

Week 45 Jonathan's Friendship [1 Samuel 20]

Series: **David**

Application: **Being a good friend is important, but not always easy.**

Memory Verse: **"The Lord is King for ever and ever." Psalm 10:16.**

Preparation Notes

David had been staying at Ramah with Samuel. He knew that the New Moon festival was coming up. It was a special celebration (see Numbers 10:10 and 28:11-15) and technically David was still a member of Saul's court, so would have been expected to attend. He was worried though that if he went back, Saul would try to kill him again.

David went to talk to Jonathan about the dilemma. He asked Jonathan why Saul had been trying to kill him. Jonathan told David that Saul confided in him for everything, and that he hadn't said anything about planning to kill David. David reminded Jonathan that Saul knew they were great friends, so Jonathan agreed to help David by trying to find out what his father's intentions were.

David knew he was due at the celebrations the next day, so he told Jonathan that he would be hiding in the field. If Saul asked where he was, Jonathan was to say that he'd asked permission to return to Bethlehem for a special family celebration. If Saul didn't mind, David knew he was safe, but if Saul lost his temper, David would know that Saul had been intending to harm him at the celebration.

Jonathan re-affirmed his oath of love for David and they agreed a plan. David was to hide behind a big stone. Jonathan would shoot three arrows towards the stone and then send a boy to find them. If Jonathan said to the boy "The arrows are on this side of you, bring them here," then it would be safe for David to return. If however Jonathan said to the boy "The arrows are beyond you," then the Lord was sending David away to avoid Saul.

The next day was the first day of the New Moon festival. Everyone sat down to eat. David's place was empty, but Saul said nothing to Jonathan. The next day, when Saul saw that David's place was empty again, he asked Jonathan where David was. Jonathan said that David had asked to return to Bethlehem for an important family celebration. Saul became very angry, knowing that Jonathan had sided with David. He told Jonathan to bring David to him because he must die. When Jonathan asked why, Saul hurled his spear at him. Then Jonathan realised that Saul had intended to kill David.

The next day Jonathan went out to the field with a small boy and shot three arrows as they had planned. He called out to the boy "Isn't the arrow beyond you?" and David knew that Saul had planned to kill him.

Jonathan sent the boy home and then David came out from the stone and bowed down before him. The two friends kissed each other and wept and affirmed that God was a witness to their friendship. David left and Jonathan returned home.

Learning Points (Discoverers 1)

- Jonathan was David's friend.
- Jonathan helped David when he was in trouble.

Learning Points (Discoverers 2)

- Jonathan was David's friend.
- Jonathan helped David when he was in trouble.
- Jonathan got into trouble because he helped David.

Learning Points (Discoverers 3)

- Jonathan and David made a promise of loyalty and friendship.
- Jonathan was the king's son, but he was not jealous of David.
- Jonathan risked his father's anger to help David.
- In his jealousy, Saul even turned against his son.

Discoverers 1

Bible Bit.

Even at this early age children can relate to friendship/love. Parents or other carers might be used as examples of this in their own lives.

Suggested Activities.

Make a craft that the children can give to a friend; enabling them to recognise others as such.

Discoverers 2

Bible Bit.

Use some simple props to re-enact the 'secret sign' element of the story (not a real bow and arrow, which might be dangerous in the confines of a classroom!). The children could play the roles of David, Jonathan and the boy.

Suggested Activities.

Using DWK 45:1, make the 'Friendship spinners'.

Discoverers 3

Bible Bit.

Jonathan was faced with some difficult decisions. He was bound to honour his friendship with David, but he was also bound to honour Saul, both as father and king. He knew that David was innocent and that Saul was wrong. He made the right MORAL decision, even if that

involved taking risks with his father's anger because he knew that was right in God's eyes.

Suggested Activities.

Using DWK 45:2, make the friendship bracelets and key rings. Use these to help the children understand the importance of friendship; perhaps using some of the questions below to prompt them.

Talk time.

- How far would a true friend go in order to help?
- How much would the children be prepared put themselves out to help a friend?
- What if our friend is wrong, should we help them anyway?
- How far was Jesus prepared to go to help us?
- Can we then be sure that we have a true friend in Jesus?

Prayer and worship.