

LESSON PLAN

DAVID SPARES SAUL AGAIN

1 Samuel 26

Lesson Memory Verse: I Peter 2:17 “Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

Lesson Aim: God tells believers to honor all men, so we must obey, even those who try to harm us.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – Be plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): What would you do if the school bully, who had tried to beat you up, was now lying helpless at your feet? Would you kick him? Would you ignore him? Would you help him? (Allow the class to respond to the question.) In our story today, we will see what David did when he was faced with a similar situation. But before we hear the story, let's see what our memory verse says we must do.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse tells us how we are to treat different kinds of people. First, we are commanded to honor **all** men.” That means we are to respect all people. However, due to sin and the wickedness of man, we are not commanded to treat all people equally. A murderer will be treated differently than a thief; and a thief will be treated differently than a good neighbor. But we should respect the rights of all men. Next, our verse says that we are to “love the brotherhood.” That means we are to love those who have received Jesus as their Savior. These people are the children of God; they are our Christian brothers and sisters. Then the verse tells us to “fear God.” Proverbs 1:7 says that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” If we fear God, we deeply respect Him as the One who made us and He is the One who keeps us alive. We respect Him as the Creator of all things. We respect His knowledge of all things, even the thoughts of our minds. We respect His power to bring us to Heaven or to send us to Hell. We respect Him as the supreme Ruler of the earth. Finally, we are commanded to “honor the king.” We should honor all rulers, because they are servants of God. Some are good servants and some are bad servants, but we are to honor God's servants. If they are bad servants, it is still our duty to honor them and let God deal with them. They are His servants (see Rom 13:1-5). However, we are not to obey them if they tell us to do something that would make us disobey God.

Words and Phrases to Explain in the Verse:

“Fear God” – It means we are to respect God. God has the absolute power to punish our sins, so we ought to fear His right to use this power against us. The fear of God will cause us to obey Him.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. Today's story will show how we are to respect and honor all men, especially our rulers, even those who may try to harm us. (The following outline is designed to help the teacher in remembering the main points of the story but should not be taught to the children. Teach the lesson as a story, inserting applications throughout the story.)

I. Saul's Chase (26:1-3)

Saul had just been told that David was hiding in the hill of Hachilah, so Saul prepared himself with 3,000 men to find David and kill him. Saul and his men went to the hill of Hachilah. David was in the wilderness and knew that Saul was coming after him to kill him. He tried to hide from him, but he still honored Saul as his king.

WE: We also will have leaders of our country that will do things that will harm us or lead our country in the wrong way. What should we do? We should still honor them as David did to Saul. That will help us to talk about them and treat them rightly. That is what God tells us to do.

II. David's Consideration (26:4-6)

David knew that Saul and his men were after him, and so he sent men to spy on Saul. David then went to the place where Saul was camped and asked if either Ahimelech or Abishai would go down with him to Saul's camp. Abishai volunteered to go with David. David loved all his men but he loved Ahimelech and Abishai most because they were the most faithful men. Of these two men that David loved, only one volunteered to go with him. Abishai proved he was worthy of David's love. This was a dangerous job.

LESSON PLAN

WE: We are commanded to love Christians. We may say that we love them, but we prove our love for another believer when we volunteer to do a dangerous job with him or her. Do we really love our Christian brothers and sisters? We do not know until we do something with them that may hurt us or even kill us.

III. David's Conflict (26:7-12)

Now David and Abishai entered into the middle of Saul's camp where Saul was sound asleep and so was his guard. David could have easily killed his king. Abishai even said that he would kill Saul for David. Would this have been right for Abishai to do? (No) David told Abishai that he could not kill the king and be innocent. He would be guilty before God. Rather than kill Saul, David only took Saul's spear and water jug as a sign to Saul that he could have killed him, but that he had respect for him as God's king. David had made an important decision. He dearly loved Abishai, a man that had risked his life to be with him in a very dangerous place, but he disagreed with him and would not let him hurt the King; instead he honored the King.

WE: We may have to disagree with our dearest friend in order to obey God. This will be a hard thing for us to do. Will we listen to our friend when he wants us to do something that God tells not to do? I hope not. Our Bible verse says that we are to "Fear God. Honor the king." David understood that principle and obeyed it when he told Abishai that he could not kill the king and still be innocent. We will prove that we fear God when we honor the king.

IV. David's Cry (26:13-20)

David left Saul's camp with Saul's spear and water jug in his hands and stood on a hill afar off. Then he cried out to Abner, Saul's captain and guard, and told him that he had done a very poor job of protecting the king. He told him to notice that the king's spear and water jug were gone. That meant someone had come into the king's camp and Saul could have been killed. As a result of his neglect to protect the king, Abner deserved to die. Saul recognized that it was David's voice speaking to them in the dark of the night. David said that it was he that was speaking to them. David then asked Saul what wrong he had done to be hunted like a criminal by him and his men.

WE: We need to prove that we honor our leaders by doing good things to them. If we honor the President of the United States, we will pray for him. We will ask God to help our President. We may not agree with much of what he does, but we can ask God to help him lead our country so that Christians will be kept free to worship Him. We should do the same for all our leaders. Pray for them and you will be showing honor to them.

V. David's Consequences (26:21-25)

Saul realized that David showed his respect for him as the Lord's anointed, when he could have killed him. This caused him to repent of his hatred for David. He admitted that he had sinned against David and acted as a fool. He told David to return to Jerusalem; he would not seek to harm him anymore. Then David told him to send a young man to come and get his spear and water jug. Saul told David that he would do great things and he would eventually be victorious. Then they separated and went different ways. They never met again.

WE: We need to learn from David how we should act when we fear God and honor our leaders. As a result God honored David and protected him. Saul even changed his mind and decided not to seek the death of David anymore. We can expect that God will protect us, when we obey His command to honor all people including our leaders. When we obey God, He will cause people to honor us.

BE (for Action): We need to honor all men; love the Christian; fear God; and honor our President. These may be hard commands for you to obey, but they are God's commands. We must diligently seek to obey them. Which of these four commands will be the easiest for you to obey? (Let the children answer.) Which of these commands will be the most difficult for you to obey? (Let the children answer.) The best way to honor these people is to pray for them (1 Timothy 2:12). Will you try to pray for a believer or a leader every day this week? It can be a different person, but remember to pray for at least one of them. And try to speak kindly of all people to show that you honor them.