

PRINCE JONATHAN'S INTEGRITY

One Bible character who I admire is Prince Jonathan. To me he's an amazing example of honor and integrity. Think about it: He was destined to be the next king of Israel, but David essentially took his birthright when he was anointed by Samuel the prophet as the next king of Israel.

I have wondered exactly what it was that made Jonathan willing to not just accept David as God's anointed, but also embrace David as a friend and brother.¹ Maybe Jonathan was just a pretty happy-go-lucky guy who didn't care much about anything, but in most of the stories found in the Bible about him, it shows evidence to the contrary.

Jonathan had the courage to take on thousands of Philistines with just the help of his armor bearer.² He confronted his father on quite a few issues, and he played an active role in Saul's court. Jonathan told David, "Look, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without confiding in me."³ Most accounts I have read about him show that Jonathan was concerned about the welfare of Israel.

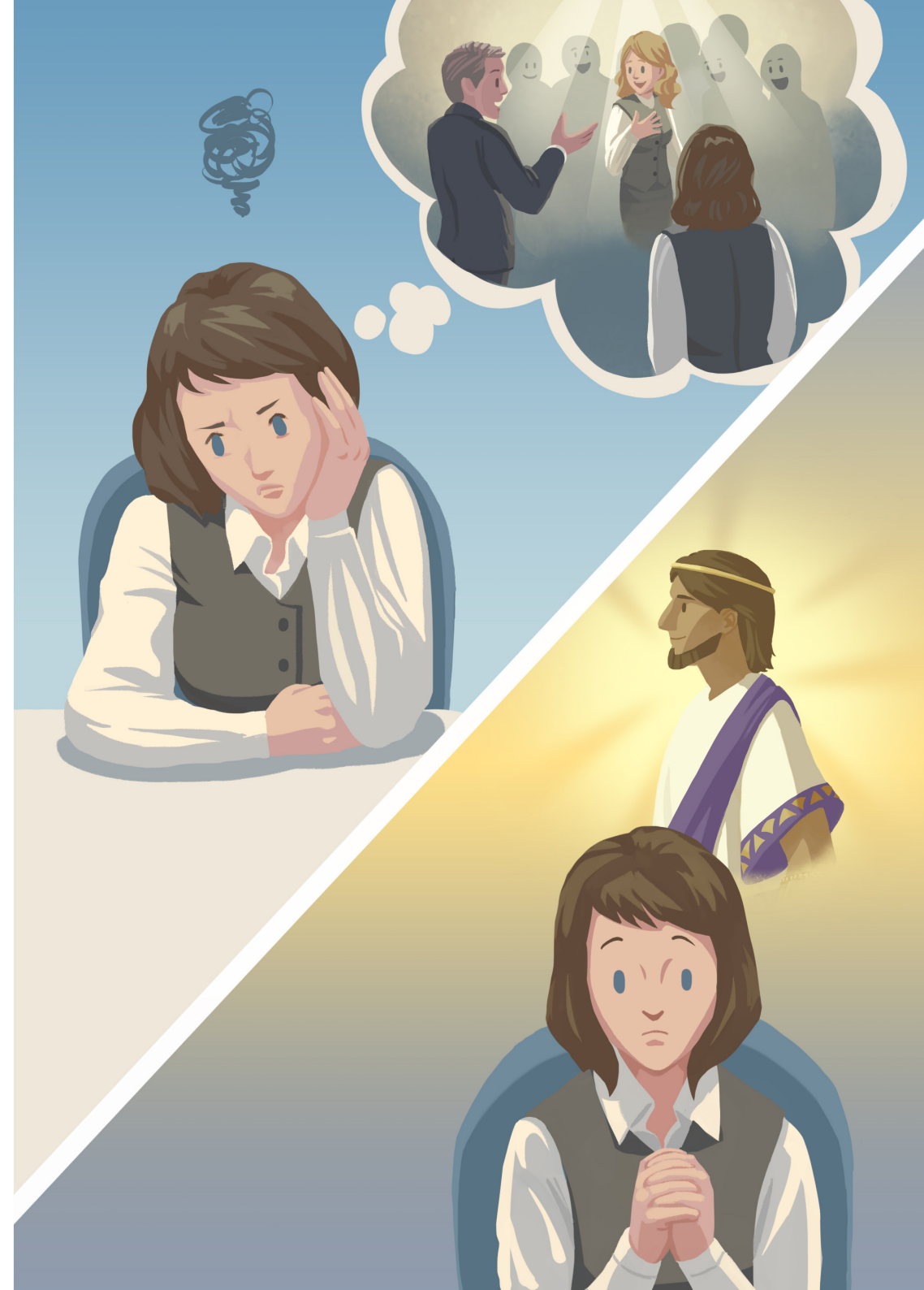


From my point of view, Jonathan didn't see ruling Israel as a self-serving opportunity. He didn't care who was king, as long as whoever was ruling was leading the country in God's ways. He put his full weight behind God's anointed, simply because he was God's anointed. That takes integrity—the kind of deep-seated integrity that comes from complete confidence in God's control.

Now we'll talk about me. A few years ago, I had some major issues in my workplace. It all came to a head for me when someone who was doing less for the company than I was got the promotion I had been in line for. I had been working hard for the company, and I honestly felt I deserved the promotion. I tried to be gracious, but it frustrated me to no end. My "team spirit" was sorely dampened.

I absolutely hate it when I feel something is unfair. Sometimes I have let myself think that someone else's unjust attitudes or actions "let me off the hook" for my bad reactions. Or—worse yet—I think that their behavior actually *entitles* me to have a poor attitude.

There I was, stewing in self-pity, before I finally realized I needed to pray about my situation. Guess who God brought to mind? Yup! Jonathan.



God reminded me of Jonathan's love for David, and how he did not question God's choice. I believe that Jonathan would have been a good king for Israel, but God chose David, and Jonathan trusted God's choice.

To be the kind of person who can recognize the part God has for you to play and play it without looking over your shoulder to see if anyone else has a better part, or is doing as good a job as you are, takes a very big person. (This is if you believe the position you are in is the place God has placed you. Of course, if you know in your heart God has something better for you, you should pursue it!)

The happy ending to my story is that I learned the value of playing my part as unto God. I learned to be content with my place.

Footnotes

¹ 1 Samuel 18:3–4.

² 1 Samuel 14:1–16.

³ 1 Samuel 20:2 NIV.

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