

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

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Lesson #23 "The Lord Be Between Thee and Me For Ever" (1 Samuel 18–20; 23–24)

Introduction



After David had slain Goliath, King Saul was so impressed with the young man's ability and courage that he took him into his own household. It was there that David became the best of friends with Jonathan, Saul's oldest son. Their admiration for each other quickly developed into such a strong bond that the Bible says, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." And the two made a covenant to honor their friendship forever.

What are some of the qualities you look for in a friend? Loyalty, integrity, unselfishness, kindness, and charity? Part of this lesson teaches us to be true to our friends, as Jonathan and David were, and to avoid being consumed by jealousy and hatred, as Saul was.

Jonathan and David make a covenant of friendship. Saul becomes jealous of David and tries to kill him. (1 Samuel 18:1–16)

David quickly became a hero after he killed Goliath. King Saul and the entire kingdom honored him. However, none was as true to David as was Jonathan, Saul's son.

1 Samuel 18:1, 3 - Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself despite the fact that it would have been easy for Jonathan to feel jealous of David for these reasons:

- **1 Samuel 16:6-13** - As Saul's son, Jonathan was next in line to be king. However, the prophet Samuel had anointed David to become the next king.

- **1 Samuel 14:1-16** - While David was greatly honored by the people for his success in battle,

Jonathan received little attention for his own success on the battlefield.

1 Samuel 18:1, 3 - Jonathan was not jealous of David or threatened by him because they were true friends who would not let jealousy arise between them.

1 Samuel 18:4 - Jonathan demonstrated his support for

Lesson Highlights

- Jonathan and David make a covenant of friendship. Saul becomes jealous of David and tries to kill him.
- Saul fails in three more attempts to take David's life.
- David and Jonathan renew their covenant of friendship, and Jonathan saves David's life.
- Saul is consumed by hatred for David. David spares Saul's life.

A study of this lesson will encourage us to be true to our friends, as Jonathan and David were, and avoid being consumed by jealousy and hatred, as Saul was.

Next Week

#24 "Create in Me a Clean Heart" (2 Samuel 11–12; Psalm 51)

David by giving him his royal robe and weapons.

1 Samuel 18:2, 5 - King Saul was grateful to and proud of David after the slaying of Goliath, so Saul took David into his home and set him over his armies.

1 Samuel 18:5 - David demonstrated his loyalty to King Saul by serving him wisely and faithfully.

1 Samuel 18:6-9 - Saul was prompted to turn against David when the people gave David greater praise than they gave to Saul. Saul found it impossible to be happy about the success of David. That jealousy and pride he felt affected his spiritual well being.

President Ezra Taft Benson said: *“Saul became an enemy to David through pride. He was jealous because the crowds of Israelite women were singing that ‘Saul hath*

slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands’ (1 Samuel 18:7, see also 1 Samuel 18:6,8). The proud stand more in fear of men’s judgment than of God’s judgment. ... ‘What will men think of me?’ weighs heavier than ‘What will God think of me?’ ... Fear of men’s judgment manifests itself in competition for men’s approval. The proud love ‘the praise of men more than the praise of God’ (John 12:42-43). Our motives for the things we do are where the sin is manifest. Jesus said He did ‘always those things’ that pleased God (John 8:29). Would we not do well to have the pleasing of God as our motive rather than to try to elevate ourselves above our brother and outdo another? ‘Some prideful people are not so concerned as to whether their wages meet their needs as they are that their wages are more than

someone else’s. Their reward is being a cut above the rest. ... When pride has a hold on our hearts, we lose our independence of the world and deliver our freedoms to the bondage of men’s judgment. The world shouts louder than the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. The reasoning of men overrides the revelations of God, and the proud let go of the iron rod” (Ensign, May 1989, 5).

1 Samuel 18:5, 14-16 - David continued to act wisely in all his ways in Saul’s behalf after the Lord blessed him with success on the battlefield. By being wise and having integrity, he maintained favor in the sight of the Lord.

From his example, we should remember to “behave [ourselves] wisely” when we are successful in our undertakings, whether temporal or spiritual.

Saul fails in three more attempts to take David’s life. (1 Samuel 18:17–30; 19:1–18)

Saul offered to let David marry one of his daughters if David would fight the Philistines.

1 Samuel 18:20-25 - Saul’s real motive in offering him one of his daughters as a wife was to ensnare him. He hoped that the Philistines would kill David. Saul wanted a dowry for his daughter’s hand in marriage.

1 Samuel 19:1-7 – As Saul’s jealousy and anger grew, he

tried to get Jonathan, among others, to kill David. Jonathan resisted and persuaded Saul to abandon his plan to slay David. Because of Jonathan’s efforts, Saul agreed to accept David back into his house.

We see from this incident what it means to be a true friend. Think about your friends and how they are true to you. Consider also how you are a true friend unto them.

1 Samuel 19:9-10 - Despite Jonathan’s efforts to change Saul’s feelings toward David, Saul continued to seek David’s life after an evil spirit came upon him. Saul’s javelin missed its mark and David escaped.

1 Samuel 19:11-18 - Michal, David’s wife, showed that she was true to her husband by helping him escape and delaying Saul’s messengers overnight to give David ample time to escape.

David and Jonathan renew their covenant of friendship, and Jonathan saves David’s life. (1 Samuel 20)

1 Samuel 20:1 – David was bewildered by Saul’s hatred and efforts to kill him because he knew there was no justification for such hatred.

1 Samuel 20:2-4, 13-17, 23, 24-42 - Jonathan continued

to show his friendship while Saul sought David’s life by trying to change Saul’s mind and keeping David informed of Saul’s doings.

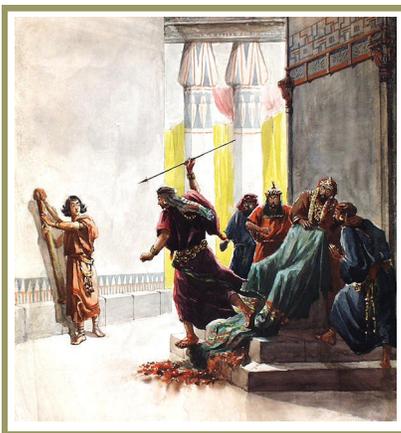
1 Samuel 20:23 - Faith in God influenced the friendship of Jonathan and

David. Their covenant of friendship was based on gospel principles. Our love of God affects our love of others. If we place loyalty to God first in our lives, if our friends do things that are wrong we will lovingly try to



Festivities in Honor of David,
John David Tissot

The scriptures contain wonderful accounts of personal friendships. They reveal not only the special bond of such relationships but also the added strength given to them when gospel principles are at the heart of the association.



Saul Attempts to Kill David
F. Luis Mora, 1900

help our friends change. If our friends ask us to do things that are wrong, we will not do unrighteous things at their request, regardless of the social consequences, and we will try to influence our friends to make righteous choices.

Saul is consumed by hatred for David. David spares Saul's life. (1 Samuel 23-24)

1 Samuel 23:1-5 - David was blessed with continued success on the battlefield against the Philistines as he followed the direction of the Lord.

1 Samuel 23:7-13 - David had to leave the city of Keilah after he had saved its people from the Philistines because he was told that Saul was coming to slay him and his men.

1 Samuel 23:10 - When Saul learned that David was in Keilah; he prepared his armies to destroy the entire city. Saul had changed from a righteous king to someone who was willing to destroy an entire city in order to kill one person. His jealousy and hatred was so consuming that he had been completely overwhelmed by them.

We need to rid ourselves of jealousy or hatred before

1 Samuel 20:24-33* (cited above) - King Saul responded to David's absence and Jonathan's defense of his friend with anger.

those conditions overwhelm us and cause us to sin.

1 Samuel 23:16 - When David was hiding from Saul, Jonathan visited David and "strengthened his hand in God". Think about what that might mean and consider how you might strengthen your friends in God. (Do you encourage your friends to continue in righteous living during their trials and tribulations?)

1 Samuel 24:1-3 - During another attempt to find and kill David, Saul stopped to rest in a cave.

1 Samuel 24:4 - David's men, when they found Saul, counseled David that the Lord had delivered Saul into his hands, so he could do with him whatever he wished.

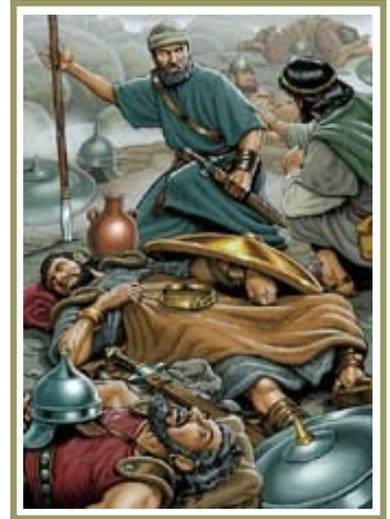
1 Samuel 20:35-42* (cited above) - Jonathan warned David to flee from Saul by meeting him in a field where he practiced his archery skills.

1 Samuel 24:4-5 - Rather than harm his master, David cut off the hem of Saul's robe—the portion of the robe that symbolized authority.

1 Samuel 24:6-12 - David refused to harm Saul because Saul was "the Lord's anointed".

1 Samuel 24:12-15; Mormon 8:20 - David's example teaches us about controlling the desire for revenge and about responding to those who do evil to us. We should let the Lord protect us and He will judge those who seek to harm us.

1 Samuel 24:16-19 - When David spared his life, Saul wept and confessed that David was far more righteous than he. He confessed that he had sought David's life while David had let him go when it would have been easy for David to slay him.



David Spares Saul's Life

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- Why is it sometimes difficult to be happy about the success of others? How do jealousy and pride affect our spiritual well-being?
- What do you think it means to "behave [ourselves] wisely" when we are successful?
- What does it mean to be a true friend? In what ways are your friends true to you? How are you true to your friends?
- What does David's example teach us about revenge and about responding to those who do evil to us?

Conclusion

The story of Jonathan and David reminds us that true friendship and love bring us closer to our friends and to God. The story of Saul reminds us that jealousy and hatred can consume us and lead us away from our friends and from God. We must be true to our friends so we can say to them, "The Lord be between thee and me for ever" (1 Samuel 20:23).

Friendship Self-Evaluation...

- what was the last kind thing you did for someone?
- what do you do when you hear someone saying unkind things about another person?
- what have you done to help your friends be better people?