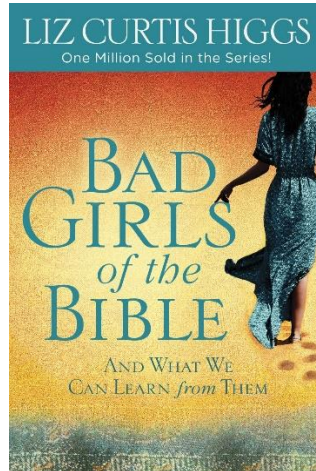


Word by Word with Liz Curtis Higgs on the Faith Radio Network

Bible Study Guide for January 27-28, 2018 | Michal

from *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs



1. Though a princess named Michal is at the heart of our story, her father, King Saul, managed to crush her heart at every turn. When Saul was anointed with oil by the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 10:1), and crowned king (1 Samuel 10:24), things looked rosy indeed. But Saul's disobedience was his undoing. Samuel lowered the boom on Saul, saying, "You have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you as king over Israel!" (1 Samuel 15:26). God chose instead to anoint David, son of Jesse, "and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David." (1 Samuel 16:13). Consider all the reasons why this shepherd boy from Bethlehem might have captured the heart of Princess Michal?
2. Fearing David's power, King Saul wanted his young rival eliminated. Read 1 Samuel 18:20-29 to see how Saul's plan backfired. After he tried to impale David with his spear (1 Samuel 19:9-10), it was up to Michal to save her husband, proving her love for David by helping him avoid her father's henchmen. In 1 Samuel 19:11-16 we see the heroic side of Michal's character. What is there about Michal that you find admirable here? Psalm 59:1-5 gives us David's version of the same scene. According to verse 4, whom does David blame? And whom does David call on for help? Do we ever hear Michal reaching heavenward for strength? Why or why not might that be the case?
3. Now consider the dilemma this daughter *and* wife faced when her father found out about David's escape, recorded in 1 Samuel 19:17. Whom does Saul blame? And how does Michal respond? Was it likely David would have killed her? What does Deuteronomy 5:16 command a daughter to do? What does Genesis 2:24 require a newlywed couple to do? To whom was Michal's first allegiance—her husband or her father? How

does Ephesians 5:22 answer that question? When, if ever, do we see Michal submit herself to the Lord?

4. While the bitter rivalry between Saul and David raged on, Michal disappears from the biblical record, reduced to a single verse: “But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David’s wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was from Gallim” (1 Samuel 25:44). According to Deuteronomy 22:22, what did Mosaic Law have to say about the situation with Michal and Paltiel? It appears Michal had no choice in the matter. How might a godly woman have managed to honor her marriage vows, even when her father didn’t? Could she have run away and found David? Refused to go with Paltiel? Instead, forced to live apart from the man she loved and forced to live with a man that she did not choose, Michal’s young heart must have been sorely broken. If you’ve ever found yourself in a desperate situation you *knew* was wrong, how did you handle it? How might Psalm 56:4 and 1 Corinthians 15:58 give you the strength to endure?
5. Finally, Michal and David were reunited, but whatever love they’d once shared was clearly lost. Read 2 Samuel 6:14-22. What is your impression of David’s means of worshiping God? And how does Michal’s response strike you? Whom did David put first in his life: himself, Michal, or God? And whom did Michal put first? What do you make of her tragic ending, described in 2 Samuel 6:23? Now read Acts 13:22-23. What does it mean that David was “a man after God’s own heart?” We’re told here that Jesus would one day become the long-awaited descendant of David. Why could Michal not be part of that family lineage?
6. What’s the most important lesson you learned from the story of Michal, a woman ultimately *not* seeking after God’s own heart nor her husband’s?