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**Subject:** The sad Failure of a Prince.

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Dear Saints

The article below was recently circulated by Revival Network.  
May God's people hear, listen and do!

Eben Swart

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JONATHAN & the SONS OF ZADOK  
-by Bill Britton.

Herein lies one the of the strangest, and saddest, stories of the Bible. The story of a fine young man who saw the coming of a new order, actually prophesied of the coming Kingdom, who knew and loved the coming King dearly, yet missed being in that glorious Kingdom simply because he never got around to coming out of the old order!

And with this story comes a solemn warning to those who are seeing the coming of a new order to the Church, who know what it is to feel the anointing of that new Move of the Spirit, who have every reason to be included in that glorious new Kingdom, yet who are in great danger of \*missing the ascent to the Throne\* simply because, like Jonathan, they will not separate themselves from the old order and "come out of her, my people". They continue to hang around the edges of what God is doing in these last days, content to keep in touch with the anointed people in the wilderness, but not willing to bear the reproach of being one of that "motley crew" in Adullam.

Now read on, if you dare.

\*"Swifter than the Eagle" \*

Jonathan was one of the finest and most admirable young men in the Bible. Many wonderful attributes are recorded of him, and not one sin laid to his charge. He was a man of faith, courage, vision, unselfishness, and deep spirituality. He was a King's son, next in line for the throne of his father. But he laid all this aside for the love of David, God's anointed, for he saw that it was the will of God for David to be the next King.

The first we see of Jonathan is in the 13th chapter of 1 Samuel. He is in Gibeah at the head of a thousand men in the army of his father, Saul. Here he refused to compromise or coexist with the devilish Philistines, but smote a garrison of them, and thus precipitated a crisis in Israel. His courage knew no limit. The Bible says that he was "swifter than the eagle, stronger than the lion". His army was not so. They had few weapons, were used to being trampled under the feet of the Philistines, and upon occasion they would flee to the rocks and the caves. He dwelled in the midst of a fearful and trembling people, but he was as bold as a lion, for he trusted in the living God.

\*"By Many or by Few" \*

As we go to the 14th chapter of 1 Samuel, we find Jonathan initiating a great victory over the Philistines, with the help of the God of heaven. He started out alone, with only the young man that bear his armour, and after putting out a fleece to God, he single-handedly attacked an entire garrison of the Philistines. He had to crawl up a mountain on his hands and feet in order to get to them, but when he got there he caused such a slaughter that the entire Philistine army went into utter confusion and began to attack each other. God stepped in with an earthquake and a great trembling, and there was a great victory that day. Jonathan was one who knew what it was to eat of the fresh honey and have his eyes enlightened and his soul strengthened. As a result, he also knew what it was to face the wrath of Saul, who is a type of the man-made king over God's people. But though he sees the wrongness in this system, he continues to stay in it.

\*\* "And He Stripped Himself" \*

After young David came along on that memorable day and slew Goliath, we find David and Jonathan becoming very close friends. In fact, it says: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."

The love between these two brave young men, the shepherd boy and the prince, was the brightest thing in Israel at this dark hour of history. Jonathan had at last found someone who did not run from the Philistines, someone whose courage matched his own. And he felt the divine anointing that rested upon David. For Samuel had anointed David with the horn of oil, to be king over Israel in Saul's place. And Jonathan came to the knowledge that David was the one to sit on the throne, not himself. For if he ascended to the throne of his father Saul, he could only continue the order his father was in, and he knew that this was not of God. But here was a new order, a new anointing, a new Kingdom that Israel had never experienced before. And God had ordained it. So Jonathan stripped himself of his princely garments and gave them to David. This was all while David was in Saul's house, under Saul's rule.

\*"David in the Wilderness" \*

Suddenly a great reproach falls upon David. It comes from nothing evil that he has done. No sin can be laid to his charge. But Saul is suddenly jealous over the anointing that is on David, and he tries to destroy that anointing. So David flees for his life into a wilderness place. Jonathan does not go along. He stays in Saul's house. He still loves David, he knows David has the anointing and the true message from God, but he is not quite ready to leave father's house and break all the family ties and bear the reproach that David is bearing.

How many there are that are pictured here! They love the anointing and the true message of the Kingdom. They are willing to make any sacrifice, pray, fast, go, and give. just to have that anointing. Except leave the old order. When it comes to that, they cannot see the need for it. Now it is not courage that is lacking. They have courage, and a great love for God. Like Jonathan, they are full of many fine qualities. But they cannot hear the trumpet saying "Come out of her, my people." They can hardly understand why the "Davids" have to waste their time in the "wilderness", with that little motley band of discontents, when they could be doing so much more, preaching to bigger crowds, winning more souls, sitting at Saul's table. They just can't see the reason for the separation. If David had gone forth with the approval of the organization, making some desperate charge against a powerful enemy, then Jonathan wouldn't have hesitated a minute. But what is David doing? \*Nothing.\* Just sitting out there in a cave somewhere, or hiding in the woods with his little band of four hundred men. Now four hundred may seem like a great congregation to some of these Move of God preachers who can hardly remember when they had more than fifty to preach to. But compared to the hundreds of thousands that Saul could assemble by blowing a trumpet, it was a tiny crowd.

"David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men" (1 Sam 22:1-2)

Where is Jonathan? Back in Saul's house, probably sitting around wondering what is happening with God's anointed tonight, maybe wishing he could just be there and hear David sing some of the psalms that God is giving him by the Spirit. He attends Saul's banquets, but they are dead, dry affairs, full of business meetings, committee meetings, programs, promotional humbug, political maneuvering, arguing and bad spirits floating around. Yet he can't seem to pull away. Maybe you think he can do more good for David there in Saul's palace.

Friends, believe me, God will take care of David. But he needs Jonathan out there in the wilderness with him. He is training an army, making leaders and future heroes. And Jonathan desperately needs to be in that Army. And there is a place for him. But he can't leave the old order, break the family ties and bear the reproach from his brethren.

Now Jonathan knows David is right, and that the new order will eventually come in. And on occasion he says so. Saul wants Jonathan to kill David, but in 1 Samuel chapters 19 and 20 we find Jonathan opposing his father and refusing to put his hand against this new move of the Spirit. This infuriates Saul so that he rails out at Jonathan and threatens him: "Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse and rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion?" (1 Sam 20:30)

Saul goes on to tell Jonathan that as long as this new order is alive, that Jonathan will never be able to take over the old order and get it established. But Jonathan refuses to oppose David, and Saul throws a javelin at him. But he still will not leave Saul. He knows that there is an evil spirit troubling his father's house, and that there is no victory in the camp. But there are strong natural ties that hold him.

\*"I Shall be Next to Thee" \*

Perhaps you think that Jonathan is not aware of what is going to happen to Saul's kingdom? Listen to him as he slips off secretly and visits David out in the woods:... "And he said unto him, "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and \*THOU SHALT BE KING OVER ISRAEL, AND I SHALL BE NEXT UNTO THEE;\* and that also Saul my father knoweth." And they two made a covenant before the Lord: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house."

Now David only had a few with him, and they were in the wilderness. But the blessings of God were "flowing" there in Ziph. But what a tragedy in those last few words. Jonathan has all good intentions. He has a true vision. \*He has a tremendous revelation of the coming Kingdom, probably more than most of the men who follow David.\* A lot of the men were in the wilderness with David because they had no place else to go, or they were discontent with the old system. Some were there because they didn't want to go to a debtor's prison, and some because they admired his ministry and the way he had killed Goliath. Some perhaps even had caught a vision of the message of the new order of the Kingdom. But none had the picture so clearly as Jonathan. \*He had the revelation.\* He loved the anointing. But all during the wilderness processing, he was missing!!

Why? He couldn't get around to coming out of the old order.

And when the new Kingdom came in and David sat on the throne, Jonathan was not standing there by him as he had prophesied. Why? Because the day that Saul fell in the battle, \*Jonathan was still with him\*, and fell also under the sword of the Philistines.

There was a time when Jonathan could put a whole army of Philistines to flight single-handedly. But that was because \*God was with him\*. Listen friends, what worked yesterday won't work today, because the order \*is\* changing, and \*God is moving on\*. Either move on \*with Him\*, or you'll find yourself missing out on the greatest thing man has ever seen. Babylon is going to fall, and if you don't come out of her, you'll find yourself falling with her, "being a partaker of her sins, and receiving of her plagues."

There is a little Army in the wilderness today, small, insignificant, reproached, lied-about, but anointed of God. They don't seem to be doing much, but they are \*not\* idle. They are in training. Mighty men of war are being raised up, men who will soon go forth and in the power of the new Kingdom order do that which Saul and all his armies have not been able to do. Saul started his reign with a battle against the Philistines, and for a while it looked like he would do alright and was making good gains against the enemy. But after 40 years on the throne, the Philistines were still around, and in fact, they overcame Saul in the end and hung his body in the halls of their false god. Jonathan's body hung there also, a reproach to the man who saw the glory from afar, but never received the inheritance ...