

The Children of Israel Wanting a King Week 1

Point to Emphasize: We shouldn't insist on our own way when our parents know what is best for us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 8-15

Memory Verse: And I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be My people.
(Leviticus 26:12)

Story Sample

In the Bible, in the Old Testament, we see many stories of a group of people that were called the children of Israel. They were God's special people. At one point they were happy to be in Canaan which was God's promised land. They were happy to be different from other nations. They were willing to know God's Word and to keep His law. God was with them, and the other nations feared them because they knew God was with them. They were God's kingdom. All the other nations around them were not like them.

But as time went on, things changed among the children of Israel. They turned their hearts away from God and began to serve and worship other gods, the idols of other nations. Yet, there was still a man among them, Samuel, who followed God. He kept God's Word, and he went among them speaking God's Word to them. All the people respected Samuel, and they even feared him because they knew God was with him. But still, no matter what Samuel did or said, not many of the people turned back to God.

Now, the children of Israel were very unhappy, discontented, to be different from the other nations. All the nations around them had kings. They wanted a king, a man they could see, just like the other nations. They did not want God to rule them. So they went to Samuel the man of God and demanded a king. Samuel was displeased about this. He did not want to appoint a king for them. He knew that they were God's people and that only God should be their king. But the people begged for a king. Samuel tried hard to talk them out of it. He told them how awful it would be to have a king over them like the other nations. He told them that they would have to pay taxes to that man, go to battle to win his wars, give him part of the crops from their land and the cattle from their flocks. A king would demand so much from them.

When I was growing up, I was exactly like the children of Israel. Once, I wanted to hear one song that ALL the kids in my class were listening to. I kept asking, insisting my parents to let me hear it. My parents knew better than me. They knew that song was not good. But you know, they sat with me and played the song for me. After I heard the song, it got stuck in my head, and I even had nightmares. I later told my parents that I was going to listen to them and not to insist on doing what others were doing. My parents knew what was better for me. *[Give an example of when you were young, insisting on having what "all the other kids had" even though your parents knew what was best for you.]*

Come back next week! We will find out if the children of Israel got the king they wanted.

Saul Disobeyed God Week 2

Point to Emphasize: There are consequences for disobeying.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 8-15

Memory Verse: Children, **obey** your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord. (Colossians 3:20)

Story Sample

So, the children of Israel rejected God as their King and insisted on having a king. God was very displeased with this, and Samuel warned them they were different from the other nations and only God was to be their King. Nevertheless, Jehovah had Samuel anoint a king for them. The new king was named Saul. Now, Saul was a man everyone would admire. He was quite a fighting man and was wealthy. He was strikingly handsome, and he was nearly a foot taller than everyone else. There was none like him. This is the one God anointed as ruler over His people. When he was presented to the people they cheered with joy. Now they were no different from the nations.

Do you think he was a good king? Well, while Saul reigned as king he was a mighty warrior. He and his son Jonathan fought well in battle for the children of Israel. BUT during this time he did not keep God's commandments. At one battle against the Amalekites, Jehovah told Saul to utterly destroy them and all that they had. Saul was not to save anything alive. God wanted this enemy to be thoroughly destroyed. So Saul with 210,000 men struck the Amalekites. But instead of destroying everything, Saul disobeyed God, and he captured their king, Agag, and kept all the best sheep and cattle for himself. When Samuel heard about this and asked Saul why he had disobeyed Jehovah, Saul denied disobeying. He said that these sheep and oxen were only kept to be a sacrifice to Jehovah. But Samuel told him that with Jehovah it is better to obey than to sacrifice. He also told him he had rejected the Word of Jehovah and so Jehovah had rejected him.

I will ask you something, but I don't want you to answer out loud. Have you ever disobeyed your parents and then lied about it? One day I was with my dad in the candy store. I was wearing overalls. These pants had a lot of pockets. When my dad was not looking I would put candies in my pockets. This is NOT RIGHT. My dad looked at me and asked me, "Why are your pockets so big?" I said, "Hmm... I have my hands in my pockets." My dad, who was very playful, started doing his favorite thing. He grabbed me, held me up in the air and started spinning me around. Oh, Oh!! You guessed it right! The candies that once filled my pockets were flying out everywhere. I was so embarrassed. I will never forget the sadness in my dad's face. I felt terrible. So, with each act of disobedience, there was always a consequence. My dad asked me to go around the store, pick up every candy that had fallen from my pockets, and give them back to the store manager along with a heartfelt apology. *[Give an example of when you disobeyed your parents and then lied about it. How did you feel when they caught you in the lie?]*

So even though Saul was a mighty warrior and fought for Israel he did not keep God's Word. He disobeyed God and then lied about disobeying. When Samuel came to him he did not confess and repent that he had disobeyed God's Word. Saul lied, trying to cover up what he did. Saul was caught red-handed, and yet he still did not confess and repent of not destroying everything of the enemy as God had commanded. What was Saul's consequence for disobeying? Saul rejected God's Word so God rejected Saul. God rejected Saul from being king over the children of Israel.

God's Selection of David Week 3

Point to Emphasize: God looks at who we are on the inside.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 16

Memory Verse: ...For it is not how man sees that matters; for man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7b)

Story Sample

God sent Samuel, the man of God, to find a man among the children of Israel who, as king, would not disobey Him as Saul had, but would care for His kingdom. God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem.

Now, even though it was Jehovah that had told Samuel to go to Bethlehem, Samuel was afraid that King Saul would find out. If a new king was selected that meant Saul's kingship would be over. Samuel knew that king Saul would kill him if he knew what he was doing. Samuel wanted to obey Jehovah, but he was afraid of Saul. What do you think he did? Did Samuel run and hide? *[let a child respond]* Samuel did not run away from God's Word. Instead he admitted to Jehovah that he was afraid and asked God what to do.

Have you ever talked to God about being afraid of something? *[Give your own example – maybe you were afraid of the dark and told God about it.]*

Samuel was really smart to talk to God like this. Jehovah then gave him the way. Samuel would take an offering when he went, so that he could make a sacrifice to Jehovah at Bethlehem. Then instead of stopping by Jesse's house, which would make people suspicious, he would call Jesse's household to come to the sacrifice. No one would think that was unusual.

Samuel did as Jehovah said and journeyed to Bethlehem. As he came to the city, the elders (the city rulers) came out to meet him. You see, the town rulers worried because they thought God had sent Samuel to judge them. They took Samuel's coming to their city very seriously.

Once they were in the city, they gathered Jesse's family together. Jesse's oldest son came before Samuel first. Samuel saw him and thought – surely this is the one Jehovah will make king. When he saw the oldest son he right away was impressed with how tall and strong he was. Based on how he looked, this one must be Jehovah's choice! But how wrong Samuel was! Jehovah's answer was that man looks on the outward matters, but He looks on the heart.

One time I met a scrawny (very skinny, kind of weak) girl. She had stringy red hair and wore clothes a little too big for her. They were hand-me-down clothes from her sister. She came with her mom each week during the summer to where I work. She and her mom would spend the day volunteering. That little girl loved to come and help. She would do

whatever small jobs we wanted her to do. Now, I am sure that kids at school did not think she was a cool kid. And I am sure she was not the first one picked to be on a kickball team, but whenever she came to my work, what I saw was her heart. She was happy to tag along with her mom. She did not complain about being bored. And she was very glad to help others. Now, what do you think that little girl is today? Do you think she is going to college so she can make a lot of money and have the best car? Well, she is in college now, and she is studying to be a nurse. Her heart is to help others, and nurses help a lot of people. So you still can see her heart.

Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and each time Samuel knew Jehovah had not chosen that one. Then Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse said that he still had his youngest son who was out looking after the sheep. You see, Jesse had not even thought to call his youngest son. This son was hardly 15 years old, and there was nothing about him that he thought should interest Samuel, the man of God. This eighth son was so young that he did the lowest family chores. While his older brothers did all the big important things, he was always sent to look after the sheep. So this last son, the eighth among the brothers was sent for.

He was the one that was chosen, and this is how the youngest son of Jesse was selected to be Israel's next king. Samuel had prayed to God, and God had answered his prayer. Does anyone know what Jesse's youngest son's name is? (David)

Entering into Saul's Service Week 4

Point to Emphasize: What kind of job we do in the future depends on our training as a youth.

References: 1 Samuel 16:12-23

Memory Verse: ...he came to know that God the Most High is the Ruler over the kingdom of men and sets over it whomever He wills. (Daniel 5:21c)

Story Sample

David (Jesse's youngest son) was anointed by Samuel to be king. If Jehovah was not for Saul or for Saul's being king, what should Saul have done? Right, he should have called for the man of God, Samuel, to see what Jehovah wanted him to do. But do you think Saul gave up being king? NO! Instead of taking the advice of a man of God, he took the advice of one of his servants to find someone who could play the lyre to calm him and make him feel better. A lyre is a stringed instrument that is strummed. The music would be soothing and calming.

Let's go back to David. He was anointed by Samuel to be king. What do you think he should do now? Should he go to the king and demand that he leave the throne? Should he go to the people of Israel and stir them up to be for him and be against King Saul? Well, David did not do either. He figured that since God had selected him to be king that God would bring him to the throne. So David kept tending his father's flock. He did not do anything to change his situation. He did not try to work out how he was going to be king. He depended on God to do something to bring him into the kingship.

Now, David was very skillful at playing the lyre. How did he become skilled at playing a lyre? To play in a skilled way is different from a beginner player who is just learning. Who here plays an instrument in a skilled way? [*Pick an older one*] Tell us how you are becoming skilled at playing the (*piano, etc.*). To be skilled we must have lessons to teach us, and then we have to practice every day. So David was taught to play the lyre, and he practiced while tending the flock. Do you know that large herds of animals like sheep or cows are calmed down by gentle music or singing? Well they are. So David must have done a lot of practicing.

Because David could play the lyre so well Saul sent a messenger to Jesse and said, "Send me David your son, who is among the sheep". So David came to Saul and entered into his service. He became one who served the king. He stood before the king and whenever Saul wanted, David took his lyre and played it, and Saul was refreshed.

Because David's playing helped him so much this made the king love David, and he made David his armor bearer. An armor bearer carried all the equipment the king would need to use during the battle. This was a very dangerous job!

Now when the king's army went out to battle David went along to keep the king's extra armor, the spears and swords that he would use during battle. And don't think that he stayed behind in the tent. NO! He was there in the midst of the battle alongside the king. So maybe you thought that David was a little soft, maybe weak, since he played the lyre so well. But you were wrong! To stand there in battle loaded down with the spears and swords the king would use meant you were as brave as the king.

Then when the battle was over for the day did David get a few days off? No, the army was camped for battle. They might be in battle for weeks and months. And there were thousands of men. The camp was a huge array of tents. How would the tents be put up? Who would be in which tent? How would they all be fed? There was a lot to take care of. If you did not have bright capable men running the camp it could be chaos. There were no cell phones so you could not just instantly dial a number and find out where your best warriors were. There had to be a lot of planning and detailed work done to set up a battle camp. David was one of the ones that took care of these things.

[Give an example about how you were given some responsibility as a child and how important it was for you to do the job well. Then relate how doing that as a child has made you responsible for many things now as an adult – at your job, or taking care of your family, household, etc.]

So in his younger years David tended sheep. Now as a young man he tends the army of the king.

Goliath's Defiant Attitude Week 5

Point to Emphasize: We should not challenge or defy our parents.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17:1-11

Memory Verse: Let every person be subject to the authorities over *him*, for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are ordained by God.
(Rom. 13:1)

Story Sample

[Storyteller: the point of this story is not Goliath's height or weight, etc. Many details are in the story. But do not spend that much time on them. The focus should be on a "defiant attitude"]

From the time the children of Israel entered the Good land, it seemed they always had enemies. Someone always wanted their land, and they always had to fight to keep it. Some of these enemies were the Philistines. At the time of David, they were the ones battling for the land.

The Philistines gathered their armies for battle in Socoh, which is in Judah. Saul and his armies gathered in the valley of Elah, and they prepared to do battle. The Philistines were on one mountain on one side of the valley, and the Israelites were on another mountain on the other side of the valley. They were ready to do battle.

One of the Philistines came forward, a very BIG soldier named Goliath, and he called out to the Israelites. The Bible says he was six cubits and a span tall. Since a cubit is about 18" and a span is about 8.75", then Goliath was 9' 8.75" tall. If he were to come in this room right now, he would have to stoop down just to come through the door. Now that is BIG! So he must have looked pretty frightening to the Israelites, don't you think?

Not only was he big, he was also dressed for the fiercest of battles. He wore a bronze helmet on his head, so that it would be very hard to harm his head. And then he was clothed with scaled armor, like the scales on a fish. It would be very hard for a spear to get through this armor, wouldn't it? This armor was very heavy, so Goliath must have been very strong. It weighed five thousand bronze shekels. Now, if a shekel weighs .4 ounces, then 5000 would weigh how much? 2000 ounces, or 125 pounds. That's a lot of weight to carry isn't it? That would be like carrying an adult on your back. And yet to still be able to move to fight, you would need to be very, very strong. And then his legs were covered with bronze also, for protection.

Besides all the protection Goliath had, he also had weapons. He carried a sword, a javelin and a spear. The spear had a shaft the size of a weaver's beam and the head of his spear weighed 600 iron shekels. Now how much does a shekel weigh? (.4 ounce) So 600 would be how much? (240 oz. or 15 lbs.) This man was really strong. How far do you think you

could throw 1 pound? ...how about 5 pounds?...how about 10 pounds?...And how about 15 pounds? And not only that, he also had someone go before him to carry his shield.

Goliath had another weapon he used. It's called attitude. Can you tell me what this means? (How you present yourselves to others, how you behave) Some people have a good attitude. They cooperate, are willing to be reasonable, are pleasant, and usually nice to be around. I really like people with a good attitude, don't you? BUT, other people have a bad attitude. They put others down and make fun of others. They are proud, thinking they are better than anyone else, and always think they are right. They are not willing to cooperate, often not very pleasant, and usually not very nice to be around. They are usually the bullies of the world. I really don't like bad attitudes! Sometimes we have on a good attitude and sometimes we have on a bad attitude. *[Give a personal example of this, either of a time you were bullied, or a time when you showed a bad attitude and then corrected it to a good attitude when you realized you had been wrong.]*

And Goliath – well, he had on his bad attitude, his defiant attitude. He proposed that if they would send just one Israelite who was willing to fight him, and he won, then the Philistines would become the servants of the Israelites. But if Goliath won, then the Israelites would become the servants of the Philistines. Goliath was so proud, he was sure he could defeat any Israelite. He was defiant. To be defiant is to openly resist authority or to challenge authority. Goliath was challenging all of God's people. He was defying them. You may think that you have never been as bad as Goliath. Well, one time I was with a mom and her daughter. The daughter wanted very much to go to a friend's house to do something special. Her mom told her no. She could not go because she had not finished her homework. That girl became so angry. She stomped her foot, put her hands on her hips and said, "I don't care what you say! I am going!" Isn't that defiant? I am afraid that some of us can think back just a few days and remember having this kind of attitude. Just telling this story this morning I remember when I was a kid and . . . *[use your own example.]* It made me want to go and tell that person how sorry I was for being defiant. Maybe this story will help us this week to consider our reactions to our parents and teachers – those who are in authority.

David Took Care of His Responsibilities Week 6

Point to Emphasize: We should be responsible.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17:12-40

Memory Verse: ...to obey is better than sacrifice,... (1 Samuel 15:22b)

Story Sample

So last week we left big huge Goliath standing there, all dressed for battle. But who would ever fight such a big man? Does anyone know? Yes, David. Now, you'll remember that David was the youngest of eight brothers. His dad was Jesse from Bethlehem. They had a nice big family and David was a good, reliable son. But being the youngest son wasn't always easy.

The war with the Philistines went on for many years while David was growing up. When the time came to go off to battle the Philistines, do you think David got to go? Noooo! His oldest three brothers got to go off to fight the enemy. And what did David get to do? Stay home and take care of the sheep. Not quite as exciting, was it? But David did what he was told. He took the best care of those sheep at Bethlehem, where the sheep were. He was an obedient, responsible son. *[Give an example of someone who was the youngest in the family and felt like they never got to do what the older siblings did BUT accepted it and did not complain.]*

But the day came when Jesse asked David to do something special. He asked him to take some food to his brothers on the battle line. I'm sure he was probably excited to go off on such an adventure! But did he just take off without taking care of things? No. He made sure that the sheep were taken care of by another keeper first.

And then, when he got to the battlefield, did he get distracted by all things happening around him? No, he stayed on task. Remember, his dad Jesse had sent him with the specific task of providing food for his brothers. So he took care of that first giving the food to the keeper of the equipment for it to be distributed properly; only then he could go off to find his brothers.

Now, when I was young, one day my dad woke me up and told me we were going to Red Rock Canyon that day. I was soooo excited already thinking about all these big giant red rocks to climb on and caves to go into – it was so much fun. So I jumped out of bed and jumped in my dad's truck and off we went! When we got home late that afternoon though, there stood my mom with the most disappointed look on her face. I had gone off without making my bed. I didn't act very responsibly, did I? *[Give an example of carrying through with chores instead of being swept away by the excitement of something.]*

Well, David wasn't that way. He was a very obedient, loyal, and responsible young person. Now what are some things that we did last week that showed we were responsible? Who turned in their homework on time? Who forgot to turn in their homework one time this week? *[Use these everyday examples to talk with the kids.]* Hopefully this coming week we will remember a little about David and be more responsible.

David Conducting Himself Honorably Week 7

Points to Emphasize: We should be diligent to conduct ourselves honorably.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17:41-58

Memory Verse: Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be extended upon the land which Jehovah your God is giving you. (Exodus 20:12)

Story Sample

We had talked about how Goliath proposed that if they would send just one Israelite to fight him, and he won, then the Philistines would become the servants of the Israelites. A crucial single battle could decide the war with the Philistines and David knew that this was God's battle, not his. David had a lot of experience protecting the sheep from lions and bears with God's help and had learned that God always defeats His enemies and stands for His people; hence, he decided that he would go against Goliath in battle. So David stood tall; he reached in his bag and he took one stone out. Then he put it into the sling. David must have been very skilled with the sling. I'm sure he practiced a lot, to be such a good shot. David swung that sling and let that stone go. He took perfect aim. David did a good job – he hit his target the first time. He struck Goliath in his forehead. And he fell down dead. He didn't even need all five stones that he had put in his bag. He did it with the first stone. *[Give several examples of daily practicing something - piano, multiplication tables - so that under pressure you can do it.]*

The Philistines were standing back watching this whole thing as it happened. Do you think they rose up to fight on behalf of Goliath? NO! They were so frightened when they saw this that they turned and ran.

What about the Israelites? Well, they were encouraged by what they saw. They probably realized that David was right, that Jehovah was with them. So, as God's people, they were encouraged. And they rose up to go fight the battle. They did not expect David to do it all. They went together and chased the Philistines off and plundered their camp. Sometimes it takes one brave person to stand for God. Then others will follow.

And when people see this, they are impressed. Saul was so impressed with what David did! He wanted to know who had raised such a fine young man. Saul asked David, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered him, "The son of your servant Jesse." He honored the king by naming his father as a servant of the king. So how David behaved reflected on his dad.

One time I got called into the principal's office for messing around during class. The principal scolded me and then called my mom. OH, I felt AWFUL as the principal told my mom what I had done. I was so ashamed because what I had done reflected on my mom. Now my mom knew how bad I could be. It was worse than being disciplined for messing around. Missing recess would have been easy but for my mom to be called made me so ashamed of myself. *[Insert several stories of how your conduct honored your parents.]*

David's Conduct Week 8

Point to Emphasize: Others should see your behavior and look up to you.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: And David acted prudently in all his campaigns, and Jehovah was with him.
(1 Samuel 18:14)

Story Sample

David went forth on every mission that King Saul sent him on. He carried out Saul's missions using sound judgment and managing the matters carefully. David was not rash or hurried; rather he was so wise in how he carried things out. So based upon this excellent performance in carrying out matters Saul set him over the men of battle. And all the people and the servants of Saul approved of David. Without trying to, David became a leader among the people.

Now anyone in this position is bound to become well known. If I am a common foot soldier in an army, no one but my family and those in my unit will know much about me. But once you have such a high position, it is easy for everyone to see what you do and what you say. And this is how it was for David. Once Saul sent him on missions and set him over the men of battle, it was easy for all to observe how he behaved himself. And how did David conduct himself? The verse says that David acted prudently. Prudently is not a word we hear very often. It means to use good judgment and to use common sense. The opposite of prudent is rash, reckless, hasty, and careless.

Here are some real situations that I have seen. You tell me if you see good judgment and common sense being used; or careless, hasty and reckless behavior. *[Discuss how each one's conduct could be changed to become the opposite. Depends on age group which examples you use.]*

- 1) A 3rd grade boy lets his little sister walk across the street with him without holding on to her hand.
- 2) A 2nd grade girl runs into the street chasing her dog.
- 3) A 1st grade girl puts a marble into her mouth while playing.
- 4) A 3rd grade boy races into a group of kids without slowing down.
- 5) A 5th grade boy reads his homework assignment to write a half page on a certain kind of dog; he decides he can whiz through this in 10 minutes; he writes quickly but does not reread what he wrote.

[Insert your own story concerning about being prudent or rash and the consequences.]

David became known by his conduct. Likewise, we also become known by our conduct. Since David was prudent when he carried out his responsibilities, others appreciated and looked up to him. Let's be like David conducting ourselves prudently.

Saul's Envy **Week 9**

Point to Emphasize: We should be happy with others' success rather than being jealous.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.
(Galatians 5:26) *[Please explain to the children what vainglorious means.]*

Story Sample

At first when Saul was made king he behaved himself quite well. He took care of the nation of Israel by warring against their enemies. Saul was certainly qualified and capable to rule Israel. At first he appeared to be for God's kingdom. He won a mighty victory over the Ammonites when they threatened Israel. This victory uplifted him in the eyes of the people. Then he fought the Philistines, and these two victories gave Saul the way to make a name for himself. He became known as a leader and valiant warrior among the people. Sometimes people who have become leaders and are very good at something often become proud. When someone else comes along who can do as well or better they react jealously.

When I was young we had spelling bees every year. I was a good speller, so every year I would win for my grade level. All the kids in my class expected me to win every year. But when I got to the fifth grade, someone new moved to my school who was an even better speller than me, and he won that year. I was so upset that I couldn't even congratulate him. I was jealous, and envied him for the award he got. *[Give an example of when you were jealous of someone.]*

Saul was like this. He had started out as a good leader to his people but when someone did better than him, he was jealous. But now David was the leading one. He was just better than Saul. Instead of congratulating David, Saul became very angry and jealous of all the attention David was getting. Instead of caring for what was best for the people Saul only cared about what was best for him! He wanted to still get all the attention. He looked at David as his competition, even his enemy.

I know that we say sports teaches us teamwork, but let's see if it really does. If you are playing kickball and someone on your team kicks and is able to run the bases, what is your reaction? Are you really thrilled or is there something small inside that says, "I wish that were me instead." If we are really a team then it should not matter to us who scores the points. But many times we have to admit that we are envious, wishing it had been us instead. *[Give an example of your personal experience or age appropriate example.]*

This is how Saul was. He and David were really on the same side, but he was envious! He did not want David to be better than him. Saul became so jealous that sometimes he treated David as an enemy. Instead of being thankful to have someone as good as David with him, he was jealous.

This week if we feel that twinge of jealousy towards someone, I hope we will remember this story of Saul and change our attitude to appreciate what others can do.

Jonathan Respects David and Chooses Him as His Friend Week 10

Points to Emphasize: We can choose to be a good friend and should choose friends we can trust.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: But there is a true friend that sticks closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24b)

Story Sample

Last week I was supposed to deliver an important paper to someone, but I was babysitting and it would have been very hard to do with the baby tagging along. I was telling a friend about my problem and she said, "How about I do it for you?" I was so relieved! Not only was I able to take care of this situation and of the baby, I was also sure my friend would deliver the paper faithfully. *[Give your own example.]*

What makes this one a good friend? *[Write a list on the board as the children answer; encourage words like "trust, respect, loyal, loving, etc"* So these are good words to know. We should be a friend like this and we should have friends like this.

In the Bible there is a good story about friends. It's in the book of Samuel. Can anyone tell me the names of these two friends? Yes, David and Jonathan. These two young people became very good friends.

Now, we already know quite a bit about David. We know that he was responsible (caring for the sheep), obedient (doing as his father instructed him, taking supplies to his brother), brave (standing against Goliath), and that he believed God (in giving him the victory over Goliath). So Jehovah was with him, even when he fought in many battles for Israel (he was a prudent warrior). He sounds like the kind of friend I would like to have.

But we haven't heard that much about Jonathan yet. Jonathan was the son of Saul, the king of Israel. Saul wanted his son to be king after him. God had chosen Saul to be king, but now Saul was choosing his son to be the next king.

Jonathan, Saul's son, was present when David went up against Goliath. Jonathan was watching David as he defeated Goliath and as he led the army to defeat Israel's enemies. He could not help but respect and regard what he saw in David.

When Jonathan saw and heard how David faced the situation, he respected David. Jonathan even befriended David, taking him as a very close friend. What Jonathan had seen in David caused him to pledge himself to support David in every way. David's words and actions showed his greatness and his wisdom and his dependence upon God. Jonathan could not help but admire, respect, and highly esteem him for that.

Jonathan gave him his robe, his sword, his bow, and his belt as a pledge of their friendship. Now, these are things a warrior like Jonathan needed very much. So this shows his heart was very pure. Jonathan took care of David as he would take care of himself.

Last week I was with my friend and saw her daughter give a friend her favorite toy, just to show her how much she liked her. She was willing to give up what she loved most for her friend. *[Use your own example.]*

Next week, see if you all can come back with a story of something you did for a friend.

Jonathan Helps His Friend David Week 11

Point to Emphasize: Be a helping friend.

Reference: 1 Samuel 19:1-7

Memory Verse: Little children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and truthfulness. (1 John 3:18)

Story Sample

I'm going to write 7 words on the board, and I want you to match them into two groups. *[Write envy, jealousy, respect, anger, friendship, helping, and love on the board].* (Child's name), can you come up and list them into two groups that match? That's right – envy, anger and jealousy go together and love, friendship, helping, and respect also go together. They are like companions – when you see one, usually the others are close behind. Do you know what all of these words mean? *[Have children try to answer – envy means to want what someone else has, anger is to be mad at, jealousy is to be resentful; love is affection or fondness for, friendship is companionship or an ally, helping is coming to someone in need, and respect is to admire or esteem]*

Now I'm going to write 3 names on the board. *[Write Saul, David, Jonathan on the board.]* (Child's name), can you draw a line from the name to which group they would belong with? Yes, when you think of Saul, you are reminded of anger, jealousy, and envy. And when you remember David and Jonathan you think of friendship, love, helping, and respect.

Jonathan was such a good friend to David. He could tell that his father, King Saul, was planning to kill David. He knew that David needed to be careful so that the king would not harm him. Jonathan warned David.

David listened to his friend. He knew he could trust Jonathan. Jonathan warned him that his father Saul was seeking to kill him. He told David that he should be careful and even hide. He also told him that he would go to his father to plead David's case. And he promised to tell David whatever he might find out.

Have you ever seen a friend about to be in trouble and you have tried to warn them? When I was young, one of my friends had a trampoline. One day we were playing on the trampoline, and she started jumping too high. I knew if she kept jumping like that, she could get hurt. So I warned her, "Stephanie, you'd better stop before you get hurt!" Now, Stephanie had a choice to make – she could either listen to the warning of a good friend or she could keep going. Well, Stephanie made the wrong choice, and she ended up falling and getting 20 stitches in her head. She really should have listened to her friend. *[Insert your own story of being warned by a friend or of warning a friend. Focus your example on a friend's help to do what is best. It may be that the friend told you to go home on time, to do what your mom told you to do, or to not cheat on a test – also invite examples from the children.]*

So Jonathan went to his father to defend his friend David. He asked him not to harm David. He reminded his father of some things about David. First, he pointed out that David had done nothing to Saul, so there was no reason to kill him. Then he reminded his father that David had done only good deeds for Saul. He had even risked his life when he fought against Goliath the Philistine. Even Saul had rejoiced when this happened. How quickly he forgot all the good things about David. Jonathan pointed out to his father that if he killed David, he would be killing an innocent man.

And I'm happy to say that Saul listened to his son.

Then Jonathan called David out of hiding and told him what had happened. That must have been such a relief for both of them. David had a very trustworthy friend in Jonathan. So they returned to the king, and David was in Saul's presence as he had been before.

Jonathan was a very good friend to have. What kind of things can we do this week to help out our friends?

David Respects Authority Week 12

Points to Emphasize: We should respect authority; we should not speak or act against those who are in charge of us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17:33-37; 19:8-10

Memory Verse: Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.(1 Peter 2:17)

Story Sample

David's life was a life of fighting, wasn't it? From the time he was very young, it seems he was always fighting something. As a shepherd, he had to fight for the sheep to protect them. When a lion or bear threatened the sheep, he would fight them. Yet God used this fighting to prepare David. It was to prepare him to battle Goliath and then the Philistines and all of the other enemies of Israel. And during all this fighting, David trusted God to always protect him and even to defeat his enemies. So he became a very brave warrior. BUT the more battles he won, the more Saul became jealous of him and wanted to kill him.

It seems as if once Saul began pursuing him, David spent all his time dodging and hiding. Last week we talked about how he hid when Jonathan told him that his father wanted him to kill him. Doesn't this seem a little out of character for David? The mighty warrior becoming someone who runs and hides? Let's think about this for a minute. We know that David had single-handedly struck down a mighty warrior and so many Philistines, so surely he could strike down one angry king, couldn't he? So why do you think he didn't?

David was a respecter of God and a respecter of God's authority on earth, which at this time was King Saul. David would never do anything to hurt the king God had raised up. So even though David was more than capable of fighting Saul, he wouldn't do anything to harm God's authority. David was not a coward. He was very wise to hide from King Saul and not to oppose the king. Just think how easy it would have been for David to spread the news of how Saul was trying to kill him. He could have criticized Saul and had many rally around him to rebel against the king. But David would not do this. He was subject to the authority over him. He knew that this authority had been planned by God.

Sometimes we are not like David at all. Sometimes we do not regard those who are over us. One time there was this really hard teacher at school. She was very strict. And she graded pretty hard. Well, some students started talking behind her back. And of course what they said about her was not nice. Those children just criticized that teacher. But those children should have been like David and not spoken badly about the teacher. *[Insert your own example of regarding or not regarding those over us.]*

Saul tried to kill David again and again, but David always honored the king. I hope all of us would think twice this week before we speak a criticism against our teachers, police officers, or parents. They are ones who are over us, and we should regard them as such.

Michal Chooses Not to Join Saul in His Plan against David Week 13

Point to Emphasize: Not joining with others to be mean but choosing to help someone who is being treated wrongly.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 19:11-17

Memory Verse: Do not envy a man of violence, and do not choose any of his ways;
(Proverbs 3:31)

Story Sample

David was married to Michal who was the daughter of King Saul. She was a very good wife, caring for the man she loved and respected. One day, David had returned to his home and wife, and Saul sent his messengers to David's home to watch for him and kill him in the morning. David and his wife talked about what was happening and Michal told him that if he didn't do something that very night, he would be killed in the morning. They must have had a very busy night, preparing for him to escape! Michal helped to lower David out of the window so that he could escape Saul's messengers.

After David was gone, Michal did something more. This was something that would delay Saul's men as they sought for David. She prepared his bed to make it look as though David was lying in bed. Then, anyone who looked in might just think that David was sleeping. This would give David more time to escape. So when the king's messengers came in the morning, looking for David, Michal told them that David was sick. Saul was angry when he heard this and demanded that the messengers bring David up to Saul on his bed so that he could kill him. When they did, they found out they had been tricked. Saul was SO angry!

Michal had not participated in her father's evil plan against David. Michal did the right thing by helping David to escape. She would not be part of any plan to destroy him!

Sometimes we have to choose whether we will join others to be against someone. Sometimes we have a choice to make like this. Will we join in on a plan that would be mean to someone else?

For example, one day you are with all your classmates in a circle, tossing a ball around, and your little brother comes and wants to play too. But you all join in to keep the ball away from him rather than letting him play. Your little brother gets really upset by this. This is mean, isn't it? You know, you have a choice when this happens. You can choose to go along with the plan to keep the ball away from the little one, or you can help him out by throwing him the ball, no matter what the others say. *[Give an example of your personal experience.]*

I hope you all will come back next week and tell me an example of making the choice not to join in on a plan that is mean or against someone else but to help someone that is being treated wrongly.

David Gives Saul Another Chance Week 14

Point to Emphasize: Not holding on to our anger; giving a person another chance.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 19:18—20:1

Memory Verse: Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another. (Romans 12:10)

Story Sample

After Michal helped David to escape, he went to a place called Ramah. Saul continued to try to find David. He sent his men to look for him, and then Saul himself went to Ramah looking for David. He would not let go of his anger and jealousy.

Sometimes, when I was young, I was like this. I would get mad at my friends, and I couldn't let go of it. Even when they wanted to forget about our fight and go on to be friends, I wouldn't drop it. I wanted to stay mad at them. I lost a lot of time I could have had fun by hanging on to my anger. *[Use your own example.]*

Up until now it seemed that David could not figure out why Saul was so against him. So instead of running even farther away, he returned to where King Saul and Jonathan were. David really wanted to fix things between him and King Saul. He was not trying to be Saul's enemy. He really wanted to remain in the king's service. He wanted to be with Saul. So he decided to give Saul another chance.

Have you ever decided to give someone another chance? Maybe at recess someone was so mean to you; right then you decided that you will never play with him again. But later on, after you have some time to think about it, you decided you should give him a chance to change and be friendly. *[Ask the children for an example; have one of your own ready in case they can't think of anything.]*

This was what David did. Saul had done a number of things against David, but David did not decide to be against Saul. He wanted to make sure that there was no hope of Saul changing his mind. He wanted to give Saul one more chance. So he went back to Jonathan to get his help.

It's always a good idea to give someone a second chance. Let's see if this week something happens where we can give someone a second chance when they are mean to us.

Jonathan Helps His Friend David Week 15

Point to Emphasize: Good friends can help us out.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 20

Memory Verse: A friend loves at all times, ... (Proverbs 17:17a)

Story Sample

David had decided to give Saul another chance. So he went back to his friend Jonathan, Saul's son. David could not understand what he had done to make Saul so angry, so he asked Jonathan if he knew. Jonathan did not know either, but he could not imagine that his father was really absolutely against David. They had a conversation about what was going on. Because that's what friends do – they talk to each other. AND, they listen to each other, especially about things that are serious.

I know you all have a friend. And I'm sure you tell them just what you think. When I was little, I would tell my friends about what I liked and what I didn't like. As I got older, I told my friends even more, even asking them about what they thought I should do when I had a problem. And because they were my friends, they would always listen to me. And often they would help me find an answer to my problem. *[Give your own personal example.]*

So David and Jonathan talked with one another, and listened too, and they came up with a plan. This plan would show them if Saul was really against David. While David hid in a field, Jonathan went to be with his father. He would then return and give David a sign to show what Saul's intention was. After three days of being with the king, Jonathan knew what his father, the king, wanted to do to David. He knew that Saul wanted to put David to death! He now realized that Saul would not change. Saul was absolutely against David. This made Jonathan so angry because David had not done anything wrong. Yet King Saul had set himself against David.

So, according to their plan, Jonathan returned to the field and shot arrows far out ahead of his servant boy. This was the sign that let David know that Saul was fully against him and that he needed to flee away. The two friends cried as they had to leave one another. What good friends they were! I am glad that I have friends like this too. And even more, I want to be a friend like this! I want to be a friend who can help someone out.

[Give an example of a time when you did something that was the best for a friend, even though it meant you had to lose something.]

Some Servants do not Join Saul **Week 16**

Point to Emphasize: We should not give in to pressure to join in activities against someone.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 21:1-10; 22:1-8

Memory Verse: ... I have conducted myself in all good conscience before God until this day.
(Acts 23:1b)

Story Sample:

David was on the run! He had to flee without any preparation. This time he headed for Nob. Ahimelech the priest was at Nob. He was a priest who served Jehovah and His house. David told the priest that he had left in such a hurry that he had not been able to pack any food or weapons. He asked Ahimelech if he could have five loaves of bread, or whatever was on hand. The only food the priest had was the bread of the Presence. This was very special bread. No one but the priests was allowed to eat it. It was not bread from the kitchen table. That bread is plain, common bread. Anyone can eat the bread found in the kitchen. But this bread was in Jehovah's house. It was bread that was set apart to feed those who served Jehovah. Only the serving priests could eat of it. So the priest gave David this bread. It was okay with Jehovah for him to take the bread. Even it was God's provision for him.

Now one of Saul's servants was also there that day. His name was Doeg the Edomite. That means he came from Edom. Doeg was the chief of all the shepherds that belonged to Saul. And he was aware of all that happened with David and Ahimelech.

So the priest supplied David with bread for food. But David also needed a weapon. All that Ahimelech had was the sword that had been taken from Goliath when David had fought him. It was a very special sword. So the priest gave the sword to David. David left with the sword and bread, and he went to Achish the king of Gath. From there he escaped to the cave of Adullam. He needed to keep traveling and keep hiding. It was a very hard life.

But he wasn't there alone.

READ: 1 Samuel 22:1-2

Then David went from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard of it, they went down to him there. And everyone who was in distress and everyone who was in debt and everyone who was discontented gathered to him, and he became captain over them. And with him were about four hundred men.

It must have been a huge cave if 400 could be there in hiding! It was a stronghold. After hiding in the cave for a period of time, then they departed and went into the forest of Hereth. Jehovah was helping to preserve David.

Now the Bible says that Saul was in Gibeah sitting under a tree surrounded by all his servants when the report came that David and his men had been discovered. Saul was in a

rage! He shouted at his servants. None of his servants had reported to him where David was. None of them had helped Saul capture David.

Of course the servants knew that Saul wanted to get rid of David. And they knew that David had done nothing wrong. They knew that it was not right for Saul to be against David. So even though they may have known or guessed where David was hiding they were going to keep silent. They would not join Saul to be against David. They did their jobs as servants to the king, but they would not join him to be against David. WOW! It takes boldness not to join in with others like that.

When I was in junior high, there was a girl who was very smart, but she talked funny. She had a speech impediment. One of the popular kids wasn't very smart. He tried to make fun of her at lunchtime. He was actually jealous of her because she was smarter than him, so he made fun of her speech to make him feel better about himself. He tried to get his buddies to join in. I was watching, and I could tell that his buddies were struggling about what they should do. They didn't want him to get mad at them, but they also knew it wasn't right to make fun of her. I was so happy when I saw them finally refuse! They even told him to apologize! They really had a lot of boldness. *[Give your own example.]*

So I hope this week we would all choose, just like those servants, not to take part in any actions against others.

Doeg's Greediness Week 17

Points to Emphasize: Do not be greedy; the desire for money or gain can sway our actions.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 22:6-23

Memory Verse: He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live. (Proverbs 15:27)

Story Sample

Saul made it very clear to all his servants that anyone who sided with him or helped him find David would be paid well. By siding with Saul and being against David, one could become a rich man.

Up until this time Doeg, who was one of Saul's servants, along with the others had remained silent, not revealing where David was. BUT, after it became clear that he could gain something for himself, Doeg spoke up! He told Saul that he saw David coming to Ahimelech at Nob. He told Saul that the priest gave David bread and a sword. WOW! Some people are really like this. They will turn in anyone if it means they could make money. They don't care what happens to others as long as they make a gain. Doeg was such a person.

[Use your own example of someone who did something to gain for himself, showing how greediness sways your actions always resulting in wrong decisions or wrong actions.]

At once the king sent men to bring the priests who were in Nob to him at Gibeah. All the priests were brought before the king. He accused them of conspiring against him and of helping his enemy David. Is this true? *[let child answer]* Ahimelech really was innocent. He had not done anything against the king. David was the king's son-in-law. He thought that in helping David he was helping the king. But Saul would not listen to reason. Right then and there he ordered his servants to draw their swords and slay the priests. What would happen now? If these servants disobeyed the king, he could have them imprisoned and then killed. After Saul commanded his servants, NO ONE moved! Each one had decided - these servants would not put forth their hands to kill Jehovah's priests. These priests served Jehovah. No God-fearing person would do such a thing! So no one drew his sword or moved!

Since these servants would not draw their swords, Saul told Doeg to turn and attack the priests. And Doeg did it. It took a lot for those servants not to go along with the king. They were God-fearing men, and they would not do something this bad. Doeg was doing something very evil because he wanted to get rich, but all the rest of the servants stood firm. They refused to take part in this evil deed.

I hope all of us this week would remember these servants and not take part in doing bad things even if others are doing them. We all know what is right and what is wrong. I hope we would all do what is right and not join in with others who are doing what is wrong.

Encouraging a Friend Week 18

Point to Emphasize: We can be a friend who speaks the truth to encourage others.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 23:13-29

Memory Verse: ...Be strong and take courage; do not be afraid or dismayed. For Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9b)

Story Sample

David had to be on the move all the time to keep from being destroyed by Saul. And he lived this way for a number of years.

If you were David, how might you feel by now? Yes, he had been anointed to be king of Israel, but for years now he had been living in one place for a while, escaping, and then living in another place for a while. How might he have felt? (*ask child*) TIRED. Yes, he was tired of having to run for his life all the time. DISCOURAGED. Yes, I am sure he was discouraged.

David and about 600 men were hiding in strongholds in the hill country in the wilderness. Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into Saul's hand. It was actually God Who was hiding David from Saul. No matter how well Saul and his men hunted, they could not find David because God was hiding him. From his hiding place David could see that Saul hunted for him every day.

It was at this very time that Jonathan was able to visit David again. It is so interesting that Saul and his men were searching every day to find David and no one could find him. Yet the friend of David, Jonathan, found him! And Jonathan's coming strengthened David.

The Lord knew David needed a good friend at this time - a friend who would encourage him and speak the truth and the facts to David. Sometimes we just see what is happening all around us, and we forget the truth. We forget the facts. We need this kind of a friend to remind us of the truth.

Once I knew a girl who was not doing very well in school. She was very discouraged and thought maybe she would never be able to get good grades in school. But a friend of hers came and encouraged her, telling her that she could get good grades. Her friend suggested that she study in a certain way - a way she had not tried before. This encouraged the girl, and she tried it. Eventually she became a very good student in her class. [*Or tell a story from your own experience, emphasizing the point that a friend's speaking the facts to you encouraged you not to worry.*]

We can all practice to help our friends in such a way. Let's all try to encourage someone this week.

David Chooses Respect Over Revenge Week 19

Point to Emphasize: Respect those in authority; do not repay evil for evil.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 24

Memory Verse: Repay no one evil for evil;...If possible, as far as it depends on you, live in peace with all men. (Romans 12:17a-18)

Story Sample

David and his 600 men were hiding from Saul in a cave. How many of you have ever been in a cave? Now, there are big caves and there are small caves. David and his men must have been in a huge cave, to hold 600 men! And they were in the very innermost part of the cave.

Saul kept seeking David. And as he was looking, he found a cave. He went inside to rest. Now, you'll never guess who else was in this cave! Yes, David and all his 600 men were way in the back of the cave.

David's men all thought this was a great opportunity! They encouraged David to harm Saul. They were loyal men who had seen David treated so unfairly by Saul. Of course they would want David to have his revenge! It seemed only fair!

But what do you think David did? Well, he just snuck up on Saul, very quietly (*whisper*), and he cut off a corner of Saul's cloak. That's all he did. It did not seem to be a big deal at all. If I were David, I would have wanted more revenge than that! It is easy to repay evil with evil. When someone has done something against us it is easy to want to be mean to them.

When I was in elementary school some kids called me names. It hurt me when they did that. And right away I would call names back. But really for me to call back names made me as bad as them. But this is not how David was. Saul was hunting him down to kill him, but now David did not harm Saul. He did not repay evil with evil.

All David did was to cut the corner of Saul's cloak. But even then his conscience started to bother him. Yes, over what seemed to be such a small thing, his heart was touched and he felt bad. Why did his conscience bother him? His conscience bothered him because he knew that Saul was the king. Saul was the authority over David. He knew he should not do anything disrespectful to the king. David honored God, so he must honor the king also.

[Add a personal example of when you wanted to or tried to get revenge on someone who wronged you.]

David would not repay evil for evil. He refused to do the same kind of things that his enemy was doing. And he felt bad when he did something against the authority over him.

Let's see if we can be like David this week.

David Shows He is Sorry
Week 20

Point to Emphasize: We need to apologize when we know that we are wrong.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 24

Memory Verse: Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good. (Romans 12:21)

Story Sample

David felt so bad about cutting off the corner of the king's cloak. He was really bothered inside. He knew he had done something wrong. The Bible says that his heart "smote" him.

READ: 1 Samuel 24:5

But afterward David's heart smote him because he had cut off a corner of Saul's cloak.

"Smote" is a very old word. It means to hit hard, and it hurts a lot. So when David realized what he had done he felt very bad inside. He knew he had done something disrespectful to the king.

I have sometimes felt like that. Once, when I did something that hurt the feelings of some of my classmates, my heart "smote" me. Oh I felt so terrible. I could hardly stand to look at them. My heart ached so bad. I think this might be how David felt. He had cut off the corner of the king's cloak, and now his heart ached. How could he have done such a thing against the king!!! He had to clear it up. He had to take some action.

So first he told his men that he had been very wrong to cut the corner of the king's cloak. Then he followed Saul and came out of the cave. He called out after the king, saying, "My lord the king." When Saul turned around, David bowed down with his face to the ground, paying honor to the king. David really did respect God's anointed authority, the king. By this David showed how sorry he was for what he had done.

How do you think David's heart felt now? *[Storyteller-insert your own story about how you confessed and apologized for doing something and how your heart felt so much better.]*

I think that maybe David's heart felt a lot better. He had done something wrong, but he had cleared it up. Now his heart felt better.

I hope this week we would practice this. When our heart feels bad for what we have done we can take care to clear it up.

**David's Men Help Nabal's Men
Week 21**

Point to Emphasize: We should not take anything that is not ours. We must regard others' property.

References: 1 Samuel 25:2-44

Memory Verse: He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have something to share with him who has need. (Ephesians 4:28)

Story Sample

Sometimes David and his men only spent a few nights in a certain place, but usually they would spend a long period of time in one area. It is not like today where you can pack up quickly and drive to another spot. There were about 600 people staying together. They had to carry whatever clothes, food, weapons, blankets, cooking pots, etc., that they needed. There was no stopping off at Walmart or Target to pick something up. And there were no grocery stores either. This means that they needed to hunt and fish to get their food. Imagine what it would be like to get food for 600 people!

David and his company were in the wilderness area between En-gedi and Carmel. And while they camped there they met young men tending huge flocks of sheep. It turned out that a very rich man named Nabal was pasturing his sheep there. All these young men worked for him. There were 3,000 sheep! It would have been tempting to steal some of those sheep, right? After all, those sheep were right there in front of them. Maybe these men would have been tempted to get these sheep and have them for dinner. It would be easy to steal some of those sheep every so often, slaughter them and have a good dinner. They would not have to send anyone out hunting birds, rabbits, squirrels, deer or wild beasts. No need to send anyone fishing. Those sheep would be dinner at their doorstep. So easy! And who was going to go and tell Nabal? Nabal would never know. And even if he did find out, what could he do against 600 fighting men! But David would not steal even though there were so many sheep and no one would ever know.

Today many children take the thought that stealing is okay. Perhaps they think that the fast food place has so much soda that it would not make any difference if they took some. I have seen it a number of times when someone gets a "water" cup at a fast food place. And when they think no one is watching they fill it with orange soda or coke. What is this? It is stealing. Or, maybe they "borrow" a pencil from their teacher's desk or a friend's backpack, thinking it is such a small thing. But it is actually stealing, no matter how small it may be. *(Insert a 2-3 minute story here from your own experience concerning not stealing.)*

But that is not what happened. Instead of stealing the sheep or even asking the young men for some, David's men helped them tend the sheep and helped keep the young men and sheep safe from the wild beasts. David's men were very good to those who worked for Nabal.

Why do you think they didn't even ask the young men for some sheep? *(ask a child)*
Because - those sheep belonged to Nabal. They did not belong to the young men. Since they did not own the sheep, then it was not right to ask them to give someone else's sheep away. Actually David's men did Nabal a great service. Without David's men, Nabal would have lost a lot of sheep to the wild beasts in the wilderness.

Story teller-

It would be good if you insert a 2-3 minute story here from your own experience concerning not giving someone else's things away or regarding others' property. This should strengthen the point that the shepherds really did not have the authority to give the sheep away.

It would also be good to ask if a few of the children can share about how they did not steal even though it was tempting or how they did not give things away that did not belong to them. Then connect what they have said to the story.

David's Request Week 22

Point to Emphasize: We should always ask for things in a polite way, even if we don't always get what we ask for.

References: 1 Samuel 25:2-44

Memory Verse: ...let your requests be made known to God; (Philippians 4:6b)

Story Sample

David's men had cared for Nabal's flocks in such a good way, not taking anything that didn't belong to them. But they still had needs – they still needed food, they needed water, and they needed meat. So David sent ten of his men to Nabal to make a request. And he gave very detailed instructions about how they should do this. David knew that they should ask in the best way in order to get what they wanted.

When you ask for something from Mom or Dad, do you always ask in the best way? Or do you say things like, "Gimmee", "I need a...", or "But Mom, everyone else has..."? Too often when I was young, I always TOLD my mom and dad what I needed, rather than ASKED them. Or, I would ask in a whiney, begging way. (*Give an example*)

But David wasn't like this. He knew he should ask in a polite way. So he told his men to ask three things in this way to Nabal. (*write on board or paper*)

1. They were to greet him, wishing him peace.
2. They were to remind him how they had helped his men with their flocks.
3. They were to ask him to give whatever he could.

So let's think about how we could use these three things to ask our parents for a new notebook (or....)

1. Mom, can I talk to you for a minute? (Greet)
2. I've been trying to study hard and keep my room clean. (Remind)
3. Would you be able to buy a new notebook for me to study with? (Ask)

You see...This is a very good way to ask for something. It may not be the only way, but it is a very good example of being polite when you ask.

So David's men went to Nabal and repeated exactly what David had told them. They made their request in a very good way. And what do you think Nabal said? He said, "NO!" I can't believe it! I thought for sure he would say yes. But he didn't.

Sometimes, even if we ask for something in the very best way, the answer is still no. Does that mean we don't need to ask in a polite way? NO! We should always ask in the most polite way, whether we get what we ask for or not.

How about next week you all come back with a good example of how you were polite to someone when you made a request?

David's Anger Week 23

Point to Emphasize: We should learn to control our weaknesses.

References: 1 Samuel 25:2-44

Memory Verse: But now, you also, put away all these things: wrath, anger, malice, blasphemy, foul abusive language out of your mouth. (Colossians 3:8)

Story Sample

(Review last week's story)

Did you think Nabal should have responded with a "No"? I thought he should have been grateful to David in his appreciation to send some supplies to him. But no, Nabal was a hard man and he insulted David's men by shouting things like, "Who is David?", and, "Shall I take my food, my water, my meat and give it to others?!"

If I am eating some candy and you ask me if you can have any, do I shout at you? No, I merely tell you that I am **not** sharing my candy. Nabal was not just stingy. His insults showed he was a hard and evil man. He was mean *and he was stingy*. He was very selfish. He had no intention of sharing anything that belonged to him.

When David heard Nabal's response from his men he was angry and offended. Why would Nabal repay David's goodness like this?! Even David, a man who carried out so many of his actions in the best way could get angry and want to do something to get back at Nabal.

Here we see a weakness in David. He wasn't perfect. We all have some weaknesses just like him. But unless we control these weaknesses, they can become problems to us. Let's say you have a weakness for ice cream. You can say "No" to cookies or candy but if you are offered ice cream you will surely eat a BIG bowl. Now, it is not a problem if you control yourself. BUT if you eat a BIG bowl of ice cream five times a day you will not be so healthy. You won't be able to run and play as easy as you did before. It will cause you problems. Or, like a roof of a house may have a very small crack. When it rains, only a drip or two of water seeps through. BUT eventually the crack widens and then a lot of rain pours down into the house. The carpet gets soaked. It creates a mess. What problems that small crack now creates!

But David did not want to control his anger. He was angry because he felt that Nabal had repaid the good he had done for evil. In his anger, David ordered 400 of his men to gird up their sword and follow David down to slay Nabal and all that he had. Even though Nabal was an evil, stingy man, that still wasn't a good reason for David to do something evil in return. We should never repay evil for evil.

When I was young, I used to get mad, especially with my sisters. We only had one bike and we had to take turns with it. If I thought it was my turn to use the bike, and my sister was riding it, I would react right away and start shouting at her. Even if she did take the bike

out of turn, that was no reason to shout. But I wanted to hold on to my anger, so I would be mad at her for the longest time. But as I grew older, I learned that I had to learn to control that temper, or I would have a miserable life of always being mad at someone. *(Use your own example)*

Even someone like David, who we have heard so many good things about, had weaknesses.

Abigail Makes Peace with David Week 24

Point to Emphasize: We can try to be peacemakers; we can lead our friends to do the right thing.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 25:2-44

Memory Verse: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.
(Matthew 5:9)

Story Sample

(Review previous 3 stories for 2-3 minutes)

While David was on his way to destroy Nabal, one young man went to Abigail, Nabal's wife. He told her everything that had happened - how David had helped with Nabal's flock, how he had sent his men to Nabal to make a request, and how Nabal had denied them by shouting at them. Now, we know that Nabal was a hard and evil man. But his wife was not at all like him. She was a wise woman who used good judgment.

Abigail right away prepared to make peace with David. She prepared 200 loaves of bread, something to drink, 5 sheep, some grain, 100 clusters of raisins, and some fig cakes. She had these supplies loaded on donkeys and sent out to David. And then she followed behind them.

Now, do you think she did this because she had to? No! She was not the one who had treated David badly – Nabal her husband had. But she knew a wrong had been done, and she wanted to make it right.

Have you ever done anything to right a wrong? Maybe you were out playing with your ball with your friends and your little brother came along and wanted to play too. Then all your friends started yelling at him, shouting, "No way, you're too small." So he went away crying. You felt bad because he's crying, so you took your ball and left to go play ball only with him. You even apologized for what your friends did to him, even though you weren't the one who had yelled at him. For him, you made something that was very wrong become right. *(Use your own example)*

So when Abigail saw David, she got down from her donkey and fell on her face, bowing down to David. She really humbled herself before him. She didn't care how she was seen by others, because she was really sorry about what her husband had done. She wanted to make peace with David. She was even willing to take the blame for what he had done!

She was very wise. She did not just plead for mercy and beg David not to take revenge on Nabal. She wisely reminded David how Jehovah had saved him from making the mistake of taking matters into his own hands in the past. She pointed David back to the fact that Jehovah had appointed him to be king over Israel and how Jehovah was doing everything to

carry out His Word. Wouldn't he feel awful after he was king, knowing that he had shed blood for such a small thing?

Her speaking pricked David's conscience and brought him to reason. She was right. How would it be if now he avenged himself by slaying this man and all that he owned? Later as king how could he justify such an action? So his anger was calmed down by Abigail's wisdom.

Have you ever had a friend do this for you? You are just about ready to get in a fight at school and one of your friends reminds you that if you do it, you will be in the principal's office before you know it. He reminds you that the fight is not worth it – you are too good for that kind of behavior. (*Use your own example*) We all need friends like this who remind us of who we are.

So Abigail was a very wise woman. She saved David from doing something that would bother his conscience, and she saved Nabal's whole household from destruction. And in the end, God was the one who judged Nabal.

David Does What He Knows Is Right Week 25

Points to Emphasize: We should do what we know is right and not let others convince us otherwise.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 26

Memory Verse: And you shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am Jehovah your God. (Leviticus 25:17)

Story Sample

David was now hiding in the wilderness, and it was reported by some men to Saul. So Saul rose up and took 3,000 of his best men with him to go search for David. They camped on the hill. David saw that Saul was coming after him and sent spies to check on what was happening. They returned and reported to him that in fact it was Saul.

David went to the place where Saul and his men were encamped. He saw Saul and Abner, the captain of the king's army, and all the people encamped around him. As the captain of Saul's army, Abner's main job was to protect the king. So the people were all encamped around Saul as a protection.

David spoke to two of his men. He asked who would be willing to go with him to Saul. And Abishai volunteered to go with him. This was very brave of him to volunteer to go with David into a camp of 3,000 men.

So David and Abishai went down to the camp where Saul was and found that they were **ALL** sleeping. The Bible says that a deep sleep from Jehovah had fallen on them. They looked around, and they found Saul. Saul's spear was in the ground, near his head, and his water jug was there also. Can you picture this? Saul, the man that has been looking for you to destroy you, is lying there in front of you sleeping. And around him **everyone** is sleeping, even the ones that were supposed to protect him! **What should David do?** Abishai had an idea. Abishai wanted David to have the revenge he felt David deserved. He even believed that God had delivered Saul into David's hand. He was very loyal to David. So, he tried to convince David, and even volunteered himself to strike Saul with Saul's own spear that was in the ground by his head.

Sometimes, our friends can be like this. They volunteer to help us, convinced that they are doing the right thing for us, but it actually is the wrong thing. I had a friend who was always offering to "help" me do my homework, but she would just give me the answers. She just wanted to help me get done with my homework faster so that we could go out to play. But, deep down, I knew I should do my own homework. Not only was it cheating, I also knew I would never learn anything if I always let someone else do it for me. *[Storyteller, insert your own example.]*

David knew something deep down too. He knew that he should have nothing to do with destroying the king, even if it was Abishai who did it and not him. He would still feel guilty. He chose to do the right thing over a friend's advice.

So he didn't touch the king. Instead he took the spear and the water jug and left the king and all those who were around him sleeping. Come next week to find out what happened next.

[At this point get the children involved by having them give their own experiences about when a friend has said to do one thing, but inside they know it is not right to do it. What choice did they make? Point out that though it is very hard to not go along with your friend, it is better to do what you know is right.]

Abner Fails to Carry Out His Duty Week 26

Point to Emphasize: We should do the best job possible, whatever we are asked to do.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 26

Memory Verse: He who diligently seeks good seeks favor;... (Proverbs 11:27a)

Story Sample

So, last week we talked about how David made the right choice and did not go along with Abishai. Instead, he took Saul's jug and spear that were by the sleeping king's head and went back to his camp so that, when they woke up, they would know David had been there, yet had not harmed Saul.

Why didn't he harm Saul? Right! Because Saul was the king and because David knew that if he were to honor God, he also needed to honor the king. He knew revenge was not the right thing to do and that some day God would deal with Saul in the right way.

But how would the people know what had happened and the danger that Saul had been in? This was like a warning to Saul. Someone needed to tell them. And who better than the one who took the spear and jug - David!

Once David had gone to another part of the hill, far from his enemies, David called out across the distance between them to those who were seeking to destroy him. He even called on Abner by name, asking him why he had not guarded the king. After all, Abner's job was to protect the king. Yet Abner, sound asleep near the king, didn't even wake when David and Abishai were so close. WOW!! Did Abner do a good job?? I don't think so! He could have been punished for not doing his job! He had failed! I imagine that he felt very foolish!

What kinds of chores or duties do we have at home or at school? *[Make a list: Clearing the table, doing homework, making their bed, taking out the trash, passing out supplies in class.....Then have the kids talk about how they clear the table or take out the trash. In this discussion point out ways to do it well and ways to just get it done.]*

Now, maybe none of our chores may seem as important as protecting a king, like Abner, but it is still important to do our chores while we are young so that we can be responsible for doing more important jobs as we grow up.

So let's try to practice doing the best job at our chores this week, OK?

**Saul Admits He Is Wrong
Week 27**

Point to Emphasize: We should admit when we are wrong.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 26:13-25

Memory Verse: He who covers his transgressions (mistakes) will not prosper, /But whoever confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. (Proverbs 28:13)

Story Sample

Last week we talked about David calling out Abner for not having done a good job, but the story goes on from there. Do you want to know what happened next?

Before Abner even had a chance to speak, King Saul called out to David when he recognized his voice. David responded, asking the king why he was coming after him. What had he done wrong? He had always honored and cared for the king, from the time he was young. He wanted so badly to remain in God's good land! Yet these men were driving him out of the land God had given.

King Saul admitted that he was wrong and that David had preserved his life by not taking it while he slept. Saul appreciated this. He admitted that he had been foolish and had made a big mistake to chase after David all this time.

It's very hard to admit when we have made a mistake. We all make mistakes, right? But it's sooo hard to admit when we are wrong. One day I was playing in the car in the garage and I opened the door too wide. I got a little dent in the door from doing it. I should have admitted to my dad what I had done, but instead I let him think my sister had done it. Eventually I felt so bad about it that I admitted it to my dad. And you know what? I felt a lot better! *[Use your own example.]*

David just wanted Saul to admit he was wrong and to treat him as fairly as he had treated the king. He wanted to be free from all the trouble Saul had caused him. So the king blessed David and told him that he would prevail. Afterwards they each went their own way.

Unfortunately, even though Saul admitted he was wrong, David could no longer trust the king. So he moved far away, outside of the land promised by God.

[Use the time at the end to encourage the children to talk about making mistakes and what they did to correct them.]

David in the Land of the Philistines Week 28

Point to Emphasize: Don't let jealousy control your actions.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 27

Memory Verse: He who pursues righteousness and kindness / Finds life, righteousness, and honor. (Proverbs 21:21)

Story Sample

David was sure that Saul would eventually start seeking after him all over again, even though he had admitted to his mistake. This time David decided to go to a place where Saul would not be as likely to go after him. He gathered his 600 men and all of his family, animals, and belongings and went to an enemy land, Philistia. The Philistines were the biggest enemies of Israel.

David gave himself to serve the king of the Philistines – the enemy of Israel! As a very young man David had given himself to be King Saul's servant. Why was he now living in a foreign land and giving himself to serve another king? *[Because of Saul's jealousy]*

Saul was so foolish! Here was David, such a valiant warrior, one who could have served King Saul, and yet the king was so selfish and jealous that he refused David's help. If I were king, I think I would want David to be on my side, not living with my enemies. But jealousy is a horrible thing and can make you do some very unwise things.

Sometimes we also become jealous. Maybe we are jealous of someone at school because they have just the clothes, skateboard, shoes, etc... that we want. And once we are jealous we begin to act differently towards them.

One time a new girl moved into our neighborhood. She was an only child, and her mom gave her whatever she wanted. She was really spoiled. I was jealous of her and treated her differently than the other neighborhood kids. *[Storyteller, use your own story. Help the children to bring in their experience of how their feelings and actions change when they are jealous.]*

We are kind of like Saul in this. We let our jealousy control how we are to others. I would have been a lot happier with this girl if I could have stopped my jealousy.

And things would have been a lot better for Saul if he had not let his jealousy grow. What might he have done to get along with David instead of being jealous of him?

What can we do to help ourselves when we are jealous? *[Let the children suggest some things. Ask them if they have tried the things they are suggesting. Has it worked? One thing they could do is to talk to their parents. Serving ones can give examples of how they helped their own children. But in doing so, be sure to take care of not putting your children on the spot or causing them embarrassment. This whole discussion on jealousy should be*

concluded according to what was said by the children, with an emphasis that, though you understand we are all jealous sometimes, we can't let our jealousy control our actions or control how we treat others.]