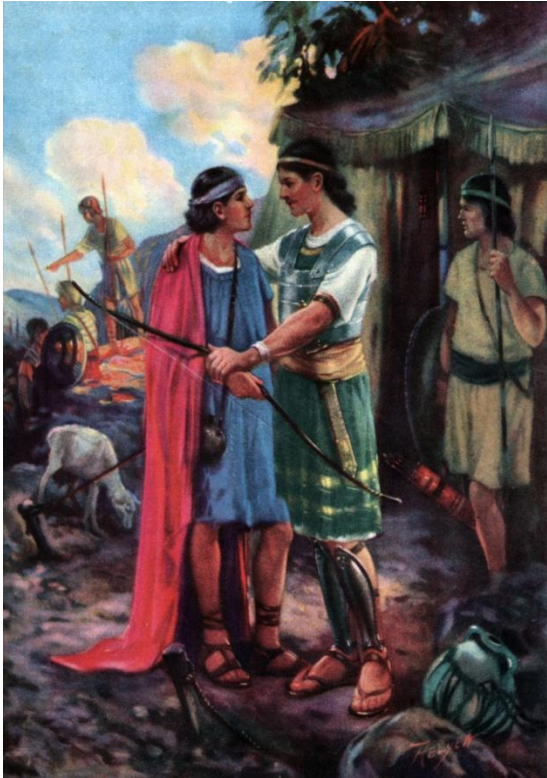


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 11



DAVID FLEES FROM SAUL

Scripture Texts: 1 Samuel 22:1-23; 1 Samuel 23:14-18

We can never fully understand a man like Saul. However, we must take into account that there are powers of Satan which entwine a human soul in their web of doom which he cannot loose himself from by his own strength.

We are all familiar with the fact that harboring thoughts of jealousy and envy causes irreparable damage to the mind and soul of man. Carrying a grudge or being jealous of someone not only makes us unhappy, but leads us to unkind deeds and even violence.

After David's victory over Goliath, David stood before the king and revealed his identity. During the conversation with the king, David made such an impression on Jonathan that he was strongly attracted to David, and a lifelong friendship began. Several times this friendship was a means of saving David's life. He declared that David would escape Saul's evil plans, that he would be the next King of Israel, that he, Jonathan, would be glad to take second place in the kingdom and that he would aid David

in assuming the position that rightfully belonged to him (Jonathan).

MEMORY VERSE: *For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth. —Psalm 71:5*

Between the Last Lesson and Now

1 Samuel 22:1-2 When Saul and David returned from the victorious battle over the Philistines, the women of Israel greeted them with this song: **Saul hath slain thousands, and David his ten thousands.** These words gave David ten times the honor given Saul, and Saul could not put it from his mind. He had not forgotten God's promise that a worthier than he would take his place. Brooding over this idea, King Saul gave himself over to bitter thoughts of envy and jealousy until he was completely ruled by his wicked passion. From that time on, Saul had his evil eye on David with hatred, and intent to kill.

As Saul's light was decreasing, David's star was ever rising and increasing in brightness. The popularity of David fanned the flames of Saul's jealousy to such a white heat that he became obsessed with the idea of getting rid of his son-in-law by any means possible. We must remember that different spirits controlled the lives of Saul and David. Here we have a new picture of Saul, nursing his evil temper and breaking forth from time to time into fits of raving madness. At last, David had to flee from Saul's fierce and jealous anger. From place to place he went, hiding to save his life. From Gath, he came to Adullam, where there were caves. Here David took refuge with his four hundred followers. These were men whose debt, distress, or discontent had caused them to turn from Saul to follow David.

David Protects His Parents

1 Samuel 22:3-5 David's position brought his parents the possibility of harm from Saul's wrath. In all his trouble he remembered his mother and father and showed a great concern for them. He arranged protection out of the country for his aged parents. This indicates the quality of the home in which David was raised and how his character was formed. At the advice of the Prophet Gad, David left for the forest of Hareth.

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Assuming Responsibility

1 Samuel 22:6-23 Saul heard from Doeg that Ahimelech, the priest at Nob, had helped David (**1 Samuel 21**). For this, Saul had Ahimelech and all the people of Nob slain, including eighty-five priests of the Lord – a great crime. One son, Abiathar, escaped and came to David. Then David showed his loving heart and tender conscience. He assumed responsibility for the tragedy – **I have occasioned the death...** He promised protection to Abiathar. Remember how Saul had excused himself when he had disobeyed God? On the other hand, David was quick to feel and confess his faults, even when his part was unintentional. A tender conscience affects the ease of repentance.

David Hides from Saul

1 Samuel 23:14-15 Saul had attempted several times to slay David in his house. He now tracked David every moment as if he were a wild beast so that he might kill him. But the Lord helped David to avoid Saul. He and his men moved from place to place, doing what was required to be safe. They came to Ziph, in the mountain wilderness, where the Lord protected them from capture. Why could not Saul find him while he was seeking him every day? **But God delivered him not into his hand.**

Jonathan Visits David

1 Samuel 23:16-18 **And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David.** Jonathan could find David easily enough. He **strengthened his hand in God.** David needed this most – a true friend with words of encouragement. David's lot was not easy. In addition to his personal fears, these hundreds of men depended upon him.

The time had come when Jonathan could no longer protect David from the dangers involved in the situation. But he could, through his unflinching love and loyalty, strengthen him for the facing of these dangers. **For the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel.** This was Jonathan's message of encouragement. It assured David that Saul's plotting against him would fail. It promised that he would not be harmed but become King of Israel. **And I shall be next unto thee** – an expression of friendship, loyalty, and humility. They would still be together, but David would have first place. **And that also Saul ... knoweth.** Jonathan was a friend who loved at all times (**Proverbs 17:17**). He conceded the throne to David that was rightfully his (Jonathan's). He did this without reservation, envy, or jealousy toward his friend. For David's sake and the sake of the God of Israel, he was compelled to sit and watch the crown slip out of his hands and onto the head of his friend. For the Lord's sake, he must suffer, play second fiddle, and forget his personal interests, advantages, and fortune. He gave up a corruptible crown, which he would never have gained anyway, for a crown which would never be taken from him – a crown incorruptible. We learn from today's lesson something of the importance of having and being a true, loving friend.

JUST A THOUGHT

“He who is on the road to Heaven will not be content to go there alone.”

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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