

# David Spares Saul's Life

1 Samuel 23:13-24:22; 26



Old Testament 6  
Part 1: David

## SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 6 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

1 Samuel 23:13-24:22; 26; Psalm 54; 142; 34; 56; 57; Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:1-9; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Romans 13:1).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- "[He's Got the Whole World in His Hands](#)"
- "[Obeying Those in Charge](#)"

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [King David and His Sons Bible fact cards](#) (provided under "O.T. 6 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- David the King A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; card 2.1: No one knows what the cherubim looked like, other than having wings; card 5.6: The text says that Absalom's head was caught. Whether it was by his hair or neck is unknown.)
- Pictures of the President, policeman, teacher, parents, other authority figures



## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me to respect and obey those in authority (those who have the responsibility of leading us and being in charge).

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Has anyone ever hurt you or tried to hurt you? How did that make you feel? Did you want to hurt them back? Today, we're going to learn how David acted toward someone who tried to hurt him.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson.

Who are some people in authority over you? (teachers, parents, policemen, elder, governor, president, etc.) Do those people ever make mistakes, make the wrong choices, or make decisions that go against what God would want? How should we respond when that happens? Today, we're going to see how David was a good example of what to do when someone in authority makes bad choices.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Saul became more and more jealous of David because of his popularity with the Israelite people, his friendship with Jonathan, and his military successes. As Saul's anger and jealousy grew, he kept trying to get rid of David. He even ordered that the priests who helped David get away be killed (1 Samuel 22).
2. David fled into the **Wilderness of Ziph** with about 600 men who had joined him. He was considered an outlaw. Jonathan met David there to encourage him and assure him of their continued friendship, no matter what Jonathan's father might do (1 Samuel 23:15-18).

[Read Psalm 54 with OLDER CHILDREN]



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Ziph was a city southeast of Hebron. The Hebrew word “wilderness” or “desert” was an area acceptable for pastureland but not for farming. So, David would have shepherds to hide among. 1 Samuel 23:15 describes the place as “the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh.” The word “horesh” means thicket. So the area may have had areas of thick brush.

3. Saul chased David everywhere he went. Even if Saul had to leave to fight the Philistines or other enemies, he came back to hunt for David again and again. David moved from one wilderness area to another. While he and his men were hiding in caves in the wilderness area near Engedi, on the western shore of the Dead Sea, Saul and 3,000 soldiers came looking for him. David and his men were hiding in the back of a cave. Saul went into that same cave, not knowing David and the others were inside.



**NOTE:** The explanation in 1 Samuel 24:3 for why King Saul went into the cave was “to cover his feet.” This is a Hebrew expression, used also in Judges 3:24, which is a euphemism for going to the bathroom.

4. David and his men could see Saul, and some of his men encouraged David to kill the king. But David refused, saying he could not kill the man whom God had chosen to be king of Israel. However, David did sneak up behind Saul and quietly cut off a piece of Saul’s robe. When Saul had gone out of the cave to return to his army, David came out to the opening of the cave and shouted to Saul, asking why he was continually being hunted like a traitor and enemy. Then he showed Saul the piece of robe he had cut off, proving that he had the opportunity to kill Saul if he had wanted to. Saul was very thankful David had not killed him and was sorry for trying to kill David. He promised to leave David alone, but sadly, it didn’t take long for him to chase David again.
5. David returned to the Wilderness of Ziph. One night while Saul and his army (again 3,000 soldiers—1 Samuel 26:2) were camped nearby, David and one of his trusted soldiers, Abishai (who was also his nephew—1 Chronicles 2:15-16), crept down into the camp. Abishai encouraged David to take that opportunity to kill Saul, but again David refused. They took Saul’s spear, and a water jug that was beside his head, and sneaked back to their own camp.



**NOTE:** The people who lived in the Wilderness of Ziph told Saul where David was the first time. So it is curious that David would go back to the same area. When David returned, the Ziphites again told Saul where he was hiding.

6. When David was at a safe distance, he called out to Saul, waking him and his army. Once again he asked why he was being hunted like a traitor or enemy. He showed Saul the spear and jug of water to prove that once again he could have killed Saul, but did not. David rebuked Abner, the commander of Saul’s army, for not protecting the king. 1 Samuel 26:19 indicates that David knew that Saul might have been chasing him because others were stirring him up against David, making Saul think that David was against him (possibly alluded to in 1 Samuel 26:1). [Be careful who you listen to! Read John 7:24.] Again Saul said that he was sorry for hunting David and returned home.
7. David had already been chosen by God to be the next king of Israel, and he could have decided to “hurry things along” by killing Saul. But David had great respect for God-given authority. Authority means that someone has the right and responsibility to lead or be in charge of others. God’s plan for order in our world is that some people be in charge—that someone leads. God planned for fathers to be in charge in the home; He planned for elders to be in charge of the Church; and He planned for kings and presidents to be in charge of countries. God planned for government leaders to help us live according to His laws by making rules and/or laws that we are to live by; they are supposed to help us. They have many responsibilities and lots of power. Unfortunately, many rulers, like Saul, do not always do what is right, and they do not try to help us follow God’s laws. David knew that he couldn’t be evil/mean to Saul because he was the king. (Romans 12:19-21—never take revenge and do not be overcome by evil.) [Discuss other types of authority whose rules we must obey: bosses; owners of businesses that we visit; etc.]
8. Why is authority so important? What would happen in the home if everyone in the family wanted to be the head of the family (make rules, enforce rules, discipline, decide how to spend money, etc.)? Not everyone would have the same ideas or expect the same things; there would be lots of confusion

and unhappiness! The same thing happens in the Church and in a country when there are no godly leaders.

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- [“David Spares Saul’s Life Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- “Simon Says”: Make children “steering wheels” out of paper plates. Make (or buy at a teachers’ supply store) a set of traffic signs. Let children “drive” around the classroom, following the traffic signs as you give them instructions.

**1st-2nd Graders:**

- Role play: Let the children role play the two instances when David spared Saul’s life.
- [“David Spares Saul’s Life Word Search”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- [“Authority Figures Cutouts”](#) (provided in activity sheets): Let the students take turns drawing slips of paper, reading them, then telling ways to show respect for that person (i.e., pray for him/her; obey laws/rules; speak kindly about; etc.).
- Bible Football: Draw a football field on a piece of construction paper and glue the paper to the inside of a box lid. Give each child a turn sliding a penny (flicking it) from one end of the shoebox to one of the “yard lines.” To have a turn sliding a penny, the child must correctly answer a question about the lesson. If he can’t answer a question, or if he slides his penny off the field (beyond the end zone or out of bounds), he has to return to the starting “end zone.” The first player to go the length of the “field” and into the end zone without sliding out of the end zone wins. (If you have too many students to all play at once, divide the class into two teams.) ([Football Field Cutout](#) provided in activity sheets)

**3rd-4th Graders:**

- [“Authority Figures Cutouts”](#) (provided in activity sheets): Let the students take turns drawing slips of paper, reading them, then telling ways to show respect for that person (i.e., pray for him/her; obey laws/rules; speak kindly about; etc.).
- Role play: Let the children role play the two instances when David spared Saul’s life.
- [“David Spares Saul’s Life Word Search”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Bible Football: Draw a football field on a piece of construction paper and glue the paper to the inside of a box lid. Give each child a turn sliding a penny (flicking it) from one end of the shoebox to one of the “yard lines.” To have a turn sliding a penny, the child must correctly answer a question about the lesson. If he can’t answer a question, or if he slides his penny off the field (beyond the end zone or out of bounds), he has to return to the starting “end zone.” The first player to go the length of the “field” and into the end zone without sliding out of the end zone wins. (If you have too many students to all play at once, divide the class into two teams.) ([Football Field Cutout](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - 1 Samuel 23-24
  - Psalm 34; 54; 56; 57; 142

- *David and the Kingdom of Israel*, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing

## SONGS:

### “HE’S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: See Internet)

He’s got the whole world, in His hands. (3X)  
He’s got the whole world in His hands.

He’s got the little bitty babies, in His hands. (3X)  
He’s got the whole world in His hands.

He’s got you and me, brother, in His hands. (3X)  
He’s got the whole world in His hands.

He’s got you and me, sister, in His hands. (3X)  
He’s got the whole world in His hands.

He’s got the mommas and the daddies, in His hands. (3X)  
He’s got the whole world in His hands.

### “OBEYING THOSE IN CHARGE” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Jeff Miller

(Tune: “Mary Had a Little Lamb”)

God put people over us, over us, over us.  
We obey them without fuss, for they come from God.

Teachers, parents, policemen, government, elder men,  
We obey the best we can, for they come from God.

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.





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Part 1: David

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

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### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

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- Pictures of the President, policeman, teacher, parents, other authority figures

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me to respect and obey those in authority (those who have the responsibility of leading us and being in charge).



## INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 6 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T 6 Review Questions](#) for example questions)
2. Remember that the New Testament scriptures mentioned on the first page of this lesson refer to times of terrible civil leadership. Throughout many periods in history (the slavery of Israelites by Egyptians in Old Testament, Roman rule of Palestine during the life of Christ, and persecution of Christians) God’s people and many others have suffered because of poor leadership. Poor leadership occurs because of sin, and the results of sin affect not only the leader himself but everyone over whom he has power. Whether we respect the leader or not, we must respect the office or place of authority planned by God.
3. Should we obey the government or our bosses, etc., if they tell us to do something that is against God’s will—like lying, bribing, or cheating? No! Read Acts 4:19. What if a parent was to tell us to do something wrong—like stealing? Ephesians 6:1 tells us that children are to obey their parents “in the Lord.” That means that as long as our parents aren’t telling us to do something that goes against the Lord’s will, we must obey them. Now this does not mean that we can disobey authorities if we disagree with them or don’t like what they are telling us to do. We must obey all authorities over us, unless they tell us to do something that goes against God’s Word.

## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson.

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