

## DAVID SHOWS MERCY TO SAUL

### I Samuel 23-24

**Lesson Memory Verse:** **Luke 6:36** – “Be therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

**Lesson Aim:** Godly people should show mercy and kindness to sinners.

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

**KEY (for Attention):** If someone asked you to be **merciful** to him, what would he be asking you to do?

1. Would he be asking you to bow down to him?
2. Would he be asking you to pray with him?
3. Would he be asking you to be kind to him?
4. Or, would he be asking you to give him some money?

(The correct answer is #3.) Yes, he would be asking you to be kind to him, even though he did not deserve it. Maybe this story will help you to better understand what it means to be merciful.

Jimmy was new in school and he wanted to find some friends. Jimmy was not real big, but he was strong and an excellent boxer. Since he was new in school some of the boys decided they would have some fun with Jimmy. Three of them had water squirt guns and they walked up to Jimmy and pretended that they were going to be his friends. Then when he wasn't expecting it, they let him have several squirts in the face and quickly ran away and laughed.

The next day Jimmy met one of those boys alone on the street near his home. When the boy realized that he was meeting Jimmy alone, he did not look as bold as he had the day before. In fact, he was a little afraid, but he did not run. Jimmy walked up to him and said he was willing to forget the squirt gun trick if he would be his friend. The boy nodded his head and became Jimmy's friend.

He could have hurt him, but Jimmy was kind to him instead and made him his friend. Jimmy showed mercy to that boy.

**HE (for Authority):** “Your Father” in the memory verse is God. He becomes your Father in Heaven when you receive Jesus as your Savior. If you are truly sorry for the bad things that you have done against God and others, and ask Jesus to remove them from your record book, He will save you and make you His child.

Then our memory verse tells us that we are to be merciful to those who hurt us. Why does God tell us to be kind to those who have done bad things to us? He tells us to be kind to our enemies, because He was kind to us when we were His enemies. We hurt Him and were His enemies when we did not love and obey Him. Even so, He did not want to send us to Hell, but sent His Son, Jesus, to take away our sins so we can live with Him in Heaven.

**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.** In this lesson you will learn how David showed mercy to King Saul. God was pleased with David for showing mercy to his enemy.

#### **I. God showed Mercy to David (23:19-29)**

The Ziphites told Saul where David and his men were hiding and Saul was very happy to hear this. He wanted to kill David because he was jealous of him. David's victories against the Philistines were greater than his victories. Saul came with his army and found the very mountain where David and his men were hiding. While Saul's army was surrounding David and his men, a messenger came to tell Saul that the Philistines had attacked his country. As a result, Saul had to leave David and go fight the Philistines. God showed mercy to David by allowing the Philistines to attack Israel at just the right time so Saul had to leave and David was saved from being killed by Saul.

**WE:** God has shown mercy to us many, many times. First, when He sent His Son to suffer for our sins and save us from going to Hell. Second, when He forgives for the wrong things that we do after we became His children. We should thank God again and again for His mercy to us.

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## **II. David Showed Mercy to Saul (24:1-7)**

As soon as Saul had finished fighting the Philistines, he returned with 3000 specially chosen soldiers to fight David and his 600 men. While trying to find David, Saul stopped at a certain cave for a brief rest. David and some of his men were hiding in this same cave. David's men thought this was their chance to kill Saul. David got close enough to cut off an edge of Saul's robe, but when he did, he felt it was wrong. David did not have peace when he cut off a piece of Saul's robe, even though Saul was trying to cut off his life!! So David persuaded his men not to kill Saul. That was David's mercy to Saul.

**WE:** We are supposed to show mercy to someone that is trying to hurt us. Are you willing to show mercy to your enemies? Will you be kind to your father and mother when you do not like what they do to you? Will you be kind to leaders that you think are mistreating you? Will you be kind to boys or girls that try to hurt you?

## **III. David Showed Himself to Saul (24:8-15)**

When Saul left the cave, David followed him and called to him saying, "My lord the king." When Saul turned, he saw the strangest sight. There was David, bowing himself to the earth before him. This was not the way Saul expected David to act. He thought that David would try to kill him for all the bad things that he had done to David. He thought David would be running from him to save his life. But here he saw that David was showing respect to him as his king. Then David told him that he had the chance to kill him in the cave, but now he was sorry that he had cut off a piece of his robe. This was a bold thing for David to do, but it showed that his mercy to Saul was genuine. He wanted to be at peace with Saul. He was willing to forget all the bad things that Saul had done to him and still wanted to be his friend. That must have been hard for David to do, but he did it.

**WE:** We need to forget all the bad things that people do to us and ask them to be our friends. That is what it takes to be merciful. They do not deserve it, but we did not deserve God's mercy either. We must be willing to be kind to our enemies and try to be friends with them.

## **IV. Saul Showed Repentance to David (24:16-22)**

Saul was so moved by David's words and his mercy toward him that he lifted up his voice and wept. He admitted that David was a better person than he was. He told David that he would be the next king of Israel. He then asked David to show kindness to his family when he became king which David promised to do. Then Saul went home. This showed that Saul had repented, that is, he had changed his mind about killing David, at least for a little while. However, his repentance did not last very long and we shall learn that he tried to kill David again.

**WE:** We must do our part to get our enemies to repent of the bad things that they are trying to do to us. The best way to do that is to show mercy to them. It is natural for us to want to do bad things to them, but the Lord will help us to be merciful to our enemies when we ask for His help.

**BE (for Action):** Everyone has enemies sometime in their lives. Do you have any enemies at school? Do you have any enemies where you live? Some children think that their parents or a school teacher is an enemy because they feel that they mistreated by them. Whether they were right or wrong, will you be kind to him like David was merciful to Saul? Try to be merciful to someone this week. Be kind to someone that you feel mistreated you. (Pray for your students to be merciful.)