



David & Jonathan

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

1 Samuel 18 - 20

God had chosen David to be the future King of Israel because David loved and trusted God. David would face many challenges and dangerous situations. God provided David with a wonderful friend named Jonathan. God used Jonathan to help and protect David. God will always be with those who trust in Him.



Day #1: Godly Friendship

Take 3 pieces of yarn or string and braid them together. This is what a godly friendship is like. It is your life wrapping around someone else's life. When you are joyful, they are joyful. When you have a problem, they share your trouble.

Why did we use 3 pieces of string? One piece represents you, one piece represents your friend, and the third piece shows that God should be the most important part of your friendship. With God as the most important strand of a friendship, friends can love without becoming jealous, friends can forgive, and they can put the other person first. David had this type of friendship with Saul's son Jonathan.

+ *Jonathan thought as much of David as he did of himself. Jonathan liked David so much that they promised to always be loyal friends. Jonathan took off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David. He also gave him his military clothes, his sword, his bow and arrows, and his belt. - 1 Samuel 18:1b, 3-4 CEV*

Jonathan did not see any difference between David and himself. He rejoiced in David's victories and was happy for David to be honored by the Israelites.

***** You can tie your braided string loosely around your wrist or ankle to remind you that the best friendship you can have includes the Lord. You may want to make one as a gift for your friend and explain what the three pieces stand for. If you don't have a friend like this yet, wear it to remind yourself to pray for this kind of friendship. Remember that a friendship that is not centered around the Lord can easily fall apart, just as if you removed one of the strands from your braid, it would fall apart.

Day #2: Not About Me

After David killed Goliath, he became very famous. Stories of his facing the fierce warrior filled the land. By the time David and the Israelite soldiers returned from fighting the Philistines, all the Israelites were talking about it. Can you imagine what David's father must have thought? Jesse had sent the young David to check on his brothers, and he returned as a war hero! The women ran out to meet the soldiers. They were singing songs about what a hero David was.

+ *This song made Saul very angry, and he thought, "They are saying that David has killed ten times more enemies than I ever did. Next they will want to make him king." - 1 Samuel 18:8 CEV*

There is a word that describes Saul's attitude toward David. It is not gratitude or respect. It is: _____ (Hint: unscramble LUEJOSA)

The next verse says, "From that time on, Saul became very jealous of David. So he watched him closely." (1 Samuel 18:9)

Saul was focused on himself! He was no longer thankful that God used David to kill the man who had been shouting curses at God's people, bringing shame to God's army. **God had won the victory** against Goliath for His name and His people. All the glory belonged to the Lord. Saul quickly forgot that David had given all credit to God for his victory over the BIG enemy, Goliath.

If Saul had been abiding with the Lord, he would have been celebrating with the crowd over God's victory. But because Saul was only thinking of himself, he was miserable, and his sin of jealousy was about to take over and ruin his life (Genesis 4:7).

***** When your heart is in tune with God, you will not be jealous of others. When you realize that God is in control of all things, you won't worry about what others think of you. You can join John the Baptist in saying, "Jesus must become more important, while I become less important." (John 3:30 CEV)

Day #3: Encouragement

When a King decides he is too old to be King, or if he dies, who usually becomes the next King? It is his first-born son. Who was next in line for Saul's crown? (Jonathan) This fact makes our story about Jonathan's friendship even more surprising. Jonathan would have become King after Saul, yet even when it became clear that David would be the next King, Jonathan was not at all jealous of David.

Day #3 continued:

Saul, on the other hand, did not want David to take his place. He made up his mind to kill David. Two times, while David was playing music to soothe Saul, Saul threw his spear at David. But David escaped.

The Lord was with David, so he was successful in everything he did. The more successful David was, the more angry and fearful Saul became (1 Samuel 18:12-15). Time and time again, Saul plotted to kill David. Each time, God used the faithful people in David's life to protect him. God used David's wife to throw Saul's men off track (1 Samuel 19:14). God also used Jonathan to stop Saul's evil plans several times (1 Samuel 20:31). And God used Jonathan to help David in another wonderful way:



Jonathan went to find David and encouraged him to stay strong in his faith in God. *"Don't be afraid," Jonathan reassured him. "My father will never find you! You are going to be the king of Israel, and I will be next to you, as my father, Saul, is well aware."* So the two of them renewed their solemn pact before the Lord. - 1 Samuel 23:16-18a NLT

Imagine how discouraging it would be to have a King trying to kill you! It might have been hard for David to remember that one day he would be the King, so Jonathan reminded him. Jonathan was a wonderful friend to David. Jonathan spoke up for David; he encouraged him, and even risked his life to protect him (1 Samuel 20:33).



You may not be asked to risk your life for a friend, but you certainly have the opportunity to encourage those around you. What are ways to encourage a friend who is having a difficult day? (Read a Bible verse to her; tell her you will pray for her; tell her that God delights in her.) Besides a friend, who can you encourage this week? (A brother or sister; your mom or dad; your teacher.)

Day #4: Self-Control

The next several chapters tell how Saul hunted David as if he were an animal. The Bible tells of a time when David had the chance to take revenge on Saul. Saul had 3,000 men chasing after David. David and his friends were hiding deep in a cave. Saul stepped into the cave, not realizing that David was in it.

Silently, David sneaked up behind Saul. David could have killed Saul right then, but he had self-control. David only cut off the corner of Saul's robe. After Saul left the cave, David went out and called to him. David bowed down and showed him the piece of his robe. David said:



You can see for yourself that the Lord gave me the chance to catch you in the cave today. Some of my men wanted to kill you, but I wouldn't let them do it. I told them, "I will not harm the Lord's chosen King!" - 1 Samuel 24:10 CEV

Day #4 continued:

Even though Saul was wrong, and David did not deserve his attacks, David was still respectful to his King. David knew that God had appointed Saul to be the King of the Israelites. Saul was still the King and David would not harm him. David respected the position of King, and David respected the man whom God had once anointed.

Saul began to sob and said, "I realize now that you will be the next king, and a powerful king at that." (1 Samuel 24:20 CEV)



We all face times when someone treats us badly. At times, this might even be someone in authority over you. You should follow David's example and control your anger and your tongue. Do not lash back at the person with unkind words. Instead, treat him or her with respect. If it is a person in authority over you, remember that God placed him or her in authority over you. By speaking respectfully to that person, you are showing respect and honor to God. The Lord will bless your respectful attitude and self-controlled actions, just as He did David's.

Day #5: Trouble

Some people make the mistake of thinking that if they believe in God, they won't have any trouble in their lives. This is not the case. The most faith-filled people in the Bible all had BIG problems! Noah faced a flood, Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children, Moses was chased by an angry Pharaoh trying to kill him, Joshua faced countless enemies on the battlefield, and the list goes on. Of course, our perfect example, Jesus, suffered and died on a cross to take away our sins. And today, around the globe, many believers suffer because they believe.

Certainly, David was no exception. Even though he was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), he was hunted down by King Saul. God never promised anyone that they would be without trouble. What He did promise, however, is far better than a life without trouble. He promised that He would remain with us through our trouble.



*Here is what I am commanding you to do. Be strong and brave. Do not be terrified. Do not lose hope. I am the Lord your God. **I will be with you everywhere you go.*** - Joshua 1:9

God allows trouble for several reasons. Many times trouble comes from someone's choice to sin. Sin always hurts people. Sometimes God allows difficult circumstances so He can show that He is stronger than anything else (2 Corinthians 12:9). Sometimes He allows suffering so we can learn more about Him (John 9:3). In all cases, He can work everything out for His glory and our good.



Do not become discouraged, or doubt God's love for you, when trouble comes your way. Ask God for the faith to trust Him even more. Remember that it is better to go through trouble **with God**, than to have the best this world has to offer **without Him** (Psalm 84:10).