

General Church Education



David Spares Saul Again

1 Samuel 26

Lesson 17

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is King of Kings

For ages 10-11

David Spares Saul's Life Again

1 Samuel 26

Teacher Background

David was a fugitive when the Ziphites told Saul where he was hiding. Saul took his army and went to search for him and set up a camp. David discovered his whereabouts and that night went into the camp with Abishai. Abishai wanted to kill Saul, but David would not let him harm the Lord's anointed. While the camp was in a deep sleep David took Saul's spear and water jug. Once he had climbed the opposite hill David called out to Abner, Saul's commander, and accused him of not protecting the king. Saul recognized David's voice. David asked why he was pursuing him. Saul acknowledged his sin and pledged not to harm him again. David offered Saul his spear, promised not to harm Saul and went on his way.

The contrast between Saul and David represents the contrast between a selfish and worldly perspective, and a life based on spiritual principles. When thinking of ourselves we are willing to do and believe almost anything. Like Saul, we can become so caught up in our desires that we fear anyone who might pose a threat to their fulfillment. Children experience such states much of the time and must be led to choose wisely.

Focus Points

- Saul went to search for David and made a camp in the wilderness.
- While everyone slept David crept in and took Saul's spear and water jug.
- When the camp awakened David showed Saul that he had the chance to kill him but did not.
- Saul blessed David.

Readings from the Writings

“Kings were called Jehovah's Anointed, and therefore it was utterly forbidden to do them harm, because 'Jehovah's Anointed' is used to mean the Lord's Divine Human.... Earthly kings...served to represent the Lord, who alone was Jehovah's Anointed.... But the anointing of earthly kings was accomplished by the use of oil, whereas the anointing of the Lord in respect of His Divine Human was by means of the actual Divine Good of Divine Love which oil represented.” *Arcana Coelestia* 9954.11

“Good works are bad works unless the things belonging to self-love and love of the world are removed. For until these have been removed works, when performed, are good to outward appearance but are inwardly bad. They are inwardly bad because they are done either for the sake of reputation, or for financial gain, or for improvement of one's position, or for reward. They are accordingly either merit-seeking or hypocritical, for the things that belong to self-love and love of the world cause those works to be such.” *Arcana Coelestia* 3147

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers students the following choices:

Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

“Do not destroy him; for who
can stretch out his hand
against the Lord's anointed,
and be guiltless?” (1 Samuel 26:9)

Projects and Activities (see back for answers)

Questions

Draw a line to connect a phrase in the left column with the right words in the right column.

Correspondences of Truth

When David found Saul asleep he took his spear and the jug of water next to his head. These were symbols of Saul's kingly power. The water and the spear stand for the Lord's truth that He should be the king of our lives. Many other things correspond to the truth as well. Circle words in a list that you think correspond to the Lord's truth.

Additional Project and Activity Choices for Parents and Teachers

Dramatic Reading

David and Saul had a dramatic conversation from afar. Imagine how they were feeling as they spoke and read with emotion. Students can take both parts, or collaborate with another student or the teacher and read one part. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-dramatic-reading-david-spares-saul-again-1samuel26.pdf>

Discussion: Leave It to the Lord

Color a quote of 1 Samuel 26:16, "And no man saw or knew it or awoke." Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/calligraphy-and-no-man-saw-it-or-knew-it-or-awoke-1-samuel-26.pdf>

Discussion: Leave It to the Lord

Encourage students to think about times when it is tempting to take matters into their own hands, as Abishai wanted to do. Encourage students to reflect on times when they want to bully others into doing what they want, or to punish them. Try to trust that the Lord is in charge and will help others see what is right.

David Spares Saul Again

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Vocabulary

stalk—to follow someone without being seen

flea—a tiny jumping insect

partridge—a medium-sized bird with a short tail

Saul Searches for David

For some months king Saul ignored David. Then the Ziphites came to Saul and told him where David was hiding. So Saul took three thousand of his best soldiers and searched for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

David Stalks Saul

David heard that Saul was looking for him again. He sent out spies to find out where Saul and his army were camped. After finding them, David and some of his men crept up to Saul's camp in the darkness of night. They saw Saul surrounded by sleeping soldiers. David asked,

“Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?” (1 Samuel 26:6)

Abishai quietly crept into the camp with David and went right to where Saul lay asleep. Saul's spear was stuck in the ground by his head. A jug of water was nearby. Saul's captain, Abner, lay near him. Abishai was overjoyed! He immediately wanted to kill the man who had hunted them for so long! He said,

“God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time.” (1 Samuel 26:8)

But David had never wanted to hurt Saul.



David spares Saul

David said,

“Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord’s anointed, and be guiltless. The Lord forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the Lord’s anointed.” (1 Samuel 26:9, 11)

The Lord had chosen Saul to be king. David recognized that it was not his job to punish or kill the “Lord’s anointed.” He recognized that the Lord, in His wisdom, would know when and how to deal with Saul.

“As the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish.” (1 Samuel 26:10)

David told Abishai to take the spear that was stuck in the ground by Saul’s head, and the jug of water. They slipped quietly out of the camp without anyone knowing. David and Abishai completed this dangerous mission without getting caught.

The Lord Protected David

It seems unbelievable that all three thousand soldiers would have been asleep, and that none of them would have heard anything. But with the Lord all things are possible. We are reminded in the story the Lord kept David safe. He miraculously put the soldiers to sleep.

“For they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.” (1 Samuel 6:12)

David Accuses Abner



Think back to how David called out to Saul when he came out of the cave after cutting Saul’s robe. Now David had done it again! From the top of a hill, he shouted down to the men far away in the camp. Imagine the soldiers, stirring from their sleep, wondering who could be shouting to them?

The soldiers heard Da-

vid's voice accusing Saul's commander, Abner, of failing to guard the king. David declared that Abner's failure should cost him his life. Imagine Abner's dismay on seeing David holding Saul's spear and jug of water! There was no doubt that David had been right next to the king, and could have killed him.

The shouting woke up Saul. He recognized David's voice.

“Is that your voice, my son David?” (1 Samuel 26:17)

David asked Saul why he kept pursuing him and asked Saul to spare him. He tried to convince Saul that he was not dangerous by comparing himself to something that he was not afraid of, a flea or a partridge.

When Saul heard David he knew that David had spared his life and confessed he had sinned. He asked David to come back and promised he would not harm him. But David did not trust him. Saul had already said he would not harm him but had not kept his promises. He would not risk being captured.

David always respected Saul as the Lord's anointed king. He never tried to take away Saul's authority. He did not even keep Saul's spear, a sign of his kingship. He called one of Saul's young men to come and get it. David was confident that the Lord would save him from Saul.

“And indeed, as your life was valued much in my eyes, so let my life be valued much in the eyes of the Lord, and let Him deliver me out of all tribulation.” (1 Samuel 26:24)

Saul and David Part

Saul's final words to David are a blessing:

“May you be blessed, my son David! You shall both do great things and also still prevail.” (1 Samuel 26:25)

Saul and David parted company for the last time, Saul returned home and David went on his way. They would not meet again. It would not be long until Saul died.



Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Do not destroy him; for who
can stretch out his hand
against the Lord’s anointed,
and be guiltless?” (1 Samuel 26:9)

Projects and Activities (answers at back)

Choose one or two.

Questions

Draw a line to connect a phrase in the left column with the right words in the right column.

Correspondences of Truth

When David found Saul asleep he took his spear and the jug of water next to his head. These were symbols of Saul’s kingly power. The water and the spear stand for the Lord’s truth that He should be the king of our lives. Many other things correspond to the truth as well. Circle words in a list that you think correspond to the Lord’s truth.

Questions

Draw a line to connect a phrase in the left column with the right words in the right column.

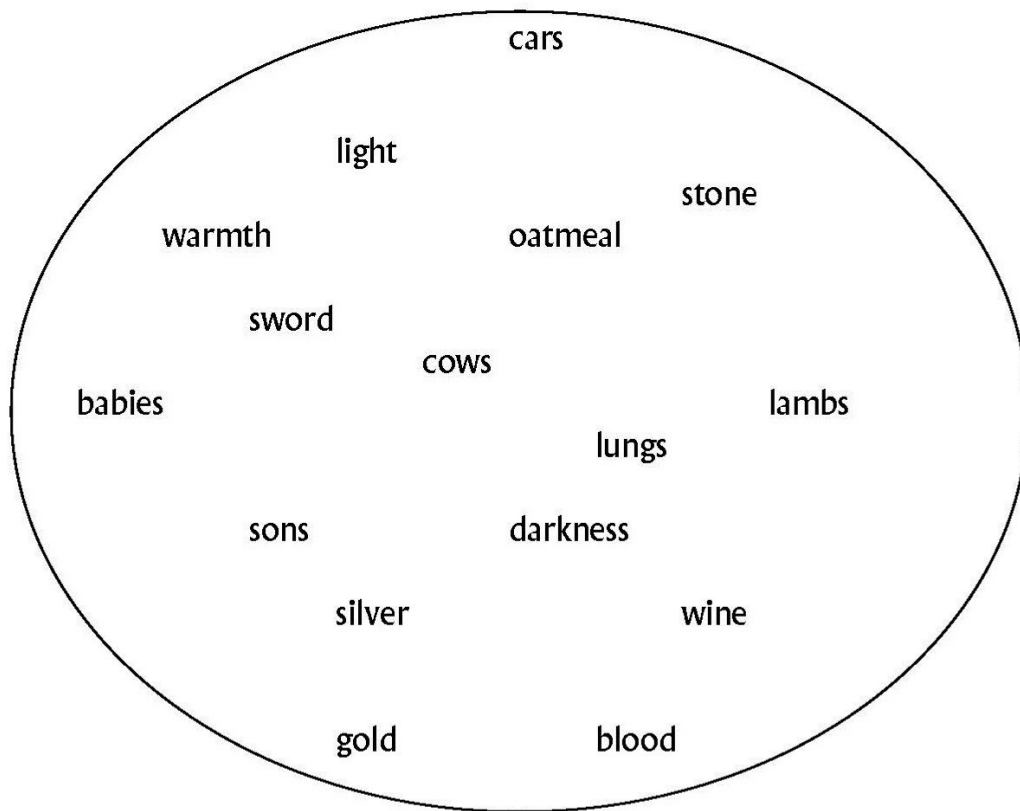
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Gave away David's hiding place | jug and spear |
| 2. Saul's army | spies |
| 3. How David knew Saul had come | flea or partridge |
| 4. Abner the son of Ner | commander |
| 5. Abishai's advice | the Lord |
| 6. Chooses when Saul dies | deep sleep |
| 7. Signs taken by David | great distance |
| 8. State of Saul and his men | 3000 men |
| 9. Between Saul and David talking | a blessing |
| 10. David's comparison | kill Saul |
| 11. Saul's last words to David | the Ziphites |

Correspondences of Truth

When David found Saul asleep he took his spear and the jug of water from next to his head. These things were symbols of Saul's kingly power. Taking them was a sign that David would take Saul's place as king.

The water and the spear are a sign for you too. They stand for the Lord's truth, which should be the king in your life. The Lord's truth is a spear to protect you from evil. The Lord's truth is also like water that quenches your thirsty mind.

There are many other things that correspond to the Lord's truth. Circle the words you think correspond to truth. Then choose one of the words that you circled and try to describe how it is like the Lord's truth. Hint: you should have circled eight words.



I think _____ corresponds to truth because

_____.

Answers

Lesson 17

Questions

1. the Ziphites, 2. 3000 men, 3. spies, 4. commander, 5. kill Saul, 6. the Lord, 7. judge and spear, 8. deep sleep, 9. great distance, 10. flea or partridge, 11. a blessing.

Correspondences of Truth

Light, sword, stone, lungs, sons, silver, wine, blood. Possible answers to question:

I think light corresponds to truth because it helps us see, just like truth; I think stone corresponds to truth because it makes a good foundation; I think a sword corresponds to truth because it helps us fight spiritual battles.