



LESSON 19

God gives David a friend

1 SAMUEL 18:1-20:42



We honor God by loving others in true, selfless, loyal friendship.



“Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam 18:3).

Supporting Truths

1. God used Jonathan’s friendship to protect and encourage David.
2. Friends love each other because they love God.
3. A true friend is loyal to his friend even in great danger.
4. A true friend gives up his rights for the sake of his friend and for the glory of God.
5. Jesus is the greatest Friend.

Objectives

1. List three things Jonathan did for David.
2. Explain why Jonathan’s soul was knit to David’s.
3. Define “covenant,” and explain whether Jonathan was faithful to his covenant.
4. Contrast the responses of Saul and Jonathan toward David and God’s glory.
5. List three ways Jesus proved to be the greatest Friend.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives David a friend • 1 Samuel 18:1–20:42



Lesson Summary

As God gave David success, Saul became jealous. But God was kind to David and provided him with a true friend—Saul's own son, Jonathan. Jonathan and David were united in faithful love for God. Jonathan made a covenant with David, willingly giving up his right to be king so that David could be king instead. This covenant friendship protected and encouraged David when he had to flee from Saul.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Jonathan's friendship reminds us of a much greater Friend who, like Jonathan, willingly gave up His claim to glory in order to honor the Father. Because Jesus humbled Himself to the point of death, we may become His friends and friends of God. Then, as those loved by God, we can honor God by following His example, as we love others in true, selfless, loyal friendship.

LAST WEEK



David fights for God's
honor
1 Samuel 17:1–58

THIS WEEK



God gives David a
friend
1 Samuel 18:1–20:42

NEXT WEEK



God judges between
David and Saul
1 Samuel 24:1–22

UNITED KINGDOM

Lesson Commentary

We honor God by loving others in true, selfless, loyal friendship.

When Samuel anointed David, God also filled David with His Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit God gave David victory over Goliath, and through the Spirit God continued to be with David. David needed God's presence, because those God calls to special service are also called to special suffering. In 1 Samuel 18–20, David suffered because of Saul's hatred, but God did not leave David on his own. God encouraged David through the covenant friendship of Saul's son Jonathan.

Jonathan faithfully loved David (18:1–4)

Immediately following David's victory over Goliath, Jonathan's soul "was knit to the soul of David" (1 Sam 18:1). This is no surprise. David and Jonathan shared the same faith, the same love for God's glory, and the same courage in battle (13:3; 14:4–14). In a similar way, believers are united in one Spirit. They share the same faith, the same love, and the same Lord, so they ought to love each other and sacrifice their own interests for the sake of others (Eph 4:1–6; Phil 2:1–4).

Because Jonathan loved David, he made a covenant with him (1 Sam 18:3). A **covenant** is an unbreakable promise that unites two 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). We, like Jonathan, should imitate God's love in the way we love others (1 John 4:19).



THINK ABOUT IT

Do you cling to your rights, or do you love God's glory enough to selflessly love others (1 Cor 10:24; 13:5)?

Jonathan loved David with a selfless love. 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 oldest son of Saul, a famous warrior, and a godly man. But Jonathan was *humble, willing to give up his own rights* to put God's kingdom first.

Saul tried to kill David (18:5–19:24)

Saul was nothing like Jonathan. Like a selfish child, he complained, "David has more than me!" (1 Sam 18:8). He used David instead of loving him, seeking his own interests rather than God's (18:2, 5). As a result, he lived in dread of David. Instead of rejoicing in what God was doing through David to bless Israel, he considered David his enemy (18:12, 15, 29). His bitter jealousy is a reminder of sin's destructive power (Prov 27:4).

Saul's jealousy led him to seek David's life several times. First, he tried to kill David privately. Terrorized by a harmful spirit, he hurled his spear at David (1 Sam 18:10–11). Then he plotted David's death at the hands of the Philistines (18:12–30). When these schemes failed, he openly called for David's death (19:1–21). Finally, he went out to kill David himself (19:22).

But Saul abandoned his chase, overpowered and put to shame by the Spirit of God (19:24). God shatters those who oppose his anointed king (1 Sam 2:10; Ps 2).

THINK ABOUT IT

God opposes those who live for their own glory (Isa 2:11–12).



However, God is with His godly ones, especially in suffering. As God's presence gave Joseph success in slavery and in prison (Gen 39:2–3, 21), so now God's presence protected David (1 Sam 18:12, 14, 28). God is present to give success to all who keep His words (Deut 29:9; Josh 1:8–9). God guarded David in battle, used Jonathan to save David's life (19:1–7), and directly intervened to save his life again (19:23). Not surprisingly, David could look back on this dangerous time and sing praise to God (Ps 59).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

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Jonathan remained faithful to David (20:1–42)

As Saul's rage increased, David fled to Jonathan. By helping David, Jonathan forfeited his right to the kingdom, became an enemy of his father, and risked joining David as an object of Saul's violent, unpredictable anger. But David came to him because Jonathan had made a covenant. How could David trust the one whose father was trying to kill him? He was a true friend, a like-minded companion who loves loyally and selflessly (Prov 17:17; 18:24; John 15:13; 1 Cor 13:4–8). We also, when we are in trouble, should fly to the Friend who has made a covenant with us (Matt 26:28).

David's first words to Jonathan concerned his own guilt. He wanted to know if he had done anything wrong (1 Sam 20:1). Had he done so, he was willing to accept the penalty (20:8). In this way David shows how to respond to opposition. He did not ignore Saul's accusa-



THINK ABOUT IT

Do you view your trials as an opportunity to learn and grow (Jas 1:2–4)?

tions, as wild and baseless as they appeared to be. Instead, he first examined his own life to see if there was any truth to Saul's allegations. David was a man of integrity, willing to

be corrected when wrong (Prov 9:8–9).

Jonathan confirmed David's innocence (1 Sam 20:9). He responded by making another covenant with David, even greater than the one before. This covenant was with the entire house of David—a lasting agreement between David's family and Jonathan's family (20:15–16). Jonathan knew that his decision to support David jeopardized the lives of his children. It was not uncommon for a new king to kill all the descendants of the former king to eliminate any threat to the new dynasty. But out of love for David (20:17), Jonathan was willing to put himself and his descendants in a position of weakness. He simply asked David to remember this and be kind to his children, and David did (2 Sam 9).

Even though Jonathan believed his father's anger for David had passed, he helped David investigate his suspicions (1 Sam 20:18–29). Then, when Saul became angry, Jonathan proved himself faithful, loyal, true, and trustworthy. He stood up for David, at great cost to himself (20:30–34). He was furious with his father, but not for his own sake. His concern was for David and his honor (20:34). After communicating the bad news (20:35–40), Jonathan sent David away in peace (20:42)—peace that endured in the midst of trouble because it was rooted in covenant friendship and trust in God (23:16).

At times we may find ourselves in David's shoes, called to suffer. If so, we should thank God if He chooses to bless us with friends like Jonathan (Eccl 4:9–10). At other times, we may find ourselves in the shoes of Jonathan, sacrificing our rights and privileges for the benefit of another. If so, may we decrease in order that another would increase, just like Jonathan and many other godly men (John 1:40–42; 3:30; Acts 11:25–26; 13:9). By putting others first out of love for God (Rom 12:1, 10), we humbly magnify God as Christ did (Phil 2:1–5).

It is amazing that even the Son of God emptied Himself in order to glorify the Father (Phil 2:7–8). So when we find it hard to empty ourselves, we must look to Him. By His humble death our sins may be forgiven, the power of sin in our lives broken, and peace with God restored. Through His humble death He was gloriously raised and will ultimately reign victorious (Phil 2:9–11). In His life we have life (Rom 6:5), and in His reign we will reign (Rev 5:5). So even when life is hard, even when we must let our ambitions go, we have peace, because He emptied Himself to become our covenant friend.

THINK ABOUT IT

Friendship is not about meeting our needs but faithfully meeting the needs of others.



Lesson Outline

We honor God by loving others in true, selfless, loyal friendship.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



Jonathan was David's friend:

1. Because he loved God like David did (18:1).
2. Because he loved David (18:1; 20:41).
3. Because he kept his promise to David (18:3; 20:11–17).
4. Because he gave up his spot as king for David (18:4; 19:1–7; 20:11–34).
5. Because he risked his life for David (19:1–7; 20:11–42)



AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. Jonathan faithfully loved David (18:1–9).
 - Jonathan knitted his soul to David's (18:1).
 - Jonathan loved David as much as his own life (18:1).
 - Jonathan made a covenant with David (18:3).
 - Jonathan gave up his kingship so that David could be king (18:4).
2. Saul tried to kill David (18:10–19:24).
 - Saul was jealous because David was more popular than he was (18:5–9).
 - Saul tried to spear David (18:10–11).
 - Saul tried to get David killed by the Philistines (18:12–30).
 - Saul ordered Jonathan and his servants to kill David (19:1–21).
 - Saul tried to kill David himself (19:22–24).
3. Jonathan remained faithful to David (20:1–42).
 - Jonathan was trusted by David (20:1–10).
 - Jonathan made a covenant with the family of David (20:11–17).
 - Jonathan confirmed Saul's hatred for David (20:18–29).
 - Jonathan stood up for David at great personal cost (20:30–34).
 - Jonathan wept with David and sent him away in lasting peace (20:35–42).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives David a friend • 1 Samuel 18:1–20:42



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. Who was David's close friend?**
Jonathan.
- 2. What did Jonathan give David?**
Jonathan gave David his royal clothes. Jonathan should have been king after Saul, but he let David be king instead.
- 3. What did Jonathan make with David?**
A covenant—a very important promise to be his friend for life.
- 4. Did Jonathan stay David's friend when Saul got very angry?**
Yes. Jonathan risked his own life for David. He was a true friend.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Why did Jonathan love David so much?**
When Jonathan saw David fight Goliath, he realized that they both loved God's honor and trusted God completely.
- 2. How did Saul feel when people liked David more than Saul?**
Saul was jealous. He loved himself more than David. He loved his own glory more than God's glory.
- 3. What did Saul try to do to David?**
Saul tried to kill David several times in different ways.
- 4. When Saul could not kill David, how did Saul feel?**
Saul was very afraid of David. He should have rejoiced that God was blessing Israel through David.
- 5. Who did David go to when he was in trouble with Saul?**
David went to Jonathan because they had made a covenant and were true friends.
- 6. When Jonathan told David to flee, what was the last thing he said?**
After they wept together, Jonathan told David to go in peace, knowing that they had made a covenant in the LORD's name.
- 7. Who is the greatest friend?**
Jesus is the greatest friend. He gave up the glory He had in heaven in order to honor God and give His life for sinners. He is a friend to the very end. We should run to Him and find peace.
- 8. How can we be true friends?**
We can be true friends only when we first accept Christ's love for us. Then after that we can love with His love—selflessly, sacrificially, faithfully, encouraging others in the Lord for the glory of God.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



WHO IS YOUR FRIEND?

Bring in a picture of one of your friends. Or, better yet, bring your friend to class with you. Talk about why this person is your friend. Ask the children who their friends are. Why are they friends? What do they do together?

RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

To play, one child should stand as the “signal” at one end of the room, while all the other children stand at the other end of the room. When the “signal” faces the children and says, “Red light!” the children must freeze in place. When the signal turns his back to the children and says, “Green light!” the children can approach him. If a child moves during a red light, he must go back to the starting point. The first child to reach the signal wins the game. After playing, talk with the children about how signals work. Tell them that in today's lesson, they will learn about a signal between David and Jonathan. This signal helped David to know whether to go or stop.



RIGHT AND WRONG ACTIONS

In today's story, David, Saul, and Jonathan demonstrate good and bad responses to the people God brings into their lives. The narrative itself doesn't always tell us which responses are good and which are bad, but the rest of the Bible does. Hand out green and red cards, and as the story progresses, ask the children to vote as to whether a particular action was right or wrong. For example:

- 1 Samuel 18:1–4—Jonathan loved David: Righteous (1 John 3:11)
- 1 Samuel 18:6–11—Saul was jealous, angry: Unrighteous (Eph. 4:26, 31–32)
- 1 Samuel 19:1–4—Saul wanted to kill David: Unrighteous (Ex. 20:13).

JEALOUSY

Ask the children what jealousy is. Explain that it is wanting something that belongs to someone else. Give one child a small gift in front of all the other children. Ask them how they feel. Do they feel that it's not fair? Do they want to take the gift from them? Explain that in today's lesson Saul is jealous of David, and because of that jealousy, he tries to kill David.



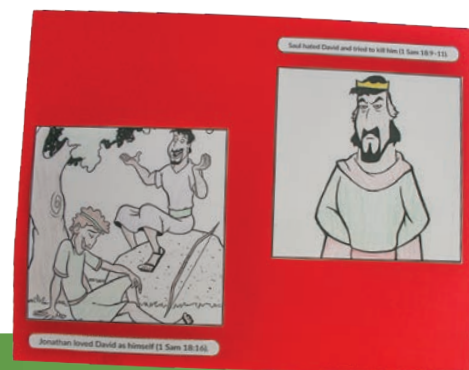
GOD GIVES RELATIONSHIPS

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, cardstock, scissors, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut pictures and phrase strips from the craft sheet. Have students color pictures. Glue pictures and phrase strips on a sheet of cardstock, as shown below.

*God Gives Relationships
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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AGES 6–8



PRIDE

In today's lesson, Saul's pride is insulted when he hears the women singing, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David has killed his ten thousands." Ask them why Saul was upset when he heard the women singing. The women were singing about him. Explain that he was upset because David was praised more than him. That's pride. The proud are not satisfied unless they are first, the biggest hero.

A GOOD FRIEND

Ask the children to name qualities they look for in a good friend. Write these on a dry-erase board or chalkboard, and discuss the answers as a class. In today's lesson we will learn about David and Jonathan's friendship.



ENEMY

Bring a "Most Wanted" poster to class. Discuss with the children what an enemy is and what it might be like to have an enemy. Explain that an enemy is a person who feels hatred for or is hostile toward another person. Ask the children whether anyone has ever hated them or wanted to be their enemy. Help them to understand what it may have been like for David to have Saul as his enemy and yet not feel hatred back toward him. He did not want to hurt the Lord's anointed king, yet he wanted to stay alive. This was a difficult position for David to be in.

WILLING TO DIE

The story is told of a young woman in desperate need of a blood transfusion. Her brother appeared to be the only available donor. As the doctor began to draw his blood, the boy asked grimly, "How long until I start to die?" The doctor was puzzled. "What do you mean?" he asked. "I mean," said the boy, "how long until my sister has all my blood, and I have none?" At once the doctor understood. The boy mistakenly believed that his sister needed all his blood.



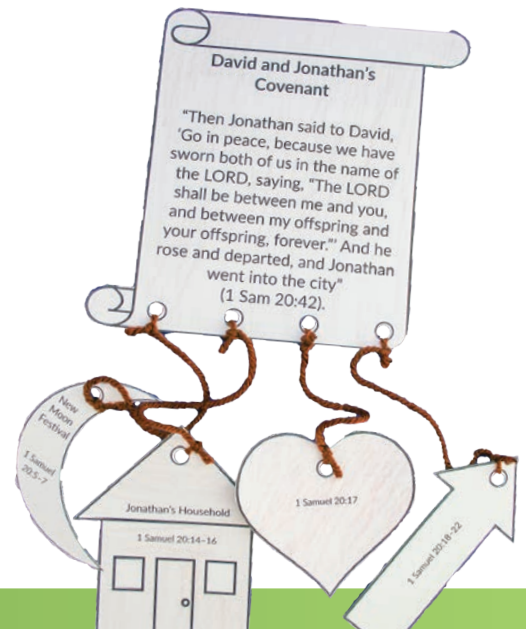
COVENANT OF LOVE

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, yarn, hole punch, scissors, and crayons.

Directions: Have children color and cut out all pieces from the craft sheet. Hole punch in the indicated places. Attach the moon, house, heart, and arrow to the scroll with yarn.

Covenant of Love
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

GOOD FOR YOU

In today's lesson, the children will learn about both good and bad relationships. Bring some common medicines and vitamins to class. Ask the children which ones taste good and which ones taste bad. Explain that although some medicines taste better than others, they all are designed to make you healthy. In the same way, God brings some people into our lives who are fun to be with and others who are not very nice to us. God uses both good and bad relationships to help us become like Him.

A GOOD FRIEND, PART ONE

Draw three columns on a piece of paper. Title the first column: "What qualities do you look for in a friend?" Title the second column: "Qualities David & Jonathan demonstrated as friends." Title the third column: "Biblical teaching on relationships." Before the lesson, ask the children to list qualities they look for in a good friend in the first column. Talk about some of the qualities the children listed.



ILLUSTRATE

LOVE THY ENEMY

Scripture tells us to love our enemies. Have the children compare how they feel toward a brother, sister, or friend with how they feel toward a person they don't get along with. Do they love both people? Does God love both people? Talk about how if God treated us the way we treat our enemies, we all would be dead. God loves us; therefore He loves what His perfection cannot love. Are we like that toward others? Do we desire the best for all people or just the ones we like? Do we desire salvation for all people? How did David "love his enemy?"

THE GEOMETRY OF FRIENDSHIP

As friends grow closer to Christ, they grow closer together. Illustrate this with a triangle. The two points on the base of the triangle represent two friends. The single point at the top of the triangle represents Christ. As the two friends move closer to Christ they also move closer together.



APPLY

A GOOD FRIEND, PART TWO

After the lesson, guide the children in listing qualities of covenantal friendship demonstrated by David and Jonathan in the middle column. List the cross-references provided from additional passages in the third column to reinforce God's instructions on friendship.

- Loves others as self; deep affection (18:1–3; 20:17); Cross References: Matt 22:39; Mark 12:33; Rom 12:10
- Keeps promises; faithfulness (18:3); Cross References: 1 Sam 22:14; Prov 28:20
- Submits to God's will (18:4); Cross Reference: Ps 40:8
- Honors others more than one's own family (19:2); Cross References: Prov 18:24b; 27:10; Luke 14:26
- Speaks well of friend (19:4–5); Cross Reference: Prov 16:13
- Loyalty (20); Cross Reference: Prov 17:17
- Believes the best (20:1–4); Cross Reference: 1 Cor 13:7
- Accountability for sin (20:14–15); Cross References: Prov 27:6,9,17
- Kindness (20:14–15); Cross References: 1 Cor 13:4; Gal 5:22; 2 Peter 1:7
- Humility (20:41); Cross References: 1 Chr 29:14; Prov 15:33; 16:19; 18:12; 22:4; 29:23; Col 3:12; 1 Peter 5:5