Realize that there is no one else that Jonathan knew who had such a clear spiritual perspective of Israel as did David. In my early teens, I recognized a kid from school at two different places, far from our neighborhood, and places where I never expected to recognize anyone. Because we recognized one another, we eventually became very good friends (along with the help of another mutual friend). In retrospect, it is clear that I would never run into anyone else that I knew at either of those places; and the same is true for him.

Edersheim writes: *The friendship between Jonathan and David, which dated from the victory over Goliath, and the modest, genuine bearing of the young conqueror, is the one point of light in a history which grows darker and darker as it proceeds. We can imagine how a spirit so generous as that of Jonathan would be drawn towards that unaffected, brave youth, so free from all self-consciousness or self-seeking, who would seem the very embodiment of Israelitish valour and piety.*<sup>2</sup>

One question which is raised by some is, were David and Jonathan homosexuals? We will deal with that question in 1Sam. 20:41.

One question which occurs to me is, *why didn't Jonathan face Goliath?* He already exhibited staggering confidence in God in 1Sam. 14. I have one answer to that: it was God's plan from eternity past for David to face Goliath. This was a battle which would be recalled for thousands of years. Most people who know little or nothing about Scripture still know about David and Goliath. Therefore, God saw to it that Jonathan would not fight Goliath. Now, on the human side, from our vantage point, why didn't Jonathan volunteer to fight Goliath? Obviously, the best I can do is speculate. However, my educated guess is that Jonathan did volunteer, probably on several occasions, and on each occasion, Saul told him *no*. In the past, Jonathan has twice taken the initiative against the Philistines, without first consulting with his father. Even though the results were good, Saul probably chewed him out for not following protocol. Undoubtedly, Saul made Jonathan give him his word that he would take no more offensive action without Saul's approval first. Therefore, when Saul would not approve of Jonathan fighting Goliath, Jonathan was bound to observe Saul's mandate.

A second possibility is that Jonathan was elsewhere during the challenge of Goliath, leading another army in another offensive. God saw to it that Jonathan was detained until David defeated Goliath. God also saw to it that Jonathan arrived in time for the post-fight interview.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 473.

And so takes him Saul in the day the that and would not give him to return [to] a house of his father.

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18:2

So Saul took him [David] in that day and did not allow [lit., give] him to return to his father's house.

On that day, Saul took David as part of his staff and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so takes him Saul in the day the that and would not give him to return [to] a house of his father.

Septuagint                              And Saul took him in that day, and did not suffer him to return to his father's house.

Significant differences:              None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                      From that time on, Saul kept David in his service and would not let David go back to his own family.

NAB                                      Saul laid claim to David that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

NJB                                      Saul engaged him that very day and would not let him go home to his father.

NLT                                      From that day on Saul kept David with him at the palace and wouldn't let him return home.

REB                                      That same day, when Saul had finished talking with David, he kept him and would not let him return any more to his father's house, for he saw that Jonathan had given his heart to David and had grown to love him as himself. [The REB combines vv. 1–2 and makes it sound as though Saul kept David in the palace because Jonathan loved him].

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™                              (From that day on Saul kept David [as his servant] and didn't let him go back to his family.)

JPS (Tanakh)                              Saul took him [into his service] that day and would not let him return to his father's house.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                      And Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house.

Young's Updated LT                      And Saul takes him on that day, and did not permit him to turn back to the house of his father.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Given that David was the man who defeated Goliath, and given that he was able to soothe King Saul with his music, Saul no longer permitted David to return to his father's house.

### 1Samuel 18:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253



## 1Samuel 18:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
Shâ'ûwl (שָׁאֹוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** [So Saul took him \[David\] in that day...](#) What this means is that David was taken by Saul into the palace as part of his permanent staff. It is probable that this actually refers back to 1Sam. 16:21b, which does not have to occur prior to David's battle with Goliath (this is the passage where Saul makes David his armor bearer). This has already been discussed in excruciating detail.

## 1Samuel 18:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## 1Samuel 18:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup></i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i> ]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʾâb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup></i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household or clan</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** ...and did not allow [lit., *give*] him to return to his father's house. Prior to his battle with Goliath, David went back and forth between the palace and his father's house. After all, David has shown himself the most distinguished warrior in Israel. In 1Sam. 14:52, we know that Saul took any man of military value and attached him to his army. This was, therefore, routine for Saul. We are told that David is made Saul's armor bearer. This probably occurred at this time. Previously, David was the house musician, and, when Saul was at war, there was no reason for him to hang at the palace (hence his return to his father's house in 1Sam. 17:15). However, here it is clear that David would not be going back and forth between the palace and his father's house. As was discussed in 1Sam. 16, this verse is probably coterminous with 1Sam. 16:21b–22. That is, Saul made David his armor bearer and also sent a formal request to Saul to keep him on in public service at the palace. Prior to his victory over Goliath, David would to return home and split his work between home and the palace. Now, he is Saul's armor bearer. You see, it makes the most sense if it is a result of David defeating Goliath in chapter 17; it makes less sense if Saul did this simply because he liked David a lot (1Sam. 16:21). We would expect Saul to make David an armor bearer as a result of doing something which is militarily impressive, like killing Goliath, rather than simply being a good musician.

The problem is that we of a Gentile mind, heavily influenced by Greek philosophy, tend to think in a chronological manner. Personally, I have been exegeting the Bible in a more or less chronological order (there are two Bibles, by the way, which place Scripture in chronological order). However, the Jewish mind did not think like this. Now, had I wrote the book of Samuel, then events in chapter 16 would naturally precede all events recorded in chapter 18. However, this is not necessarily how the Jewish mind thinks. David's first two promotions are recorded in 1Sam. 16:21–22 because they come under the heading of promotion partially as a result of Saul's love for him. However, this does not mean that David comes to the palace one day, plays some tunes, and Saul says, "You're now the palace musician." And then the next day, soothed tremendously by what David is playing, Saul say, "Heck yes, you're also going to be my armorbearer." David did receive those promotions in that order, and Saul did send a message home to his father—however, the events of the following chapter reasonably fall in between the two promotions.

Now, I need to point out that there is no contradiction that I am hoping to fix here; no problem passage that just doesn't seem to fit. I am just adjusting what is recorded here so that the events are placed sequentially, rather than topically. It is not impossible that these events did occur in just this order as they are found in Scripture. The only problem with that is that the motivations involved (most of which are a matter of conjecture anyway) are more difficult to ascertain. What I need to do is to list the various events of these past several chapters as they occur in Scripture and then sequentially. In any case, there are no theological issues at stake here.

**And so cuts Jonathan and David a covenant in a love of his [to] him as his soul.** 1Samuel 18:3 **So Jonathan and David cut a covenant when his love to him [was as his love for] his [own] soul.**

**Also at that time, David and Jonathan made a covenant to indicate that Jonathan loved David as his own soul.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so cuts Jonathan and David a covenant in a love of his [to] him as his soul.  
 Alexandrian Septuagint        And Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul.

Significant differences:        None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV                                      Jonathan liked David so much that they promised to always be loyal friends.  
 NLT                                      And Jonathan made a special vow to be David’s friend,...  
 REB                                      Jonathan and David made a solemn compact because each loved the other as dearly as himself.  
 TEV                                      Jonathan swore eternal friendship with David because of his deep affection for him.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™                      So Jonathan made a pledge of mutual loyalty with David because he loved him as much as [he loved ] himself.  
 JPS (Tanakh)                      —Jonathan and David made a pact, because [Jonathan] loved him as himself.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB                                      Then Jonathan made a covenant with [lit., and] David because he loved him as himself.  
 Owen’s Translation              Then Jonathan made with David a covenant because he loved him as his own soul.  
 Young’s Updated LT              And Jonathan makes—also David—a covenant, because he loves him as his own soul,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** David and Jonathan enter into a pact because of Jonathan’s love for David.

1Samuel 18:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced kaw-RAHTH]	<i>to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #3772 BDB #503

## 1Samuel 18:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yôwnâthân (יֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>yoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3129 (& #3083) BDB #220
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> rîyth (בְּרִית) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>reeth</i> ]	<i>pact, alliance, treaty, alliance, covenant</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1285 BDB #136

**Translation:** [So Jonathan and David cut a covenant...](#) Two things occurred almost simultaneously. Jonathan was a part of Saul's staff not because he was Saul's son, but because of the tremendous bravery which he exhibited in 1Sam. 14. So after David defeated Goliath, indicating with what he said that God was responsible, Jonathan knew that he had found himself a soul mate, someone with the same spiritual perspective. Saul, recognizing David's abilities as a soldier, put him close by. Jonathan, recognizing David's spiritual strength, decides to make a private alliance with him. We aren't told here what was said, other than it was simply a pact that the two men made with one another. Who knows?—perhaps this agreement was a precursor of *One for all and all for one*.

## 1Samuel 18:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʾâhêb (אֲחֵב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12
The infinitive construct, when combined with the b <sup>e</sup> yth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kaph preposition or k <sup>e</sup> (כְּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453

## 1Samuel 18:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nepesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	soul, life, living being, desire	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

**Translation:** ...when his love to him [was as his love for] his [own] soul. The bēyth preposition with an infinitive construct means that this covenant was made simultaneously (which would mean spontaneously). David recognized Jonathan's great spiritual growth and Jonathan saw the same in David. This being understood between the two young men caused them to immediately make a personal pact with one another.

Jonathan's relationship with David was the polar opposite of Saul's. From the standpoint of human thinking, David is more of a threat to Jonathan and his potential inheritance of the throne; however, this is not an issue to Jonathan. His love for David is unconditional, and, as we will see in the next verse, it is possible that Jonathan even recognizes that David is the crown-prince. In any case, Jonathan does not stress over that possibility. Saul, on the other hand, will become obsessed with that possibility, which will account for most of the drama which will follow.

Allow me a divergence here: when men and women *fall in love*, their expectations belie the strength (or lack of) of their relationship. If the man is willing to die for his woman, that is love. If his love is simply based upon what she can potentially do for him, that is selfishness and manipulation. In Eph. 5, we men love the passage, **Women obey your husband**. We tend to be a little less enthusiastic about, **Men, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it**. Men, if you ask a woman to marry you, and your thoughts are about your wedding night, a greater certainty of sex, perhaps an added income, perhaps children, then you are thinking about all the wrong things. If this is a woman whom you are willing to give your life for; if this is a woman that, should she become sick or unattractive, your soul is so knit to hers that these are not issues which would cause you to leave her, then you have a true and honorable love for her.

Jonathan's love for David was along those lines. He felt as though this was a person that he could trust with his life; he would be the sort of person whom David could trust with his life (which he would on several occasions). He would be willing to give his life for David's. His soul was knit together with the soul of David's.

**And so removed [from himself] Jonathan the robe which [was] upon him and so he gave him to David and his outer garments and as far as his sword and as far as his bow and as far as his belt.**

1Samuel  
18:4

**So Jonathan removed the robe that he was wearing [lit., *which (was) upon him*] and he gave it to David, along with [lit., *and*] his outer garments, his sword, his bow and his belt.**

**So Jonathan removed the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his outer garments, his sword, his bow and his belt.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so removed [from himself] Jonathan the robe which [was] upon him and so he gave him to David and his outer garments and as far as his sword and as far as his bow and as far as his belt.

Alexandrian Septuagint      And Jonathan stripped himself of his upper garment, and gave it to David, and his mantle and all he had upon him, even to his sword and to his bow, and to his girdle [or, belt].

Significant differences:      The short phrase *which was upon him* has a different meaning in the Greek and Hebrew. In the Hebrew, it refers to Jonathan's robe; in the Greek, we have the additional word *all* and it refers to everything else where Jonathan was wearing.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV      Jonathan took off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David. He also gave him his military clothes, his sword, his bow and arrows, and his belt.

NAB      Jonathan divested himself of the mantle he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his military dress, and his sword, his bow and his belt.

NLT      ...and he sealed the pact by giving him his robe, tunic, sword, bow, and belt.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™      Jonathan took off the coat he had on and gave it to David, along with his battle tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

JPS (Tanakh)      Jonathan took off the cloak and tunic he was wearing and gave them to David, together with his sword, bow, and belt.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB      And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt .

Young's Updated LT      ...and Jonathan strips himself of the upper robe which *is* upon him, and gives it to David, and his long robe, even unto his sword, and unto his bow, and unto his belt.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Jonathan gave his personal military equipment to David.

### 1Samuel 18:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâshaṭ (פָּשַׁט) [pronounced <i>paw-HAHT</i> ]	<i>to remove one's clothing, to remove some of one's own clothing</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #6584 BDB #832
The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel (intensive stem). So this is some that he does to himself (and therefore, pâshaṭ simply means <i>to remove one's own clothing</i> or <i>to remove some of one's own clothing</i> ).			
Yôwnâthân (יוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>yoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3129 (& #3083) BDB #220
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

## 1Samuel 18:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
m <sup>er</sup> îyl (לִיעָיִל) [pronounced m <sup>e</sup> GEEL]	robe, upper coat or cloak	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4598 BDB #591
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ġahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** So Jonathan removed the robe that he was wearing [lit., which (was) upon him]... Jonathan has found a kindred spirit in David. In this verse, he gives what appears to be most or all of his military accouterments to David. You may wonder, what the heck is going on? Why is he doing this? David has just been hired on into full-time military service and David was a former shepherd. David has nothing by way of true military equipment. Jonathan recognizes this and gives David his own personal equipment.

In our army, the guy shows up, his head is shaved, he is put through rigorous training and given his uniform and weapons. In the ancient armies, whatever things a man brought with him were his weapons and uniform. David has his shepherd stuff—a staff and a sling. Jonathan is going to be the best equipped soldier next to Saul. Jonathan, without giving this a second thought, gives David all of his own military equipment.

## 1Samuel 18:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	beloved and is transliterated David	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
maddîym (מַדְיִם) [pronounced mahd-DEEM]	measure, cloth garment, outer garments; armored coat; carefully tailored clothing; a thick piece of cloth; a leather garment, a carpet	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4055 BDB #551



## 1Samuel 18:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
chereb (כרעב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
qesheth (קשת) [pronounced <i>KEH-sheth</i> ]	<i>bow</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7198 BDB #905
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
chăgôwr (חגור) [pronounced <i>khuh-GOHR</i> ]	<i>binding; a girdle, belt</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2289 BDB #292

**Translation:** ...and he gave it to David, along with [lit., *and*] his outer garments, his sword, his bow and his belt. The items which Jonathan gave to David are the basic implements of war. This would suggest to me that the soldiers who were under Saul probably provided their own weapons and equipment.

The NIV Study Bible notes suggest that this act may have been a recognition of more than just a simple need on David's part.<sup>3</sup> Jonathan's gift of these items to David may signify his realization and acceptance that David would be successor to the throne and not him (see 1Sam. 23:17). Gordon also suggests that *this is a virtual abdication by Jonathan, the crown prince*.<sup>4</sup> Saul will make this connection probably in this chapter around v. 7; it is reasonable that his more spiritually aware son will recognize David's royal personage before Saul would. Jonathan obviously had no crown to give, nor did he possess anything physical which designated him as crown-prince. However, he did have the uniform of his country's military hierarchy, so to speak, and that he gave to David.<sup>5</sup> At the very least, a transference of power is foreshadowed here—which is what I think is occurring here, rather than a conscience abdication of the throne by Jonathan.

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<sup>3</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 399.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Gordon, *I & 11Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 159. He footnotes *The Sense* by Jobling here.

<sup>5</sup> Saul did have other sons; however, only Jonathan distinguished himself in such a way as to *deserve* the crown.

## Israel Comes to Love David; Saul Begins to Fear and Despise David

And so goes out David in all that sends him Saul he is prudent. And so sets him Saul over men of the war and so he is good in [two] eyes all the people and also in [two] eyes of servants of Saul.

1Samuel  
18:5

So David goes out and is prudent in all that Saul sends him [to do]. Therefore, Saul placed him over the men of war and [this] was good in the eyes of all the people and in the eyes of Saul's servants.

So David functioned in Saul's service and showed himself to be wise in all that Saul required him to do. Therefore, Saul set David over his men of war, and this was an intelligent choice in the opinions of the people and Saul's army.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so goes out David in all that sends him Saul he is prudent. And so sets him Saul over men of the war and so he is good in [two] eyes all the people and also in [two] eyes of servants of Saul.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he acted wisely, and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was pleasing in the eyes of all the people, and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul. [We will return to the text of LXX β with the next verse].
Significant differences:	None.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David was a success in everything that Saul sent him to do, and Saul made him a high officer in his army. That pleased everyone, including Saul's other officers.
NJB	Wherever David was sent on a mission by Saul, he was successful, and Saul put him in command of the fighting men; all the people respect him and so did Saul's staff.
NLT	Whatever Saul asked David to do, David did it successfully. So Saul made him a commander in his army, an appointment that was applauded by the fighting men and officers alike.
REB	David succeeded so well in every venture on which Saul sent him that he was given command of the fighting forces, and his promotion pleased all ranks, even the officials round Saul.
TEV	David was successful in all the missions on which Saul sent him, and so Saul made him an officer in his army. This pleased all of Saul's officers and men.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	David was successful wherever Sauls sent him. Saul put him in charge of the fighting men. This pleased all the people, including Saul's officials.
JPS (Tanakh)	David went out [with the troops], and he was successful in every mission on which Saul sent him, and Saul put him in command of all the soldiers; this pleased all the troops and Saul's courtiers as well.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible

And David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he prospered *and* behaved himself wisely; and Saul set him over the men of war, and it was satisfactory both to the people and to Saul's servants.

NASB

So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* prospered; and Saul set him over the men of war. And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

NRSV

David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

Young's Updated LT

And David goes out wherever Saul sends him; he acts wisely, and Saul sets him over the men of war, and it is good in the eyes of all the people, and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David was a military success, and soon promoted by Saul to a position of leadership. David was recognized as a good man in the eyes of Saul and all the people of Israel.

### 1Samuel 18:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
kol (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kol</i> ]	<i>the whole, totality, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i> ]	<i>to send, to send for, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	<i>which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
sâkal (סָכַל) [pronounced <i>saw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to look at, to attend to, to turn the mind to; to be or become understanding, to be prudent; to be successful, to act prosperously; to make prudent, to teach</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7919 BDB #968

**Translation:** *So David goes out and is prudent in all that Saul sends him [to do].* Although the word *yâtsâ`* literally means *to go out, to come out*, it essentially refers to David acting in service to Saul. As a teacher, I would be called into early morning faculty meetings and at the end, we would be dismissed or *sent out*. We were not sent out to simply go home; we were sent out to work, to teach the students. This is how we should understand the use of this word in this context (it is often found to be used in this way).

The result was that David was prudent and wise in all the assignments which Saul gave him. We may reasonably suppose that there were battles to be fought, and that David performed admirably; in fact, we may assume that David stood out from the other soldiers in his abilities.

In my opinion, what had occurred is that Saul pressed David into full-time service (v. 2), making him an armor bearer when Israel was at war, and a palace musician when Israel was not at war. However, David quickly rose in the ranks, as he apparently fought during these subsequent battles, to a position equal to that of Jonathan's (which will be the next part of this verse).

By the way, just as it seems that Israel is forever at war with various Arab factions today, Israel also was at war almost constantly with the surrounding countries of that day. Probably what we are dealing with are a number of skirmishes with the Philistines, who appear to be among Israel's most aggressive enemies.

1Samuel 18:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
The wâw consecutive can also be rendered <i>so, that, yet, therefore</i> . There are times when the wâw consecutive simply carries the action along and we do not need an English translation in order to indicate that.			
sîym (שׂוּם) [pronounced <i>seem</i> ]; also spelled sûwm (שׂוּמ) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
´al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
´îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** *Therefore, Saul placed him over the men of war...* We do not know how long David remained in the ranks of Saul's army. My guess is less than a year. David was already notorious for defeating Goliath when no one else, including Jonathan, was willing to face him. Therefore, Saul gave David a position of authority, no doubt similar to Jonathan's position of leadership.

Now, an interesting point is, *why didn't Jonathan face Goliath?* We are not given any clue here; given Jonathan's bravery evidenced in 1Sam. 14 and his unauthorized strike against the Philistines in 1Sam. 13:3, my guess is that Saul, even after congratulating his son, privately told him to make no moves of aggression of any sort without his personal authorization. My guess is that Saul would not allow his son to fight against Goliath. Again, this is purely speculation. Whatever occurred, God orchestrated it, because God's man needed to fight Goliath.

David enjoyed a very quick rise to military power. He began as Saul's palace musician, advancing to armor bearer, to being sent out along with the army, and finally, to being over the men of war (the latter two promotions probably occurred in rapid succession—that is, David was made an armor bearer after defeating Goliath, and then, placed in a position of great authority after the next battle, which is unrecorded). It appears in this verse that David has been given a position equal to that of Saul's in military authority. Even though very little is said about this rise to power, there are several implications. First of all, Saul was able to recognize military bravery and savvy. He may have begun to succumb to demonic influence, but he had not lost it completely. Furthermore, even though there were certainly many men in the ranks of Israel's army who would like to have advanced, what David consistently did was impressive enough to earn their respect, as the beginning and end of this verse indicate. I have worked with people who would backbite and jockey for positions in a place where such behavior was not necessarily conducive to an increase of authority or salary. So if such things go on where they don't help one to advance, surely they occur where such things would help one to advance. However, men who had served longer than David approved of his rise to high military authority, and celebrated this as a victory for Israel.

Time-wise, I would place this promotion pretty much where it is found in Scripture—after the fight with Goliath, following the war with the Philistines (which apparently continued), and prior to this particular celebration of vv. 6–7 which caused Saul to become jealous of David.

1Samuel 18:5c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâṭa <sup>bv</sup> (יָטָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TA<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>to be good, well, to be pleasing, to do good, to deal well, to make glad, to make a thing good</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3190 BDB #405
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (אֵינַי) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿam (אָמ) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

1Samuel 18:5c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עין) [pronounced <i>ʿAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
ʿebed (עבד) [pronounced <i>ʿE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Shâʾûwl (שׂוּאָל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...and [this] was good in the eyes of all the people and in the eyes of Saul's servants. We know that there are some petty jealousies which erupt when Charlie Brown is promoted, but those who have been there as long as Charlie Brown are not. This was not the case. Saul's decision to give David a position of great authority was supported by both the people of Israel and those who served under David (as well as the rest of Saul's army—this is to whom *Saul's servants* refer to).

And so he is in their coming in a returning of David from a striking of the Philistine, and so come out the women from all cities of Israel to sing and the dances to meet Saul the king in timbrels in joy and in three-stringed instruments.

1Samuel  
18:6

And is was in their coming [and] as David returned from defeating the Philistine, that women from all the cities in Israel came out to sing and dance and to meet King Saul with timbrels, with [songs of] joy and with musical instruments.

Then, as the army returned from battle, along with David, after David's defeat of the Philistine, that the women from all the cities of Israel came out to sing, to dance and to meet King Saul. They played various songs of happiness on timbrels and other musical instruments.

This and the next verse may appear at first to be confusing. It appears as though David has killed one Philistine, Goliath, and that the women are singing praises to him about killing tens of thousands of men. However, that is not the complete picture.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text

And so he is in their coming in a returning of David from a striking of the Philistine, and so come out the women from all cities of Israel to sing and the dances to meet Saul the king in timbrels in joy and in three-stringed instruments.

Septuagint                      And there came out women in dances to meet David out of all the cities of Israel, with timbrels, and with rejoicing, and with cymbals.

Significant differences:      The Masoretic text makes it seem as though, after David kills Goliath, women from all the cities of Israel come out to sing and dance (this could be understood to occur after any engagement with the Philistines). In the Greek, this appears to come about as David is promoted and travels with his army.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV                                David had killed Goliath, the battle was over, and the Israelite army set out for home. As the army went along, women came out of each Israelite town to welcome King Saul. They were singing happy songs and dancing to the music of tambourines and harps.

NLT                                But something happened when the victorious Israelite army was returning home after David had killed Goliath. Women came out from all the towns along the way to celebrate and to cheer for King Saul, and they sang and danced for joy with tambourines and cymbals [The type of instrument represented by the final word is uncertain].

TEV                                As David was returning after killing Goliath and as the soldiers were coming back home, women from every town in Israel came out to meet King Saul. They were singing joyful songs, dancing, and playing tambourines and lyres.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™                      As they arrived, David was returning from a campaign against the Philistines. Women from all of Israel's cities came to meet King Saul. They sang and danced, accompanied by tambourines, joyful music, and triangles [Hebrew meaning uncertain].

JPS (Tanakh)                      When the [troops] came home [and] David returned from killing the Philistine, the women of all the towns of Israel came out singing and dancing to greet King Saul [meaning of Hebrew uncertain; Septuagint reads "the dancing women came out to meet David from all the towns of Israel"] with timbrels, shouting, and sistrums [meaning of Hebrew uncertain].

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB                                And it happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments [i.e., *triangles* or *three-stringed instruments*].

Young's Updated LT              And it comes to pass, in their coming in, in David's returning from striking the Philistine, that the women come out from all the cities of Israel to sing—also the dancers—to meet Saul the king, with tabrets, with joy and with three-stringed instruments;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** There appears to have been a tradition which began when David killed Goliath—that the women of Israel would come out and celebrate military victories with singing and dancing. What is occurring here refers probably to a tradition which began, and there is one specific incident which will irritate Saul.



## 1Samuel 18:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup></i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered *when [such and such happens]*. It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb. You will note that we have two instances of that in this verse.

Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong #5221 BDB #645

## 1Samuel 18:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (ת ׀) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>h</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (תִּשְׁלִי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** *And is was in their coming [and] as David returned from defeating the Philistine,...* The use of *hâyâh* in this verse simply indicates the actions which all took place at the same time. We often find this rendered *and it came to pass* or *and so it was that...* The Israelite army had pursued the Philistine army to their own cities (1Sam. 17:53) and were coming back into Israel (which is the masculine plural suffix with the Qal infinitive construct of *to come, to come in*). David is returning from killing the Philistine. The *bêyth* preposition with the Qal infinitive construct verbs indicate that these actions took place simultaneous with the women flocking to the armies with musical instruments. It is possible that someone read or heard Ex. 15:20–21, where Miriam leads the women of Israel in dance to celebrate God's deliverance in the exodus.

What is reasonably possible is, this tradition began after David killed Goliath. That is, when word got around that David killed Goliath, the giant Philistine who threatened all Israel, many women came out to celebrate his victory when he came through town. This continued as David moved up in the army and became commander of Saul's armies (which appears to be the case).

## 1Samuel 18:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (א ׁ) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
ʿîshshâh (ה שׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i> ]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

## 1Samuel 18:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis <sup>ra</sup> êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** ...that women from all the cities in Israel came out... The scene is simply this: Israel, particularly the women of Israel, were in a very vulnerable position. If the Israeli army was defeated, then not only would the Philistines pillage Israel, but they would have taken the women and raped them and possibly taken them as slaves. So, quite obviously, the women are going to be particularly thrilled and thankful for what the army of Israel has done. Bear in mind that all that happened was reported back to the rest of Israel, so that these women know what has happened. They recognize that their freedom has been purchased on the battlefield, and that men had made the ultimate sacrifice on their behalf. Therefore, the women come out to the army of Israel in great celebration.

## 1Samuel 18:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shîyr (שִׁיר) [pronounced <i>sheer</i> ]	<i>to sing</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7891 BDB #1010
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
m <sup>e</sup> chôwlâh (מְחֹלָה) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>kho-LAW</i> ]	<i>dances, dancing</i> (which usually accompanies and celebrates a victory of some sort)	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4246 BDB #298

**Translation:** ...to sing and dance and... Because Israel defeated the very formidable Philistine army, there was great celebration which took place, particularly on the part of the women, who are relatively helpless in this situation. The singing and dancing is simply the expression of their souls.

## 1Samuel 18:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ <sup>h</sup> (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896

## 1Samuel 18:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
tôph (תּוֹפִי) [pronounced <i>tohf</i> ]	<i>timbrel, tambourine</i> ; it is sort of a drum or tambourine and it is generally held in the hands of dancing women	masculine plural noun	Strong's #8596 BDB #1074
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
sim <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׂמְחָה) [pronounced <i>sim<sup>e</sup>-KHAW</i> ],	<i>joy, gladness, mirth</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8057 BDB #970
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
shâlîysh (שְׁלִישׁ) [pronounced <i>shaw-LEESH</i> ]	<i>three-stringed, three-stringed instrument: three-barred, three-cornered</i> ; perhaps the musical instrument <i>the triangle</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #7991 BDB #1026

**Translation:** ...to meet King Saul with timbrels, with [songs of] joy and with musical instruments. Although there is some confusion as to some of the words here, the general scenario is easy to understand. So that there is no confusion, the women are not flocking to meet King Saul personally. He is a metonym for the Israeli army. Certainly, he will be given his due and the recognition of these women; however, they are there to celebrate the victory of the entire army. There are two musical instruments mentioned (both in the plural): timbrels and triangles (or, *three-stringed instruments*). In between the naming of these musical instruments, we find that they are meeting Saul with joy—certainly, this could refer to *songs of joy*, but it just as reasonably refers to the condition of their souls—the women are celebrating Israel's victory.

Saul was the king and the commander-in-chief; therefore, he is considered the victor against the Philistines, even if he never lifted up his sword. It would be impertinent for the text to read that the people went out to meet certain men in Saul's army, although, no doubt, that is what some did. However, the people generally came out to

celebrate Saul's victory over the Philistines (whether or not, as I said, he ever lifted up his own sword). However, it will be clear that the people recognized the bona fide war hero in the midst of Saul's army.

The key to understanding this passage is that this celebrating began after David defeated Goliath and the Israeli army routed the Philistine army. However, this was not a one-time event. It began a tradition which continues as David and the army of Israel continue on their campaigns against their enemies. Let's see if I can substantiate this: David defeated Goliath (1Sam. 17:31–51), the Israeli army pursued the Philistines (1Sam. 18:52), while David met with Saul (1Sam. 17:58–18:1a). Jonathan gives David the proper equipment (1Sam. 18:4); the women come out and celebrate (1Sam. 18:6); and David prospers or is prudent wherever he goes (1Sam. 18:5). You see, it would make little sense to interpret these events as occurring in a different order even to agree with the order of the verses. V. 5 is a summation of David's military career prior to Saul turning against him. Vv. 6–7 are a summation of the celebrations that the women of Israel held for the army of Israel. If you are able to grasp that v. 5 covers a period of time and is not just a reference to that one point in time immediately after the defeat of Goliath; then it is easy to grasp that vv. 6–7 also sum up a series of events which began after David's defeat of Goliath, but continue on. Having this understanding will make help us to make sense of v. 7.

**And so answer the women the laughing ones,  
and so they say:**

**“Has slain Saul in his thousands  
and David in his ten thousands.”**

1Samuel  
18:7

**The dancing women sang responsively,  
saying:**

**“Saul has slain his thousands  
and David his tens of thousands.”**

**As a part of their celebration, the dancing women sang,**

**“Saul has killed thousands of our enemies;  
and David has killed tens of thousands.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	And the women sung as they played, and they said: Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands.
Masoretic Text	And so answer the women the laughing ones, and so they say: “Has slain Saul in his thousands and David in his ten thousands.”
Peshitta	And the women sang as they played, and laughed, saying, “Saul has slain by thousands, and David by tens of thousands.”
Septuagint	And the women began and said, “Saul has struck his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”

Significant differences: The verse begins differently, although the Hebrew and Syriac are fairly similar.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	They sang: Saul has killed a thousand enemies; David has killed ten thousand enemies!
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#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	The women who were celebrating sang,  “Saul has defeated thousands but David tens of thousands!”
JPS (Tanakh)	The women sang as they danced, and they chanted:

Saul has slain his thousands;  
David, his tens of thousands!

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the women responded, as they laughed <i>and</i> frolicked, saying, Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.
NASB	And the women sang as they played, and said, “Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands.”
NRSV	And the women sang to one another as they made merry, “Saul has killed his thousands, And David his ten thousands.”
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	...and the women answer—those playing, and say, ‘Saul has struck among his thousands, And David among his myriads.’

**What is the gist of this verse?** After David had defeated Goliath, the armies were met by the women who sang about Saul killing thousands of men and David tens of thousands of men. As we will find out in the exegesis, this does not represent one event, but several.

1Samuel 18:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿânâh (אָנְאָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
sâchaq (שָׂחַק) [pronounced <i>saw-KHAHK</i> ]	<i>to joke, to jest, to laugh repeatedly, to play, to amuse, to dance</i>	feminine plural, Piel participle with the definite article	Strong's #7832 BDB #965
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

**Translation:** *The dancing women sang responsively, saying:...* Although the first verb in this verse generally means *to answer, to respond*; in this context, it means *to sing or to sing responsively*. The idea is that there is a line sung by some of the women, and other women respond singing another similar line. In fact, BDB gives this verb a separate listing on p. 777 with that meaning. The Piel participle acts as an adjective to describe the women; they are dancing and celebrating, and this participle indicates that. Often, in both the Greek and the Hebrew, we again have a verb which indicates the content of what they are saying.

## 1Samuel 18:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
Shâ'ûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿelep (אֶלֶף) pronounced EH-lef]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

Written *thousand* but read *thousands*.<sup>6</sup>

**Translation:** ...“Saul has slain his thousands... The women first pay homage to Saul, who has been a great and practically fearless warrior (except with regards to Goliath; and even his son Jonathan did not stand up to Goliath). However, he did kill thousands of Israel's enemies.

## 1Samuel 18:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
r <sup>e</sup> bâbâh (רַבְבָּאִה) [pronounced r <sup>eb</sup> vaw- <sup>B</sup> VAW]	<i>multitude, myriad, ten thousand</i>	feminine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7233 BDB #914

Written *thousand* but read *thousands*.

**Translation:** ...and David his tens of thousands.” This is an interesting refrain, as this appears to have occurred after David returned from killing Goliath. What I would suppose is that there was a campaign to eradicate the Philistines from Israel from wherever else they might be, along with other enemies of Israel. That is, in time, v. 5

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 307. All such notes come from Rotherham's translation.



precedes this verse. What we have in the previous verse is not something which only occurred one time—that is, after David defeated Goliath, but after every campaign. The women would come out and celebrate the victories of Saul's army. My reasoning here is this refrain which the women sing. This would not seem to be reasonable to sing after David kills one Philistine; however, it would be reasonable after David has been on many military campaigns. So, what we have in vv. 6–7 is a merging of several events. The women began to come out to celebrate Israel's victories when David defeated Goliath and they continued to come out after other victories. At some point in time, they begin to sing this refrain, that “Saul has killed his thousands and David his tens of thousands.” In fact, this was probably done by separate groups of women. The first group would sing, “Saul has killed his thousands” and the second group would respond with, “And David his tens of thousands.”<sup>7</sup> The women meant nothing by it. They were celebrating their two great war heroes. As you would no doubt suspect, this really pisses Saul off.

There are several other interpretations of this passage. It could be that we are on the day after David defeated Goliath, and that the destruction of the Philistines was significant. David himself did not kill tens of thousands of Philistines, but Israel, inspired by David's defeat of Goliath, killed an inordinate amount of Philistines. Hence, the lyrics of this refrain. Another explanation is that the women were simply mistaken or that ascribing tens of thousands to David was just a song. It is also possible that David personally killed a great many men after defeating Goliath (the song lyrics would be exaggerations). In any case, I still lean toward this as being representative of several successful battles rather than just one after the killing of Goliath. Apparently, David, although not necessarily given a leadership position, assumed one in battle (if we go with my first theory of the events).

There is another reason to interpret this singing and dancing as a tradition which began at the killing of Goliath and continued for several years afterward. The Philistines will be aware of this song—it is mentioned twice again by Philistines, which would indicate that the singing of this song occurred on more than one occasion (1Sam. 21:11 29:5). It is highly unlikely that the Philistines would be aware of this song if it had been song only at the occasion of Goliath being killed (and, as I have already mentioned, this refrain was not sung at the time that Goliath was killed, but it eventually became a part of the celebration of Israeli victories).

Our problem is that we tend to see events as presented in a narrative as always been chronological and sequential. In Jewish writing, this is not always the case. They seem to think more topically. For this portion of the narrative to actually represent several occasions would be a very Jewish way of presentation.<sup>8</sup> There are ways for us to interpret this passage as referring to single, consecutive events; but that raises as many problems as it solves. For instance, it appears in the end of 1Sam. 17 that David and Saul do not necessarily join in the attack upon the Philistines, who are retreating. It is possible that they did and that is left out of the narrative. However, recall that David is not a full-fledged soldier at the time of defeating Goliath, so that it would have been unnatural for him to join in the pursuit of the Philistines (especially since he only had a sling shot). An explanation of the song lyrics can be made, if we are speaking of only one victory parade after one battle, but I don't see it as being a reasonable explanation.

You might think that I am making way too much of this chapter and tying it to the previous chapter; however, apparently others have struggled with this as well. In the two main Septuagint versions, we have an abbreviated approach to this chapter (LXX β) and we have the version which corresponds more closely to the Massoretic text (the Alexandrian Septuagint). The abbreviated version does not leave us without questions, nor does it solve the issues that I have raised here. We still have David victorious over Goliath, followed by women coming out and singing that refrain, followed by Saul being afraid of David and removing him to be a captain in his army. This leaves us with the problem, what about the refrain, *And David has slain his tens of thousands?*

Keil and Delitzsch have a rather lengthy footnote dealing specifically with the chronology of this portion of the book of Samuel, a small portion of which I will quote: *Some supposed discrepancies...are founded upon the erroneous assumption that everything contained in these two chapters are to be regarded as strictly chronological. But the fact recorded in v. 2, namely that Saul took David to himself, and did not*

<sup>7</sup> See *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 139.

<sup>8</sup> And maybe it is not so much Jewish as the way ancient man recalled things—topically, rather than chronologically.

allow him to go back to his father's house any more, occurred unquestionably some time earlier than those mentioned in v. 6ff. with their consequences. Saul took David to himself immediately after the defeat of Goliath, and before the war had been brought to an end. But the celebration of the victory, in which the paeon of the women excited jealousy in Saul's mind, did not take place till the return of the people and of the king at the close of the war. How long the war lasted we do not know; but...it certainly follows that some days, if not weeks, must have elapsed between David's victory over Goliath and the celebration of the triumph.<sup>9</sup> My point is that several have commented on these two or three chapters alone pointing out that they are not laid out in strict, chronological order.

I should mention one more thing: the words *thousands* and *ten thousands* are often used in parallel in poetry (Deut. 32:30 Psalm 91:7 Micah 6:7). This does not mean that our general understanding of the meaning of this refrain should be adjusted and that we should have a *poetic* understanding of it (that is, to understand that this is simply a common parallelism which does not mean what we think it means). Certainly, it is possible that Saul and the men he personally commanded have killed thousands of men; and that David and the men under him have killed tens of thousands; however, it can just as reasonably be interpreted that David and his leadership are responsible for considerably more enemy deaths than Saul. In no way should we interpret this refrain as merely meaning that Saul and David have killed lots of men between the two of them. Saul did not understand it in that way, nor did the Philistines (1Sam. 21:11 29:5). If men of that era understood that this elevated David above Saul, then we should also understand it in that way.<sup>10</sup>

What passes for fame in one generation does not necessarily hold up in the next. In my lifetime, I have never seen this sort of a turnout for a war heroes or for several war heroes (although there has been, on several occasions, a minor celebration for some war heroes. However, so that we might understand this, David was like the Beatles to his generation (although they were not completely out of control); or he was like a celebrity to the generation during which I write.

**And so he burns to Saul exceedingly and so he is displeasing in his [two] eyes the word the this. And so he says, "They have given to David ten thousands and to me they have given the thousands; and still to him certainly the kingdom."**

1Samuel  
18:8

**This [lit., *it*] angered Saul exceedingly and this saying displeased him [lit., *is displeasing in his eyes*]. Therefore [lit., *and*], he said, "They have ascribed [lit., *given*] ten [of] thousands to David but they have [only] ascribed to me thousands. In addition, the kingdom [is] certainly his!"**

**Saul was furious; the song's refrain strongly displeased him, so that he remarked to his aides, "These women have ascribed to David tens of thousands of enemies killed, but to me, only thousands. Next, they will want to make him king!"**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so he burns to Saul exceedingly and so he is displeasing in his [two] eyes the word the this. And so he says, "They have given to David ten thousands and to me they have given the thousands; and still to him certainly the kingdom."

##### Septuagint

And it seemed evil in the eyes of Saul concerning this matter, and he said, "To David they have given ten thousands, and to me they have given thousands." [The Alexandrian Septuagint adds: "And what more can he have but the kingdom?"]

<sup>9</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 490–491. I took some liberties with the first 2–3 sentences. The discussion in Keil and Delitzsch runs about a full page.

<sup>10</sup> The notes of the NIV Study Bible tell us that this interpretation was a misunderstanding of Saul's and it was a *measure of Saul's insecurity and jealousy* that he incorrectly understood this song. *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 399.

Significant differences: That Saul was burned up over this is not given in the Greek (but we do find this in the Hebrew, Latin and Syriac); the Alexandrian LXX does have the same final line of the Hebrew, although it appears to be more idiomatically stated (however, this final phrase is in agreement with the Syriac and the Latin, so maybe I have missed the idiom in the Hebrew?).

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV This song made Saul very angry, and he thought, "They are saying that David has killed ten times more enemies than I ever did. Next they will want to make him king."  
 NLT This made Saul very angry. "What's this?" he said. "They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they'll be making him their king!"

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Saul became very angry because he considered this saying to be insulting. "To David they credit tens of thousands," he said, "but to me they credit [only] a few thousand. The only thing left for David is my kingdom."  
 JPS (Tanakh) Saul was much distressed and greatly vexed about the matter. For he said, "To David they have given tens of thousands, and to me they have given thousands. All that he lacks is the kingship!"

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him [lit., *was evil in his eyes*]; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?"  
 Young's Updated LT And it is extremely displeasing to Saul and he says, "They have given to David myriads, and to me they have given the thousands; and more to him is only the kingdom."

**What is the gist of this verse?** When the women of Israel began to ascribe to David greater victories than Saul, he became extremely angry. He apparently recognizes that David is his successor.

### 1Samuel 18:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chârâh (חָרָה) [pronounced <i>khaw-RAWH</i> ]	<i>to burn, to kindle, to become angry, to evoke great emotion</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2734 BDB #354
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

## 1Samuel 18:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Saul is not the subject of the verb here because the name <i>Saul</i> is preceded by a preposition. The subject of the verb is the song sung by the women. This will be clear in the next phrase, which ends with <i>the word the this</i> , which refers back to that song (and is the subject of the verb).			
m <sup>e</sup> ôd (טֹד) [pronounced m <sup>e</sup> -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** *This* [lit., *it*] *angered Saul exceedingly...* The women came up with a harmless and accurate song; David was responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of enemies and Saul was responsible for the deaths of thousands. This does not mean that David personally killed 20,000 men and Saul personally killed 2000 (or whatever). David led troops who they themselves were responsible for killing tens of thousands of men. It was a result of David's bravery, leadership and tactics which allowed him to be victorious over all so many of the enemy.

## 1Samuel 18:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'â (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-GAHG]	<i>to make a loud noise; to be evil [from the idea of raging or being tumultuous]; to be bad, to displease; possibly to be unpleasant and embittering; to break, to shatter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7489 BDB #949
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
'ayin (עַיִן) [pronounced GAH-yin]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
dâ'vâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** *...and this saying displeased him* [lit., *is displeasing in his eyes*]. As discussed in the table, the subject of the two verbs is *this saying* (or, *this song*); it was the song which angered and displeased Saul. Saul's initial reaction was one of anger, but, when he thought about it further, the words of the song displeased him because of the possible repercussions of them. The idea was that the people thought more of David than they did of Saul. Up until this time, he had been Israel's golden boy. Certainly, he had stumbled here and there, but much

of that was outside the radar of Israel in general. However, his war record was public record, as was David's, and he did not compare favorably to David.

### 1Samuel 18:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
r <sup>b</sup> bâbâh (רַבְבָּה) [pronounced <i>r<sup>eb</sup>vaw-<sup>b</sup>VAW</i> ]	<i>multitude, myriad, ten thousand</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #7233 BDB #914
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʾelep (אֶלֶף) [pronounced <i>EH-lef</i> ]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

**Translation:** Therefore [lit., *and*], he said, “They have ascribed [lit., *given*] ten [of] thousands to David but they have [only] ascribed to me thousands. Saul apparently had a staff of men in whom he confided, and he first repeats to them the gist of this song. As already discussed, the men under David were actually the ones who killed tens of thousands of Israel's enemies.

You may ponder, *just who is Israel fighting?* Israel was surrounded by enemies and there were enemies within her borders. Ever since the Jews returned to the land in 1947, there has been continual fighting. Because they are God's people, Satan is going to inspire enemies to rise up against them. This is why antisemitism can continue to run rampant, even when Jews are almost fully assimilated into certain societies. The Philistines will continue to be thorns in the side of Israel even through the time that David is king (although there will be an uneasy coalition there for a short time). There are the Ammonites, the Edomites and the Moabites to the east and southeast of Israel. The Amalekites, who should have been completely wiped out by Saul, still remained in southern Judah. The





NLT So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.  
TEV And so he was jealous and suspicious of David from that day on.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) From that day on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.  
Young's Updated LT And Saul is eyeing David from that day and from that time onward.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul, realizing that David was his successor, eyed him with suspicion and jealousy from that day forward.

### 1Samuel 18:9

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
gâvan (גָּוַן) [pronounced <i>gaw-VAHN</i> ]	<i>to eye, to look at; to eye [enviously]; to look [askance] at</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5770 BDB #745
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398



## 1Samuel 18:9

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hûw' (הוּ) [pronounced hoo]	that	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâl <sup>e</sup> âh (הַלְאֵה) [pronounced HAWL <sup>e</sup> -aw]	beyond, back, henceforth, hitherto, forward	adverb	Strong's #1973 BDB #229

**Translation:** So Saul began [lit., is] eyeing David [or, regarding David with suspicion] from that day forward. The verb found here is only used here, so that we cannot unequivocally determine its meaning. However, its noun cognate is eye, so we get what we need from its cognate and the context. Saul simply kept his eye on David from that day forward.

Saul knows that God has replaced him as king; however, he does not know that David has been anointed nor does he know the manner in which he will be replaced or the time frame. Saul has no idea that David's patience and faith will be tested for several years and that he, Saul, is going to be the instrument of testing.

Edersheim describes Saul at this time: *[The refrain of the women sufficed to kindle in Saul deep and revengeful envy. Following upon what the spirit of evil from the Lord had set before him as his own fate, sealed as it was by his solemn rejection from the kingdom and the conscious departure of the Spirit of God, the popular praise seemed to point out David as his rival. And every fresh success of David, betokening the manifest help of God, and every failure of his own attempts to rid himself of this rival, would only deepen and embitter this feeling, and lead him onwards, from step to step, until the murderous passion became all engrossing, and made the king not only forgetful of Jehovah, and of what evidently was His purpose, but also wholly regardless of the means which he used. Thus Saul's dark passions were ultimately concentrated in the one thought of murder.]*<sup>11</sup>

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## Saul Begins to Make Attempts on David's Life; Israel's Love for David Grows

And so he is from the next day and so comes upon a spirit of God evil unto Saul. And so he prophesies in a midst of the house and David is playing in his hand as a day in a day and the spear [was] in a hand of Saul.

1Samuel  
18:10

And it was on the next day that an evil spirit of God comes into Saul and Saul raved [lit., and he prophesies] in the midst of the house while David was playing [his instrument] with his hand; Saul [had] a spear in his hand.

The next day, and evil spirit from God came into Saul and he raved in the midst of the house while David was playing his stringed instrument. Saul had a spear in his hand.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

<sup>11</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 474.

Masoretic Text	And so he is from the next day and so comes upon a spirit of God evil unto Saul. And so he prophesies in a midst of the house and David is playing in his hand as a day in a day and the spear [was] in a hand of Saul.
Septuagint	And it came to pass from the next day that an evil spirit from God fell upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of his house. And David was playing on the harp with his hand, according to his daily custom. And Saul's spear was in his hand.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The next day the LORD let an evil spirit take control of Saul, and he began acting like a crazy man inside his house. David came to play the harp for Saul as usual, but this time Saul had a spear in his hand.
NAB	The next day an evil spirit from God came over Saul, and he raged in his house. David was in attendance, playing the harp as at other times, while Saul was holding his spear.
NLT	The very next day, in fact, a tormenting spirit from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave like a madman. David began to play the harp, as he did whenever this happened. But Saul, who had a spear in his hand,...
REB	The next day an evil spirit from God seized on Saul. He fell into a frenzy [or, <i>prophetic rapture</i> ] in the house, and David played the lyre to him as he had done before. Saul had a spear in his hand,...
TEV	The next day an evil spirit from God suddenly took control of Saul, and he raved in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did everyday, and Saul was holding a spear.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	The next day an evil spirit from God seized Saul. He began to prophesy in his house while David strummed a tune on the lyre as he did every day. Now, Saul had a spear in his hand.
JPS (Tanakh)	The next day an evil spirit of God gripped Saul and he began to rave in the house, while David was playing [the lyre], as he did daily. Saul had a spear in his hand,...

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was laying <i>the harp</i> with his hand, as usual [lit., <i>day by day</i> ]; and a [lit., <i>the</i> ] spear was in Saul's hand.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And it comes to pass, on the next day, that the spirit of sadness <i>from</i> God prospers over Saul, and he prophesies .

**What is the gist of this verse?** When Israel was not at war, it was David's duty to play music in the king's palace, which is what he is doing in this verse. Saul is seized by an evil spirit from God and he speaks apart from his own volition. At this time, Saul has a spear in his hand.

## 1Samuel 18:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
mâchōrâth (מָחָרָת) [pronounced <i>moh-chō-RAWTH</i> ]	<i>the morrow (the day following a past day), the next day, the following day</i>	feminine singular noun/adverb	Strong's #4283 BDB #564
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâlach (צָלַח) [pronounced <i>tsaw-LAHCH</i> ]	<i>to come upon, to rush upon, to prosper, to be prosperous</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6743 BDB #852
rûwach (רוּחַ) [pronounced <i>ROO-ahkh</i> ]	<i>wind, breath, spirit, apparition</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #7307 BDB #924
ʿĕlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i> ]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular adjective	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
Because this adjective is a feminine singular, it modifies the noun <i>spirit</i> .			
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** *And it was on the next day that an evil spirit of God comes into Saul...* The time frame is the next day after the women of Israel sang the song whose lyrics enraged Saul. He was used to being met by these women after a battle, but that particular song upset him tremendously. After hearing the song and thinking about it, Saul kept his eye on David.

On the very next day, God allowed Saul to be influenced by an evil spirit. We do not know the exact mechanics of this. Saul appears to be a believer, so the evil spirit would not have indwelt him; however, it could profoundly influence Saul's behavior. It apparently had some control over his vocal cords, as we will see in v. 10b, as well as his volition.

We do have several issues to discuss. First of all, we have an evil spirit which is said to come from God (Elohim). I don't know if there is any way around this. We could interpret this as an evil spirit from *the gods*; however, there is nothing in this context which really allows for us to interpret *Elohim* in that way (although this is the word used for *gods* in Deut. 6:14 7:4<sup>12</sup>). God apparently restrains His angelic creation which has gone bad, but occasionally allows them, with specific limits, to harass certain individuals (Job is a perfect example of this—see Job 1–2). Given that, it is not unreasonable to imagine that there are demons who pester God to more fully involve themselves in the lives of certain believers. There are believers who perform magnificently under these pressures (Job), and there are those who do not (Saul). In the case of Saul, it was Saul's volition which led to this point. He may be now considered under discipline, if not the sin unto death. God has clearly allowed evil throughout human history; he simply *uses it to accomplish His own good purposes*.<sup>13</sup>

The NIV Study Bible has an excellent footnote on this subject: *The removal of the Spirit from Saul and the giving of the Spirit to David (1Sa 16:13–14) determined the contrasting courses of their lives...This statement and similar ones in Scripture indicate that evil spirits are subject to God's control and operate only within divinely determined boundaries (see Jdg 9:23; 1Ki 22:19–23; Job 1:12; 2:6; compare 2Sa 24:1 with 1Ch 21:1). Saul's disobedience continued to be punished by the assaults of an evil spirit (1Sa 16:15–16, 23; 18:10; 19:9). Saul's increasing tendencies to despondency, jealousy and violence were no doubt occasioned by his knowledge of his rejection as king (see 1Sa 13:13–14; 15:22–26; 18:9 20:30–33; 22:16–18) and his awareness of David's growing popularity, but an evil spirit was also involved in these psychological aberrations (see 1Sa 18:10–12; 19:9–10).*<sup>14</sup>

Let me approach this question as Gleason Archer did. It is first important to recognize that Saul had knowingly and increasingly transgressed the clear mandates of God. He offered sacrifices himself, rather than waiting upon Samuel to administer them (1Sam. 13:12–13). He spared the life of Agag, even though God specifically told him not to. He also spared the cattle of the Amalekites again, in direct opposition to God's clear directive (1Sam. 15:20–23). In our chapter, Saul because jealous of David, and develops distrust, suspicion and hatred for David—a cacophony of mental attitude sins, which are also in opposition to God's plan. Archer: *Insofar as God has established the spiritual laws of cause and effect, it is accurate to say that Saul's disobedience cut him off from the guidance and communion of the Holy Spirit that he had formerly enjoyed and left him a prey to a malign spirit of depression and intense jealousy that drove him increasingly to irrational paranoia. Although he was doubtless acting as an agent of Satan, Saul's evil bent was by the permission and plan of God. We must realize that in the last analysis all penal consequences for sin come from God, as the Author of the moral law and the one who always does what is right (Gen. 18:25).*<sup>15</sup>

Let me see if I can draw some sort of an analogy to better explain God allowing the evil spirit to torment Saul: in school, there are often a few tormentors and there are those who are tormented. A teacher may move a tormentor next to a person that he torments, but, as long as the teacher is there, nothing happens. However, when the teacher leaves the room, the tormentor begins to torment, restrained only by his own personal self interest (he obviously does not want to go to jail for killing the person he torments). There is apparently some actual relationship which we can have with demons—at one point in time, God apparently allowed even sexual intercourse between demons and women, resulting in a corrupt super-race (Gen. 6). This was completely outlawed later; however, God apparently does allow some interaction between demons and man, although it is not completely clear just what that

<sup>12</sup> It is also the word used in Deut. 6:15 7:6).

<sup>13</sup> *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, p. 166. Although I did not take my explanation from their book, we essentially offer the same explanation for this *evil spirit from God*.

<sup>14</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; pp. 395–396.

<sup>15</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*; Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; pp. 179–180.

interaction entails. However, it appears to be at least analogous to what the bully does when the teacher leaves the room.

A reasonable question: *given what has happened up until this time, what is Saul's correct move?* The day before (for us, the previous couple verses), when Saul recognized that David was probably his replacement. The best thing that Saul could have done at that point would be to either give the crown to David or begin to groom David to assume his position. He should have said, "David, it is obvious that you are going to be the next king; and Samuel has already informed me that God has taken the kingdom from me. Therefore, it's time for me to prepare you to take over my kingship." Saul was not about to give up his power and the recognition that went with it.

By the way, if Saul groomed David to become king, and turned the crown over to David, Saul's life would have been much easier. It is clear that there is a lot of frustration in Saul's life as well as fear (which we will see near the end of his life). The difficult things which Saul endured (and especially the vicious things which he did to others) would not have come to pass had he simply recognized God's authority. However, had Saul recognized God's authority, he would not be having problems in the first place.

<b>1Samuel 18:10b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâbâ' (נָבֵא) [pronounced <i>naw<sup>b</sup>-VAW</i> ]	<i>to prophesy, to speak divine viewpoint; to speak in an ecstatic state or frenzy; speaker can be true, false or heathen prophet</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #5012 BDB #612
<p>This is not a word which requires us to assume that there is ecstasy, raving, or frenzy involved; the one speaking might be animated, but not necessarily out of his gourd. I included those definitions only because they were found in BDB. However, in the case of Saul, given the context, and in the case of the prophets of Baal (1Kings 18:29; see also 1Kings 22:22), we may reasonably assume that there was some lack of control (or some relinquishing of control) on his part.</p>			
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
tâvek <sup>e</sup> (תַּוֶּק) [pronounced <i>taw-VEK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i> ]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

**Translation:** *...and Saul raved* [lit., *and he prophesies*] *in the midst of the house...* The verb used here is the same as the verb *to prophesy*. The implication is that there are utterances which emanated from Saul that he did not originate.

This is another issue. It is apparently true that, if given the power, demonic spirits can have some control over the believer—the implication here is that the spirit that God sent spoke through Saul. You have seen the three year old boy who has discovered that he can speak and make noise with whatever toys he is given, and he will, for hours on end, babble incessantly and bang loudly on his toys. He is making sounds simply for the enjoyment of making

sounds. To those around him, it may not be all that pleasant; however, to him, it's the best thing in the world. We are dealing with a demon here who has not been allowed a voice on this earth for perhaps millions of years. Suddenly, he is given Saul's vocal cords to play with, and the result is that Saul raves. This is not indwelling, nor, apparently, can this occur without God's permission—however, it appears that control can be relinquished in the area of the tongue.

### 1Samuel 18:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
nâgan (נָגַן) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHN</i> ]	<i>to touch, to play a stringed instrument, to strike strings</i>	Piel participle	Strong's #5059 BDB #618
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כְּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** ...while David was playing [his instrument] with his hand;... David was also in the palace; one of his duties, when Israel was not at war, was to soothe Saul by playing music in the palace. David sort of provided some background music.

We already know that Saul has been sent an evil spirit and that his behavior had become quite distressing to his aides (1Sam. 16:14–16). David had been brought to the palace originally to help soothe Saul's state of mind when he was tormented by this evil spirit. Therefore, if Saul is raving, it is David's duty to begin to play music. So this is what is happening. Saul is obviously possessed by some spirit (and I use the term *possessed* in a non-technical

sense) and David begins playing, as is his duty. What makes this instance different is that, the day before, David's accomplishments as a war hero had eclipsed Saul's, and Saul was enraged over this.

Let me theorize here: apparently, once a person's volition has reached a certain point in terms of negative volition, God acts in a strongly disciplinary way. In the case of the exodus pharaoh, God allowed him to increase his negative volition past a point that apparently would have removed him from this world. Here, God allows an evil spirit to influence Saul (as He had allowed previously).

1Samuel 18:10d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chănîyth (חַנִּיִּת) [pronounced khuh-NEETH]	spear	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated hand	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...Saul [had] a spear in his hand. While David was playing, Saul was speaking uncontrollably. Also, Saul was holding a spear in his hand. Saul is going through periods of raving. He looks at David with great disdain, as he realizes that David is his replacement. It is likely that Saul suffers paranoiac delusions, and saw David there as a personal threat. He sees that David has somehow gained entrance into the palace and stands poised to remove Saul's power from him (which, in the ancient world, was generally accomplished by assassination). Saul is not merely jealous of David; he sees David as a personal and immediate threat to him in his paranoiac delusional state.

I do not have any idea as to how many delusional people are troubled by demons. I would guess that Satan has become more subtle in his ways over the past several centuries. However, we live in a world where mass murder and accompanying bizarre behavior occurs on a regular basis. It is not unreasonable to infer demonic influence in some (if not all) of these cases. By the claims of some murderers, they are urged to commit this murder (or murders) from what seems to be to them and outside force. There seems to be this bizarre influence over their lives, leading them to take the life of another. Given this passage, and assuming some truthfulness on the part of these murderers, and this gives us an idea of demonic influence.

And so hurls Saul the spear and so he says, "I will strike in David and in the wall." And so turns [himself] David from his faces two times.

1Samuel 18:11 Saul threw the spear and said [to himself], "I will pin [lit., strike] David to the wall." But David evaded him [lit., turned from his faces] twice.

Saul flung the spear, thinking to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." However, David twice evaded him.

Here is how others have handled this verse:



**Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	And threw it, thinking to nail David to the wall: and David stepped aside out of his presence twice.
Masoretic Text	And so hurls Saul the spear and so he says, "I will strike in David and in the wall." And so turns [himself] David from his faces two times.
Septuagint	And Saul took his spear and said, "I will strike David even to the wall." But David escaped twice from his presence.

Significant differences: In the Hebrew, Latin and Syriac (which agrees with the Hebrew), the spear is said to be thrown; in the LXX, Saul takes the spear in hand. The second sentence seems to agree in gist in all the translations.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	Saul thought, "I'll pin David to the wall." He threw the spear at David twice, but David dodged and got away both times.
NJB	Saul brandished the spear; he said, 'I will pin David to the wall!' David evaded him twice.
NLT	[But Saul, who had a spear in his hand,] suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David jumped aside and escaped. This happened another time, too,... [v. 10d, in brackets, is included for context].
REB	[Saul had a spear in his hand,] and he hurled it at David, meaning to pin him to the wall; but twice David dodged aside. [v. 10d, in brackets, is included for context].

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	He raised the spear and thought, "I'll nail David to the wall." But David got away from him twice.
JPS (Tanakh)	...and Saul threw [Change of vocalization yields "raised."] the spear, thinking to pin David to the wall. But David eluded him twice.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	And Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall [lit., <i>strike David and the wall</i> ]." But David escaped [lit., <i>turned about</i> ] from his presence twice.
Young's Updated LT	...and Saul casts the javelin, and says, "I will strike through David, even through the wall." And David turns round out of his presence twice.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul makes two overt attempts to kill David with his javelin. David moves out of the way on both occasions.

**1Samuel 18:11a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ṭûwl (טוּל) [pronounced <i>toof</i> ]	<i>to hurl, to cast, to throw; to cast out [of a country]; to throw down at length, to prostrate</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2904 BDB #376

## 1Samuel 18:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chănîyth (חֲנִיִּת) [pronounced khuh-NEETH]	<i>spear</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2595 BDB #333

**Translation:** [Saul threw the spear...](#) Here is how one solves something using human viewpoint. Saul knows of David's great popularity with the people; he knows that he has lost favor in God's eyes; he has figured out that David will be the one to replace him. Therefore, his solution is to kill David. Saul isn't sly about this. While David is in the palace, playing his musical instrument, Saul attempts to kill him. After all, he is king.

## 1Samuel 18:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
I have added on the meaning <i>to say [to oneself], to think</i> . Such a use is reasonably inferred here and in v. 18.			
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

## 1Samuel 18:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qîyr (קִיר) [pronounced <i>keer</i> ]	<i>the wall [of a city], a wall; a place fortified with a wall [i.e., a fortress]; a side</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7023 BDB #885

**Translation:** ...and said [to himself], "I will pin [lit., strike] David to the wall." Since we do not know the extent to which the evil spirit influenced Saul, we don't know exactly to what extent Saul's behavior was influenced. Obviously, since David was God's man, demons would look to kill him. However, I believe what we have here is Saul, thinking himself not as one who is subject to any law, willing to kill David from his own free will. Having the office of king made Saul realize that he could do pretty much whatever he wanted.

According to Freeman, if a slave was so threatened by his master, he was thereby absolved of all allegiance to this master, according to an ancient Asiatic custom. *Thus Saul by his murderous fury gave complete liberty to David, whose subsequent acts of war against the king could not be considered rebellion. From that hour he was no longer a subject of King Saul.*<sup>16</sup> Obviously, David will remain loyal to Saul for a long time afterward; however, he will soon become a fugitive.

## 1Samuel 18:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çâbab (בָּבַב) [pronounced <i>saw<sup>b</sup>-VAH<sup>b</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encompass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, mipânîym mean *from before your face, out from before your face, from one's presence*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of, because that*.

<sup>16</sup> Partially quoted and partially paraphrased from *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 139. Freeman cites Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, vol. I, p. 225.

## 1Samuel 18:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pa'am (פֹּאֵם) [pronounced PAH-gahm]	beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time, steps; the connotation is the passage of time	feminine dual noun, pausal form	Strong's #6471 BDB #821

**Translation:** **But David evaded him** [lit., *turned from his faces*] **twice**. The latter word is one of the more interesting of the Hebrew words. Just as old black and white films used to show the fluttering of a calendar or the fast movement of the hands on the clock to indicate a passage of time, we usually have the same sort of usage with the word. However, here, in the dual, it means that David moved out of the way of Saul's flying spear two times out of two attempts. This will be the first time out of many that David will evade Saul's attempt to kill him.

**And so is afraid Saul from to faces of David for has been Y<sup>h</sup>owah with him and from with Saul he has turned aside.**

1Samuel  
18:12

**So Saul was afraid from before David because Y<sup>h</sup>owah was with him and had turned away from Saul.**

**Saul became afraid of David because Jehovah was clearly with David, and had turned away from Saul.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Saul feared David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul himself.
Masoretic Text	And so is afraid Saul from to faces of David for has been Y <sup>h</sup> owah with him and from with Saul he has turned aside.
Septuagint	And Saul was alarmed on account of David. [We are back with Septuagint β].
Significant differences:	This time, there is much less in the LXX than in the MT. The LXX only speaks of Saul being afraid or alarmed. As usual, the Syriac, Latin and Hebrew are all in agreement.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul was afraid fo David, because the LORD was helping David and was no longer helping him.
NAB	Saul then began to fear David, [because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul himself.] The NAB brackets that which is missing from LXX β, so that the reader can <i>easily</i> read the two different traditions by leaving out the bracketed portions. Although it is not really that easy to read the two different traditions, this was a reasonable attempt. Given the costs and restraints of printing, this was probably the best option. Furthermore, as far as I know, they are the only Bible to make this attempt.
NLT	[This happened another time, too,] for Saul was afraid of him, and he was jealous because the LORD had left him and was now with David. [v. 11b was included for context].

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul.
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JPS (Tanakh) Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him and had turned away from Saul.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB Now Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

Young's Updated LT And Saul is afraid of the presence of David, for Jehovah has been with him, and from Saul He has turned aside.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul, after two failed attempts on David's life, recognizes that God is with David (which is logical, if God has chosen David to be Saul's successor).

<b>1Samuel 18:12a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, the two prepositions and pânîym mean <i>from before, from the presence of, a from a position before a person or object, from before a place</i> . However, this also expresses source or cause, and is also rendered <i>because of, on account of</i> .			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** So Saul was afraid from before David... Several times in this chapter, Saul will be said to be afraid of David (vv. 12, 15, 29). Saul had the power and the mental attitude to kill anyone that he chose to; however, in what should have been two simple attacks on David, Saul failed to kill him. It was clear from what David said and from his success that God was with him.

## 1Samuel 18:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** ...because Y<sup>e</sup>howah was with him... Several times, we will be told that Jehovah is with David (vv. 12, 14, 28). David, who was about two-thirds the size of Goliath, killed Goliath. After Saul had inducted David into the armed forces, and then promoted him, David's continued successes made it clear that God was with him. What David said testified to his faith in God.

## 1Samuel 18:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: <i>from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.</i>			
Shâ'ûl (שָׂאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
çûwr (סוּר) [pronounced <i>soor</i> ]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693

**Translation: ...and had turned away from Saul.** We are told on several occasions that God the Holy Spirit deserted Saul: 1Sam. 16:14 18:12 28:15. Saul knew that he was clearly separate from God. He had experienced the power and guiding of the Holy Spirit previously, and now was influenced by a demonic spirit; so he knew things were not good. Furthermore, Saul had already made two attempts on David's life, under circumstances which should have resulted in David's death. However, David eluded Saul's spear, making it even more apparent that God was with David. Furthermore, there are several incidents which indicate that Saul is still capable of rational thought (although he seems to drift in and out of rational thinking). He has probably deduced that David is his replacement; therefore, he would expect that any attempt on David's life would be futile. His own experience bears this out.

I have a new theory concerning Old Testament spirituality: it appears possible that God the Holy Spirit did not generally empower several people at a time (the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture would be an exception to this). He leaves Saul and is with David. Elisha asks for a double portion of the Spirit that Elijah had. I don't know that I can fully support this position at this time, but it did occur to me. In any case, it is often that one man seems to stand out spiritually in any period of time.

**And so caused to depart him Saul from with him and so he makes him for himself a commander of a thousand. And so he goes out and he comes in to faces of the people.**

1Samuel  
18:13

**Saul also caused him to depart from with him by making him a commander over a thousand [lit., and so he makes him for himself a commander of a thousand]. Therefore he [David] went out and came in before the people.**

**Saul caused David to be removed from the palace by making him a commander over a thousand soldiers. As a result, David became a very public figure.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so caused to depart him Saul from with him and so he makes him for himself a commander of a thousand. And so he goes out and he comes in to faces of the people.
Septuagint	And he removed him from him, and made him a captain of a thousand for himself; and he went out and came in before the people.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul put David in charge of a thousand soldiers and sent him out to fight.
NAB	Accordingly, Saul removed him from his presence by appointing him a field officer. So David led the people on their military expeditions,...
NLT	Finally, Saul banned him from his presence and appointed him commander over only a thousand men, but David faithfully led his troops into battle.
REB	He therefore removed David from his household and appointed him to the command of a thousand men. David led his men into action,...

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	So he kept David away. He made David captain of a regiment. David led the troops out [to battle] and back again.
JPS (Tanakh)	So Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him chief of a thousand, to march at the head of the troops [lit., and he went out and came in before the troops].



**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and appointed him as his commander of a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.  
**Young's Updated LT** And Saul turns him aside from him, and appoints him to himself head of a thousand, and he goes out and comes in before the people.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Because Saul recognized that the Holy Spirit was now with David, he sent David out to war, in charge of a 1000 men. The latter half of this verse simply indicates that what David did thereafter was observed by the people of Israel.

<b>1Samuel 18:13a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
The wâw consecutive can also be rendered <i>so, that, yet, therefore</i> . There are times when the wâw consecutive simply carries the action along and we do not need an English translation in order to indicate that.			
çûwr (וָרַח) [pronounced <i>soor</i> ]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
Shâ`ûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
I must point out here that what we have is somewhat of a play on words. In the previous verse, the Holy Spirit departed from Saul; here, Saul causes David to depart from him (and David is empowered by the Holy Spirit). The pairing of prepositions which follow also serve to continue this literary parallelism.			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
`îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity (with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular suffix)	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: <i>from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.</i>			

**Translation:** *Saul also caused him to depart from with him...* As was mentioned in the Hebrew table, this is a literary parallelism. David is empowered by the Holy Spirit; Saul, because of his negative volition toward God's plan, has seen the Holy Spirit *depart from him*. Therefore, Saul caused David, who had the Holy Spirit, *to depart from him*.

Edersheim has an interesting take here: *It deserves special notice, that Saul's attempts against the life of David are in the sacred text never attributed to the influence of the spirit of evil from the Lord, although they were no doubt made when that spirit was upon him. For God never tempts man to sin; but he sins when he is drawn away by his own passion, and enticed by it. If proof were needed that the spirit whom God sent was not evil in himself, it would be found in this, that while formerly David's music could soothe*

the king, that power was lost when Saul had given way to sin. On the first occasion of this kind, Saul, in a maniacal fit, twice poised against David the Javelin, which, as the symbol of royalty, he had by him (like the modern scepter); and twice “David turned (bent) aside from before him.” The failure of his purpose only strengthened the king’s conviction that, while God had forsaken him, He was with David. The result, however, was not repentance, but a feeling of fear, under which he removed David from his own presence, either to free himself of the temptation to murder, or in the hope, which he sacredly yet confessed to himself, that, promoted the command over a thousand men, David might fall in an engagement with the Philistines. How this also failed, or rather led to results the opposite of those which Saul had wished, is briefly marked in the text.<sup>17</sup>

### 1Samuel 18:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
The wâw consecutive can also be rendered <i>so, that, yet, therefore</i> . There are times when the wâw consecutive simply carries the action along and we do not need an English translation in order to indicate that.			
sîym (שׂוּם) [pronounced seem]; also spelled sûwm (שׂוּם) [pronounced soom]	to put, to place, to set, to make	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #7760 BDB #962
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong’s # BDB #510
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander	masculine singular construct	Strong’s #8269 BDB #978
ʿelep (אֶלֶף) [pronounced EH-lef]	thousand, family, (500?); military unit	masculine singular noun pausal form	Strong’s #505 (and #504) BDB #48

**Translation:** ...by making him a commander over a thousand [lit., and so he makes him for himself a commander of a thousand]. The easiest way for Saul to remove David from his presence was to place him in command of a reasonable sized division of Saul’s army. You might wonder, *didn’t Saul just do this in v. 5?* Saul did place David over some soldiers in v. 5—we don’t know exactly how many. Although, it is possible that this was a further promotion or that this is equivalent to v. 5, and that we are simply looking at two sides of the same coin; I believe that this represents a demotion, and one which intentionally places David’s life at risk (see vv. 17, 21, 25).

Again, the time frame is a little confusing. How is David sung about as a killer of tens of thousands of enemies if he is not a leader? For him to physically kill tens of thousands of men as an individual soldier would have been pretty difficult to do. To kill that many as the head of a large patrol (even a thousand), that would have taken some time. Back in v. 5, Saul is said to have put David over the men of war; it is here where David would have enjoyed the victories attributed to him. However, in this verse, he is said to be placed over a 1000 men. That is not as much of an honor. The New Living Testament may capture that concept, as it says that David was placed over *only* a thousand men (besides which, they footnote this as a *demotion*).<sup>18</sup> So, here’s what I believe happened: David was placed over a much larger force originally, and, after a few battles, he achieved the recognition of the

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; pp. 474–475.

<sup>18</sup> *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 390.

killer of tens of thousands of Israel's enemies. During the downtime, he returned to the palace with Saul and continued to play music. Saul, in a state of paranoiac delusion, made two attempts on David's life, and recognized that David was under the guardianship of God. Since Saul could not bear to be reminded that David was going to replace him, he placed David over a small, active force, which apparently moved throughout Israel, dealing with problems that a small military force could deal with, and putting David at great risk. So, in effect, Saul demoted him. Constant active military duty coupled with a smaller force to lead. However, there was an unintended result, to which the next portion of this verse alludes.

Now, I should point out that others have been left confused by this particular verse, in the light of v. 5. It is suggested that v. 13 represents a promotion; or that vv. 5 and 13 both look back upon the same event.<sup>19</sup> I'm not saying that these ideas are not without merit, nor am I saying that they are absolutely, unequivocally false. I have stated the events as I see them—this verse is essentially a demotion; but I don't cling to that viewpoint as sacred. I believe that what happened during the Philistine war (begun with the battle between David and Goliath), was that David was promoted from armor bearer to a leader of men in v. 5 (although it is not clear as to how many he led).

### 1Samuel 18:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (אָצַא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אָבא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
'am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** *Therefore he [David] went out and came in before the people.* *Going out and coming in before the people* simply means that David had a very public position whose activities were observed by many (see also Num. 27:17 1Sam. 18:16 29:6 2Sam. 5:2). With David commanding over a 1000 men, he was before these men at all times, and had become familiar with them and their families. As we have seen, after some successful campaigns, groups of people would come out and celebrate the victory. Furthermore, it appears as though these 1000 men were on active duty, traveling throughout Israel, putting out fires here and there (so to speak). So, in this capacity, David became very well-known to all Israel. This is exactly what we would expect of a small fighting force

<sup>19</sup> See Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 491.

that traveled throughout Israel and was always on active duty. Not only did David become well-known, but the unintended result of his being a public figure was great popularity among the people (vv. 14, 16, 30).

**Application:** If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you will have enemies. Two of the greatest men in Israel, Moses and David, always had enemies. Jews today look back at these two with almost universal respect, but throughout their lives, Moses and David faced many men who opposed them. Therefore, if you are a believer—especially if you are a growing believer—you will have enemies, and don't be shocked if these enemies are fellow believers. In fact, if you live a life bereft of opposition and pressure, where you do not suffer any attacks from fellow believers, you should either thank God for this respite or look within to determine whether or not you are growing. If you are growing spiritually, you are a threat to Satan; if you are a threat to Satan, he will attack you; given Satan's great genius, he will often attack via those closest to you. Part of your spiritual life is enduring attacks by Satan, often through other believers. It is a part of life just like eating and breathing. You may not like it, but that makes no difference whatsoever. It is a fact of life.

**Application:** Now, don't mistake your own idiocy for spirituality. Most people, believers and unbelievers, are their own worst enemies. You will cause yourself more problems than will any other single person that you know. Furthermore, if your behavior is self-righteous, condescending, arrogant, then certainly there will be problems in your life that you have ultimately manufactured.

**Application:** Now let me give you the positive side, also taught to us by this passage: if you behave honorably in all that you do, then you will experience some success and, even though there will be short-sighted, spiritually lacking, Satan-influenced believers who attack you, there will also be a great many people who respect and love you. We find this over and over again in this one chapter with respect to David: 1Sam. 18:5, 13–14, 16, 20, 28, 30). The key to your life is to behave wisely and honorably in all that you do, whether you are promoted, demoted, or left in the same place for several years.

**Application:** Just as David does in this passage—no matter how high your authority goes (or if you have no authority whatsoever), you do your job as unto the Lord. It does not matter if things are unfair; it does not matter if you are promoted or demoted, it does not matter if the boss hates you and is the biggest jerk on the planet, wherever God places you, that is where you function in obedience to Him. David's boss tried to kill him; so I am fairly certain that your boss is somewhat easier on you. If David could function with integrity, despite the problems that he face, and if David could continue to function honorably, giving deference to the office of the king, then I am sure you have got the ability to deal with your boss, who is no doubt a nicer guy than Saul.

**And so is David to all his ways behaving wisely and Y<sup>e</sup>howah [was] with him.** 1Samuel 18:14 **In all ways, David behaved wisely; [clearly] Y<sup>e</sup>howah [was] with him.**

**David behaved wisely in every instance; it was clear that Jehovah was with him.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so is David to all his ways behaving wisely and Y <sup>e</sup> howah [was] with him.
Septuagint	And David was prudent in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	The LORD helped David, and he and his soldiers always won their battles.
NAB	...and prospered in all his enterprises, for the LORD was with him.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) David was successful in all his undertakings, for the LORD was with him;...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And David was prospering [or, acting wisely] in all his ways for the LORD was with him.

Young's Updated LT And David is in all his ways acting wisely, and Jehovah is with him.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The key here is that David behaved wisely in all that he did, which is important when you are a public figure. It was clear to Saul (and to most other people) that Jehovah was with him.

<b>1Samuel 18:14a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	<i>wâw</i> consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>with a plural noun, it is rendered all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
derek <sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>way, distance, road, journey, manner, course</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
<p>Written <i>way</i> but read <i>ways</i>. The idea is that, the received manuscripts read <i>way</i>, and it is so copied in subsequent manuscripts, even though that does not really sound correct. However, it is traditionally read <i>ways</i> in the synagogues. This is one of the many examples of the accuracy of the transmission of the Sacred Text. Even though copyist after copyist has wanted to write <i>ways</i> as he copied this text, because one copyist in the past probably made an error in transcription, that error was perpetuated. The idea is, the Jews had so much regard for their Sacred Scriptures, that they were careful and prudent to copy the text exactly as they found it, even though they might disagree with the text on the basis of textual criticism (which was not a developed science in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D).</p>			
sâkal (שָׂכַל) [pronounced <i>saw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to look at, to attend to, to turn the mind to; to be or become understanding, to be prudent; to be successful, to act prosperously; to make prudent, to teach</i>	masculine singular, Hiphil participle	Strong's #7919 BDB #968

**Translation:** *In all ways, David behaved wisely;...* David was in the public eye when commanded these 1000 men—in fact, he appears to be more in the public eye than before. However, despite the fact that he was under constant surveillance, David behaved wisely. Many men in his position would have lusted after the power and authority of the crown. They would have been concerned for their own safety to be on active duty at all times. When commandeering this small of a force, David had, in effect, been given a demotion; however, he was faithful in his service to Saul, rendering it as his service to the Lord. This is how we need to perform in all of our positions. God places us in various positions and jobs, and we are to function in those positions as though we are working directly for Him. It does not matter if you have been demoted or if the position that you hold is demeaning in your own eyes. David, to be colloquial, got screwed. However, he still functions with great wisdom.

If I were in that position, and God had told me that the kingdom was mine, I just might be willing to take that power from Saul. I might decide that, *to hell with this crappy job; I want what God has for me!* David did not do that. He did not look upon his position with disdain; he did not shirk his new duties. He was faithful and honorable in what he did, so that all who observed him recognized the wisdom of his behavior.

**Application:** This is a repetition, but you need to act wisely, faithfully and honorably in whatever God places before you. Now, from whence do you gain this wisdom? From Bible doctrine. You aren't born with wisdom and the amount which is imparted to you via your various mentors is based upon the amount of doctrine in *their* souls. If your parents, teachers, and coaches have a spiritual awareness gotten through exposure to God's Word, then they can impart some of this to you. However, the key is that wisdom is obtained by divine viewpoint; divine viewpoint is found in God's Word. You *cannot* behave wisely, faithfully or honorably apart from the teaching of God's Word.

### 1Samuel 18:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity (with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular suffix)	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** *...[clearly] Y<sup>e</sup>howah [was] with him.* There were two things which made it clear that God was with David. First of all, his own actions indicated that he functioned from a position of great wisdom. Secondly, God continued to prosper David, despite the fact that Saul had demoted him.

There is something which I want you to carefully note: David came from relative obscurity. He was unpopular in his own family; his father sent him out away from the home to watch their sheep. His brothers berated him. It would have been a reasonable expectation of David to spend his entire life separate from most of humanity, and watching over sheep in quiet, desolate fields. David was positioned in life to go nowhere. However, he apparently met just one man, who found him to be *a skilled musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one who is wise in speech* [i.e., he did not put his foot in his mouth], *who is handsome, and with whom is Jehovah God* (1Sam. 16:18b). David did not do a damn thing to move up in life but put God first; and that is the key. *If God be for us, then who can be against us?* (Rom. 8:31b). *Therefore I say to you, Do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Behold the birds of the air; for they sow not, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them; are you not much better than they are? Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They*



do not toil, nor do they spin, but I say to you that even Solomon in his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much rather clothe you, little-faiths? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we be clothed? For the nations seek after all these things. For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you** (Matt. 6:22–33).

**Application:** Your primary focus in life should be your spiritual life. You need to be filled with God the Holy Spirit and you need to grow by taking in doctrine. When you have a little doctrine, then you need to apply it to your life. All of these other things will take care of themselves.

**And so sees Saul that he is being wise exceedingly and so he stands in awe from his faces.**

1Samuel  
18:15

**When Saul sees that he is behaving wisely, he stands in awe because of him.**

**When Saul realized that David behaved wisely, he was in awe of David's wisdom.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so sees Saul that he is being wise exceedingly and so he stands in awe from his faces.

Septuagint                              And Saul saw that he was very wise, and he was afraid of him.

Significant differences:              No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    This made Saul even more afraid of David.

NLT    When Saul recognized this, he became even more afraid of him.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word™*                                  Saul noticed how very successful he was and became [even more] afraid of him.  
JPS (Tanakh)                                  ...and when Saul saw that he was successful, he dreaded him.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible*                        When Saul saw how capable *and* successful David was, he stood in awe of him.

NASB    When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly [or, acting very wisely], he dreaded him.

*Young's Updated LT*                        ...and Saul sees that he is acting very wisely, and is afraid of him,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** David acted intelligently, despite the fact that he had been reduced in rank and placed in constant active duty. Saul recognized that David was behaving wisely, and feared him all the more.



## 1Samuel 18:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hûw` (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
sâkal (שָׂכַל) [pronounced <i>saw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to look at, to attend to, to turn the mind to; to be or become understanding, to be prudent; to be successful, to act prosperously; to make prudent, to teach</i>	masculine singular, Hiphil participle	Strong's #7919 BDB #968
m <sup>e</sup> ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-ODE</i> ]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** [When Saul sees that he is behaving wisely...](#) Saul has purposely demoted David, and he is surprised that David is still able to make intelligent choices. We have seen several times when Saul was in a jam or was told to do one thing, and he would freak out and do exactly what he was not supposed to do. David, under similar circumstances, did exactly what he should have done.

## 1Samuel 18:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gûwr (גִּוַר) [pronounced <i>goor</i> ]	(1) <i>to temporarily reside, to sojourn, to stay temporarily;</i> (2) <i>to stir up, to strive with, to quarrel with; and, (3) to dread, to be afraid of, to stand in awe of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect (this verb is a homonym; all basic meanings are given)	Strong's #1481 BDB #158
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

### 1Samuel 18:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]</p>	<p><i>face, faces</i></p>	<p>masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix</p>	<p>Strong's #6440 BDB #815</p>

Together, mipânîym mean *from before his face, out from before his face, from one's presence*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of, because that*.

**Translation:** ...he stands in awe because of him. Saul, expecting David to behave stupidly, expecting him to complain or to cause trouble, sees David do quite the opposite. He did exactly what he should do. For that reason, Saul began to be afraid of David. He was a man who could not do wrong.

**And all Israel and Judah was delighting in David because he was going out and coming in to their faces.** 1Samuel 18:16 **All Israel and Judah delighted in David, for he went out and came in before them.**

**All of Judah and Israel delighted in David, because he was constantly before them.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And all Israel and Judah was delighting in David because he was going out and coming in to their faces.
Septuagint	And all Israel and Juda loved David, because he came in and went out before the people.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	But everyone else in Judah and Israel was loyal to David, because he led the army in battle.
NLT	But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was so successful at leading his troops into battle.
REB	But all Israel and Judah loved David because he took the field at their head.
TEV	But everyone in Israel and Judah loved David because he was such a successful leader.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	Everyone in Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in and out of battle.
JPS (Tanakh)	All Israel and Judah loved David, for he marched at their head.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	But all Israel and Judah loved David, and he went out and came in before them.
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NRSV

But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

Young's Updated LT

...and all Israel and Judah love David when he is going out and coming in before them.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David's becoming very public resulted in the love and respect of all Israel.

1Samuel 18:16a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ <sup>l</sup> (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y <sup>e</sup> hûwdâh (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>hoo-DAW</i> ]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397
âhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>desiring, breathing after; loving; delighting in</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #157 BDB #12
êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** *All Israel and Judah delighted in David,...* Over the years, partially due to geography and partially because there had been no national leadership, Israel and Judah had already begun to act as two separate countries. Actually, this was probably influenced greatly by Satan. Satan recognized that God was the leader of one nation and one people, so he attempted to mess with that. Satan inspired Israel's neighbors to hatred, and to attack and pillage. He also fostered a separatist movement, which would come to fruition in the not too distant future. In any case, here we have the seeds of that movement.

You may recall some of the geography which we have studied and how the Philistines, for instance, did not generally attack Israel from the west, in order to carve out larger chunks of property for themselves, but they often attacked Israel from the middle, sometimes going north, sometimes going south from whatever position that they took. However, in most cases, the Philistines tended to take a position between northern and southern Palestine, or, if you will, between Israel and Judah.

## 1Samuel 18:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (בָּוּא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>leh</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*.

**Translation:** ...for he went out and came in before them. David was always in the public eye. Because Saul had put him in constant active duty, David had the opportunity to travel throughout all Israel, and to meet all the people, and to deliver them from various problems. Therefore, because of this, because of his success, and because of his wise behavior, the people began to have strong, positive feelings toward David. He was seen more as a national leader than Saul. He was always out there doing that which was right.

Note how this all flies in the face of human viewpoint: David rose out of relative obscurity. He did not network, he did not go out of his way to meet influential people, he did not send out his resume, he did not politic. David went from relative obscurity to being the most public figure in all of Israel. All David did was he knew Bible doctrine and he acted as though he knew Bible doctrine.

**Application:** What you are privately is what you will become publically. David as a shepherd, even though he was by himself with no one looking over his shoulder other than God, behaved with honor and integrity. When a bear and a lion attacked his flock, David went to the rescue. When David suddenly became a public figure, he acted no differently. He acted with wisdom and honor, and the people respected that and loved him for it. Because of his personal integrity, Saul did not stand a chance against David in the realm of public opinion. Saul may have been king and may have appeared to wield all the power, but God protected David, and his daily integrity impressed the people. In private, you should behave with wisdom and honor; it should be habitual. Then, whenever you come into public view, behaving with integrity is second nature.

## Saul Promises His Eldest Daughter to David in Marriage and Withdraws the Offer

And so says Saul unto David, “Behold my daughter, the greater, Merab; her I give to you to wife. Only be to me for a son of strength and fight wars of Y<sup>h</sup>owah.” And Saul had said, “Not is my hand against him and is against him a hand of Philistines.”

1Samuel  
18:17

Saul said to David, “Here [is] my elder daughter, Merab; I will give her to you to wife. No doubt you will be a man [lit., a son] of valour for me and fight the wars of Y<sup>h</sup>owah.” But Saul was thinking [lit., *Saul had said*], “My hand will not be against him; instead, the hand of the Philistines will be against him.”

Saul then said to David, “This is my oldest daughter, Merab. I will give her to you as a wife as long as you show yourself to be a man of courage and integrity by fighting the wars of Jehovah for me.” But Saul was thinking, “I don’t have to lift a finger against him; the Philistines will kill him for me.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

#### Masoretic Text

And so says Saul unto David, “Behold my daughter, the greater, Merab; her I give to you to wife. Only be to me for a son of strength and fight wars of Y<sup>h</sup>owah.” And Saul had said, “Not is my hand against him and is against him a hand of Philistines.”

#### Alexandrian Septuagint

And Saul said to David, “Behold my elder daughter Merob—I will give her to you to wife, only be to me a mighty man and fight the wars of the Lord.” And Saul said, “Let not my hand be upon him, but the hand of the Philistines will be upon him.”

#### Significant differences:

No significant differences. The phrase *son of strength* may not have been literally rendered into the Greek (I only have Brenton’s translation at this point).

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV One day, Saul told David, “If you’ll be brave and fight the LORD’s battles for me, I’ll let you marry my oldest daughter Merab.” But Saul was really thinking, “I don’t want to kill David myself, so I’ll let the Philistines do it for me.”

NLT One day Saul said to David, “I am ready to give you my older daughter, Merab, as your wife. But first you must prove yourself to be a real warrior by fighting the LORD’s battles.” For Saul thought to himself, “I’ll send him out against the Philistines and let them kill him rather than doing it myself.”

REB Saul said to David, ‘Here is my elder daughter Merab; I shall give her to you in marriage, but in return you must serve me valiantly and fight the LORD’s battles.’ For Saul meant David to meet his end not at his hands but at the hands of the Philistines.

TEV Then Saul said to David, “here is my older daughter Merab. I will give her to you as your wife on condition that you serve me as a brave and loyal soldier, and fight the LORD’s battles.” (Saul was thinking that in this way the Philistines would kill David, and he would not have to do it himself.)

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

#### God’s Word™

Finally, Saul said to David, “Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I will give her to you as your wife if you prove yourself to be a warrior for me and fight the LORD’s battles.” (Saul thought, “I must not lay a hand on him. Let the Philistines do that.”)

#### JPS (Tanakh)

Saul said to David, “Here is my older daughter, Merab; I will give her to you in marriage; in return, you be my warrior and fight the battles of the LORD.” Saul thought: “Let not my hand strike him; let the hand of the Philistines strike him.”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:****NASB**

Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife, only be a valiant man for me and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought "My hand shall not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

**Young's Updated LT**

And Saul says unto David, "Behold, my elder daughter Merab—her I give to you for a wife; only, be to me for a son of valour, and fight the battles of Jehovah." And Saul said, "Let not my hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him."

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul promises David to give him his eldest daughter as a wife. The condition is that David fight the Philistines. Saul is hoping that the Philistines will kill David.

Again, we tend to think entirely in a chronological manner. It is possible that this led up to David being put in charge of 1000 men. Saul was irritated with David, and he feared him. And he knew David was in line for his throne. So Saul offers David his daughter in marriage, except that David has to perform the duties of a great soldier first. This could have led to his assignment with the 1000 men. It is also possible that this occurred after being assigned to lead those 1000 men, and that this time they were sent into Philistine country.

**1Samuel 18:17a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâʾul (שׂאול) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
ʾel (אל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bath</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
gêdôlôwth (גְּדֹלוֹת) [pronounced <i>gê-doh-LOHTH</i> ]	<i>great things, mighty things, immutable things, significant things, astonishing things; proud things, impious things</i>	feminine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

## 1Samuel 18:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mêra <sup>bv</sup> (מֵרָב) [pronounced <i>may-RAH<sup>bv</sup></i> ]	transliterated <i>Merab</i>	proper noun	Strong's #4764 BDB #597

**Translation:** Saul said to David, “Here [is] my elder daughter, Merab;... We covered Saul's sons and daughters in 1Sam. 14:49. He had two daughters, Merab and Michal.

## 1Samuel 18:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (תּ אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** ...I will give her to you to wife. Offering his daughter to David in marriage was a great honor. Such an honor actually put David (or his progeny) in line for the throne (although it would have been possibly been a long line).

## 1Samuel 18:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿak <sup>e</sup> (אֵי אַךְ) [pronounced <i>ahk<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception. Also used as an affirmative particle	Strong's #389 BDB #36



## 1Samuel 18:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
chayil (חַיִל) [pronounced <i>CHAH-yil</i> ]	<i>army, strength, valour, power, might; efficiency; and that which is gotten through strength—wealth, substance</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2428 BDB #298
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i> ]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperative	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** **No doubt you will be a man** [lit., *a son*] **of valour for me and fight the wars of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** If you will recall from the previous chapter, Saul had already offered this daughter to whoever killed Goliath (1Sam. 17:25). Had Saul been a man of his word, the nuptials would already be in progress. However, Saul was not. Saul possessed no personal integrity. This is why he was willing to use his daughter as a prize or as a tool of manipulation. Perhaps his reasoning was that, this previous offer was specifically made to his soldiers, and not to just some kid off the streets. Perhaps he even justified it in this manner to David: “I know that I had promised my daughter to whoever killed Goliath, but that was a promise that I had made to my enlisted men. Now, if you don't mind functioning as a soldier and proving your bravery, as these men had, then certainly I will give Merab to you in marriage.” We are not privy to their entire conversation, but very likely Saul justified his position in that way (at least to himself). As we have seen before, Saul is a master at justifying his own behavior.

You will note that Saul here does not specify a dowry, and there is nothing which indicates the length of time that David must serve as a soldier to earn the hand of Saul's daughter. However, apparently at some point, even during

this conversation, a date was set for David to marry Merab, as we will see in v. 19. Saul's plan, of course, was for David to be killed in battle since he will head a relatively small force.

You will note the phrase *the wars of Jehovah*. Saul couches his evil intent in holy language. It makes it sound as though Saul's thoughts were upon the welfare of God's kingdom of Israel; however, Saul's thoughts were thoughts of jealousy, hatred and cunning; he saw this as the means to send David to his death.

### 1Samuel 18:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; then</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
With a voluntative, cohortative or jussive, the wâw conjunction means <i>that, so that</i> . It expresses <i>intention</i> . The wâw conjunction can express informal inference or consequence ( <i>so, then, therefore</i> ); especially at the beginning of a speech. The wâw conjunction can connect alternative cases or contrasting ideas and be properly rendered <i>or, but, yet</i> . The wâw conjunction can also be rendered <i>for</i> .			
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'al (אֵל) [pronounced <i>al</i> ]	<i>not; nothing; none</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39.
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

**Translation:** *But Saul was thinking* [lit., *Saul had said*], *"My hand will not be against him;...* This promise meant nothing to Saul, as his intention was not meant to control the Philistine aggression, but to be rid of David. He already was aware that he could not kill David; he had tried twice. So, rather than simply hand the crown over to David, Saul came up with another way to kill him.

## 1Samuel 18:17e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הִיא) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** ...instead, the hand of the Philistines will be against him.” The Philistines were a vicious and brave people. The soldiers were almost unparalleled. If Saul assigned David to a small enough force, it would only be a matter of time before the Philistines killed him. Saul, not thinking clearly, figured this was the perfect solution. At no time did he ever feel as though he was obligated to give his daughter in marriage to David, as that was not the purpose of offering her. She was simply the bait.

This verse is not necessarily separate from the previous few verses. When David was put in charge of a thousand men and sent out, this was probably his assignment and the rationale for his assignment. He may have been concerned that he had only been placed in charge of 1000 men. However, Saul used this small, mobile force to attack the various outposts of Philistines, having given David the rationale that he was being offered Saul's daughter. His successfulness, mentioned in vv. 15–16, would have actually occurred *after* v. 17.

And so says David unto Saul, “Who [am] I and who [are] my lives—a family of my father in Israel—that I am a son-in-law to the king?”

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David responded to Saul, “Who [am] I and what is my [status in] life [or, who [are] my kinsfolk]—my father's family—that I should be the king's son-in-law?”

David then responded to Saul, asking, “Who am I and who are my relatives—my father's family—that I should be the son-in-law of the king?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so says David unto Saul, “Who [am] I and who [are] my lives—a family of my father in Israel—that I am a son-in-law to the king?”

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

And David said to Saul, “Who am I and what is the life of my father's family in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David answered, "How could I possibly marry your daughter? I'm not very important and neither is my family."
NJB	David replied to Saul, "Who am I and what is my lineage — and my father's family — in Israel, for me to become the king's son-in-law?"
REB	David answered Saul, "Who am I and what are my father's people, my kinsfolk, in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	"Who am I?" David asked Saul. "And how important are my relatives or my father's family in Israel that I should be the king's son-in-law?"
JPS (Tanakh)	David replied to Saul, "Who am I and 'what is my life' [meaning Hebrew uncertain. Change of vocalization yields "who are my kin."] —my father's family in Israel—that I should become Your Majesty's son-in-law?"

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my life or my father's family in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?"
Young's Updated LT	And David says unto Saul, "Who <i>am</i> I and what my life—the family of my father in Israel—that I am son-in-law to the king?"

**What is the gist of this verse?** David acknowledges that his family has no standing compared to Saul's family, which has become the royal family of Israel.

## 1Samuel 18:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâʾûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i> ]	<i>who</i> ; occasionally rendered <i>how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566

## 1Samuel 18:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
אָנֹכִי (אָנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59

**Translation:** David responded to Saul, “Who [am] I.. David no doubt remembered the promise of Saul before to give him Merab as his wife, and, as I mentioned, Saul may have explained that away during this conversation. However, with the king, you don’t say, “Now just hold on a minute, buster, how many times are you going to promise me your daughter in marriage before you deliver?” David will instead ask, how could he fit into such a family; how could he be worthy to be a part of the royal family. This is known as polite deference (from teaching, I realize that there are those who have no clue that they don’t necessarily need to share every thought that rattles through their brains, even if it seems like a keeper).

## 1Samuel 18:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
וְ (or וֶ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
מִי (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i> ]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
חַיָּיִם (חַיָּיִם) [pronounced <i>khay-YAWH</i> ]	<i>living thing, animal, organisms, life forms</i>	masculine plural adjective with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #2416 BDB #312

According to Rotherham, who is following the lead of Gesenius, this word should be *kinfolk* (plural).<sup>20</sup> The JPS tells us that a different vocalization results in *my kin* and this is how the REB renders this verse (see the translations above). However, I have been unable to unearth the other word that they claim this could be.

Edersheim comments, in opposition to this view: “*my life*” probably means *my status in life*. The rendering proposed by some, “*my people*,” is linguistically unsupported, and implies a needless repetition.<sup>21</sup> Edersheim’s view results in the least damage to the text and is in agreement with the MT and the LXX.

מִשְׁפָּחָהּ (מִשְׁפָּחָהּ) [pronounced <i>mish-paw-KHAWH</i> ]	<i>family, clan, sub-tribe, class (of people), species (of animals), or sort (of things)</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4940 BDB #1046
אָבִי (אָבִי) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household or clan</i>	masculine singular noun with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

<sup>20</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham’s *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 308.

<sup>21</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 475.

## 1Samuel 18:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ <sup>l</sup> êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** ...and what is my [status in] life [or, who [are] my kinsfolk]—my father's family—... As mentioned above, there is some disagreement as to the rendering of the second word in this part of the verse. David asks either *who [are] my lives* or *who are my kinfolk*? By vocalization, I assume the main difference are the vowel points; however, I have been unable to confirm that in any way. Edersheim, as mentioned in the Hebrew exegesis, says that there is no linguistic support for this notion. Furthermore, this is in agreement with the MT and the LXX. This yields a rather rocky translation, however. In any case, the overall meaning is clear—David is being humble. Saul is offering to make David a part of the royal family, and David is saying that there is nothing in his life or lineage to make him worthy of such an honor. To a rational king, this would have signified that David had no grandiose ideas of stealing the throne from him. However, Saul was not a rational king.

It is also likely that Saul recalls that he said substantially the same thing to Samuel, when Samuel informed him that God had chosen him to be king over Israel (1Sam. 9:21).

## 1Samuel 18:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâyâh (הִיָּה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
châthân (חַתָּן) [pronounced khaw-THAWN]	<i>son-in-law, a daughter's husband, a bridegroom</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2860 BDB #368
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...that I should be the king's son-in-law?" David cannot see himself as being the king's son-in-law. This could be politeness and it could be a result of his brothers' treatment of him. More than likely, this is David's actual humility showing through. He was just recently a shepherd boy, and essentially offered a place equivalent to the king's son. His response to Saul here is the polar opposite of so many people today who feel that they deserve this or that.



Again, do not be confused by the time frame. This chapter, like much of Old Testament Scripture, is not in strict chronological order. Prior to David taking charge of a 1000 men and going in and out before the people, showing great personal integrity, Saul took him aside and said, "If you can command this small force of 1000 and do serious damage to the Philistines, then you can have my daughter in marriage."

I need to point out, Saul has no intention of keeping this promise. Saul uses this as a carrot to get David to do what he wants him to do. Let me see if I can take you inside Saul's head for a moment. David apparently had greater authority before—recall that women sang that he had killed *his tens of thousands*. This meant that David presided over a fairly large army. This sort of authority was in less physical danger than one who presided over a smaller force. Saul wants David over a smaller force to increase the chance that he might die in battle. Saul wants to be certain that, in every battle, David is fighting just like his men. The smaller the force, the more likely this will be. If David himself is involved in the actual combat, the chances of him dying increase with each battle. This is what Saul wants; he does not even consider that he might actually give Merab to David in marriage.

**And so he is in a time, a giving of Merab, Saul's daughter, to David and she was given to Adriel the Meholathite to wife.**

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**When it was time to give Merab, Saul's daughter, to David, she was [instead] given to Adriel the Meholathite as [his] wife.**

**When it came time for Saul to give his daughter Merab to David, he instead gave her in marriage to Adriel Meholathite.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

##### Masoretic Text

And so he is in a time, a giving of Merab, Saul's daughter, to David and she was given to Adriel the Meholathite to wife.

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

But it came to pass at the time when Merob, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Israel the Mothulathite to wife.

##### Significant differences:

No significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

##### CEV

But when the time came for David to marry Saul's daughter Merab, Saul told her to marry Adriel from the town of Meholah.

##### NLT

So when the time came for the wedding, Saul gave Merab in marriage to Adriel, a man from Meholah.

##### REB

However, when the time came for Saul's daughter Merab to be married to David, she had already been given to Adriel of Meholah.

##### TEV

But when the time came for Merab to be given to David, she was given instead to a man named Ariel from Meholah.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

##### God's Word™

But when the time came to give Saul's daughter Merab to David, she was married to Adriel from Meholah.

##### JPS (Tanakh)

But at the time that Merab, daughter of Saul, should have been given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel the Meholathite.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

##### NASB

So it came about at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.



Young's Updated LT

And it comes to pass, at the time of the giving of Merab, daughter of Saul, to David, that she had been given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.

**What is the gist of this verse?** When the time came for David to marry Merab, she became the wife of Adriel the Meholathite instead.

1Samuel 18:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿêth (עֵת) [pronounced <i>gayth</i> ]	<i>time, the right time, the proper time</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #6256 BDB #773
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mêra <sup>b</sup> (מֵרַב) [pronounced <i>may-RAH<sup>b</sup>V</i> ]	transliterated <i>Merab</i>	proper noun	Strong's #4764 BDB #597
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
Shâʿûl (שׂאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** When it was time to give Merab, Saul's daughter, to David,... Although *time* is not the subject or the direct object, *when it was time* gives us a more up-to-date notion of how this verse begins. Saul had promised

David twice to give him his daughter Merab; and this half of the verse indicates that a specific date had been set—either that, or what Saul had required of David had been accomplished.

1Samuel 18:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced <i>hee</i> ]	<i>she, it</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to be give, to be delivered, to be given forth [as law]; to be made</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'ad'rîy'êl (עַדְרִי'אֵל) [pronounced <i>GAHD<sup>e</sup>-ree-ayl</i> ]	<i>lacking in foolishness and is transliterated Adriel</i>	masculine singular proper singular noun	Strong's #5741 BDB #727
m <sup>e</sup> chôlâthîy (מְחֹלַתִּי) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>khoh-law-THÉE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Meholathite</i>	masculine singular proper singular noun	Strong's #4259 BDB #563
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** ...she was [instead] given to Adriel the Meholathite as [his] wife. This was the end result; she was given to Adriel the Meholathite, instead. We don't know the circumstances; we really know nothing about him; however, we can be assured that this was the most expedient thing for Saul to do. We do know this, however: it is very likely that both Merab and Adriel both knew that Saul had promised her to David. I doubt that this was a situation where she was in love, although that is possible and that Saul was being indulgent. Given what we know about Saul, it is more reasonable that this marriage fulfilled an obligation of some sort or had been a bribe (for instance, a large dowry may have been offered to him).

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## Saul Offers David His Youngest Daughter in Marriage for a Dowry of 100 Philistine Foreskins

And so desires Michal, Saul's Daughter, David and so they make known to Saul and so is smooth the word in his [two] eyes.

1Samuel  
18:20

Michal, Saul's daughter, was in love with David. When they announced [this] to Saul, this thing [lit., *the word*] was pleasing in his sight [lit., *in his eyes*].

**However, Michal, Saul's younger daughter, had fallen in love with David. When they announced this to Saul, he was pleased, as it suited his purposes.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so desires Michal, Saul's Daughter, David and so they make known to Saul and so is smooth the word in his [two] eyes.  
 Septuagint                              And Melchol the daughter of Saul loved David; and it was told Saul, and the thing was pleasing in his eyes.

Significant differences:              Some of the verbs are slightly different here, which may represent a reasonable rendering from the Hebrew into the Greek.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    Saul had another daughter. Her name was Michal, and Saul found out that she was in love with David. This made Saul happy,...

NLT    In the meantime, Saul's daughter Michal had fallen in love with David, and Saul was delighted when he heard about it.

REB    But Michal, Saul's other daughter, fell in love with David, and when Saul was told of this, he saw that it suited his plans.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™                              However, Saul's daughter Michal fell in love with David. When Saul was told about it, the news pleased him.

JPS (Tanakh)                              Now Michal daughter of Saul had fallen in love with David; and when this was reported to Saul, he was pleased.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul, the thing was agreeable to him [lit., *in his sight*].

Young's Updated LT                      And Michal daughter of Saul loves David, and they declare to Saul, and the thing is right in his eyes,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul's youngest daughter, Michal, was in love with David and this was told to Saul (although it is not completely clear *who* told this to Saul, as the verb is in the plural).

**1Samuel 18:20a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâhêb (אָהַב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV</i> ʔ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #157 BDB #12

## 1Samuel 18:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Mîykal (מִיכַל) [pronounced mee-KAHL]	possibly means <i>brook</i> or <i>stream</i> and is transliterated <i>Michal</i>	feminine proper noun	Strong's #4324 BDB #568
bath (בַּת) [pronounced bath]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאָל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** *Michal, Saul's daughter, was in love with David.* Apparently, Merab was not in love with David; or, it is possible that Saul used her to fulfill some other promise or obligation. At the same time, David had not yet been killed in battle. Therefore, Saul was obligated to give Merab to David as his wife. However, as we saw in the previous verse, Saul gave her to someone else. However, it did turn out that Saul's youngest daughter, Michal, was in love with David.

## 1Samuel 18:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נִגַּד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
This verb is in the singular in the Greek.			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאָל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** *When they announced [this] to Saul,...* According to the Hebrew, Michal did not go to her father Saul alone. It says here that *they* announced this news to Saul. At first, I thought that this was Michal and David. However, the remainder of this chapter will indicate that it was not both of them. Therefore, it was either Michal and someone else (her personal servant or servants) or it could have been her servants who went on their own.

## 1Samuel 18:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshar (יָשָׁר) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAHR</i> ]	<i>to be smooth, straight, right; figuratively, it means to be pleasing, agreeable, right (particularly when followed by in my eyes)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3477 BDB #449
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

**Translation:** ...[this thing](#) [lit., *the word*] [was pleasing in his sight](#) [lit., *in his eyes*]. You will note that the Revised English Bible sounds rather nefarious here. Instead of saying that the news of his daughter's love was pleasing, they say, *because it suited his purpose*. The context will indicate that this is how Saul felt. Although Barnes tells us that this *partly relieved Saul from the charge of breaking his previous promise*,<sup>22</sup> I don't think that was the sort of thing that would bother Saul. Saul was able to rationalize anything he did to anyone. Rationalizing one's behavior requires some concentration and little by way of conscience. This person acts first, and then decides later how to explain that what he did was right. Here, Saul is pleased because he can work this love of Michal for David into his own plans to kill David.

**Application:** The proper approach is to think first, and then act, according to what is right.

[And so says Saul, "I give her to him and she is to him for bait and is in him a hand of Philistines." And so says Saul unto David in a second \[time\], "You are a son-in-law to me the day."](#)

1Samuel  
18:21

[And Saul thought, "I will give her to him and she is to him bait and the hand of the Philistines will be against him." But he said to David a second time, "You will be my son-in-law today."](#)

[And Saul thought to himself, "I will offer to give her to him and she will be a snare, so that the hand of the Philistines will be against him." So Saul, for the second time, said to David, "Today, you are my son-in-law."](#)

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

<sup>22</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 47.

Latin Vulgate	And Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a stumbling block to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be upon him." And Saul said to David, "In two things you will be my son in law this day."
Masoretic Text	And so says Saul, "I give her to him and she is to him for bait and is in him a hand of Philistines." And so says Saul unto David in a second [time], "You are a son-in-law to me the day."
Septuagint	And Saul said, "I will give her to him and she will be a stumbling-block to him." Now the hand of the Philistines was against Saul.
Significant differences:	The Greek has a different meaning attached to the second sentence; in it, the Philistines are against Saul in the Greek; however, in the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin, Saul is expecting for the hand of the Philistines to be against David. The final sentence is not found in the Greek.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...and he thought, "I'll tell David he can marry Michal, but I'll set it up so that the Philistines will kill him." He told David, "I'm going to give you a second chance to marry one of my daughters."
NJB	He thought, 'Yes, I shall give her to him; she can be the snare for him, so that the Philistines will get him.' (On two occasions, Saul told David, 'Today, you shall be my son-in-law.')
NLT	"Here's another chance to see him killed by the Philistines!" Saul said to himself. But to David he said, "I have a way for you to become my son-in-law after all!"
REB	He said to himself, 'I will give her to him; let her be the bait that lures him to his death at the hands of the Philistines.' So Saul proposed a second time to make David his son-in-law.
TEV	He said to himself, "I'll give Michal to David; I will use her to trap him, and he will be killed by the Philistines." So for the second time, Saul said to David, "You will be my son-in-law."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	Sal thought, "I'll give her to David. She will trap him, and the Philistines will get him." So he said to David a second time, "You will now be my son-in-law."
JPS (Tanakh)	Saul thought: "I will give her to him, and she can serve as a snare for him; so that the Philistines may kill him." So Saul said to David, "You can become my son-in-law even now through the second one." The meaning of the Hebrew of the final sentence is uncertain.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And Saul thought, "I will give her to him that she may become a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David, "For a second time you may be my son-in-law today."
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	...and Saul says, "I give her to him, and she is to him for a snare, and the hand of the Philistines is on him." And he says to David, "By the second—you do become my son-in-law today."

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul thinks to himself that he can use Michal as bait for David, to get him to face off the Philistines. Then Saul tells David (although possibly not directly) that he will be asked for the second time to become Saul's son-in-law.

There are two very different scenarios that might be occurring here. When I first read this and the previous verse, I assumed that David and Michal approached Saul with the news that Michal loved David, and Saul thought about this and found it agreeable. So he tells David, “For the second time, I ask you to become my son-in-law.” The other approach is that Michal approached Saul with her personal servant (or servants) and made this known to him. This revelation pleases Saul, and, for the second time, he tells David (via his own servants) that he would like David to become his son-in-law. I believe that the second scenario is the more accurate.

### 1Samuel 18:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâʾûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
môwqêsh (מִוְקֵשׁ) [pronounced <i>moh-KAYSH</i> ]	properly <i>the bait or lure for a trap</i> ; figuratively <i>trap, snare</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4170 BDB #430

**Translation:** *And Saul thought, “I will give her to him and she is to him bait... Again, as we have seen twice before in this chapter, although the Hebrew reads *and so Saul said*, it means that *and Saul thought [to himself] or and Saul said [to himself]*. This verse explains why Michal's love for David pleased him in the previous verse. This indicates that Saul's mind is functioning and he is often thinking about ways to end David's life. So, he sees this as a great opportunity to put David in jeopardy again.*



## 1Samuel 18:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הִיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** ...and the hand of the Philistines will be against him.” Saul’s mind made a great leap. However, what father does not want to see Philistine intervene when it looks as though his daughter might be getting married? So Saul has, in an instant, worked out a scenario which involves David, his daughter’s love for David, and the Philistines in a plot to kill David.

## 1Samuel 18:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâʾûl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

## 1Samuel 18:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
sh <sup>e</sup> tayîm (שְׁתַּיִם) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> TAH-yim]	<i>two, a second [time]; a repetition, a repeating</i>	feminine numeral substantive	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
The reason that this particular substantive seems to be a problem for so many translators is that it is generally found as a construct, so that meaning is well-established. However, this noun is a cognate of the verb <i>to repeat</i> which therefore yields a simple and reasonable substantive meaning.			
châthan (חָתָן) [pronounced khaw-THAHN]	<i>to be a son-in-law, to make oneself a daughter's husband</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #2859 BDB #368
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day, today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Before we cover the translation, there are essentially three different ways this has been interpreted (as is borne out by the various translations already given): (1) David is told for the *second time* "You will be my son-in-law." (here and in v. 17). This is an acknowledgment by the author of 1Samuel and not by Saul. (2) Saul says to David, "For the second time, you will become my son-in-law." This seems less likely, as Saul is not going to acknowledge that he has made this promise before and did not make good on it. He certainly rationalized what he did to David already by giving his firstborn daughter to someone else; however, he is not going to bring this up in trying to get David to agree to marrying Michal. (3) Saul tells David that he will make David his son-in-law by means of his second daughter. In this scenario, he is essentially fulfilling his original obligation to David. Although my translation reflects the sentiment of #1, and I just as comfortable with the third scenario as well. The preposition is consistent with this understanding.

**Translation:** [But he said to David a second time, "You will be my son-in-law today."](#) Saul has already told David that he would become his son-in-law. This is the second time he tells David this. The previous time does not seem to have involved the emotions of David or of Saul's other daughter. However, this time, it appears as if both Michal is interested in David (we don't know whether these emotions are reciprocated). Therefore, it is more than simply an honor which Saul appears to offer David.

Given Saul's well-known mental condition and probably the lack of feelings between David and the older sister, David did not press Saul earlier about not being married to the older sister. However, here David possibly has an interest in Michal. You may wonder, *why doesn't David recognize that this is a trap?* People who are honest tend to take what they hear at face value. After being burned several times by the same person, they will approach that relationship with some caution; however, David does not tend to automatically assume that everyone who says anything to him is lying. This is because he judges others on the basis of his character. By the way, free of charge: if you ever have any business dealings with someone who is immediately suspicious of you, recognize that he is

probably a dishonest person and he is judging you based upon his own character. However, the contents of the next verse will indicate that David had some reticence in the matter.

Now, either David was there with Michal as she confesses her love for him. Obviously, there would be additional back story to this of whatever relationship that they formed. It is possible that David and Michal both go to Saul and tell him of Michal's love for David. The reason that it appears to be David is v. 21, where Saul says, "**Today you will be my son-in-law.**" This is reasonably spoken to David immediately after Michal speaks to Saul. However, even though David approaches Saul with Michal, there appears to be some reticence on his part, as Saul will find it necessary for him to work his own servants, so that David will go through with this marriage. My thinking is that David and Michal simply put this information out there, Saul said what he did, and that is as far as the matter went. David had already been promised that he would marry the older sister, and Saul instead gave her to another man. So it is possible that David views what Saul says here with great suspicion, or that he and Michal, given Saul's mental condition, do not do anything else, expecting that Saul will later change his mind. I hope that it is clear that this makes little sense. Why would David and Michal approach Saul and tell him of their love, and then, when Saul agrees to a marriage, they both meander off and do nothing about it. In fact, David will have to be convinced to marry Michal. If that is the case, why would David have agreed to approach Saul in the first place?

What is more likely is that Michal does not approach her father with David, but with a personal servant. When she proposes that she is in love with David, Saul considers the matter (not his daughter's feelings) and recognizes that he can work with this. He then sends his servants to David, and they speak for Saul when they say, "Today, you will be my son-in-law." It is also possible that Saul summoned David personally and told him this as well. David expresses some reticence (either directly to Saul or to his servants) and then departs.

You may at times become exasperated with my exegesis, thinking to yourself, "He is way over thinking this situation." That just happens to be my nature. I tend to examine each situation as it is presented and determine exactly what took place. There are times—in fact, probably most of the time—that this has little to do with doctrine and simply gives a plausible explanation for what takes place (and thus explains away some apparent inconsistencies). However, now and again, I do come across a unique understanding of a passage which serves to completely and thoroughly explain what is occurring, and, in this way, allow the reader (and myself) to become comfortable with the fact that Scripture is God-breathed.

**And so commands Saul his servants, "Speak unto David in the secrecy, to say, 'Behold, takes pleasure in you the king and all his servants love you and now you will be a son-in-law in the king.' "**

1 Samuel  
18:22

**Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David privately, saying, 'Listen, the king takes pleasure in you and all his servants love you; therefore become [lit., you are] a son-in-law to the king.' "**

**Then Saul commanded his servants, "Take David aside privately and speak to him. Say this: 'Listen, David, the king really does like and respect you, furthermore, all of his servants love you; therefore, take up Saul on this offer and become his son-in-law.' "**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

##### Masoretic Text

And so commands Saul his servants, "Speak unto David in the secrecy, to say, 'Behold, takes pleasure in you the king and all his servants love you and now you will be a son-in-law in the king.' "

##### Septuagint

And Saul charged his servants, saying, "Speak privately to David, saying, 'Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; and do become the king's son-in-law.' "

##### Significant differences:

No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

NLT	Then Saul told his men to say confidentially to David, “The king really likes you, and so do we. Why don’t you accept the king’s offer and become his son-in-law?”
REB	...and ordered his courtiers to say to David privately, ‘The king is well disposed to you and you are dear to us all; now is the time for you to marry into the king’s family.’
TEV	He ordered his officials to speak privately with David and tell him, “The king is pleased with you and all his officials like you; now is a good time for you to marry his daughter.”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™	Saul ordered his officers, “Talk to David in private. Tell him, ‘The king likes you, and all his officers are fond of you. become the king’s son-in-law.’ ”
JPS (Tanakh)	And Saul instructed his courtiers to say to David privately, “The king is fond of you and all his courtiers like you. so why not become the king’s son-in-law?’ ”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Then Saul commanded his servants, “Speak to David secretly, saying, ‘Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; now therefore, become the king’s son-in-law.’ ”
Young’s Updated LT	And Saul commanded his servants, “Speak unto David gently, saying, ‘Listen, the king has delighted in you, and all his servant shave loved you, and how, be son-in-law to the king.’ ”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul told some of his servants to privately speak to David, to convince him to become the son-in-law of the king.

**1Samuel 18:22a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
tsâvâh (חַוָּה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i> ]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong’s #6680 BDB #845
Shâ’ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #7586 BDB #982
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
’ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>Ē<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #5650 BDB #713
Written <i>servant</i> but read <i>servants</i> .			

## 1Samuel 18:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
lâṭṭ (לָטֹט) [pronounced lawṭ] (also spelled without the aleph)	<i>surreptitiousness, quietness, secrecy; surreptitiously; privately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3814 & #3909 BDB #532
Lâṭṭ comes from the verb <i>to muffle, to cover</i> (Strong's #3813); or is the participle of <i>to wrap</i> (Strong's #3874). The former understanding obviously makes the most sense.			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

**Translation:** Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David privately, saying,... It appears that there is a piece of this puzzle that we are missing. My first impression was that Michal and David both approached Saul together because we have the plural in v. 20 and we have Saul speaking to David in v. 21. However, this would make little sense if Saul now makes an attempt to cause David to want to become his son-in-law. If he approached Saul with Michal in the first place, then it would make little sense for David to require encouragement. Therefore, what appears to have happened is that Michal, flanked by her personal servant, or sister, or a friend (or any combination of these) approaches her father and tells him of her love for David. Saul thinks about this, sees how he could use it to his advantage, and then he approaches David. Now, Saul has already approached David about being a son-in-law via the oldest daughter, who just got married to someone else. So what we have is simply Saul and David speaking in v. 21, after Michal had spoken to Saul; and some time had passed (five minutes, a day; whatever; or, this is Saul speaking to David through his servants (which will be expanded upon in the following few verses). David had already been set up like this before, so he probably declined the offer, but with a great deal of deference (that is not recorded here; however, it probably was very similar to what he said in v. 18 with a clear negative answer). So, Saul needs to convince David of his sincerity; therefore, Saul later calls his servants together and commands them to get David alone and talk to him.

Now, what is all this about speaking to David *privately* or *quietly*? The idea that Saul wants to convey to David is that these men came to David of their own accord; they are not to be seen as an official delegation from Saul, but rather as a group of men, close to Saul, who have come to David of their own accord, *as though they are doing this behind the king's back*.<sup>23</sup> They like David; they want him to be a part of the royal family. They approach David on their own and without Saul's direction—at least, that is what Saul wants David to think.

### 1Samuel 18:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
châphêts (חָפֵּץ) [pronounced <i>khaw-FATES</i> ]	<i>to will, to desire, to take pleasure in, to delight in, to long to, to be inclined to</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2654 BDB #342
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...[Listen, the king takes pleasure in you...](#) It is well-known to all that Saul is a bit mental. Therefore, it is not so unusual that Saul has these mood swings. What is being conveyed here is that, at the heart of the matter, Saul does respect and like David. That cannot be questioned (or so the servants are to convey to David). However, given his mood swings, there are times when Saul hates and fears David as well. However, Saul is attempting, through his servants, to get David to pursue Saul's daughter in marriage. However, just as before, Saul is hoping that the final result will not be marriage, but David's death.

### 1Samuel 18:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

<sup>23</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 493.



## 1Samuel 18:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced aw-HAYV <sup>ê</sup> ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12

**Translation:** ...and all his servants love you;... Now, what lie is not improved with a little truth? Saul is not a stupid man. He knows how to play David; he mixes in some truth. Saul's servants do love David, so this will be said as well. When you hear several things at once, and many of these things are truthful, it is normal to assume that the other things are also truthful. A good liar knows to always mix in some truth with the lies.

## 1Samuel 18:22d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>ê</sup> (or v <sup>ê</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (אָתָּה) [pronounced gâht-TAWH]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w <sup>ê</sup> + the adverb ʿattâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
châthan (חָתָן) [pronounced khaw-THAHN]	<i>to be a son-in-law, to make oneself a daughter's husband</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #2859 BDB #368
b <sup>ê</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>êh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
melek <sup>ê</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...therefore become [lit., you are] a son-in-law to the king.' ” The purpose of the servants visit with David is in this portion of the verse: to convince David that he should go along with Saul's offer and marry Michal. Saul becomes aware that his younger daughter has a crush on David. He figures out how to work this in his favor, and calls David in and talks to him about becoming his son-in-law. David does not give him a clear answer. Then Saul speaks to his servants, to have them talk to David *unofficially* (or, so, Saul would want it to appear).

And so speak servants of Saul into [the two] ears of David the words the these; and so says David, “Is she trivial in your [two] eyes to be a son-in-law in the king; and I a man needing and lightly esteemed?”

1Samuel  
18:23

So the servants of Saul spoke these words to [lit., in the ears of] David and David answered [them], “Is it trivial in your eyes to be son-in-law to the king? I am a poor man and lightly esteemed.”



**After the servants of Saul spoke these words to David, he answered them, saying, “Is it a trivial matter to become the king’s son-in-law? Don’t forget that I am a poor man and lightly esteemed [by the king].”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so speak servants of Saul into [the two] ears of David the words the these; and so says David, “Is she trivial in your [two] eyes to be a son-in-law in the king; and I a man needing and lightly esteemed?”

Septuagint                              And the servants of Saul spoke these words in the ears of David; and David said, “Is [it] a light thing in your eyes to become son-in-law to the king? Whereas, I [am] a humble man, and not honorable?”

Significant differences:              No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    Saul ordered his officials to speak to David in private, so they went to David and said, “Look, the king likes you, and all of his officials are loyal to you. why not ask the king if you can marry his daughter Michal?”

NJB    “I’m not rich or famous enough to marry princess Michal!” David answered. [The CEV mixed vv. 22–23 together, so I present them here].

NJB    Saul’s servants repeated these words in David’s ear, to which David replied, ‘Do you think that becoming the king’s son-in-law is a trivial matter; I have neither wealth nor position.’

NLT    When Saul’s men said these things to David, he replied, “How can a poor man from a humble family afford the bride price for the daughter of a king?” I want you to keep this translation in the back of your mind. Even though it is inaccurate (that is, with respect to the Hebrew or Greek), it is probably a very good guess as to exactly what was said between Saul and David.

REB    When they spoke in this way to David, he said to them, ‘Do you think that marrying the king’s daughter is a matter of so little consequence that a poor man of no account, like myself, can do it?’

TEV    So they told this to David, and he answered, “It’s a great honor to become the king’s son-in-law, too great for someone poor and insignificant like me.”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™                              When Saul’s officers made it a point to say this, David asked, “Do you think it’s easy to become the king’s son-in-law? I am a poor and unimportant person.”

JPS (Tanakh)                              When the king’s courtiers repeated these words to David, David replied, “Do you think that becoming the son-in-law of a king is a small matter, when I am but a poor man of no consequence?”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    So Saul’s servants spoke these words to [lit., *in the ears of*] David. But David said, “Is it trivial in your sight to become the king’s son-in-law, since I am a poor man and lightly esteemed?”

## Young's Updated LT

And the servants of Saul speak in the ears of David these words, and David says, "Is it a light thing in your eyes to be son-in-law to the king—and I a poor man, and lightly esteemed?"

**What is the gist of this verse?** David, who had already been approached by Saul (or his servants) in v. 21, replies to Saul's servants that he is not rich enough to afford the dowry that a king's daughter deserves; furthermore, King Saul does not really hold him in high regard.

1Samuel 18:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֵוֹל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿôzen (אֶזְנִי) [pronounced <i>OH-zen</i> ]	<i>ear</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #241 BDB #23
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʿêlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>EEHL-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41

**Translation:** So the servants of Saul spoke these words to [lit., in the ears of] David... The servants did exactly as they were told. They did not give David any sense of what they thought on the matter; they just conveyed what Saul told them to convey.

## 1Samuel 18:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hă (הֵ) [pronounced <i>heh</i> ]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAL</i> ]	<i>to be a trivial matter; to be light; to be of little account, to be lightly esteemed; to be despised; to be swift</i>	Niphal feminine singular, participle	Strong's #7043 BDB #886
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
châthan (חַתָּן) [pronounced <i>khaw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to be a son-in-law, to make oneself a daughter's husband</i>	Hithpael infinitive construct	Strong's #2859 BDB #368
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...and David answered [them], “Is it trivial in your eyes to be son-in-law to the king? You will recall that whenever Saul did something wrong, he (1) knew that he had done something wrong and (2) he had a ready explanation. Saul had it all thought out. When he offered up a sacrifice in the place of Samuel, Saul was right there with an explanation as to why he had to do it. When he did not follow God’s orders to kill all of the Amalekites, he was right there with an explanation when questioned by Samuel. Therefore, it does not matter whether he and David had a conversation or not. He had an explanation as to why he gave his eldest daughter in marriage to Adriel. If David didn’t confront him, then Saul passed this explanation to one of his servants and this servant delivered the bad news. One way or the other, David knew what he was not taken as Saul’s son-in-law. Now, let me tell you exactly what I think happened (and the NLT appears to have gleaned roughly this same scenario from the

narrative).<sup>24</sup> Some people are shy; but David wasn't. He wasn't hotheaded, but he wasn't shy. So when it came time for him to marry Merab and he finds out that she is being wed to another, he went straight to Saul. He didn't know Saul at this time and didn't know that Saul was waiting with an explanation. "Well, you see David, I began to think about what you said to me. You told me that your family was very humble in Israel, and apparently, that is very true. Secondly, there is no way that you could provide a dowry which would do honor to the daughter of a king. I am embarrassed about this, but it is clear that Adriel is the right man for my daughter. His family is well-known; he is also a brave soldier like yourself; and he was able to provide a dowry of a substantial amount which, unlike whatever you could offer, did not bring shame upon my daughter on her wedding day. It was a difficult decision, but that's why I'm king. I have to make the difficult decisions." I want you to recall that, not but a few chapters ago, Saul was wandering all over the entire countryside trying to locate the family mules. That's the idea; there is very little difference between David and Saul; however, David still recognizes the office that Saul is in and respects that God placed him there—David does not spend much time questioning Saul's character, because, and listen to this carefully, *because God put Saul in office as king*. The next time you have problems with a person who is in authority over you, remember, God gave him (or her) that authority.

### 1Samuel 18:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾânôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
rûwsh (רָשׁוּ) [pronounced <i>roosh</i> ]	<i>to be in want, to be needy, to be poor</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7326 BDB #930
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qâlâh (קָלָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAW</i> ]	<i>to be of little account; to be lightly esteemed, to be swift</i>	Niphal participle	Strong's #7034 BDB #885

**Translation:** *I am a poor man and lightly esteemed.* David recalls what Saul had told him: he was not rich enough to provide an honorable dowry for the daughter of a king; and he came from a family which was not really up to intermarrying with a family of royalty. So it did not matter what Michal said or what Saul said, these facts had not changed.

We do not know if this was a simple conversation where the servants of Saul had their say (vv. 22–23a), then David had his (v. 23b), or whether there were several exchanges, which are summed up in these two verses. That is, David could have said, "I am not held in high esteem in the king's eyes." And then Saul's servants reply, "Saul truly does delight in you. He really has respect for you." Bearing in mind that we are often given the gist of this or that, this exchange is not unlikely.

Now, notice David's genius: I suspect that when David was going to marry Saul's older daughter, Saul had a ready explanation as to why David could not become his son-in-law—he was poor and he was a nobody. So when Saul's

<sup>24</sup> In fact, it was their translation which caused me to think through this narrative to determine what happened.

servants come to David and suggest this thing (and, I also suspect that David knew their ultimate source), David says, "Yes, but I am too poor and I am a nobody."

Here we will see Saul's genius. He has felt conflicted about giving his older daughter to another man; but he could see not other way. So he pondered this, and he has come up with a solution to David's problem of being too poor and of too low a station to marry a royal woman (which were no doubt his rationalizations as to why Merab ended up being given to another man). The impression that Saul wants to give is that he felt bad and that he got all the problems worked out and he will give his solution to this problem in v. 25.

**And so make known servants of Saul to him to say as the words the these spoke David.**

1Samuel  
18:24

**So the servants of Saul made known to him the words that David spoke [lit., as these words (that) David spoke].**

**Then the servants of Saul relayed to Saul the things which David said.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so make known servants of Saul to him to say as the words the these spoke David.

Septuagint                              And the servants of Saul reported to him according to these words, which David spoke.

Significant differences:              No significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    The officials went back to Saul and told im exactly what David had said.

NAB    When his servants reported to him the nature of David's answer,...

NLT    When Saul's men reported this back to the king,...

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word*<sup>™</sup>                              When the officers told Saul what David had said,...

JPS (Tanakh)                              Saul's courtiers reported to him, "This is what David answered."

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    And the servants of Saul reported to him according [lit., *by saying according*] to these words *which* David spoke.

NRSV    The servants of Saul told him, "This is what David said."

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul's servants go back to Saul, letting him know that David is too poor to afford a dowry and that his station in life does not befit being the husband of a royal person (which are no doubt the reasons that Saul gave for giving Merab in marriage to another man).

## 1Samuel 18:24

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i> ]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
ʿebed (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Shâ`ûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʾêlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>EEHL-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** So the servants of Saul made known to him the words that David spoke [lit., as these words (that) David spoke]. The idea of the kaph preposition is that these servants did not convey to Saul exactly what David said, but they did communicate roughly what he said. As I mentioned in the previous verse, Saul was ready for what David had to say and already had an answer—which answer would serve his own purposes. I hope that you recognize how Saul plays this like one plays chess. He already knows what his opponent will do (he knew David’s responses several moves in advance), and determined how to respond a long time ago.

I am not a good chess player, and do not like the game because it is so intimidating. However, I did follow the moves of a couple of chess champions and one put the other exactly where he wanted him 10–15 moves prior to checkmate. He forced his opponent to make certain moves, all of which were calculated long in advance. Saul may be demon-influenced and his behavior may be crazy now and again; however, Saul was still a man of great intelligence. He plotted David’s death several moves in advance. Only a greater genius could get out of the trap that Saul was setting.

And so says Saul, “So you say to David: ‘[There is] no delight to the king in a dowry that in one hundred foreskins of Philistines to avenge in enemies of the king.’ ” And Saul thought, to fall David in a hand of Philistines.

1Samuel  
18:25

Saul said, “Thus you will say to David: ‘[There is] no delight for the king in a dowry because by means of one hundred Philistine foreskins will the king be avenged [lit., to be avenged the king] against [his] enemies.’ ” But Saul had calculated that David would fall [lit., to fall David] [by] the hand of the Philistines.

Saul answered them, “You will say this to David: ‘The king does not need a cash and asset dowry for his daughter; instead, let his dowry be the foreskins of 100 Philistines, and in this way he will receive vengeance on his enemies.’ ” However, Saul had figured that David would die by the hand of the Philistines.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so says Saul, “So you say to David: ‘[There is] no delight to the king in a dowry that in one hundred foreskins of Philistines to avenge in enemies of the king.’ ” And Saul thought, to fall David in a hand of Philistines.

Septuagint                              And Saul said, “Thus you will speak to David: ‘The king wants no gift but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to avenge himself on the king’s enemies.’ ” Now Saul thought to cast him into the hands of the Philistines.

Significant differences:              No significant differences; the final verb is probably just a matter of translation.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV    Saul was hoping that the Philistines would kill David, and he told his officials to tell David, “The king doesn’t want any silver or gold. He only wants to get even with his enemies. All you have to do is bring back proof that you have killed a hundred Philistines!”

NLT    ...he told them, “Tell David that all I want for the bride price is one hundred Philistine foreskins! Vengeance on my enemies is all I really want.” But what Saul had in mind was that David would be killed in the fight.

REB    ...and Saul replied, ‘Tell David this: all the king wants as the bride-price is the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, by way of vengeance on his enemies.’ Saul was counting on David’s death at the hands of the Philistines.



TEV ...and Saul ordered them to tell David: “all the king wants from you as payment for the bride are the foreskins of a hundred dead Philistines, as revenge on his enemies.” (This was how Saul planned to have David killed by the Philistines.)

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™ Sal replied, “Tell David, ‘The king doesn’t want any payment for the bride except 100 Philistine foreskins so that he can get revenge on his enemies.’ ” in this way, Saul planned to have David fall into the hands of the Philistines.

JPS (Tanakh) And Saul said, “Say this to David: ‘The king desires no other bride-price than the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, as vengeance on the king’s enemies.’ ” —Saul intended to bring about David’s death at the hands of the Philistines.—

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB Saul then said, “Thus you shall say to David, ‘The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king’s enemies.’ ” Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

Young’s Updated LT And Saul says, “Thus do you [all] say to David: ‘There is no delight to the king in dowry, but in a hundred foreskins of the Philistines—to be avenged on the enemies of the king.’ ” And Saul thought to cause David to fall by the hand of the Philistines.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul’s message back to David concerning his lack of wealth is that he would accept a dowry of 100 Philistine foreskins. His reasoning was that this would give him satisfying vengeance against his enemies the Philistines. However, Saul’s objective was for David to die at the hands of the Philistines.

1Samuel 18:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Shâ`ûwl (שׂאֲוֹל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #7586 BDB #982
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	so, thus, here, hence	adverb	Strong’s #3541 BDB #462
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	beloved and is transliterated David	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** Saul said, “Thus you will say to David:... Saul would have been an outstanding chess player. He already knew David’s response, he already knew what his officials would say to him, and he had a ready answer. Saul may have been a little mad, but he was not stupid. He had his moves planned out in advance.

Saul is speaking to his servants and he is playing them just like he is playing David. He was very likely an outstanding actor as well. Before he said this, he probably paused, got a look on his face that belied concentration, and then spoke. A master manipulator does not necessarily want those he is manipulating to know that he is playing them. His servants will serve him better if they themselves believe what he is saying.

### 1Samuel 18:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
ʾêyn (אֵין) [pronounced ān]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; there is no</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong’s #369 BDB #34
Owen tells me that this is a negative construct and other sources tell me that this is not the way the construct is spelled.			
chêphets (חַפֵּצִים) [pronounced KHAY-fets]	<i>a delight, a pleasure</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #2656 BDB #343
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #4428 BDB #572
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #none BDB #88
môhar (מֹחָר) [pronounced MOH-hahr]	<i>dowry, bride-price, purchase-price</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #4119 BDB #555
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong’s #3588 BDB #471

Kîy, like many of the small words in Hebrew, has a large number of uses: ❶ It is used as a relative conjunction, particularly after the verbs *seeing, hearing, speaking, knowing, believing remembering, forgetting* and in such cases means *that*. ❷ Although kîy is used for consecution and effect and rendered *to that, that*; it sometimes has an intensifying force and is rendered *so that, so even, even*. This is how it is used in this context. ❸ The connective can be used of time and be rendered *at that time, which, what time, when*. ❹ Kîy can be used of time, but in such a way that it passes over to a demonstrative power where it begins an apodosis (*then, so*). ❺ It can be used as a relative causal particle: *because, since, while, on account that*. When we find it several times in a sentence, it can mean *because...and* or *for...and*. ❻ It can also have a continuous disjunctive use here and be rendered *for...or...or* (when the second two kîy’s are preceded by conjunctions). ❼ After a negative, it can mean *but* (the former must not be done because the latter is to be done).

## 1Samuel 18:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mê'âh (מאה) [pronounced may-AW]	<i>one hundred</i>	feminine plural numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
ôr'law (עורלה) [pronounced gôhr <sup>e</sup> -LAW]	<i>foreskin</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #6190 BDB #790
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>ah</sup> tiy (פלישתים) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** ...[\[There is\] no delight for the king in a dowry because by means of one hundred Philistine foreskins...](#)

In the ancient world, it was common for a suitor to offer a dowry to the father of the bride. This is mentioned in the Law (Ex. 22:16–17) and in the history of the patriarchs (Gen. 34:12); however, it was a tradition and not a requirement. With the daughter of a king, a dowry would have been expected. To some, this would indicate how much a man loved the bride. It would also indicate his financial status. A suitor who could raise only a paltry dowry—or, worse yet, no dowry at all—may not be the sort of man a father would want his daughter to marry. The NIV Study Bible tells us that a dowry compensated the father for the loss of his daughter and was essentially an insurance policy for the bride should her husband die.<sup>25</sup>

So Saul says to his servants: “Okay, this is what I want you to convey to David. I am not interested in a dowry of assets and cash; I know David is poor, I know he may feel as though he got a raw deal out of this previous attempt to marry into my family. But I can’t allow my youngest daughter to be embarrassed by the dowry that he brings. So, here’s a solution: tell David to bring me the foreskins of 100 Philistines. Such a dowry will reveal David as a man of courage and determination and my daughter will not be embarrassed by his station in life.” Saul knew exactly what he wanted David to do, and he knew it way back when Michal confessed to him her love.

I should add; David is not going to necessarily carefully circumcise 100 dead Philistines. He will simply cut off their penises and bring a bag full of uncircumcised penises to Saul. Personally, I think I’d prefer cash.

## 1Samuel 18:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâqam (נָקַם) [pronounced naw-KAHM]	<i>to avenge, to take vengeance, to be avenged</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #5358 BDB #667
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

<sup>25</sup> The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 400.

## 1Samuel 18:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāya <sup>bv</sup> (אָיָב) [pronounced aw-YA <sup>bv</sup> ]	<i>to be at enmity, to be hostile;</i> as a participle, it means <i>enemy, the one being at</i> <i>enmity with you</i>	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #340 BDB #33
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...will the king be avenged [lit., *to be avenged the king*] against [his] enemies.' " Saul has to offer a plausible explanation as to *why* this is acceptable—the Philistines have been a thorn in the side of Saul from the beginning. They embarrassed him when they squared off and Goliath came out and called for a combatant for 40 days. So, requiring David to go out and kill 100 of them for vengeance seems like a perfectly reasonable thing to ask.

## 1Samuel 18:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
châshab (חָשַׁב) [pronounced khaw-SHAHBV]	<i>to think, to mediate, regard, to</i> <i>account, to count, to</i> <i>determine, to calculate, to</i> <i>impute, to reckon</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2803 BDB #362
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	Qal meanings: <i>to fall, to lie, to</i> <i>die a violent death</i> ; Hiphil meanings: <i>to cast lots, to</i> <i>cause to fall, to be brought</i> <i>down</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

## 1Samuel 18:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> iy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>h</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** *But Saul had calculated that David would fall [lit., to fall David] [by] the hand of the Philistines.* In the final portion of this verse, we find out what Saul was thinking: he expected that even the great David would die at the hands of 100 Philistines. Saul suspected that the killing of Goliath was pretty much a lucky break for David (and for Israel); however, the odds were stacked against David if he is expected to kill 100 Philistines.

This also reveals a little more of Saul's character. I know that I have said in the past that Saul was extremely brave and courageous, and he *was*. But as we grow older, we sometimes lose the reckless abandon of youth. Saul probably did not fight on the front lines anymore. When Goliath challenged Israel, Saul did not go out to fight Goliath himself. He knows that even when David leads such a small group as 1000 men, that even then David could hang back, give directions, and remain fray-adjacent. Saul here hoped to make certain that David would directly face the enemy and that he would eventually be killed in his attempt to get 100 foreskins. After all, when David is right out in front, right in the midst of the battle, concentrating on killing as many men as possible, it is quite likely that someone will kill him in a cowardly manner; strike him from the back while his attention is diverted. Saul was certain that his plan was fool-proof.

How does that old saying go? *Fool me once, shame on you; fooled me twice, shame on me.* Saul has already promised David that he would give him his daughter's hand in marriage, but did not fulfil that obligation (vv. 17–19). Why on earth would David fall for this promise a second time?

### Why David Believed that Saul Would Give Him His Daughter's Hand in Marriage

- Before, David dealt directly with Saul—Saul made the promise to David personally. It is easy to retract a promise which is not witnessed by others (Saul either made this promise before no witnesses or few witnesses). 1Sam. 18:17
- There were possibly several reasons given why Saul explained why he did not fulfil this promise to David:
  - The first time this promise was made, it was to the soldiers of Saul's army. They were promised that whoever killed Goliath would marry his daughter. Saul could reason that this promise was made to his soldiers and not to just anyone.
  - It appears, however, the Saul offered up his daughter to David a second time. However, this time, he did not fulfil this obligation because of David's station in life and his lack of a dowry. No doubt he explained to David, "If I allowed her to marry you, I would be degrading my own daughter. She is a part of the royal family; you are from an undistinguished family, socially, financially and politically. Furthermore, you have no dowry to offer, which is an embarrassment to her." Although we do not have such an explanation recorded, we are well-aware that Saul always had a ready response when he did the wrong thing (see 1Sam. 13:11–12 15:13–21).
- So, what is different this time? First of all, Saul's younger daughter is in love with David. Although we do not know that David knew this, apparently more than Michal and Saul knew this (the plural verb of v. 20). So, David was probably made aware of Michal's feelings for him.
- Secondly, this promise of Saul's is not simply between David and Saul, but all of Saul's servants know of his promise to David (vv. 22–24). If Saul made such a promise known to his servants, it is more likely that

## Why David Believed that Saul Would Give Him His Daughter's Hand in Marriage

he would fulfil this promise.

5. Saul's servants approach David rather than Saul, and they give him several reasons why David should marry into the royal family, not the least of which is their love and respect for David (v. 22).
6. Finally, the dowry and station issues are dealt with. Although it is not directly stated, no doubt one of the servants said, "King Saul feels terrible about your inability to marry his eldest daughter and has sought to solve that problem." Saul is the reason David did not marry the eldest daughter. Saul made that decision. But, the proposition is, David will personally kill and bring back the foreskins of 100 Philistines. This way, he shows himself to be a great warrior, by killing the Philistine soldiers, thus improving his station in life. Secondly, the dowry of their foreskins represents great service and honorable to the king, thus solving the dowry issue.
7. Therefore, given the public knowledge of Saul's proposal, given the feelings of Saul's servants towards him, and presented with the solutions to the dowry problem, David felt relatively confident that Saul would make good on this repeated promise.

You will note that many of the points here are inferred by the text of 1Sam. 18. There is nothing which indicates that we should not investigate human behavior when studying Scripture. There are times when we should read between the lines in order to understand the behaviors that we observe.

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**And so make know his servants to David the words the these and so is smooth the word in [two] eyes of David to be a son-in-law in the king.**

1Samuel  
18:26

**So his servants made known to David these words and the proposition [lit., *the word*] to become the son-in-law to the king was agreeable to David [lit., *agreeable in the eyes of David*].**

**And not been fulfilled the days,...**

**And before the days had been fulfilled [lit., *And the days had not been fulfilled*],...**

**So Saul's servants made these things known to David and this proposition which allowed him to become the king's son-in-law appealed to him. Therefore, before the time frame given by Saul was up,...**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so make know his servants to David the words the these and so is smooth the word in [two] eyes of David to be a son-in-law in the king.

Septuagint

And not been fulfilled the days,...

And the servants of Saul report these words to David, and David was well pleased to become the son-in-law to the king.

Significant differences:

The differences appear to be differences in translation.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

The officials told David, and David wanted to marry the princess.

King Saul had set a time limit, and before it ran out,...

NLT

David was delighted to accept the offer. So before the time limit expired,...



**REB** The courtiers told David what Saul had said, and marriage with the king's daughter on these terms pleased him well. Before the appointed time,...

**TEV** Saul's officials reported to David what Saul had said, and David was delighted with the thought of becoming the king's son-in-law. Before the day set for the wedding,...

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

**God's Word™** When his officers told David this, David concluded that it was acceptable to become the king's son-in-law. Before the time was up,...

**JPS (Tanakh)** When the courtiers told this to David, David was pleased with the idea of becoming the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired,...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** When his servants told David these words, it pleased [lit., *it was agreeable in the sight of*] David to become the king's son-in-law. Before the days had expired [lit., *And the days had not expired*].

**Young's Updated LT** And his servants declare to David these words, and the thing is right in the eyes of David, to be son-in-law to the king;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** The servants pass along these words to David about an acceptable dowry being 100 Philistine foreskins, and this is fine with David. The end of this verse belongs with the next verse; it indicates that Saul put a time limit on the collection of foreskins.

1Samuel 18:26a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i> ]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
ʿebed (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84



## 1Samuel 18:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʿêlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced EEHL-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41

**Translation:** [So his servants made known to David these words...](#) Saul was like a master chess player. He knew exactly what David would say to his servants; he knew what his servants would say to him. Before they walked through the palace doors, Saul already knew what he was going to say to them. He knew how David would react as well. He knew that the servants would find David easily, that they would convey his proposal reasonably well, and that David would accept the terms of the marriage dowry.

## 1Samuel 18:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshar (יָשָׁר) [pronounced yaw-SHAHR]	<i>to be smooth, straight, right; figuratively, it means to be pleasing, agreeable, right (particularly when followed by in my eyes)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3477 BDB #449
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced ĠAH-yin]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## 1Samuel 18:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châthan (חַתָּן) [pronounced <i>khaw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to be a son-in-law, to make oneself a daughter's husband</i>	Hithpael infinitive construct	Strong's #2859 BDB #368
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MĒH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...and the proposition [lit., *the word*] to become the son-in-law to the king was agreeable to David [lit., *agreeable in the eyes of David*]. David thinks about this proposal and it seems reasonable to him. Obviously, he told these men, “This proposition is agreeable to me” and that Saul’s officials took this information back to Saul. However, insofar as Saul was concerned, this was a done deal. He already knew what was going to transpire. So another trip by the servants is not recorded.

You may wonder to yourself, *isn't David as smart as Saul? Why isn't David playing chess with the same skill as Saul?* We are dealing with different sorts of people; David is honest and you can believe what he says; Saul is dishonest and he says whatever he does to get what he wants. Saul could care less whether he lies or tells the truth; he says what he says to get what he wants. To David, it never occurs to him—particularly at this age—to be anything other than honest and straightforward. This is one of the problems that honest believers face—we tend not to read much more into what a person says beyond what that person says. Sometimes, we have to be lied to several times in a row before it registers. Saul is God’s choice as king of Israel; Saul is still king. David pretty much takes whatever Saul says at face value. There will be a point at which David will stop doing this; however, David gives Saul the benefit of the doubt over and over again. Recall what Jesus told His disciples when sending them out: “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the sanhedrins, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the nations.” (Matt. 10:16–18). Jesus did not expect his disciples to be sneaky and deceptive; He did not expect them to lie and misrepresent the truth; He did not expect them to cleverly put phrases together in order to get what they want. “Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”

**Application:** There are other religions whose adherents come to you and argue their position, and, if you ever seem to get the best of the argument, then they are told to go on the offensive in a different area. There are some radical religions who teach that almost anything is acceptable—lying, deceiving, killing—as long as it promotes the ends of their fanaticism. We are not called upon by Jesus to lie, to cheat, or to do anything wrong in order to promote the truth. If you could snap your fingers, and a “Christian” army would spring into action and take over a country, making all other religions illegal, would you do it? God never calls upon us to spread Christianity by force. We all believe in Jesus Christ the same way—from our own free will. There is no other way to come to Christ. You cannot be argued into the kingdom; you cannot be forced into the kingdom. No matter how many options you eliminate, a person can always say *no*. The decision that they make inside their souls is the decision which counts. If a person does not, in their own soul, believe in Jesus Christ, then there is nothing that we can do—we cannot override the free will of others. We cannot run roughshod over the free will of others.

Okay, I realize I have gone off on a tangent, so let’s get back to the narrative:

## 1Samuel 18:26c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô <sup>7</sup> (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâlê <sup>7</sup> (מָלֵא) [pronounced <i>maw-LAY</i> ]	<i>to fill, to make full; to be filled, to be full, to fulfill</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #4390 BDB #569
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** *And before the days had been fulfilled* [lit., *And the days had not been fulfilled*],... In almost every chapter, there is at least one poorly divided verse. The division of the verses did not occur until after the first advent of our Lord. V. 26c obviously belongs with the following verse. The idea is that Saul had set a time limit on this. Given 20 years, sure, David might be able to casually put together 100 kills. However, as Saul no doubt explained, "I cannot allow my daughter to wait and wait and wait. It just would not be fair to her. This is the time period that you will have." Even though this was not recorded, we know Saul said something along these lines, because we have the *fulfilment of days* here, indicating that there was a time frame to which David had to adhere.

**And so rises David and so he goes, he and his men, and so kills in the Philistines two hundred a man and so David brings their foreskins and so they fulfill them to the king to be a son-in-law in the king. And so gives to him Saul Michal his daughter to wife.**

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**So David arises and goes out, he and his men, and he kills two hundred men [from] among the Philistines. David then brought their foreskins and they fulfilled his obligation [lit., and they fulfilled them] to the king to become the king's son-in-law. Therefore, Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wed [lit., to wife].**

**Later, David arose and went out with his men, and he personally killed two hundred Philistine men. He returned and gave their foreskins to Saul, thus fulfilling the dowry requirement. Therefore, Saul gave his daughter Michal to him to marry.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Latin Vulgate

And after a few days David rose up, and went with the men that were under him, and he slew of the Philistines two hundred men, and brought their foreskins and numbered them out to the king, that he might be his son in law. Saul therefore gave him Michol, his daughter, to wife.

##### Masoretic Text

And so rises David and so he goes, he and his men, and so kills in the Philistines two hundred a man and so David brings their foreskins and so they fulfill them to the king to be a son-in-law in the king. And so gives to him Saul Michal his daughter to wife.

##### Septuagint

And David arose and went, he and his men, and struck down among the Philistines a hundred men; and he brought their foreskins and he becomes the king's son-in-law, and he gives him Melchol his daughter to wife.

**Significant differences:** The primary difference is, the Greek has 100 Philistines; the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin has 200. There is some confusion with the verb which precedes *the king*; in the Syriac, this reads *he gave them*; in the Latin, *he numbered them*; in the Hebrew, *he fulfilled them*; and in the Greek, *he becomes the king's son-in-law*. I think the difficulty is found with a difficult verb in the Hebrew.

Another difference, so minor, it hardly bears mentioning: the Greek does not name Saul by name in this verse.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

**CEV** ...David and his men left and killed two hundred Philistines. He brought back the proof and showed it to Saul, so he could marry Michal. Saul agreed to let David marry Michal.

**NLT** ...he and his men went out and killed two hundred Philistines and presented all their foreskins to the king. So Saul gave Michal to David to be his wife.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

**JPS (Tanakh)** David went out with his men and killed two hundred [Septuagint reads "one hundred" and cf. 2 Sam. 3.14] Philistines; David brought their foreskins and they were counted out [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain] for the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**The Emphasized Bible** Wherefore David arose and went—||he and his men||, and smote among the Philistines two hundred men, and David brought in their foreskins, and gave them in full tale unto the king, that he might become son-in-law unto the king, and Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

**NASB** David rose up and went, he and his men, and struck down two hundred men among the Philistines. Then David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter for a wife.

**Young's Updated LT** ...and David rises and goes, he and his men, and strikes among the Philistines two hundred men, and David brings in their foreskins, and they set them before the king, to be son-in-law to the king; and Saul gives to him Michal his daughter for a wife.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Before the time limit had expired (v. 26c), David killed 200 Philistines and brought their foreskins to Saul. Saul gave his daughter Michal to David in marriage.

1Samuel 18:27a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced koom]	to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

## 1Samuel 18:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
hûw <sup>ʾ</sup> (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** [So David arises and goes out, he and his men,...](#) What you will miss in my almost literal translation is the repetition of the connective *and so*, which is found six times in this verse. This is known as a polysyndeton,<sup>26</sup> which moves the action along quickly. The usage here conveys that David gets right on this requirement which Saul set for him and fulfills it immediately. There was no dinking around wondering if there was another way, or wondering whether or not he really wanted to marry Michal. He simply went out and did it. They may have even left that very day.

## 1Samuel 18:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>ʿ</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

<sup>26</sup> See *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 208.

## 1Samuel 18:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâ`thayim (מֵאֵתַיִם) [pronounced <i>maw-thah-YIM</i> ]	<i>two hundred</i>	feminine dual numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
This reads <i>one hundred</i> in the Greek; <i>200</i> in the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin.			
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** ...and he kills two hundred men [from] among the Philistines. The first four verbs all have singular subjects. David certainly took his troops with him; however, I can guarantee you from the morphology that David personally killed each and every one of the one or two hundred Philistines. He agreed to this obligation and he held up his part of the bargain.

You will note that the Hebrew reads *200* and the Greek reads *100*. I personally would go with the Hebrew here; it is not out of the question that David would do more than what was required for Michal—particularly, given Saul's questionable honor. It is also understandable why a copyist (or translator) might change the *200* into *100*. For these two reasons, the Hebrew is probably the more accurate text.

You will note that David doubly fulfills the requirements of Saul (the Greek text notwithstanding), sooner than was required.

## 1Samuel 18:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בָּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾorlâw (עֲרֻלָּו) [pronounced <i>gôhr<sup>e</sup>-LAW</i> ]	<i>foreskin</i>	feminine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6190 BDB #790

**Translation:** David then brought their foreskins... After these men were killed, their foreskins were collected and brought to Saul. You might think, *that's an unusual request*. David essentially cut off their penises and it was obvious that these were uncircumcised penises, indicating that these were Philistine penises. This is why Saul requested that these be brought. David would have to kill 100 (or 200) enemies of Israel, as they would be the uncircumcised ones. Also, it was a matter of convenience (not to the Philistines, of course). It is a lot easier to



put 100–200 penises in a bag than it is to bring 100 bodies to fulfill the dowry request (not that I have done either in the past; I'm simply approaching this from a logical stance).

### 1Samuel 18:27d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâlê' (אָלַי) [pronounced <i>maw-LAY</i> ]	<i>to fill, to make full, to fill up, to fulfill</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4390 BDB #569
The previous verb is a masculine singular in the Greek and Latin. Rotherham renders this verb <i>to give</i> . However, the subject here would no longer be David, but possibly the foreskins (which is actually feminine noun) or the Philistines (the <i>dead</i> Philistines, which is a masculine plural).			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
châthan (חַתָּן) [pronounced <i>khaw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to be a son-in-law, to make oneself a daughter's husband</i>	Hithpael infinitive construct	Strong's #2859 BDB #368

**Translation:** ...and they fulfilled his obligation [lit., and they fulfilled them] to the king to become the king's son-in-law. Here, there is some problem with the translation. In the Hebrew, this reads *and they fulfill them*, which does not exactly make sense. It is reasonable for this to read, perhaps, *and they [the foreskins] fulfilled his obligation* or *they [the foreskins] fulfilled the dowry requirement*. The problem is that *foreskin* is actually a feminine singular and a feminine plural noun in this context. The reference could be to the *dead Philistines*, which noun is a masculine plural. This would give us: ...and they [the dead Philistines] fulfilled them [the dowry requirements]. This understanding allows the text to stand as is and still make perfect sense.

### 1Samuel 18:27e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678



## 1Samuel 18:27e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>ℓ</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ`ûwl (לִּוְאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mîykal (מִיכָל) [pronounced <i>mee-KAHL</i> ]	possibly means <i>brook</i> or <i>stream</i> and is transliterated <i>Michal</i>	feminine proper noun	Strong's #4324 BDB #568
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bath</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>ℓ</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
`îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** Therefore, Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wed [lit., *to wife*]. Saul had no other choice—David fulfilled the conditions of marriage—in fact, David twice fulfilled the obligation of the dowry requirement; Saul conveyed these requirements via his officials; therefore, it would be difficult for Saul to recant at this point.

And so sees Saul and so he knows that Y<sup>e</sup>howah [is] with David; and Michal, daughter of Saul, loved him;...

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Saul realized [lit., *Saul sees and knows*] that Y<sup>e</sup>howah [is] with David and [that] his [lit., *Saul's*] daughter Michal [LXX: *all Israel*] loved David [lit., *him*];...

Saul clearly realized that Jehovah was with David and that his daughter was very much in love with David,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so sees Saul and so he knows that Y<sup>e</sup>howah [is] with David; and Michal, daughter of Saul, loved him;...

##### Septuagint

And Saul saw that the Lord [was] with David and [that] all Israel loved him.

##### Significant differences:

The Greek leaves out the fact that Saul *knows* that God is with David; the Greek also says that *all Israel* loves David, rather than Michal. The Latin and Syriac are in agreement with the Hebrew, as usual.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	Saul knew that she loved David [ <i>she...David</i> : Hebrew; one ancient translation “all Israel was loyal to David.”], and he also realized that the LORD was helping David.
NJB	Saul could not but see that Yahweh was with David, and that the whole House of Israel loved him;...
NLT	When the king realized how much the LORD was with David and how much Michal loved him,...
REB	He saw clearly that the LORD was with David, and knew that Michal his daughter had fallen in love with him;...
TEV	Saul realized clearly that the LORD was with David and also that his daughter Michal loved him.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)	When Saul realized to the LORD was with David -and that Michal daughter of Saul loved him- [ <i>Septuagint reads “and that all Israel loved him.”</i> ],...
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**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and <i>that</i> Michal, Saul's daughter loved him,...
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And Saul sees and knows that Jehovah <i>is</i> with David, and Michal daughter of Saul has loved him,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul recognizes that his daughter Michal is clearly in love with David and that Jehovah God is clearly with David.

This is again one of those verses which was incorrectly separated; vv. 28–29 should form one verse (you will note that most of the translations treat this and the next verse as one sentence).

**1Samuel 18:28a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâda` (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHÇ</i> ]	<i>to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393

## 1Samuel 18:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** [Saul realized](#) [lit., *Saul sees and knows*] [that Y<sup>e</sup>howah \[is\] with David...](#) All the evidence that Saul could observe made it clear that Jehovah God was with David. Saul had been a man empowered by God the Holy Spirit. He could see that God was with David and he knew it in his heart.

## 1Samuel 18:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Mîykal (מִיכָל) [pronounced <i>mee-KAHL</i> ]	possibly means <i>brook</i> or <i>stream</i> and is transliterated <i>Michal</i>	feminine proper noun	Strong's #4324 BDB #568
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bath</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
In the Septuagint, it is <i>all Israel</i> that loves David.			
ʿâhêb (אָהַב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV<sup>ê</sup></i> ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12

**Translation:** [...and \[that\] his](#) [lit., *Saul's*] [daughter Michal](#) [LXX: *all Israel*] [loved David](#) [lit., *him*];... It was also clear that his daughter Michal was very much in love with David, and that pawning her off on another man would have just opened up a can of worms that Saul was not prepared to deal with. At this point, Saul felt, "Oh, hell, what's the use?"

In the Septuagint, this reads: [...and all Israel loved David](#). I believe that this is probably the better rendering (although few translators followed the LXX here), because (1) we already know that Michal is in love with David and (2) it is more important that all Israel loves David. This is almost a moot point, however, as we have already been

told that Michal loves David in v. 20 and that Judah and Israel love David in v. 16. Saul's realization that his daughter loved David (or that Israel loved David) would have given him cause for fear (v. 29). This means either that (1) David has someone on the inside who is more loyal to him than to Saul; or that the people or that (2) Israel favor David over Saul. In the second instance, Saul would have reason to fear David and to become David's enemy continually, which is in complete agreement with the next verse.

**And so adds Saul to fear from faces of David still; and so is Saul an enemy [to] David all the days.**

1Samuel  
18:29

**Therefore, Saul continues to fear from before the face of David and so he becomes [lit., is] the enemy of David continually [lit., all the days].**

**No matter how elaborate were the schemes that Saul plotted against David, David always emerged unscathed. Therefore, Saul began to continually be in fear of David and he became David's inveterate enemy.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so adds Saul to fear from faces of David still; and so is Saul an enemy [to] David all the days.

Septuagint                              ...and he was yet more afraid of David.

Significant differences:              The Greek leaves off the second phrase. This phrase is found in the Hebrew, Latin and Syriac.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    But knowing those things made Saul even more afraid of David, and he was David's enemy for the rest of his life.

NJB    ...Saul became more afraid of David than ever, and became his inveterate enemy.

NLT    ...he became even more afraid of him, and he remained David's enemy for the rest of his life.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word*<sup>TM</sup>                              Then Saul as even more afraid of David, and so Saul became David's constant enemy.

JPS (Tanakh)                              Saul grew still more afraid of David; and Saul was David's enemy ever after.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    ...then Saul was even more afraid of David. Thus Saul was David's enemy continually.

*Young's Updated LT*                      ...and Saul added to be afraid of the presence of David yet; and Saul is an enemy with David all the days.

**What is the gist of this verse?** No matter what Saul tries, he cannot kill David nor can he set things up so that David will be killed. He therefore fears David and becomes David's continual enemy.

## 1Samuel 18:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâçaph (יָצַח) [pronounced <i>yaw-SAHPH</i> ]	<i>to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
There is an alternative reading of this verb in the Hebrew, which is...			
ʿâçaph (יָצַח) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i> ]	<i>relocate, transfer, transport, gather, to gather and remove, to remove</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
yârê' (יָרַע) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פְּנֵים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, mipânîym mean <i>from before his face, out from before his face, from one's presence</i> . However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered <i>because of, because that</i> .			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿôwd (עוֹד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i> ]	<i>still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet</i>	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728

**Translation:** [Therefore, Saul continues to fear from before the face of David...](#) Saul could not kill David directly or by stealth; he could not keep David away from the palace or out of the royal family. He knows that David is his replacement and he is beginning to see that there is nothing that he can do about it. Saul therefore fears David (vv. 12, 29), knowing that at any time, David could kill him and take the throne from him. Recall that we tend to judge people based upon our own character. Saul knows that, if he had the power, he would kill David in an instant; therefore, he assumes David would do the same to him.

I have given the quote: **“Be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves.”** I want you to notice all that Saul has done, and what either David or God does in response:

### Saul’s Attempts to Foil the Plan of God

What Saul Does	The End Result
Saul twice tries to kill David directly.	Saul fails on both occasions to kill David (1Sam. 18:10–11).
Saul put David into warfare continually with a small squad of men, effectively demoting him and putting him in greater danger.	Despite this, David prospers (1Sam. 18:3–16).
Saul goes back on his word and has his daughter who is promised to David marry another	Saul’s younger daughter falls in love with David (1Sam. 18:17–20).
Saul sends David out to personally kill 100 Philistines, thinking that, out of a hundred, given a time limit, David will have to slip up and die.	David instead returns with 200 Philistine foreskins (1Sam. 18:20–28).
Saul acts with duplicity again and again, looking to harm David in any way possible; David acts honestly and with integrity.	

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**Application:** Saul is the king of Israel and he cannot kill David either directly or indirectly. Let this be a lesson to you—no one can take you out of this world until it is God’s time. When God has a plan for your life, and when you fulfill His plan, then you do not need to worry about death. God controls that entirely.

### 1Samuel 18:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #1961 BDB #224
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #7586 BDB #982
`âyab (אֵיבָב) [pronounced <i>aw-YA<sup>AV</sup></i> ]	<i>to be at enmity, to be hostile; as a participle, it means enemy, the one being at enmity with you</i>	Qal active participle	Strong’s #340 BDB #33

## 1Samuel 18:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** ...and so he becomes [lit., is] the enemy of David continually [lit., all the days]. This is how addictive power can be. There is no reason that the passing of the kingship over Israel could not be peaceful. Saul needs only say to David, “I know that you are God’s chosen man to be king over Israel; here is the crown; I have instructed my soldiers to obey you. I will simply take this villa outside of Jerusalem and expect a salary to retire on.” Saul could swing that deal, but he never does. He doesn’t even consider handing over the crown to David. He is king; that is a position that he can retain for life; and Saul is just not about to give it up. Therefore, this makes David and Saul more than simply political factions who oppose one another—they are sworn enemies to one another (at least, in Saul’s mind). The only way that David will become king is over Saul’s dead body; therefore, they are enemies.

The NIV Study Bible tells us: *Saul’s perception that God’s hand was on David did not lead him to repentance and acceptance or his own lot (see 15:26) but into greater fear and jealousy toward David.*<sup>27</sup> When we perceive any sort of relationship with God (e.g., personal discipline), there are a variety of ways that we can respond. Here, Saul responded with hatred, fear and jealousy.

Let us again pick up Edersheim’s commentary: *In reality it was against Jehovah that he contended rather than against David. So true is it that all sin is ultimately against the Lord; so bitter is the root of self; and so terrible the power of evil in its constantly growing strength, till it casts out all fear of God or care for man. So true also is it that “he that hateth his brother is a murderer,” in heart and principle. On the other hand, these constant unprovoked attempts upon the life of David, regardless of the means employed, till at last the whole forces of the kingdom were used for no other purpose than to hunt down an innocent fugitive, whose only crime was that God was with him, and that he had successfully fought the cause of Israel, must have had a very detrimental effect upon the people. They must have convinced all that he who now occupied the throne was unfit for the post, while at the same time they could not but demoralize the people in regard to their real enemies, thus bringing about the very results which Saul so much dreaded.*<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 400.

<sup>28</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 474.



And so comes out chiefs of Philistines and so he is from a sufficiency of their coming out has been prudent David from all servants of Saul. And so is esteemed his name exceedingly.

1Samuel  
18:30

When [lit., *and*] the chiefs of the Philistines came out [to war with Israel], it was [that] every time they came out [to war], David behaved more wisely than all of Saul's servants. Therefore [lit., *and*] his reputation was highly esteemed.

Even though the Philistines continued to battle against the Israelites, that David behaved more wisely in each battle than any of Saul's other servants. Because of this, David's reputation was highly honored.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so comes out chiefs of Philistines and so he is from a sufficiency of their coming out has been prudent David from all servants of Saul. And so is esteemed his name exceedingly.

Septuagint                              And the chief of the Philistines went forth; and it came to pass that from the sufficiency of their expedition, David acted wisely above all the servants of Saul; and his name was extremely honored.

Significant differences:              No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                        The Philistine rulers kept coming to fight Israel, but whenever David fought them, he won. He was famous because he won more battles against the Philistines than any of Saul's other officers.

NJB                                        The Philistine chiefs kept mounting their campaigns but, whenever they did so, David proved more successful than any of Saul's staff; consequently he gained great renown.

NLT                                        Whenever the Philistine army attacked, David was more successful against them than all the rest of Saul's officers. So David's name became very famous throughout the land.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™                            The Philistine generals still went out [to fight Israel]. But whenever they went out [to fight], David was more successful than the rest of Saul's officers. So David gained a good reputation

JPS (Tanakh)                            The Philistine chiefs marched out [to battle]; and every time they marched out, David was more successful than all the other officers of Saul. His reputation soared.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                        Then the commanders of the Philistines went out *to battle*, and it happened as often as they went out, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul. So his name was highly esteemed.

Young's Updated LT                    And the princes of the Philistines come out, and it comes to pass from the time of their coming out, David has acted more wisely than any of the servants of Saul, and his name is very precious.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The war between Israel and Philistia was ongoing; however, David continued to behave wisely in his wars with the Philistines. His name (or reputation) in Israel continued to be revered by all Israel (and he was feared by the Philistines).

## 1Samuel 18:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
sar (סָר) [pronounced <i>sar</i> ]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
Philistîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** *When* [lit., *and*] *the chiefs of the Philistines came out* [to war with Israel],... In the day that I write this, the news is filled with reports of acts of aggression between the Jews and Arabs. In fact, from the time that the Jews moved into the Palestine area, there seems to be a continual war going on, and an extreme amount of hatred between Jews and non-Jews. This was how things were between the Jews and the Philistines. Even though they were soundly defeated in the valley of Elah, the Philistines continued to attack the Israelites.

## 1Samuel 18:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; without a specific subject and object, hâyâh can mean and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass (with the wâw consecutive)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
day (דַּי) [pronounced <i>dahy</i> ]	<i>sufficiency, a large enough quantity, enough, abundance</i>	substantive which can act like an adverb	Strong's #1767 BDB #191
When <i>day</i> is preceded by <i>min</i> , the meaning is <i>according as, as often as, whenever</i> when followed by an infinitive; also, <i>according to the multitude, abundance; every month, every year, monthly, yearly</i> [in the right context], <i>every time</i> .			
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	Qal infinitive construct with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3318 BDB #422

## 1Samuel 18:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sâkal (לַכֹּשֵׁל) [pronounced saw-KAHL]	<i>to look at, to behold; to be prudent, to behave wisely [as one who has been properly instructed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7919 BDB #968
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>with a plural noun, it is rendered all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĠE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	<i>which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...it was [that] every time they came out [to war], David behaved more wisely than all of Saul's servants. The more that you are in the public eye, the more that you are put under pressure, the more opportunities one has to screw up their own reputation in one way or another. David, even though under constant pressure, continued to reveal his almost innate wisdom in almost any circumstance—even more so than anyone else in Saul's army.

## 1Samuel 18:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâqar (יָקָר) [pronounced yaw-KAHR]	<i>to be heavy; to be hard [to be understood; to be precious, to be prized, to be highly esteemed, to be praised; to be honored]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3365 BDB #429
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

## 1Samuel 18:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
m <sup>e</sup> ôd (טִּכַּן) [pronounced m <sup>e</sup> -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** *Therefore* [lit., *and*] *his reputation was highly esteemed*. Because of David's visibility and wisdom under pressure, the people of Israel began to think very highly of David, recognizing his ability to function well under pressure. The Philistines also knew of David and feared him.

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One of the *problems* associated with this account (or accounts) of David, Saul and Jonathan, is that the narrative only partially follows the chronological order. Therefore, it may be instructive to set all these events out chronologically.

### 1Samuel 16–18 Presented in Chronological Order

Passage	Event	Additional Notes
1Sam. 16:1–13	Samuel anoints David to be king over Israel.	Saul was given at least two chances to obey God, and he failed to do so. God chose not to have a king who obeyed Him whenever he felt like it.
1Sam. 16:13–14	The Holy Spirit leaves Saul and comes upon David.	God also allows an evil spirit—a demon in all likelihood—to torment and influence Saul.
1Sam. 16:16–20, 23	David is brought to the palace of Saul with the purpose of becoming the palace musician and soothing Saul during one of his <i>attacks</i> .	God moved David to a very visible position, even though very few people actually knew David when he was a shepherd.
1Sam. 17:1–11, 16	The Philistines gather to fight against Israel in Socoh. Goliath challenges the troops of Israel.	This event is simultaneous with the two events that follow.
1Sam. 17:15	David, when his services were not required at the palace, would still tend his father's flock. He went back and forth between the fields and the palace.	If Saul is at war, then he is away from the palace and David was not brought with him to the battle.
1Sam. 17:17–20	David's father sends him to the battle lines with some supplies.	If David is not Saul's armorbearer at this time, then this makes perfect sense for him to be at home while his brothers are at war.
1Sam. 17:21, 23	Goliath continues to challenge the men of Israel. He comes out and challenges them to a one-on-one fight for 40 days.	No man—including Saul, Jonathan or any of David's brothers—step forward to meet this challenge.

## 1Samuel 16–18 Presented in Chronological Order

Passage	Event	Additional Notes
1Sam. 17:22–30	David double-checks about the reward that Saul is offering for the man who defeats Goliath. David's three older brothers are peeved at him asking these questions.	David already knows that he is carrying the winning lottery ticket; he is simply double-checking his winnings at this point.
1Sam. 17:31–37	Saul hears about David's questions and sends for him. David defends his ability to fight.	David tells Saul that he has already faced a bear and a lion.
1Sam. 17:38–39	Although Saul lends David his armor, it is clear that David is uncomfortable with it.	This is one reason why David had not been made Saul's armor bearer yet. Furthermore, had David been Saul's armor bearer, then he would have been with Saul ready to prepare Saul for war. Furthermore, he would be more familiar with the armor.
1Sam. 17:40–51	David defeats Goliath.	God, through David, defeats Goliath.
1Sam. 17:51b–53	Israel attacks the Philistines, who retreat to their cities in Philistia.	It is not clear whether David or Saul joined in the fray. There is no reason to assume that David chased after the Philistines with the rest of Israel, as he is not officially a part of Saul's army.
1Sam. 17:54–58	Saul asks his general about David. General Abner does not know who David is or who his father is. David is brought before Saul. Goliath's head is in his hand, as he is about to take it to Jerusalem.	There is no reason for Saul to know David's father—even if he directed a message to be sent to David's father back in 1Sam. 16:21–22. Saul may not have recognized David as his palace musician.
1Sam. 18:1, 3	During the visit between Saul and David, Jonathan, Saul's son, became quite fond of David. This relationship grew into a solid and true friendship.	It is reasonable that Jonathan sat in on at least two conversations between David and Saul, and noticed that they had a lot in common.
1Sam. 16:21–22 18:2	Saul had David's father contacted, to let him know that David would be employed full-time by Saul. David was first promoted to armor-bearer (a position which he held during war time).	The original intention was for David to be Saul's musician during peacetime and his armor bearer during war time. Furthermore, if David was to be groomed for a position of military leadership, he needed to know something about armor.
1Sam. 18:4	Jonathan gives David his personal weapons and armor.	Unlike Saul, Jonathan is not threatened by David. We will see this throughout their relationship.
1Sam. 18:6	A tradition developed after Israel's initial victory over the Philistines. The women of Israel came out and celebrated this victory.	This apparently occurred in city after city where David went to fight.

## 1Samuel 16–18 Presented in Chronological Order

Passage	Event	Additional Notes
1Sam. 18:5	David is promoted rather quickly over the men of Israel. Although it is not clearly stated, it is possible that he rose in rank to the equivalent of Jonathan and Abner.	Although no time frame is given here, probably less than a year pass between this verse and the previous four.
1Sam. 18:7	These songs of celebration sung by the women of Israel turn sour in Saul's ear, as they begin to praise David over him.	It does not seem reasonable that David would be praised as the killer of tens of thousands of men after he kills only Goliath.
1Sam. 18:8–9	Saul is very upset that David is perceived as being superior to him in military exploits.	Saul has a fragile ego; he is threatened by David, even though he has no reason to be.
1Sam. 18:10–12	A peace of sorts was established, and David and Saul were back in the palace, with David acting as palace musician. On two occasions, Saul tries to kill David.	David eludes Saul on both occasions.
1Sam. 18:17–18	Saul apparently did not deliver on his promise to give his eldest daughter, Merab, to the killer of Goliath. Saul's rationale was probably that he had made this promise to his army, and not to civilians. However, he offers her to David if David goes out and fights Jehovah's battles as a part of Saul's elite force; in this way, David is a soldier.	It is not clear whether this was an additional duty assigned to David or whether this is simultaneous to the verses below. My feeling is that this verse clarifies why David is given the assignment in vv. 13–16. Saul didn't simply assign David to hazardous duty and let it go at that. He gave David a reason and motivation for serving.
1Sam. 18:13–16, 17b	Saul decides to remove David from his sight and puts him in charge of a small band of soldiers who are in constant duty. As we have seen, the bait is probably marriage to Saul's oldest daughter. David continues to prosper in this position and to gain public acclaim.	Originally, Saul's purpose was to get David out of his sight. It is never clear whether this is a demotion or whether Saul had several roving bands of soldiers who went about and <i>put out fires</i> , so to speak. It was Saul's expectation that David would become a battle casualty.
1Sam. 18:19	David apparently returns from war on the day that he is to marry Merab. However, she is marrying, on that very day, another man.	Saul probably told David that he was too poor and too low on the social scale to marry the king's daughter.
1Sam. 18:20–21a	Saul's youngest daughter, Michal, professes her love for David; this love may have existed for some time; however, she cannot make this known as long as David and her older sister are to be married. Saul decides to use this to his advantage, and to see that David is killed by the Philistines.	Saul keeps David from marrying Merab, and now he finds that his younger daughter is in love with David.



## 1Samuel 16–18 Presented in Chronological Order

Passage	Event	Additional Notes
1Sam. 18:21b	Saul probably speaks to David directly, offering him his other daughter's hand in marriage. David politely refuses, after having been burned twice by Saul's promises.	David will later tell Saul's servants, "I am too poor and too low to marry the king's daughter."
1Sam. 18:22–26	Saul employs his personal servants to go back and forth between himself and David to broker a marriage. The first time, they approach David as though it was of their own initiative.	Saul very likely is an outstanding actor and convinces his own servants of his own personal desire to make David his son-in-law.
1Sam. 18:27–29	Saul allows the marriage between Michal and David to go as scheduled, being frightened of David.	No matter what Saul does, David overcomes him—and David does so by being honest and showing great personal integrity.
1Sam. 18:30	This is a summary verse. David, from vv. 5–29, was a part of the army of Saul. During that time, he behaved wisely, as a man with doctrine; his fame spreading to both Israelites and Philistines.	Saul lies and is duplicitous; David is honest and straightforward, acting with great integrity.

You will note that the order of the previous three chapters is not completely out of order with the chronology. There are simply a few places here or there which need to be fine tuned, so that all of this fits together into a reasonable, sequential narrative.

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The book of Samuel presents to us the greatest textual problems of the Old Testament. There are portions where the Greek text is significantly different from the Hebrew text. The greatest disparity is found in this and the previous chapter, where huge chunks of text found in the Hebrew are missing in the Greek. Therefore, I will give you the entire text of this chapter, and differentiate between the text found only in the Greek and that found in the Hebrew.

What is in **blue** below is what Lancelot has in the Septuagint text; what is in **Magenta** is the additional text from the MT and also (for the most part) in the Alexandrian Septuagint. All of the text below is the MT and LXX α; the **blue** text taken by itself is what is found in LXX β.

### The Greek and Hebrew Text Translated and Differentiated

And so it was as he finished speaking to Saul that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as [he loved] his own soul. So Saul took him [David] in that day and did not allow [lit., give] him to return to his father's house. So Jonathan and David cut a covenant when his love to him [was as his love for] his [own] soul. So Jonathan removed the robe that he was wearing [lit., which (was) upon him] and he gave it to David, along with his outer garments, his sword, his bow and his belt. So David goes out and is prudent in all that Saul sends him [to do]. Therefore Saul placed him over the men of war and [this] was good in the eyes of all the people and in the eyes of Saul's servants. (Vv. 1–5)

And there came out women in dances to meet David out of all the cities of Israel, with timbrels, and with rejoicing, and with cymbals. And the women began the strain, and said, Saul has smitten in his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And it seemed evil in the eyes of Saul concerning this matter, and he said, To David they have given ten thousands, and to me they have given thousands. (Vv. 6–8a).

In addition, the kingdom [is] certainly his!" So Saul began [lit., is] eyeing David [or, regarding David with suspicion]



## The Greek and Hebrew Text Translated and Differentiated

from that day forward. And it was on the next day that an evil spirit of God comes into Saul and Saul raved [lit., and he prophesies] in the midst of the house while David was playing [his instrument] with his hand; Saul [had] a spear in his hand. Saul threw the spear and said [to himself], "I will pin [lit., strike] David to the wall." But David evaded him [lit., turned from his faces] twice. (Vv. 8b–11)

And Saul was alarmed on account of David. (V. 12a).

...because Y<sup>e</sup>howah was with him and had turned away from Saul. (V. 12b)

And he removed him from him, and made him a captain of a thousand for himself; and he went out and came in before the people. And David was prudent in all his ways, and the Lord was with him. And Saul saw that he was very wise, and he was afraid of him. And all Israel and Judah loved David, because he came in and went out before the people. (Vv. 13–16).

Saul said to David, "Here [is] my elder daughter, Merab; I will give her to you to wife. No doubt you will be a man [lit., a son] of valour for me and fight the wars of Y<sup>e</sup>howah." But Saul was thinking [lit., Saul had said], "My hand will not be against him; instead, the hand of the Philistines will be against him." David responded to Saul, "Who [am] I and what is my [status in] life [or, who [are] my kinsfolk]—my father's family—that I should be the king's son-in-law?" When it was time to give Merab, Saul's daughter, to David, she was [instead] given to Adriel the Meholathite as [his] wife. (Vv. 17–19)

And Melchol the daughter of Saul loved David; and it was told Saul, and the thing was pleasing in his eyes. And Saul said, I will give her to him, and she shall be a stumbling-block to him. Now the hand of the Philistines was against Saul. And Saul charged his servants, saying, Speak ye privately to David, saying, Behold, the king delights in thee, and all his servants love thee, and do thou become the king's son-in-law. And the servants of Saul spoke these words in the ears of David; and David said, Is it a light thing in your eyes to become son-in-law to the king? Whereas I am an humble man, an not honourable? And the servants of Saul reported to him according to these words, which David spoke. And Saul said, Thus shall ye speak to David, The king wants no gift but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to avenge himself on the king's enemies. Now Saul thought to cast him into the hands of the Philistines. And the servants of Saul report these words to David, and David was well pleased to become the son-in-law to the king. And David arose, and went, he and his men, and smote among the Philistines a hundred men: and he brought their foreskins, and he becomes the king's son-in-law, and Saul gives him Melchol his daughter to wife. And Saul saw that the Lord was with David, and that all Israel loved him. And he was yet more afraid of David. (Vv. 20–29)

When the chiefs of the Philistines came out [to war with Israel], it was [that] every time they came out [to war], David behaved more wisely than all of Saul's servants. Therefore his reputation was highly esteemed. (V. 30)

What is in Magenta and blue is found in the MT and, for the most part, in the Alexandrian LXX.

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