

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – January 26, 2025

Theme: "The Impact of Unsung Heroes in the Bible" **Topic:** Jonathan: A Covenant Brother

Text: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 1 Samuel 23:15-18; 2 Samuel 1:26; John 15:13.

Key verse: **John 15:13** ¹³ "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."
(NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: What is true friendship? It is when one soul is knit to another, like Jonathan's and David's (1 Sam 18:1). They were united because they shared the same faith, the same love for God's glory, and the same courage in battle (1 Sam 13:3; 14:4-14). Because Jonathan loved David, he made a covenant with him (1 Sam 18:3). A covenant is an unbreakable promise that unites people or groups. Jonathan was imitating God's covenant love. Because God loved Israel, He swore an oath to them that will never be broken (Deut 7:7-8; Rom 11:28-29). Do you imitate God's love in the way you love others (1 John 4:19)? Jonathan also shows that godly friendship is selfless. He took off his princely robe and military gear and gave them to David (1 Sam 18:4). By doing that, Jonathan gave up his right to be king and instead supported David's kingship. From a human perspective, Jonathan should have been the next king. He was the eldest son of Saul, a famous warrior, and a godly man. But Jonathan was humble. He was willing to give up his own rights to put God's kingdom first.

1. Read 1 Sam 18:1-4; 20:8, 12-16, 23, 42; 23:15-18 (a) What do you see as the source of the strength of the friendship between Jonathan and David? (b) In what practical ways do you see this manifest in their relationship? (c) What might a similar relationship look like in a city like Lagos?

True friends stand by each other, especially in difficult times. This is evident when David turned to Jonathan during his troubles. First, when David was confused (1 Sam 20:1), Jonathan reassured him that he had done nothing wrong (1 Sam 20:8-9). Second, Jonathan remained loyal, even establishing a greater covenant with David that extended to their entire families (1 Sam 20:15-16). Third, Jonathan assisted David by seeking out the truth (1 Sam 20:18-29). Fourth, Jonathan demonstrated selfless love by defending David, even at great personal risk (1 Sam 20:30-34). His anger towards his father was not for his own sake but out of concern for David's honour (1 Sam 20:34). Finally, after delivering bad news to David (1 Sam 20:35-40), Jonathan comforted him by pointing him back to God, sending him away in peace (1 Sam 20:42). This peace endured through their covenant friendship and trust in God (1 Sam 23:16).

2. (a) Read 1 Samuel 19:1-5; 20:4, 30-33, 35-42 and identify specific evidence of Jonathan's loyalty to his friend, David. (b) In 2 Samuel 9:1, David was ready to show kindness to anyone from the family of Saul for the sake of Jonathan. What does this teach us about the importance of loyalty to one's friends? (c) Which of the qualities that you look for in a friend do you exemplify, and which do you need to develop further?

Who is the greatest friend ever? Jesus is. Jesus sets the standard for friendship and true love. He demonstrated true love by sacrificing Himself for sinners. Even though He is God, Jesus willingly humbled Himself, taking on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man, so that He might suffer and die on a cross to satisfy the Father's wrath against sin (Phil 2:7-8). This is the same type of love God expects from you, but it is impossible until you first receive Christ's love (1 John 3:16). So, when you find it hard to humble yourself, look to Jesus. Through His humble death, your sins may be forgiven, the power of sin in your life broken, and peace with God restored. But since Jesus did not stay dead (Phil 2:9-11), you may also find life in His life (Rom 6:5) and reign with Him as He reigns (Rev 5:5). So even when life is hard, even when you must let go of your ambitions, you may have peace, because Jesus offers Himself as your truest friend.

3. Read John 15:12-13. (a) What parallels do you see between what Jonathan was willing to do for his friend David and what God, in Christ, did for sinful man? (b) If the vow Jonathan and David made was so binding that David was ready to show God's kindness to a descendant of Saul (2 Sam 9:3), how binding do you think God's oath is in our relationship with Him and with fellow believers? (c) What evidence or attribute of this binding covenant would you like to see more of in the body of Christ?

Prayer: Father, thank You for the example of Jonathan and David in showing us the characteristics of true, enduring, and loyal friendship. Please help us to be true and loyal to You and one another in the body of Christ so that all men may know that You are Lord. In Jesus name, Amen.