

K-5th Grade
David showed Mercy
Parent Devo & Bible Study

BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 24

STORY POINT: David showed mercy even though Saul hated him.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 145:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How is Jesus the perfect King? Jesus perfectly rules over the universe as the King of kings.

Parent Devotional

David's relationship with King Saul was complicated. Early on, David served the king by playing the lyre for him whenever he felt unwell. After David killed Goliath, he became good friends with Saul's son, Jonathan. But David's success made Saul jealous. Saul could see that David was rising in popularity. He won victory after victory. Saul made several attempts on David's life, and David fled to the land of Moab.

David wasn't alone. His family and other men—anyone who was “desperate, in debt, or discontented” (1 Sam. 22:2)—joined David, and he became their leader. About 400 men were with David. Once in Moab, the prophet Gad instructed David to return to the land of Judah. When Saul found out David's location, he pursued David, intending to kill him. Yet God protected David from Saul.

Saul was in pursuit of David when he stopped to relieve himself. Imagine David's surprise when Saul entered the very cave in which David and his men were hiding. This was David's chance! Saul was outnumbered and could easily be defeated. David got up and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe, but he did not allow his men to hurt Saul.

When Saul left the cave, David followed after him. He acknowledged Saul's authority—“My lord the king!” (1 Sam. 24:8)—and showed Saul the corner of his robe, proof of David's passed-up opportunity. Saul wept upon realizing David's mercy toward him. God had put Saul in David's hand, and David let him go unharmed. Saul realized God had clearly chosen David to be Israel's king.

David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan. As you teach, point kids to Jesus, who also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.

David Was Anointed 1 Samuel 24

David was hiding in the wilderness. He had served King Saul and won many battles, but now Saul was jealous of David and wanted to kill him. Saul took three thousand men and went looking for David.

David and his men were hiding in the back of a cave when Saul happened to pass by. Saul decided to go inside. David's men saw Saul and said, "Look! God said He would hand your enemy over to you. This is the day! You can do whatever you want to him!"

David got close to Saul and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe. Saul didn't realize that David was there. David felt bothered about what he had done, and he told his men, "I won't fight the king. God chose him." So David did not let his men fight against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went on his way.

David left the cave and called to Saul, "My lord the king!" Saul turned around, and David knelt low before him. "Why do you believe people who say I'm trying to hurt you?" David asked. "See, God handed you over to me today in the cave. I had a chance to kill you, but I showed mercy." David showed Saul the corner of the robe that he had cut.

"I have done nothing against you," David said. "God might punish you, but I will never harm you. Let God decide who is right and who is wrong. May He protect me from you."

When Saul heard David's words, he cried. "You are more righteous than I," Saul said, "because you have done what is good to me though I have done what is evil to you. Most people would kill an enemy, but you have let me go. May God reward you for your kindness."

Saul realized God was with David, and he knew David would be the king of Israel. "Promise me you won't kill my family," Saul said. So David promised. Then Saul went home, and David and his men returned to their hiding place.

Christ Connection: David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan. Jesus also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.

Memory Verse:

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures through all generations.

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.

Psalm 145:13