

SAUL ATTACKED DAVID

1 Samuel 18:6 - 20:43

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Saul, Jonathan, and David

Key-location: Inside and close to Saul's palace

Key-repetitions:

- Saul was angry: at the women's song (1 Sam 18:7-8); at David (1 Sam 18:9); at Jonathan for defending David (1 Sam 20:30).
- Saul attempted to kill: twice threw a spear at David (1 Sam 18:11); Saul told Jonathan and his officers to kill David (1 Sam 19:2); Saul again threw a spear at David (1 Sam 19:10); Saul sent men to David's house to kill him (1 Sam 19:11); Saul ordered Jonathan to bring David to him (1 Sam 20:31); Saul threw his spear at Jonathan (1 Sam 20:33).
- David and Jonathan together (1 Sam 18:3; 19:2, 7; 20:1, 16-17, 35-42).
- Jonathan defended David to Saul (1 Sam 19:4; 20:32).

Key-attitudes:

- Saul's anger.
- Jonathan's love for David.
- David's distress.

Initial-situation:

King Saul was the first king of Israel. On two occasions, Saul disobeyed God's clear commands. The Lord told the Prophet Samuel that he had rejected Saul as king and had chosen one of Jesse's sons to be king. Samuel anointed young David as king.

The Philistines prepared for war. Saul called up his troops. The Philistine giant, Goliath, issued a dare for an Israelite soldier to fight him. Saul and his troops were terrified of Goliath. David visited his brothers in Saul's camp and heard Goliath's dare. David offered to fight the Philistine giant. David defeated Goliath using a sling and a stone.

King Saul kept David with him. Saul's son Jonathan loved David, made a covenant with him, and gave him gifts. Saul gave David a high rank in the army.

Initial-problem:

Women from all the villages of Israel greeted King Saul with singing and dancing. They danced and sang, "Saul killed thousands and David killed tens of thousands!"

Final-situation:

Jonathan told David, "Go in peace. We've vowed friendship with each other." David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.

BIBLE STORY

Soldiers returned home after David killed Goliath. Women from all the villages of Israel greeted King Saul with singing and dancing. They sang, "Saul killed thousands, and David killed tens of thousands!"

King Saul thought, "They credit David with tens of thousands, but me with only thousands. What more can David get but the kingdom?" From then on Saul kept a jealous eye on David (1 Sam 18:6-9).

The next day, King Saul was at home and an evil spirit seized him. David played his harp. Saul threw a spear to nail David to the wall, but David eluded Saul twice. Saul was afraid of David, but the Israelites in Saul's kingdom loved David (1 Sam 18:10-16).

Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David. Saul gave Michal to David in marriage (1 Sam 18:17-27).

Saul told his son Jonathan and his officers to kill David.

Jonathan told King Saul, "Don't attack David. David put his life on the line when he killed Goliath. Why would you do wrong by killing David, an innocent man?"

Saul promised Jonathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, David won't be killed."

Jonathan brought David back to Saul. David had his former status in Saul's court.

Once again an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul. David played the harp and Saul once again tried to nail David to the wall with his spear. David dodged and escaped. Saul sent men to David's house to kill him. But Michal, David's wife, let David down through a window, and David escaped (1 Sam 19:1-17).

David sought Jonathan who made a covenant with him. David reaffirmed his pledge of love and friendship for Jonathan (1 Sam 20:1-17).

Jonathan told David his plan, "The New Moon Festival is tomorrow and you'll be missed when you don't show up. Three days from now, go to the boulder where you hid when this trouble began. I'll shoot three arrows in the direction of the boulder. Then I'll tell a boy, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I yell to him, 'The arrows are on this side of you; retrieve them,' then you're safe; there's no danger. If I yell to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are farther out, you must run away' (1 Sam 20:18-23).

The New Moon Festival came. King Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why hasn't David come to the meal?"

Jonathan answered, "David asked permission to go to Bethlehem to attend a family reunion."

Saul exploded in anger at Jonathan and screamed, "You, son of a slut! I know that you've sided with David. You bring disgrace both on yourself and your mother! As long as David lives, you'll never be king nor have a kingdom. Bring David here. David must die!"

Jonathan answered, "Why should David be killed? What has David done?"

Saul threw his spear at Jonathan, trying to kill him. Jonathan stormed from the table. Saul's shameful treatment of David, grieved Jonathan (1 Sam 20:24-34).

The next morning, Jonathan went to the field to meet with David. Jonathan told the young boy with him, "Run and find the arrows I shoot." The boy ran. Jonathan shot an arrow beyond the boy. Jonathan yelled, "The arrow is farther out! Don't stop!" The boy picked up the arrow and returned to Jonathan. Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and sent the boy back to town.

David left his hiding place beside the boulder. Jonathan and David kissed each other and wept together.

Jonathan told David, "Go in peace. We've vowed friendship with each other in the name of the Lord. The Lord is witness between you and me, and between our descendants forever." David left, and Jonathan went back to the town (1 Sam 20:35-43).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can you learn from Jonathan and David about true friendship?
2. What made Saul angry and jealous?
3. What are the dangers of uncontrolled jealousy or anger?
4. Why did Saul try to kill his son Jonathan?
5. Why did Jonathan disobey his father, King Saul?
6. When should a child, who seeks to do right in the eyes of God, disobey his parents?
7. What kind of person abuses his own child for displeasing him?
8. Why did David fight Goliath, but flee from King Saul?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **True friendship is invaluable!** The friendship between Jonathan and David became a pattern of true friendship. It was born spontaneously and voluntarily (1 Sam 18:1-3). David and Jonathan based their friendship on commitment to God as well as to one another (1 Sam 18:1-4). Family problems did not destroy their friendship (1 Sam 19:1-3). It lasted through severe testing (1 Sam 20:30-34, 41; 23:15-18). It was not destroyed by the death of one of the friends (2 Sam 9:7, 13).
2. **On every occasion, a person must decide if he will choose the right or wrong response. Making right choices on one occasion does not imply that a person will make the right choice on another occasion.** When Saul first became king, he took no notice of those who criticized him (1 Sam 10:26-27). Later Saul had the opportunity, but did not seek revenge against his critics (1 Sam 11:12-13). However, later Saul's appreciation for David turned to jealousy when people began to applaud

David's exploits. In a jealous rage, Saul hurled his spear at David to kill him (1 Sam 18:11-12). Saul felt threatened by David and was consumed with jealousy (1 Sam 19:1-3; 20:30-31).

3. **The person who disobeys God may consider the person who faithfully serves God as his enemy.** This happened to Saul when he became an enemy to David (1 Sam 18:29). Paul promised Timothy that everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted (2 Tim 3:12).
4. **There are occasions when a person needs to fight and other occasions when a person should flee from a fight.** David faced and fought Goliath (1 Sam 17:32-51). However, David fled to escape from Saul. When Saul was pursuing David, twice David had opportunities to kill Saul but spared him (1 Sam 24:3-7; 26:2-12).
5. **A child should disobey a parent's order if it would require him to sin and disobey God.** Saul told his son Jonathan to kill David, but Jonathan disobeyed that order (1 Sam 19:1-2). Children should be respectful and obedient to their parents, but they are not to follow commands or advice that violate God's laws (Eph 6:1-3).
6. **A dysfunctional home cannot prevent a family member from doing right and serving God.** Saul's anger and foolish actions didn't keep Jonathan from being faithful to God and to David (1 Sam 20:42).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Role-playing Drama:

Invite two volunteers, pretending to be Saul's servants, to dramatize a dialogue.

One volunteer argues that Jonathan should show loyalty to his father the king and obey the king's command to entrap and kill David.

The other volunteer argues that Jonathan should disobey his father, the King, who demanded for him to kill his best friend who was innocent of any wrongdoing.