

General Church Education



David Spares Saul's Life in a Cave

1 Samuel 24; 25:1

Lesson 15

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

David Spares Saul's Life in a Cave

1 Samuel 24; 25:1

Teacher Background

King Saul was afraid that David would take his kingdom from him. He pursued David into the wilderness of En Gedi where there were many caves. During Saul's search, he entered the cave where David was hiding. When David's men saw Saul, they thought David should strike him. Indeed, David crept up and cut off a piece of his robe, but he instantly regretted doing it. When Saul left the cave, David showed him the piece he had cut from his robe. Saul recognized David's righteousness and recognized him as the next ruler of Israel. Saul asked David to vow that he would not harm his descendants. Following this, we learn of Samuel's death. Samuel was the last judge, priest and prophet of Israel.

In spite of knowing that David was the Lord's chosen, Saul could not conquer the evil loves that compelled him to act in anger and jealousy. However, when Saul's actions put him in danger from David, David acted honorably. For a brief moment, this shamed Saul so he allowed David to escape. However, shame was only a momentary deterrent. Saul had no conscience, so only exterior bonds caused him to make periodic changes in the direction of his life.

Focus Points

- Saul and three thousand men searched for David in the wilderness.
- Saul entered the cave in which David and his men were hiding.
- David secretly cut off part of Saul's robe, showing he would not harm him, and Saul let him go in peace.

Readings from the Writings

The words of Samuel make clear that "the rending of the skirt of the cloak" signified the rending of the kingdom from Saul. Saul could no longer represent the Lord. The representation of the church would perish if the kingdom were not rent from him. The same is signified by David's cutting off the skirt of Saul's cloak. This was done by David of Divine Providence, that the like might be represented as above, "the skirt of the cloak," and "King Saul and his kingdom," having the like meaning as above. See *Apocalypse Explained* 395.5,6

Kings were called Jehovah's Anointed, and therefore it was forbidden to harm them, because 'Jehovah's Anointed' means the Lord's Divine Human, though in the sense of the letter the title is applied to a king who had been anointed with oil. See *Arcana Coelestia* 9954.11

"Those who possess conscience have internal bonds; those who are destitute of conscience, external bonds, as the tacit ones of shame, fear, honor, and other things." *Spiritual Experiences* 4254

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers students the following choices:

Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." (1 Samuel 24:6)

Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

Who Said It? Saul, David, or David's Men?

Read each statement and decide whether Saul, David or David's men said it.

1 Samuel 24:10 Word Jumble

Unscramble words and use them to complete a quote from the story.

Additional Project and Activity Choices

Cleaning Selfish Thoughts Experiment

Everyone makes wrong choices. At such times our faults come to our attention so we can choose not to do them again. Do an experiment, or watch a video of an experiment, to consider what it takes to make new choices. At <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-cleaning-selfish-thoughts-experiment/>

Discussion: Bring the Word into Your Life

It would have been easy for David to kill Saul in the cave. At times we have to think carefully to know what is right and what is wrong. David did not hurt Saul because he realized he would be harming the Lord. Encourage students to pay attention to times when they have a choice between doing something good and doing something wrong and to invite the Lord to help them make a good choice.

David Spares Saul's Life in a Cave

1 Samuel 24; 25:1

Vocabulary

region—an area distinguished by similar geographic features

rebellion—opposition to the authority of the king

righteous—acting according to the Lord's laws

David Flees to the Wilderness of En Gedi

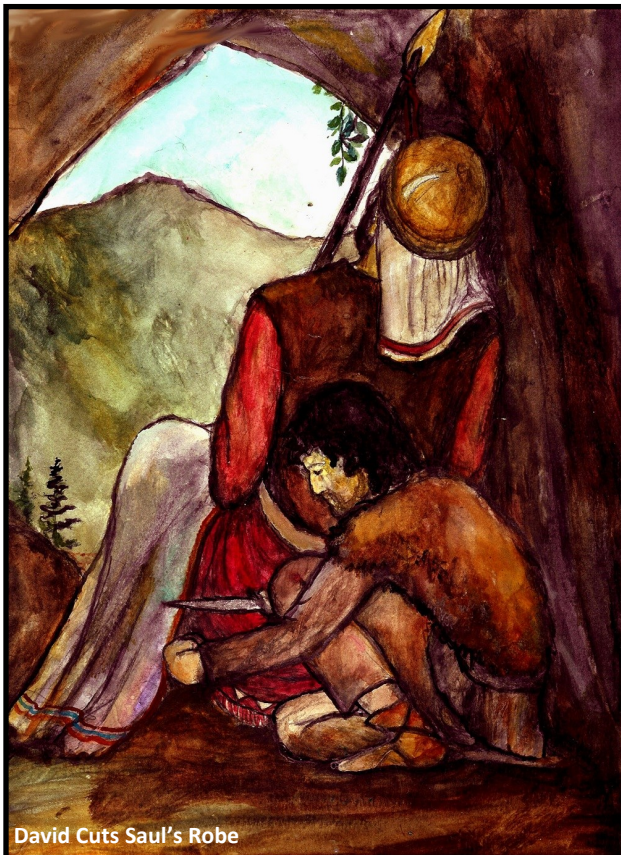
King Saul was afraid that David would take the kingdom from him. While Saul was busy fighting the Philistines David escaped to the wilderness of En Gedi. It was a mountainous region on the western shore of the Dead Sea. The area had many large caves where David and his men could hide. For a while, they would be safe from Saul.

Several months later, after the Philistines had been driven back into their own cities, someone told Saul where David was hiding. Saul chose three thousand of his best soldiers and once again went to search for David. He searched the mountains and the caves, but found no trace of David and his men.

During his search, Saul went into a huge dark cave to rest. He did not know that David and his men were hiding in the back of the cave and did not see them!

You can imagine that David's men thought that this was a great opportunity to kill their enemy. With their encouragement, David crept up behind Saul and cut off a corner of his robe. But as soon as he had done it he was sorry. He said to his men,

“The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.” (1 Samuel 24:6)



David Cuts Saul's Robe

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David refused to harm Saul, and would not allow his men to kill or capture him. Even though the Lord had anointed David to be the next king, Saul was still the king that the Lord had anointed. David would rather put his own life in danger than act against the Lord in any way.

Saul Is Saddened

Saul left the cave to return to his men. Then David came out of the cave and shouted to him, "My lord the king!" (1 Samuel 24:8)

Imagine Saul's face when he turned and saw David standing there! What do you think he was feeling? Shock? Fright? Anger? Maybe all of those things. He would certainly have expected David to attack him.

But instead, David, who loved the Lord and was always loyal to Saul, bowed down. He asked his king why he believed those who told him that he wished to harm him. David had proof that he would not hurt the Lord's anointed.

"Look, this day your eyes have seen that the Lord delivered you today into my hand in the cave.... See the corner of your robe in my hand!"



For in that I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you." (1 Samuel 24:10, 11)

When Saul heard David's words he wept and said,

"You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. And now I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand." (1 Samuel 24:17, 20)

After speaking these words, Saul asked David to swear that he would treat his name and his descendants with honor. David swore that he would do as Saul

asked. After this, Saul returned home. David knew that even though Saul now recognized him as the future king, he would not be safe from Saul. Saul's actions in the past probably made David cautious, because he stayed in the wilderness of En Gedi.

Throughout our lives we have choices like David. Sometimes it is easy to choose well, and other times it is very difficult. Pressure from others might cause us to do something we would not do if we had time to think, or we weren't angry about something else. Sometimes it is hard to choose well because we are alone, and we think no one will find out if we do something wrong. This story shows that at such times we can ignore others and choose our own path.

The Death of Samuel

For many years, the Lord had spoken to the children of Israel through Samuel. As a priest, Samuel had been the voice of the Lord. He had judged and taught the people. Samuel had even instructed and warned king Saul.

Samuel had anointed Saul as Israel's first king. He had also told Saul that his throne would be taken away from him. He had anointed David to be king after Saul. He was the person David fled to when he needed protection.

The time had come when the children of Israel would no longer have Samuel's truly wise and caring guidance. Samuel died and was buried at his home in Ramah. The Israelites gathered together to mourn the death of the Lord's great priest and prophet. Samuel had been the last judge in Israel. His death brought the period of the judges to an end.



Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.” (1 Samuel 24:6)

Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

Who Said It? Saul, David, or David's Men?

Read each statement and decide whether Saul, David or David's men said it.

1 Samuel 24:10 Word Jumble

Unscramble words and then use them to complete a quote from the story.

Who said it? Saul, David, or David's Men?

Read quotes and decide if they were spoken by **Saul**, **David**, or **David's men**. These quotes come from the New King James translation of the Bible. If you are reading a different translation the words may be slightly different. Look back in 1 Samuel chapter 24 if you need help.

Quote	Who said it
1. "This is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold I will deliver your enemy into your hand...'"	_____
2. "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master..."	_____
3. "My Lord the King!"	_____
4. "Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand!"	_____
5. "Let the Lord judge between you and me, and let the Lord avenge me on you."	_____
6. "You are more righteous than I."	_____
7. "Therefore may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me this day."	_____
8. "And now I know indeed that you shall surely be king."	_____

1 Samuel 24:10 Word Jumble

Unscramble each word. Then use the words you have unscrambled to complete the sentence below. You will need to change the order of the words.

1. H R S E T T C

2. I N A N E D T O

3. D R O S L

4. I L L W

5. S T G A I N A

6. A D N H

"I _____ not _____ out my

_____ the

_____."

Answers

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Who Said It? Saul, David, or David's Men?

1. David's men, 2. David, 3. David, 4. David, 5. David, 6. Saul, 7. Saul, 8. Saul.

1 Samuel 24:10 Word Jumble

1. stretch, 2. anointed, 3. Lords, 4. will, 5. against, 6. hand. "I will not stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed."