

Jonathan Helps David Escape



Scripture Reference: [1 Samuel 18:1-16;](#)
[19:1-10; chapter 20](#)

Suggested Emphasis: Do not be jealous.



Background Study



Story Introduction



Telling the Story



Review Questions



Songs



Learning Activities



Other Online Resources

Story Overview:

David moved to Saul's house. Saul often asked him to play the harp for him when he was upset. Saul became jealous when the people began to prefer David over him. In his jealousy he threw a spear at David and tried to kill him. Saul's son, Jonathan, was David's friend and he helped David escape from Saul.

Background Study:

Only David and his family and the elders at Bethlehem knew that Samuel had anointed David as the future king of Israel. David led a normal life otherwise. Because he was a

good musician, he seems to have become a part-time musician to the king. David still lived at home and went to the king when he was needed.

Although we sometimes think of Jonathan and David as very young when this story took place, they were actually grown men. They had both fought as soldiers and David married at this time. Jonathan was Saul's oldest son. He loved David despite the fact that his father was beginning to grow jealous of him. Jonathan and David even made a vow of friendship and sealed it with gifts. Jonathan gave David his robe, tunic, sword, bow and belt (18:1-4).

David's victory over Goliath is mentioned in 1 Samuel 18:6 and 19:5. In that time, women often went out to meet a victorious army of their people and then accompany the army back to town with singing and dancing. They used superlatives in their song of victory. The victory song of the Israelite women became quite a motivator, and it was an irritation to the Philistines (1 Samuel 21:11 and 29:4-5).

David's victory over Goliath changed him from an obscure rural shepherd to a national hero. He lived at the palace, accomplishing all the tasks Saul gave him. Instead of being jealous at his promotions, the people and the military were pleased with David's success.

Saul was trapped. On the one hand, he wanted to kill David and get him out of the way; but on the other hand, he needed to maintain the good will of his subjects. So when he and David were alone, he made two attempts to kill him (18:11 and 19:10). It's not unusual that Saul should have a spear in his hand, because that was the symbol of his kingly authority. But when he was unsuccessful in killing David, Saul began to fear David (18:12, 15).

In his jealousy, the king told his servants and his son to murder David. Instead, Jonathan warned David to hide. Jonathan planned to take his father for a walk close to David's hiding place in order to talk with him privately. He managed to get the king to change his mind and say David should not be killed (19:4-7). This goodwill did not last long, however.

Again the king sent men to kill David, but this time he did not tell Jonathan. David eluded the murderers and went to Jonathan to ask why the king wanted him killed. Jonathan was surprised, not knowing about the plot. He promised to talk to the king again, and planned a secret way to let David know the result of his talk (19:9-20:34).

Jonathan was shocked to learn that his father truly was after David. Saul even threw a spear at Jonathan when he tried to take up for David (20:33).

Using the signals that he had planned with David, Jonathan shot an arrow to let David know that he should flee for his life (20:35-41). The two of them renewed their oath of friendship and David left in tears. He was to spend many years on the run from Saul.



[Previous Lesson](#)



[Next Lesson](#)



[List of all lessons on this website](#)

[top](#)

Way to Introduce the Story:

Discuss good friends that you have had and share some adventures with the class. Photos of you and some friends (as adults or children) would be good. Perhaps the children can share some things that they have done with their friends. "In today's story we are going to learn about two men who were very good friends. They were friends even when bad things began to happen to one of them."

[top](#)

The Story:

Sometimes Saul was sad and he liked to hear music played on a harp. Sometimes he liked

to hear people sing good songs. It made him feel better. Saul knew that David could sing and play the harp. King Saul invited David to come to the palace sometimes and play and sing for him.

When David was at the palace he often saw Saul's oldest son, Jonathan. David and Jonathan became very good friends. They made a promise to each other that they would always be friends no matter what happened. Jonathan wanted to show David that he loved him as a friend. He gave David his tunic and the robe that he was wearing. He also gave him other gifts. He gave David his belt and sword; He even gave him his bow and arrows. It made Jonathan happy to give gifts to his friend.

Everyone seemed to like David. Everyone talked about how brave David was. The women even sang songs about brave David. Jonathan was glad that people liked David. When good things happened to David, Jonathan was happy for his friend.

But Jonathan's father, King Saul, was not happy for David. Sometimes, when David played his harp for Saul, Saul started thinking about all of the good things that happened to David. He started thinking that the people might like David better than their own king! Saul became very jealous. The bible says that Saul had a "jealous eye". That meant that Saul always watched David and wished for the things that David had. Saul was jealous that the people liked David. Saul was jealous that Jonathan liked David. Soon, everything that Saul saw about David made him jealous.

When people get jealous sometimes it makes them do bad things. Jealousy can make us feel angry. One day Saul got so angry that he threw a spear at David. David was able to get out of the way just in time. David ran away.

When Jonathan heard about what happened to his friend he quickly went to talk to David.

"Don't worry, David," said Jonathan. "I will talk to my father. I'm sure he will be sorry for what he did!"

Jonathan talked to King Saul about David. Jonathan reminded Saul that David was a good man and that he loved God very much. Saul told Jonathan he was sorry for what he had done. He said that he would not do it again.

But Saul did do it again. Later, he tried to kill David with his spear again. David was able to jump out of the way and run away.

When Jonathan heard about what his father had done to David he was very sad. He told David to hide while he talked to his father again. David hid by some stones.

“Stay hidden by the stones,” said Jonathan. “After I talk to my father I will come back to this place and shoot some arrows. Listen carefully, if you hear me tell my helper that the arrows are far away then you will know that you are in danger from Saul. That will be my special signal to you.”

Jonathan went to find his father. When Jonathan talked to Saul about David, Saul became very angry. He did not like David. In fact, he hated David. He even ordered some men to try to find David and kill him. Jonathan tried to take up for his friend. When Jonathan said that David was good, Saul became really angry. He was so angry that he even threw a spear at his own son, Jonathan.

Jonathan was very sad. He was sorry that his father was so jealous and mean. He knew he had to give a message to David so that David could run away and be safe. Jonathan took his bow and arrows out to the field and shot an arrow far away. The helper who was with him ran to find the arrow. Jonathan yelled to him to go very far to find it.

Later, when the boy had gone back to the palace, David came out of his hiding place to talk to Jonathan. They were both very sad and they both cried. David knew he had to leave his friend.

“Just remember, Jonathan, we will always be friends,” said David.

“Yes, I will always remember you,” answered Jonathan.

David left Jonathan and the palace and he did not come back for many, many years. Saul was jealous of David for the rest of his life. David had to always move from place to place because Saul tried to chase him and hurt him. David and Jonathan never saw each other again.

[top](#)

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review Questions:

1. Why did Saul ask David to come to the palace? To sing and to play his harp
2. Who was David's best friend? Jonathan
3. What gifts did Jonathan give to David? Tunic, robe, belt, bows and arrows, and his sword
4. What did Saul feel towards David? Jealousy
5. When Saul got very jealous of David, what did he do to him? He threw a spear at him
6. When David left, what did he promise Jonathan? That they would always be friends.

Song Suggestions:

- [Ha-la-la-la Song](#)
- [Books of the Old Testament Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

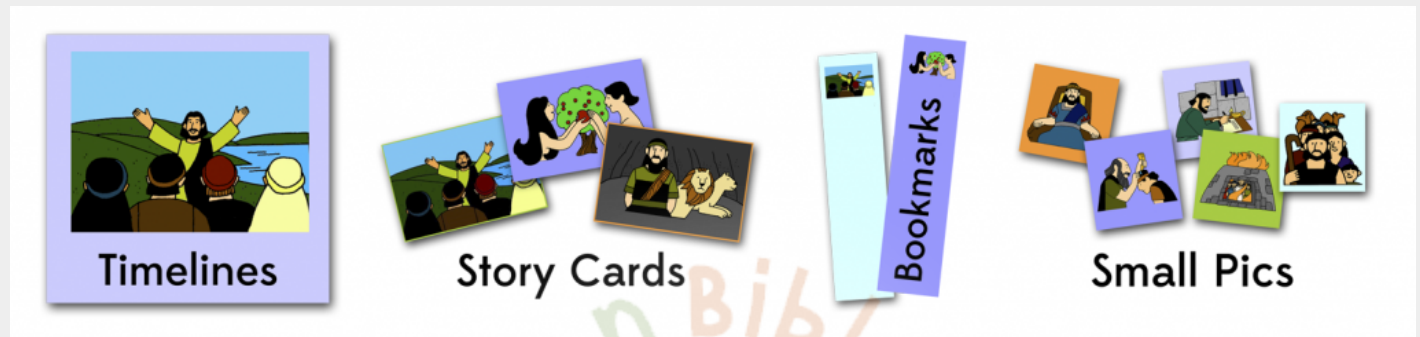
Activities:

- Discuss gifts that you have exchanged with friends.
- Draw a big eye on the board or on a piece of paper. Have the class read [1 Samuel 18:9](#) . Some versions of the Bible say Saul kept a “jealous” eye on David and others say he kept a “close” eye. In either case Saul viewed David in a different and critical way. Discuss what can happen when we are jealous (fighting, stealing, refusing to talk to each other, not being friends, etc.)
- Look up “jealousy” and “envy” in the dictionary.
- Place items found in the story inside a pillow slip or bag. Let the children pull out one item at a time and tell how it relates to the story. (spear, belt, tunic, bow and arrows, song book)
- Discuss how David played and sang for Saul. Plan a trip to go sing to someone who elderly or unable to attend church.
- Let the children sit in a circle and pass a beanbag (or any item) from one person to the next around the circle. Either you or a child you have chosen should keep your eyes closed as the bag is passed. At any given time - clap your hands once. The child who was holding the bag when you clapped should tell the class one good thing about having a friend who believes in God.

Crafts:

- Make friendship bracelets or any gift to give to a friend.
- Cut pictures from magazines depicting things that people can be jealous of. Glue these pictures on a large piece of paper and title the page “Jealousy”

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for “Jonathan Helps David Escape” printables to print on A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for “Jonathan Helps David Escape” printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

[top](#)

Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Various puzzles and games at http://gardenofpraise.com/bib115s.htm](http://gardenofpraise.com/bib115s.htm)
- [Skit: “David on the Run” at http://church-skits.com/](http://church-skits.com/)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/united-kingdom-daidsolomon/>

[top](#)



©2011-2021 Mission Bible Class. Permission to use for personal or ministry purposes only. Not to be resold. www.missionbibleclass.org