

Grade 4—Unit 3

David—Servant King

In this unit, students will study of David in depth, from God’s call to him as a young shepherd to the end of his 40-year reign as king of Israel. Lesson 1 introduces David as “a man after God’s own heart,” chosen to be the future king of Israel—not because of his outward appearance, but because of his pure heart.

Lessons 2, 3, and 4 bring David out of his estrangement from Saul and into his 40-year reign as king, first as king of Judah and finally, fulfilling God’s promise, his anointment as king of all Israel. Tucked into these lessons are the stories of David’s sorrow over the deaths of Jonathan and Saul, Jerusalem becoming the City of David, and God’s covenant with David’s family, which leads to the reign of Christ.

Lesson 5 begins with a flashback to the covenants made between David and Jonathan, and David and Saul, which bound David to kindness and preservation of Saul’s family. The lesson ends with David fulfilling that promise.

Lessons 6 and 7 deal with sin, confession, forgiveness, the end of David’s life, and finally, his words of wisdom to his son, Solomon, whom God chose to be his successor. David’s writings from the Psalms are scattered throughout this unit.

LESSONS

1. David, Chosen by God
2. David, King of Judah
3. David, King of all Israel
4. David, Your Name Will Live Forever
5. David, Keeper of Promises
6. David, the Human King
7. David, the Elderly King

Unit 3: David—Servant King

Unit Information

SUMMARY

David, a young boy tending the sheep in his father's pastures in Bethlehem, was chosen by God to be anointed to be the future king. A series of circumstances brought him into service for Saul. This led to a covenant relationship with Jonathan, Saul's son. It also led to many years in exile, due to Saul's jealousy, before David finally became king of Judah and then king of all Israel.

God was with David and increased his kingdom. Jerusalem became the city where David reigned as king for 40 years. God made a covenant with David, promising that his family would reign forever. As shepherd and king, David sought to serve God faithfully. There were times when he sinned against God, but he always came to God in confession, begging for forgiveness, and dealt with the consequences of his sins. Looking back, we see God's plan for Jesus' birth through the lineage of David.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Lesson 1

1 Samuel 13:13-14

1 Samuel 16:1-13

1 Samuel 17:34-35

Memory text: 1 Samuel 16:7b

Lesson 2

2 Samuel 1–2:7

Memory text: 2 Samuel 1:19-27

Lesson 3

2 Samuel 2:8–6:23

Memory text: Psalm 150

Lesson 4

2 Samuel 7:1-17, 18-29

2 Chronicles 22:5-13

Memory texts: 2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 89:3, 28, 34

Lesson 5

1 Samuel 18:1-4

1 Samuel 19:1-7

1 Samuel 20:1-42

1 Samuel 23:15-18

1 Samuel 24:16-22

2 Samuel 9:1-13

Memory texts: Proverbs 12:24; John 15:13

Lesson 6

2 Samuel 11 and 12

Memory text: Psalm 32

Lesson 7

1 Samuel 20:15,42

1 Samuel 24:16-22

2 Samuel 9, 11, 12

Memory text: Psalm 72

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Out of Exile and into Kingship

When David learned that Saul and Jonathan were dead, he tore his clothes and mourned for seven days. Mourning the dead involved covering his head with sackcloth, rubbing ashes on his head, and fasting for the mourning period of seven days. David was truly sorry that Saul was dead. His respect for Saul as God's anointed king was evident after Saul's death, as well as while Saul was living. David had never questioned Saul's authority. As for Jonathan's death, David had lost his dearest friend. David's lament, found in 2 Samuel 1:23-27, describes his feelings.

When the mourning period of seven days was over, David was in a quandary. He was still living in Philistia as a vassal of the Philistine king. He knew that the tension between the northern tribes (Israel) and the southern tribes (Judah) had become volatile. Ish-Bosheth, Saul's 40-year-old son, had proclaimed himself king of Israel soon after Saul's death. Abner, Saul's chief counselor, had given allegiance to Ish-Bosheth, thus ensuring support from the people.

David was safe for the time being. He knew that Ish-Bosheth and Abner were preoccupied with maintaining Ish-Bosheth's claim to the crown and would not focus on finding him for several weeks. David didn't want to stay in Philistia. He wanted to return to his homeland.

David appealed to God for guidance, and God told him to go to Hebron, a meeting place for tribal leaders centrally located in the mountainous region of Judah. David took his wives, Abigail and Jezreel, and the men that had been with him, and traveled to Hebron, a city at the foot of the mountains.

At Hebron, the leaders of the tribes of the southern kingdom, Judah, anointed David to be their king. Ish-Bosheth was now king in Israel, and David was king in Judah.

As king, David showed kindness to Jabesh-Gilead. This northern city had secretly stolen the bodies of Saul and his sons from the Philistines, who had hung them up for the birds to devour. The men of Jabesh Gilead gave the dead king and his sons a proper Israelite burial, under a tamarisk tree, thus keeping them from disgrace. David thanked the men for their kindness. He promised, as king of Judah, to return their kindness.

The beginning days of David's reign were filled with tension. Animosity between the northern and southern tribes grew. Soon the tension erupted into a battle between the house of Saul and the house of David.

God continued to fight for David. David's army grew strong, while Ish-Bosheth's stronghold grew weak. Finally, David defeated Ish-Bosheth's armies. At a meeting in Hebron, with all the northern and southern tribes present, David, who was now in his thirties, was proclaimed king of all Israel. God's promise to David had been fulfilled.

Building a Nation

David began looking for a city of residence for his court, and God provided the ideal place. Jerusalem, located on the border between Judah and Benjamin, was

naturally fortified from attacks. Three of the city's four sides looked out over the valley below. A natural spring ran beneath the city. It provided ample water for 3,000 inhabitants. The Jebusites occupied Jerusalem at this time. David invited them to remain in the city, as long as they followed his rules.

Once David was established in the royal city of Jerusalem, he began building relationships with other nations with which Israel traded. David married the daughters of several kings, thus finalizing agreements of peace with those nations. The king of Tyre sent materials and artisans to help David build a palace in Jerusalem. David's family grew, and he prospered. The Philistines, however, had other plans for David's dynasty.

When the Philistines first learned that David had become king of Judah, they were not worried. David was a successful warrior, but his presence in Judah was no threat to the Philistines. They were more concerned about events in the north, where Ish-Bosheth was gaining in power. They wanted to conquer the coastal regions north of Philistia. The Philistines hoped to "divide and conquer" the northern and southern tribes.

But the Philistines underestimated the power of God in the Israelites' memories. Immediately after Ish-Bosheth's demise, the northern tribes went to Hebron to ask David to be their king. With the north and south united, there was only one thing for the Philistines to do, which was to strike at once.

David saw the Philistines' advance. He asked the Lord, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The Lord responded, "Go, for I will surely hand the Philistines over to you" (2 Samuel 5:19). David obeyed God and defeated the Philistines. He praised God for the victory, and did not claim the glory for himself.

The Philistines regrouped for another attack. Again David asked the Lord for guidance. This time, God told David to circle behind the Philistines and attack them in front of some balsam trees. He instructed David to refrain from attacking until he heard the sound of marching in the tops of the trees. This meant that the Lord had gone in front of the Israelite army to strike down the Philistines.

David followed each of the Lord's instructions. True to God's word, the Philistines were soundly defeated. It was not David's might, but God's power that won the battle on that day! From that day on, the Philistines were no longer a threat to Israel. They soon came to recognize Israel as one of the greatest political powers of that time.

God continued to give the Israelites success in battle. David made several conquests during his reign. Israel added the lands of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Kenites, and Amalekites to Israel. The people of these lands were encouraged to submit to David's authority as king. David never attempted to conquer Philistia, probably because they were under the authority of Egypt. However, he did have positive relations with the leaders of Philistia throughout the rest of his reign as Israel's king.

The Humanity of the King

The kingdom was prosperous. The people of Israel continued their agricultural vocations. The north and south appeared united. David's palace was completed. The king began thinking of other things.

Nathan, the prophet, had been called by God to act as chief counselor to David. One day, David told Nathan that he felt guilty living in a palace of cedar while God remained in a nearby tent in the Ark of the Covenant. The servant king

wanted to build a beautiful temple as a place for God to dwell. He asked Nathan what God would say about his idea.

Without consulting God, Nathan responded positively and told David to do whatever he had in mind. That night God spoke to Nathan. The following day Nathan reported to King David all that God had said (2 Samuel 7:5-16). God told him that he never asked for a house in which to dwell. He declined David's offer, but instead promised to build a house for David, continuing his lineage. One of David's descendants would rise up, and God would establish his throne forever.

David continued to rule over Israel with fairness and justice, and the people of Israel flourished under his rule. He remembered that he had once promised Saul that he would show mercy to his descendants. He had also promised Jonathan that he would care for his family as long as he lived (1 Samuel 20:15, 42). So King David sent for Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, who had been crippled in an accident. He gave Mephibosheth all of Saul's previous possessions and invited him to eat at his table each day.

There were times in David's reign when he was disobedient. The most powerful example of his disobedience is the story of Bathsheba and Uriah. David met a beautiful woman whom he wanted to add to his harem. Bathsheba was already married to Uriah, a soldier in the king's army, and was unable to become David's wife. So David devised a plan.

David's army was involved in a war. He sent a message to one of his commanders, asking that Uriah be placed in the most dangerous position of all—the front line. David's plan was successful. Uriah was killed in battle on that very day. Once the seven days of mourning were over, David married Bathsheba.

God sent Nathan, the prophet, to share a parable with David. In the parable (2 Samuel 12:1-4), a rich man with many sheep and cattle decided to butcher his poor neighbor's only sheep to feed a guest. David was enraged that someone would abuse his power in such a way. He told Nathan that such a man should be put to death.

Nathan rebuked David by explaining that he was the rich man in the parable. The Lord was angry that David had sinned against him, as well as abused his power as king. God did not kill David as a punishment. Instead, David's punishment was related to each of his sins.

Because David had schemed that Uriah would die in battle, God told him that the sword would never depart from his house (2 Samuel 12:10). This came to fruition, as three of David's sons died violent deaths in later years.

Because David had conspired to take someone else's wife, God told him that his wives would also be taken from him. Several years later, one of David's sons, Absalom, seized the throne for a short period of time and took David's wives as his own.

David acknowledged his sin before God. He repented and God forgave him, saying through Nathan, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die" (2 Samuel 12:13). The final consequence for David's actions was the death of the first son of his union with Bathsheba.

As David's life began to wane, he did several important things. First, he wrote a song of praise to God, 2 Samuel 22, which recounts some key events in his life. Second, he took a census of all the military personnel, forgetting that the army was God's army. This action gave credit to himself instead of God.

David immediately knew that his action was sin, and with a contrite spirit he said, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, O Lord, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a foolish thing" (2 Samuel 24:10). God

responded with forgiveness and consequences. God allowed David to choose his punishment from three options: (1) three years of famine, (2) three years of flight from pursuing enemies, or (3) three days of plague upon the people of Israel.

David chose the three days of plague. The plague killed over 70,000 people. When David saw the despair and pain of the people, he asked God to transfer this punishment to his family so that the people would not suffer for his sins.

The Lord heard David's prayers and sent the prophet, Gad. Gad told David to build an altar at the threshing floor of Aruanah, the Jebusite. Aruanah offered to give the threshing floor to David, but David insisted on paying a large sum of money, because he didn't want to sacrifice offerings to God on an altar that had cost him nothing. When the altar was built, David gave offerings to the Lord. God heard him, and the plague ended.

By this time, David had many wives and a large number of children. He was growing older, and his death was inevitable. He needed to name his successor. Solomon, whose birth name, Jedidiah, means "loved by the Lord," had been chosen by God at birth to be the next king of Israel. However, David did not publicly affirm Solomon as his successor until another son, Adonijah, attempted to forcefully take the throne.

David completed his reign by giving Solomon instructions for being king (1 Kings 2:1-4). In David's charge to his son, he showed understanding that God's love is unconditional. However, this blessing would be dependent upon his descendant's obedience to God's authority.

After 40 years as king, David died and was buried in Jerusalem. David had spent his life working to build a nation of God's chosen people, who would remain in covenant relationship with the Lord.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- David served God during his reign as king of Israel.
- David gave God the glory for taking care of Israel.
- David repented when he sinned.
- God forgives the sins of people who are truly sorry.
- God's covenant with David's family foretells the coming of the Messiah.

WORSHIP

1. Redecorate the worship center to display the themes in this unit. Use memory texts, pictures charts, posters, and maps as visuals. In this unit, a number of creative activities are suggested. Leave space on bulletin boards, etc., for children to display their art and their writing.

2. Include the class Bible and a prayer basket or jar in the setting. Keep in mind that prayers of forgiveness may appear in the basket as the stories of David unfold, particularly those of the human king and the elderly king.

3. Include a basket for questions. If students are asking a lot of questions about forgiveness, etc., you may want to invite your pastor to come and answer some of the questions.

4. Choose a worship theme. Servanthood, trust in God, obedience, and joyful praise are all themes in the lessons. Psalm 150 is used in Lesson 3 as a special writing activity. You may want to choose it as your theme scripture and have the students memorize it. Songs that speak to these themes are:

“Obey my voice,” *Hymnal: A Worship Book* #163

“The Lord’s my shepherd,” HWB #578

“They that wait upon the Lord,” HWB #584

“Holy, holy, holy,” HWB #75

5. Consider extending your theme with an activity. Provide concordances for students to look up the theme word or words. When they find Scriptures that apply, they can copy them on large sticky notes and post them in the worship center.

6. Obedient living. Compare the lives of Saul and David to show the truth of obedient living. Saul started out as a follower of God, but became self-centered instead of God-centered. David began his life as a shepherd boy, trusting and obeying God. He ended his life as a king, trusting and obeying God. David made serious mistakes, but he chose to confess his sins and accept God’s forgiveness.

7. Continue to pray with your students. David had an open and honest relationship with God, through praise and thanksgiving, as well as in confession and forgiveness. Encourage students to follow David’s example in this.

MEMORY PASSAGE

This unit pays special attention to some of David’s writings, particularly those of the Psalms. Memory texts are not necessarily included as memory work, but rather as texts that bring a special emphasis to the lesson.

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

Each lesson is an opportunity to assess your students’ understanding. During storytelling and discussions, observe body language that lets you know how well students comprehend. Questioning during the storytelling makes for active listening, and involves those students who are not auditory learners.

There are a number of creative projects in this unit. Observing the students’ interest and dedication to these assignments will give you a feel for their understanding of the concepts.

Most lessons contain activity sheets that can be used for assessment. A formal assessment completes the unit. Becoming familiar with the unit assessment will help you focus on facts and concepts that your students are expected to master.

David—Servant King

LESSON 1: DAVID, CHOSEN BY GOD

Objective

Students will recognize that God looks at the heart. They will relate this concept to friendship choices they make.

Key Concepts

- David, as a young boy tending sheep, was chosen by God to be King of Israel.
- God shows continued love for the people of Israel by choosing David as king.
- People choose friends based on outward appearances, but God chooses based on their hearts.
- People’s words and actions define them as followers of God.

Text: 1 Samuel 13:13-14; 1 Samuel 16:1-13; 1 Samuel 17:34-35

Memory Text: 1 Samuel 16:7b

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Chart paper (*optional*)
- Bibles
- “Who Will God Choose?” (p. 111)
- Transparency or projection of memory text (p. 112)
- For Extend the Lesson: poster paper, art and writing supplies

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Bible texts to become familiar with the story, and the Biblical Background (pp. 104-107) for an overall picture of David’s kingship.
- Plan to tell this story to the students. Think about how the three Scripture texts can flow together into one story. Plan your discussion time.
- Make copies of “Who will God Choose?” (one per student).

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Who’s the main character? On the board or on chart paper, make a list of the other characters in this story of David: Saul, Samuel, Jesse, Eliab, Aninadab, Shammah. Also write down the setting, Bethlehem. Ask the children to guess the main character of today’s story by looking at the list.

LESSON STEPS

1. Find out what students know. Once David has been identified as the main character, ask the students to tell you what they know about David. List their ideas on the board or chart, beside the character list.

2. Tell the story. Begin the story with Samuel’s pronouncement to Saul in 1 Samuel 13. Then move to the main story in 1 Samuel 16. Finally, share what David told Saul in 1 Samuel 17:34-35 about his life as a shepherd.

3. Scripture study and discussion. Explain that the story of David the shepherd boy tells us something important about God that you want them to discover. Divide the class into teams of three or four students.

Have each team reread 1 Samuel 16:1-13. Ask them to find something important about God. (*They are looking for the memory text.*) Once the teams have identified a Scripture, ask each team to read what they found and discuss their choices. Use the following questions to help students incorporate the memory text into their daily action plan.

1. How did God choose a new King for Israel? (*Students must support their answers with Scripture, which is the memory text.*)
2. What does this story teach us about choosing friends? (*It should be easy at this point for students to respond with the memory text.*)
3. Ask them to explain what the text means by giving examples.

4. “Who Will God Choose?” Have students complete the activity sheet. This could be an individual or small group activity. The answers will vary. After the students complete their sheets, have them share and support the answers they wrote.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Memory text.** Have students memorize the memory text and then plan a creative presentation of the text for the class. Following are some examples of what they might do:

- Illustrate the text with a picture
- Illustrate the text with symbols
- Present the text with American Sign Language or motions
- Creatively letter the text onto a poster
- Write a short story that applies the meaning of this text
- Write a Scripture song of the text



Who Will God Choose?

Listed below are the characters from the story about David the shepherd boy, chosen by God. The characters are found in the following Scriptures: 1 Samuel 13:13-14 and 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

Saul

Jesse

Aninadab

Samuel

Eliab

Shammah

Choose two characters, in addition to David, that you think God would choose to be his followers. Write a short paragraph for each one, telling why you think this person was a follower of God. Support your writing with Scripture.

1. Character number one: _____

2. Character number two: _____

Complete the following statements:

3. I think God chose David to be the king of Israel because _____

4. _____ is a good plan for me to use when I am choosing my friends.



The LORD does not see
as mortals see;
they look on the
outward appearance,
but the LORD looks on the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7b

David—Servant King

LESSON 2: DAVID, KING OF JUDAH

Objective

Students will observe David’s loyalty and love for Saul, his sorrow over Saul’s death, and his great dependence on God as he begins his reign as king of Judah.

Key Concepts

- David remained in hiding until Saul was killed in battle against the Philistines, near Gilboa.
- David expressed his love and loyalty for Saul’s family in a lament.
- David looked for God’s guidance.
- David moved to Hebron and became king of Judah.

Text: 2 Samuel 1–2:7

Memory text: 2 Samuel 1:19-27

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

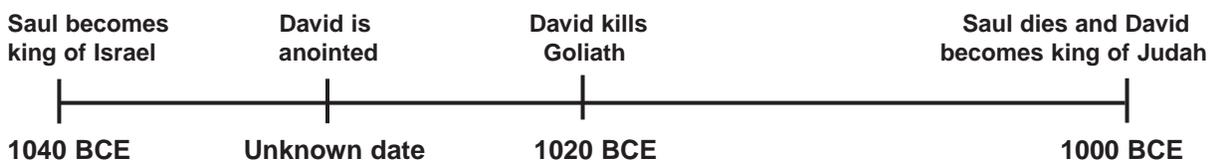
- Bibles
- “Scripture Study” (p. 115)
- Transparency or projection of map of Palestine (p. 117)
- For Extend the Lesson: “David’s Lament” reading sheet (p. 118), “David’s Lament” activity sheet (p. 119)

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Bible passage and the Biblical Background for this unit.
- Draw the time line from Introducing the Lesson on the board.
- Make copies of “Scripture Study,” one per student.
- If using Extend the Lesson, make copies of the “David’s Lament” reading sheet and activity sheet, one of each per student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Draw the following time line on the chalkboard before class begins. *(Dates are approximate.)*



Explain that it is difficult to tell the story of David without connecting it to the story of Saul. Use the time line to help them understand that Saul reigned as king for 40 years, and David was part of the story for over half of that time.

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell David's story. Summarize the story of David from sometime after 1020 BCE to 1000 BCE. You might say something like this:

Early in his reign, Saul proved to God that he was not going to be a king who followed God, but one that wanted power and glory for himself. At that point, God asked Samuel to anoint another king, one with a servant's heart.

As we know from the last lesson, this person was David. King Saul found out about David when the young man killed Goliath, about halfway through Saul's reign. Later, David played a musical instrument—sometimes called a harp, and sometimes a lyre, in the courts of Saul. This music was soothing to Saul, and he appreciated David's playing. However, sometime after the Goliath incident, Saul began to figure out that David was the one who would ultimately take the throne from his family. He became extremely jealous of David and plotted to kill him.

For the rest of Saul's reign, David was a refugee, fleeing from the jealous wrath of Saul. There were several incidents during this time when David had an opportunity to kill Saul. He never did, because he respected and honored Saul as the king God had chosen before. During this time, there were many battles against neighboring enemies. Since God was no longer on Saul's side, the army became weak, and was defeated. At last, in a battle against the Philistines, Saul and his three sons were killed.

2. "Scripture Study." Tell the students that they will learn six things about David from the Scripture lesson. Hand out the activity sheet. Pair the students in groups of two and read the five scriptures found on the activity sheet. Then ask them to answer the questions. When the students are finished, discuss their answers and respond to any questions they have.

3. Map study. Display the map of Palestine from page 117 to show the location of Hebron. Explain that Hebron was a central location between the northern tribes, known as Israel, and the southern tribes, known as Judah. This made it an excellent meeting place for the leaders of the tribes. Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, had proclaimed himself king of Israel soon after Saul's death. Now that David was king of Judah, the kingdom was divided. *(You may wish to refer to the first section of the Biblical Background for additional information.)*

4. Connect to history. Hebron was where Abraham built an altar and located his tents when he and Lot selected home sites. Genesis 23:2 tells us that Sarah died at Hebron. Joshua gave the land surrounding Hebron to Caleb when they were dividing the land in Canaan. Hebron was Caleb's reward for his faithfulness to God (Joshua 14:13-15). According to Joshua 21:11-12, Joshua gave the city of Hebron and nearby fields to the descendants of Aaron.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **"David's Lament."** Use this reading sheet and the accompanying activity sheet to familiarize students with the memory text, 2 Samuel 1:19-27. Ask them to read the Scripture until it becomes familiar. Then have them do one of the activities described on the activity sheet.

Scripture Study

Read each Scripture and answer the question that goes with it.

1. (2 Samuel 1:11-12) How did David respond when he learned of Saul and Jonathan's deaths?

2. (2 Samuel 1:17-18) What did David write in memory of Saul and Jonathan?

3. (2 Samuel 2:1-3) Where did God tell David to go?

4. (2 Samuel 2:4) What happened at Hebron?

5. (2 Samuel 2:5-7) What did the people of Jabesh Gilead do?

6. (2 Samuel 2:5-7) How did David respond to the kindness of the people of Jabesh Gilead?



What characteristics of David do these Scriptures show? Write at least one characteristic for each question. Do not repeat an answer.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

ANSWER KEY

Scripture Study

Read each Scripture and answer the question that goes with it.

1. (2 Samuel 1:11-12) How did David respond when he learned of Saul and Jonathan's deaths?

Tore his clothes, mourned, wept, fasted

2. (2 Samuel 1:17-18) What did David write in memory of Saul and Jonathan?

A lament in the form of a song or poem

3. (2 Samuel 2:1-3) Where did God tell David to go?

Hebron

4. (2 Samuel 2:4) What happened at Hebron?

David was anointed king over the house of Judah.

5. (2 Samuel 2:5-7) What did the people of Jabesh Gilead do?

Gave Saul a proper burial

6. (2 Samuel 2:5-7) How did David respond to the kindness of the people of Jabesh Gilead?

David asked God's blessing for them and promised that he would show them kindness and faithfulness.



What characteristics of David do these Scriptures show? Write at least one characteristic for each question. Do not repeat an answer.

1. ***Sensitive, loyal, loving, compassionate***
2. ***Loyal, loving***
3. ***Dependent on God, obedient to God***
4. ***Willing to follow God, obedient to a promise from God***
5. ***Aware of circumstances and situations***
6. ***Kind, generous***

The Great Sea





David's Lament

from 2 Samuel 1:19-27



Oh, oh, Gazelles of Israel, struck down on your hills,
the mighty warriors—fallen, fallen!
Don't announce it in the city of Gath,
don't post the news in the streets of Ashkelon.
No more dew or rain for you, hills of Gilboa,
and not a drop from springs and wells,
For there the warriors' shields were dragged through the mud.

Jonathan's bow was bold—
the bigger they were the harder they fell.
Saul's sword was fearless—
once out of the scabbard, nothing could stop it.

Saul and Jonathan—beloved, beautiful!
Together in life, together in death.
Swifter than plummeting eagles, stronger than proud lions.

Women of Israel, weep for Saul.
He dressed you in finest cottons and silks,
spared no expense in making you elegant.
The mighty warriors—fallen, fallen
in the middle of the fight!
Jonathan—struck down on your hills!

O my dear brother Jonathan, I'm crushed by your death.
Your friendship was a miracle-wonder,
love far exceeding anything I've known—or ever hope to know.

The mighty warriors—fallen, fallen.
And the arms of war broken to bits.

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David—Servant King

LESSON 3: DAVID, KING OF ALL ISRAEL

Objective

Students will observe David’s reliance on God as his kingdom, fame, and power increased.

Key Concepts

- David’s kingdom increased as he sought wisdom from God, who was with him.
- David was anointed king of all Israel.
- Jerusalem was conquered, the Philistines were defeated, and the Ark brought to Jerusalem.
- David celebrated before the Lord.

Text: 2 Samuel 2:8–6:23

Memory text: Psalm 150

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- “David Is Made King of Israel” (p. 122)
- For Extend the Lesson: copy paper, construction paper, fine-tip markers, glue, scissors

Teacher Preparation

- Read the lesson and the Bible text.
- Prepare to tell the stories in Steps 1, 3, and 4.
- Make copies of “David Is Made King of Israel,” one per student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Divide the class into two teams. Then divide each team into two parts. One part of each team will ask questions. The other part of the team will give answers. The questioners should think of a list of review questions from the first two lessons of this unit. They will ask questions to the other team’s “answerers,” while, in turn, the other team’s questioners will ask their team. Each correct answer receives a point. If an answer is incorrect, the questioners may choose to ask the question of their own answerers. If their own team answers correctly, they earn a point. However, if they do *not* answer correctly, they lose a point for their team.

The questioning should go back and forth until the questioners run out of questions. If they miss important things that should be reviewed, you as teacher may add questions, beginning with the team whose turn is next. You might give the winning team a small favor, such as being first in the lunch or recess line.

LESSON STEPS

1. Warring families. Move from the review game into the next part of David's story, from 2 Samuel 2:8 through 4:12. This is the story of warring between the house of Saul and the house of David. Summarize the story line, without including violent details. Chapter 3, verse 1, establishes what happened during this time.

2. "David Is Made King of Israel." Hand out this activity sheet, which covers 2 Samuel 5:1-5, where David is anointed king over all of Israel. Have students complete the activity independently or in pairs. Review when they are finished.

3. Jerusalem conquered; Philistines defeated. Briefly summarize the stories of David conquering Jerusalem and defeating the Philistines (2 Samuel 5:6-25). Verses 10, 19, and 23 are important, because they establish that David asked for God's guidance in these conquests and that God was with him.

4. The Ark is brought to Jerusalem. Briefly summarize this story from 2 Samuel 6:1-23. Emphasize David's celebration of the Ark's return. It gives us insight into his exuberant spirit, which is also demonstrated in the Psalms. This story leads into the psalm-writing activity in Extend the Lesson.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Write a psalm.** Read Psalm 150 (*the memory text*) and talk about the pattern of praise in this psalm. Some of David's psalms also follow this pattern.

Pattern:

Opening praise

Where to praise

Why to praise

How to praise

Who should praise

Closing praise (*same as opening praise*)

Possible format:

Praise the Lord, Hallelujah,

Praise Him where.

Praise the Lord because why.

Praise Him with how.

Let who praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, Hallelujah.

Ask the students to write their own praise psalms. They should follow the pattern that is used in Psalm 150 (*printed above*). Reluctant writers might need to see the possible format as well, but encourage students to be creative as they use the pattern. They should write psalms that are truly their own experience of praise. Instruct students to creatively display their psalms. Here is one way to do this:

- (1) Copy the psalm in pencil onto white paper. (*Copy paper works well.*) Make sure it is centered on the paper and in your best handwriting. (*Suggest putting a piece of lined paper under the white paper as a guide for making straight lines.*)
- (2) Trace the writing with fine-tip markers. Use as many colors as you like.
- (3) Cut around the psalm in an interesting cloud-like shape.
- (4) Attach the psalm to a colorful piece of construction paper.
- (5) Be sure to sign your work as the writer and designer.

Display the students' work on a wall or bulletin board, or perhaps within the worship center. Consider a display in the hallway.

Name _____

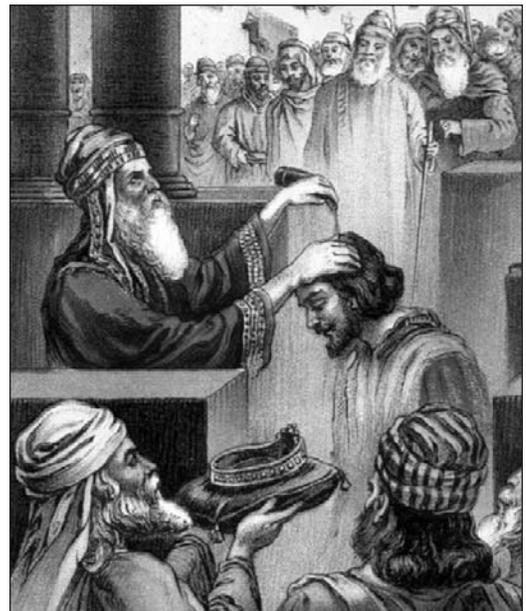
Date _____

David Is Made King of Israel

Find 2 Samuel 5:1-5 in your Bible. Fill in the missing words for each verse. Then, write a summary statement for the verses.

1. All of the _____ of Israel came to David at _____ and said, “We are your own _____ and _____.”
2. “In the past while _____ was king over us, _____ were the one who _____ Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, ‘You will _____ my _____ Israel, and you will become their _____.’”
3. When all the _____ of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a _____ with them at Hebron before the _____, and they _____ David _____ over _____.
4. David was _____ years old when he became _____, and he _____ for _____ years.
5. In Hebron he reigned over _____ for _____ years and _____ months, and in _____ he reigned over _____ Israel and Judah for _____ years.

Summary:



ANSWER KEY

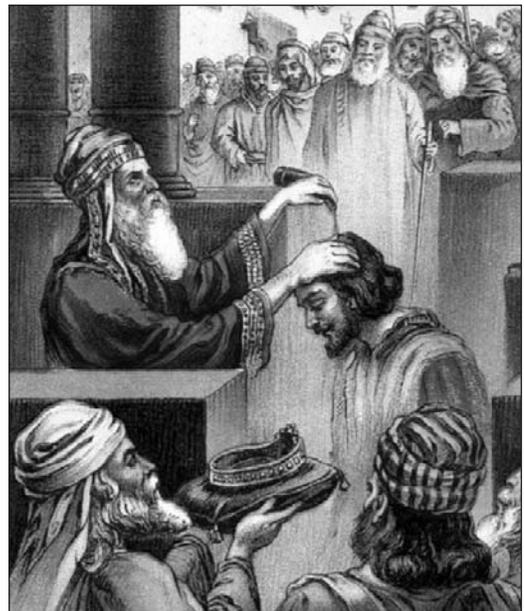
David Is Made King of Israel

Find 2 Samuel 5:1-5 in your Bible. Fill in the missing words for each verse. Then, write a summary statement for the verses.

1. All of the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “We are your own flesh and blood.”
2. “In the past while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.’”
3. When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.
4. David was 30 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 40 years.
5. In Hebron he reigned over Judah for 7 years and 6 months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for 33 years.

Summary:

Should include David's popularity, his being
chosen by God, and the long length of his
reign.



David—Servant King

LESSON 4: DAVID, YOUR NAME WILL LIVE FOREVER

Objective

Students will learn about God’s covenant with David and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Key Concepts

- God’s covenant with David’s family is forever.
- God explained to David that Solomon was to build a house for God.
- David demonstrated his praise and thanksgiving to God through prayer.
- God’s covenant with David was fulfilled with the coming of Jesus.
- God also made a promise to us.

Text: 2 Samuel 7:1-17, 18-29; 2 Chronicles 22:5-13

Memory text: 2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 89:3, 28, 34; John 3:16

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Sample covenant (p. 126)
- Bibles
- “God’s Covenant with David” crossword puzzle (p. 127)
- “David’s Prayer” (p. 129)
- Colored pencils

Teacher Preparation

- Read 2 Samuel 7, the other Scripture references and the lesson. Prepare to tell the story, as explained in Lesson Step 1, and the additional information in Lesson Step 4.
- You may want to make a transparency or projection file of the sample covenant.
- This lesson is longer than most, so you may decide to omit one of the activities. Decide which activities you will use and prepare them, making copies as needed.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Write the word “covenant” on the chalkboard. Talk about its meaning (*a promise*) and when a covenant might be written or used. One example is a marriage covenant (*vows*). Sometimes covenants are written by small groups to make certain promises to each other. Show the sample small group covenant. Explain that a covenant plays an important part in this lesson.

LESSON STEPS

1. Storytelling. In your own words, tell the story of David’s desire to build a temple for God and God’s reply through Nathan, 2 Samuel 7:1-17. (*Make sure students understand the Israelites believed God dwelled in the Ark. This differs from our belief that God is present everywhere, because the Holy Spirit lives in God’s people around the world.*)

2. “God’s Covenant with David.” *(This lesson is long, so you might choose to skip this part. If so, include the additional scriptures, 2 Samuel 23:5, Psalm 89:3, 28, and 34 in your storytelling. They help to confirm the story of the covenant.)* Hand out the activity sheet. Ask the children to complete this puzzle by locating and reading the Scriptures listed. *(This is a quick review of the story you have just told them. The additional Scriptures emphasize the fact that God made a covenant with David.)*

3. 1 Chronicles 22:5-13. Ask the students why they think God told David he was not the one to build a temple. Allow them to discuss this question and venture some suggestions. Then have them find I Chronicles 22:5-13. Tell them to read this Scripture and see if it gives them an answer. When someone has found the answer (1 Chronicles 22:8-10), ask him or her to read it. Then have someone else rephrase the answer in his or her own words.

Now ask the students to find an answer to this question: What was David’s attitude toward building a house for God? *(From this Scripture, they should be able to explain that David’s attitude was positive, because he continued to make preparation for the building of the house. He explained the situation to Solomon, his son, and assured him that he would have success if he observed the laws and decrees. He admonished him to be strong and courageous.)*

4. The promise fulfilled. Ask students if they think God’s promise came true. Give them a chance to discuss this question. Then share the following information:

After Solomon died, Israel was again split into two tribes, Israel to the north and Judah to the south. All the kings over the house of Judah were from David’s house. When the Israelites were conquered and taken to Babylon in exile, there was no king to sit on David’s throne. In fact, David’s throne didn’t even exist at that time. Centuries later, God fulfilled the promise to David by bringing Jesus into the world as a servant king. Jesus was a direct descendent of David. The genealogy in Matthew 1, beginning in verse 5, verifies this.

5. “David’s Prayer.” Hand out this activity sheet from 2 Samuel 7:18-29. Explain that this is a paraphrase of the prayer David prayed after Nathan told him about the covenant God had made with his family. Read the prayer with the students. Then explain the four types of prayers, as shown in the key. Explain the directions for the activity. Work with the students to find examples of the different types of prayer. Remind them that not every prayer includes all the different types. This prayer does not seek forgiveness.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Write a prayer.** Tell the students that God also made a covenant with us in John 3:16, promising that “whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Ask them to write a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the John 3:16 promise, much like David’s prayer. Remind them that David did have one petition in his prayer, when he asked God to bless his family forever. Challenge them to include a petition in their prayers.

Sample Covenant

for a small group

We, as a group of God's children, in God's family, covenant to walk together in the light of God's love. We will strive to learn together, pray together, and share together, always seeking God's will for our lives.

We covenant together to:

- share our beliefs, feelings, and responses as persons who are open to God changing us.
- respect and receive what others offer, honoring the way God is working with each person.
- prayerfully and respectfully listen to each other with our hearts, as well as our ears and minds.
- embrace silence, listening for the Spirit in our midst.

We covenant together to:

- enter into an attitude of worship as we gather together.
- spend time throughout the week studying, praying, meditating, and reflecting on our weekly study.
- offer justice and compassion to each member of the group by: maintaining each other's confidentiality, and accepting each other's thoughts and opinions without judgment.

We covenant together to seek to allow God to shape us according to the image of Christ, by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world.



Name _____

Date _____

David's Prayer

2 Samuel 7:18-29

Then King David went into the Tent of the Lord's presence, sat down and prayed, "Sovereign Lord, I am not worthy of what you have already done for me, nor is my family. Yet now you are doing even more, Sovereign Lord; you have made promises about my descendants in the years to come. And you let a man see this, Sovereign Lord! What more can I say to you! You know me, your servant. It was your will and purpose to do this; you have done all these great things in order to instruct me.

"How great you are, Sovereign Lord! There is none like you; we have always known that you alone are God. There is no other nation on earth like Israel, whom you rescued from slavery to make them your own people. The great and wonderful things you did for them have spread your fame throughout the world. You drove out other nations and their gods as your people advanced, the people whom you set free from Egypt to be your own. You have made Israel your own people forever, and you, Lord, have become their God.

"And now, Lord God, fulfill for all time the promise you made about me and my descendants, and do what you said you would. Your fame will be great, and people will forever say, 'The Lord Almighty is God over Israel.' And you will preserve my dynasty for all time. Lord Almighty, God of Israel! I have the courage to pray this prayer to you, because you have revealed all this to me, your servant, and have told me that you will make my descendants kings.

"And now, Sovereign Lord, you are God; you always keep your promises, and you have made this wonderful promise to me. I ask you to bless my descendants so that they will continue to enjoy your favor. You, Sovereign Lord, have promised this, and your blessing will rest on my descendants forever."

—*Good News Translation*, Second Edition, Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society.

Color the key with four different colors. Then find examples of the different types of prayer in David's prayer. Underline them with the correct color.

Praise

Thanksgiving

Petition

Confession



David—Servant King

LESSON 5: DAVID, KEEPER OF PROMISES

Objective

Students will observe David’s model of friendship and learn what it means to be a true friend.

Key Concepts

- David was a true friend who kept promises regardless of circumstances.
- David’s covenant (*promise*) with Saul was fulfilled during his kingship.
- A true friend sticks closer than a brother or sister.

Text: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 1 Samuel 19:1-7; 1 Samuel 20:1-42; 1 Samuel 23:15-18; 1 Samuel 24:16-22; 2 Samuel 9:1-13

Memory text: Proverbs 12:24; John 15:13

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Index cards
- “Outline for 2 Samuel 9:1-11” (p. 132)
- Transparency or projection of “Outline for 2 Samuel 9:1-11” (*optional*)
- Copies of 2 Samuel 9:1-13 for reader’s theater
- For Extend the Lesson: “Memory Texts” (p. 134)

Teacher Preparation

- Read all the Scripture texts and plan how you will tell the story of David and Jonathan.
- Write these Scripture references on 5 index cards: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 1 Samuel 19:1-7; 1 Samuel 20:1-42; 1 Samuel 23:15-18, and 1 Samuel 24:16-22.
- Make copies of the activity sheets, one per student.
- Make four copies of the biblical text, 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Highlight one copy for each reader: David, Ziba, Mephibosheth, and narrator. You will be the narrator.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

David and Jonathan. Tell the students that this lesson begins with a flashback into the earlier life of David. (*Reviewing the friendship of David and Jonathan will make the connection with 2 Samuel 9.*) Ask them what they know about Jonathan and his friendship with David.

LESSON STEPS

1. Storytelling. Tell the story of David and Jonathan’s friendship and covenant. (*Use the I Samuel texts and as much background as you think is necessary for the content of your story.*)

2. Scripture search. Divide the class into 5 small groups. Give each group one index card with a Scripture reference. Explain that they will be reading about the relationship between David and Jonathan, or David and Saul. Their task is to discover what these Scriptures tell about covenants. Ask them to write their discoveries on the index cards.

3. Class discussion. Bring the groups back together. Beginning with the first Scripture, discuss what the students discovered about covenants and friendships. *(Examples: 1 Samuel 18:1-4—People who make covenants care about each other. 1 Samuel 19:1-7—People who make covenants work for reconciliation. 1 Samuel 20:12-17—People who covenant with each other try to keep their friends from harm. 1 Samuel 23:15-18—People who covenant together are there for each other in time of need. 1 Samuel 24:16-22—David made a covenant with his enemy, Saul, to take care of his family.)* Write the findings on the board. Then explain that the next story will tell if David kept his promise.

4. Reader's theater. Read the story from 2 Samuel 9:1-13, assigning readers to read the parts of David or King, Ziba, and Mephibosheth. Give each reader one of the highlighted texts. Read the narration yourself, so you can keep the story flowing.

5. "Outline for 2 Samuel 9:1-13." After reading the story, complete this activity sheet in one of two ways: 1) Make a transparency and complete as a class; or 2) Make copies and have individuals or small groups complete. *(Completing this sheet will assure comprehension of the story, and understanding of the fulfilled promise.)*

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Creative presentation.** Provide students with a copy of the memory texts. Ask them to memorize one of the two texts and plan a creative presentation of the passage. Give them the option of working with another student, and explain when the presentation is due. *(You will need to plan additional time for the presentations.)*

Ideas for the presentations:

1. Present the passage in American Sign Language (This website might help: <http://commtechlab.msu.edu/SITES/ASLWEB/browser.htm>)
2. Create your own motions.
3. Create a song.
4. Create a mini-drama.
5. Use props to describe words.
6. Draw or paint an artistic display.



Outline for 2 Samuel 9:1-11

I. The question and the answer:

- A. _____
- B. _____

II. Ziba appears before David, the king:

- A. _____
- B. _____
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____

III. Mephibosheth appears before the king:

- A. _____
- B. _____

IV. The covenant is kept:

- A. _____
- B. _____

V. Ziba's commission:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

VI. Ziba accepts his commission.

ANSWER KEY



Outline for 2 Samuel 9:1-11

I. The question and the answer:

- A. *Is there anyone left from the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness?*
- B. *There is a servant named Ziba.*

II. Ziba appears before David, the king.

- A. *Is there anyone left from the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness?*
- B. *Jonathan's son remains:*
1. *Crippled in both feet*
 2. *Lives in the house of Makir, in Lo Debar*

III. Mephibosheth appears before the king:

- A. *Son of Jonathan, grandson of Saul*
- B. *Bows before the king*

IV. The covenant is kept:

- A. *Restoration of the land that belonged to Saul*
- B. *Saul's grandson is to eat at the king's table*

V. Ziba's commission:

- A. *Farm the land*
- B. *Bring in the crops*
- C. *Provide for Mephibosheth*

VI. Ziba accepts his commission.

Memory Texts

Some friends play at friendship,
but a true friend sticks closer
than one's nearest kin.

Proverbs 18:24



No one has greater love than this,
to lay down one's life for one's friends.

John 15:13



David—Servant King

LESSON 6: DAVID, THE HUMAN KING

Objective

Students will understand that God is willing and ready to forgive us when we are truly sorry for our sin.

Key Concepts

- David sinned against God.
- God stood ready to forgive when David confessed his sin.
- Parables are teaching tools.
- Sinful actions bring consequences.
- Forgiveness is a joyful experience.

Text: 2 Samuel 11 and 12

Memory text: Psalm 32

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- “David and Bathsheba” paraphrase (p. 138)
- Transparency or projection of “The First Parable” (p. 139)
- Index cards (1 for each student and the teacher)
- For Extend the Lesson: “Search the Psalms” (p. 140)

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Bible passages and the lesson. Prepare to tell the story of David and Bathsheba, 2 Samuel 11. This story will be somewhat delicate to tell. You may want to read the paraphrase that accompanies this lesson (p. 138). You might pre-record the story and let the students listen to it.
- Write the sequence map of temptation to sin to consequences, from Introducing the Lesson, on the board.
- Divide Psalm 32 into as many parts as there are members in your class, including yourself. Write one reference of the psalm on each card. Number the cards, beginning with #1 for the first section of the psalm. See Lesson Step 3 for directions on how to use the cards.
- If using Extend the Lesson, make copies of “Search the Psalms,” one for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1 2 3 4 5 6
Temptation → Sin → Awareness of Sin → Confession → Forgiveness → Consequences

(Write the above sequence map on the board.) Explain that this lesson is titled “David: the Human King.” Remind students that we are all born into humanity, and that human nature is sinful. David was sinful, just like all of us. Even though

he was the King of Israel, and was a man “after God’s own heart,” he needed God’s forgiveness, as we all do. Explain that what you have drawn on the board is a sequence or event map. It shows what happened in today’s story. Invite them to listen to the story and find out what happened.

LESSON STEPS

1. Storytelling. Tell the story of David and Bathsheba, from 2 Samuel 11. (*Refer the students to the sequence map from the introduction as the story proceeds. Make sure they notice that the first two events have occurred by the end of this portion of the story.*)

2. “The First Parable.” The next part of the story is a parable told by Nathan, the prophet. Ask students what they know about parables. Can they think of a specific parable? Have they heard someone tell a parable? Ask them if they know why people tell parables. (*Jesus and the prophets told parables. Parables are used to help people learn about difficult things or to teach something. Writers also use fables to teach specific morals.*)

Display the transparency/projection, “The First Parable,” from 2 Samuel 12:1-4. Read the parable aloud, or ask a good reader with excellent expression to read it. Then ask students to open their Bibles to 2 Samuel 12:5-13. Explain that you will ask them some questions, and the answers will be in this portion of Scripture. Lead the discussion based on the following questions. Refer them to the sequence map (SM) throughout the discussion.

1. How do you think David, the king, felt when he heard this story? (*verses 5-6*)
2. Who is the rich man in the parable? (*verses 7, 8, 9*) (SM 3)
3. How did David respond? (*verse 13a*) (SM 4)
4. What did Nathan say to David’s response? (*verse 13b*) (SM, event 5)
5. Why did God forgive David of these great sins? (*David’s attitude was one of a servant. He chose to please God. He was truly sorry for his sin.*)
6. How many of you think this is the end of the story? If you think there’s more to the story, what might it be? (*Hopefully, students will notice that event 6 remains on the SM.*)
7. Look at event 6 on the sequence map. Do you think David suffered consequences for his actions? (*Verses 10, 14b*)

Note: Make sure students are clear that forgiveness and consequences are two different things. Consequences come as a result of our sinful actions. *Examples: speeding on a highway can cause fatal accidents; taking drugs can destroy health; fighting, arguing, and mean actions can hurt relationships; lying and stealing can break trust relationships.* Also, make sure they understand that we are New Testament people, living under God’s grace. Jesus paid our sin up front. All we have to do is accept his gift. However, we, also live with the consequences of our actions.

3. Memory text—forgiveness brings joy. Find Psalm 32 and read it silently. David wrote this psalm to express the joy he felt in being forgiven. (*After this difficult story, students will be delighted to see the king, whom they have surely come to admire, delighting in his knowledge of forgiveness. One could imagine that this is another time when David may have danced before the Lord. Help your students capture this joy.*)

Hand out the numbered index cards you have prepared, as explained in the Teacher Preparation section.* Save #1 for yourself. Ask students to find the reference of the psalm that is on their index card and notice how and where it fits into the total psalm. The class will read the psalm as a choric reading. *(Allow a little practice time, giving individual guidance as necessary.)*

Have students form a large circle, standing in sequence, according to the numbers on their cards. When everyone is ready, share the psalm with each other. Tell students to read with enthusiasm, as though they were David standing before the Lord. *(You will begin, with card #1. Your modeling will set the tone for the other readers.)*

** If time is short, this activity could be completed during the first worship time after this lesson.*

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **“Search the Psalms.”** The following psalms—6, 38, 41, 51, 130, and 143—all speak about forgiveness. Hand out the activity sheet. Explain the directions to the students, and have them complete it.

David and Bathsheba

Paraphrase of 2 Samuel 11

It was springtime, and King David had sent Joab and his men to war against the Ammonites. David often went with his men into battle, but this time he stayed at home.

One evening, the king was walking around on the roof of his palace, probably getting some fresh air and enjoying the view of his city, Jerusalem. While he was looking around, his eyes fell on a beautiful woman. David wanted to know about her, so he sent someone to find out who she was. Soon the man returned and said, "The woman's name is Bathsheba. She is the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

David was really tempted by this beautiful woman. He sent some messengers to get her and bring her to the palace. When she arrived, David could not resist her beauty. He only thought about his own desires, and he took her to his room.

The next morning, Bathsheba went back to her home, but soon she sent a message to David. It said, "I am going to have a baby." This message made David think that he needed to trick her husband, Uriah. However, the trick didn't work, so he needed another plan.

Uriah was a soldier in the king's army. So David sent a letter to Joab, the leader of the battle. The letter said, "Put Uriah in the front line, where the fighting is fiercest. Then, withdraw from him so that he will be struck down and die." Joab followed the king's command, and shortly Uriah was dead, killed by the enemy.

Bathsheba was unbelievably sad when she heard that her husband was dead. She mourned for him until after the time of mourning was over. Then David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife. After a while, a baby son was born to them.

But . . . this thing that David did greatly displeased the Lord!

The First Parable

as told by **NATHAN** the **PROPHET**, **2 Samuel 12:1-4**

1 The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, “There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor.

2 The rich man had a large number of sheep and cattle,

3 but the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup, and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

4 Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man, and prepared it for the one who had come to him.



David—Servant King

LESSON 7: DAVID, THE ELDERLY KING

Objective

Students will observe the passing of kingship to God’s next appointed person, who points them to the Messiah.

Key Concepts

- David’s reign was coming to an end.
- God forgave David for taking a census.
- David appointed Solomon as the king to succeed him.
- David counseled Solomon before he died.
- Solomon’s visionary psalm looked forward to the reign of the Messiah.

Text: 2 Samuel 21:15 to 2 Samuel 24; 1 Kings 1–2:12; Psalm 72

Memory text: Psalm 72 (*special emphasis on verses 12-14*)

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- “Diary of a Servant King” (pp. 142-144)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: 20 game cards (see Teacher Preparation)

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Scripture texts for this lesson, and the “Diary of a Servant King” story.
- Make copies of “Diary of a Servant King” for the reader(s).* You will be the narrator and provide story content between the diary entries, to tie them together. The Scripture texts will help you plan your content.
- If you will have a guest reader, make plans with him and tell him what time to arrive.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option two, make game cards by writing the following words on index cards: lament, Bethlehem, shepherd, consequences, Hebron, covenant, Nathan, Jonathan, Jesse, Judah, Mephibosheth, king, parable, Solomon, Saul, Psalms, thanksgiving, petition, confession, heart. You may want to add additional words.

** If possible, ask a male guest to visit your class in biblical costume like King David might have worn. The guest will read “Diary of a Servant King.” (Give him the script ahead of time.) If this is not possible, choose several good readers from the class to read the diary. Perhaps they could wear a kingly crown that is passed from one reader to the next.*

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

This is the last lesson of the unit on David. Begin the lesson with a summarizing statement. For example:

David reigned as king over Israel for 40 years. His kingship was long and productive. King David chose to lead his people in obedience to God. When he made mistakes,

he was truly sorry for his sins and asked for God’s forgiveness. Because David was faithful, God made an everlasting covenant with David’s family. This covenant was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Now we have come to the end of David’s reign. He is old, and realizes that soon he will need to pass the kingship to a son, the one that God chose at his birth to be David’s successor.

LESSON STEPS

1. Explain the “diary.” Explain that today’s story is in the form of a diary. It is told in first person, so it seems as if David wrote it. However, the “diary” was written by a modern-day author who based it on accounts of David’s life and many of David’s writings, such as the Psalms.

2. Share the “diary.” Working with your guest reader or student readers, share the diary. Before Entry 8, tell 2 Samuel 12:24-25 in your own words. “Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him, and he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.” Jedidiah means “loved by the Lord.”

3. The end of David’s reign. Finish the story by reading 1 Kings 2:10-12. “Then David rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. He had reigned forty years over Israel—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. So Solomon (Jedidiah) sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.”

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Memory text—visionary Psalm 72.** A wonderful way to end the incredible story of King David is to refer the students to Jesus, directly descended from David and Solomon. As Christians, we can see how Jesus fulfilled the vision of Psalm 72, especially verses 12-14.

Share the following information: The book of Psalms is divided into five books. Psalm 72, written by Solomon, is the last psalm of the second book, which was mostly written by David. This psalm is sometimes referred to as “The Reign of the Messiah.”

Read the psalm together. As you read, ask students to raise their hands when something is read that reminds them of Jesus. Talk about their thoughts. Explain that verses 12-14 speak about the things that Jesus came to do. Since we are to be like Jesus, this is a message to us. Ask students to rewrite these three verses in modern-day English, using the pronoun “I” instead of “he.” For example: “I will share my food with people who have less than I do.”

• **Play a review game.** Explain that in this game, a player gives clues to his/her team to help them guess a secret word. All the words in the game have something to do with the story of David, and they can only give clues that relate to the David story. Multiple clues can be given, but the word itself must never be used in the clues.

Divide the class into two teams. Place the stack of word cards in a central location, face down. The first player from Team One picks up the top card. After seeing the word, he/she has one minute to give the team clues. Team members start calling out words. When the clue giver hears the correct word, he/she says, “You got it,” and the team receives one point. If they do not guess the word in one minute, they get no points. Then it’s Team Two’s turn, and they try to guess a word. When a team reaches predetermined score, the game is over and that team wins.

Diary of a Servant King

Entry 1

The 14th day of the month Abib, in the year 966

Oh, God!

You are so great and merciful toward me. Your blessings are heaped upon me and your chosen people. I have tried to be a good king and faithful servant. We have finally completed the work that you assigned our fathers when they first entered the land of Canaan! Your chosen people inhabit the Promised Land. I rest tonight knowing that you are pleased. May my actions tomorrow bring you great pleasure and joy, my king!

Entry 2

Today I was almost killed in battle. What a stupid thing, really! I must be getting clumsy in my old age. I just couldn't pull my sword from its sheath fast enough. They almost had me. If it weren't for my loyal soldiers, I would now be as a rock on the battlefield.

How embarrassing! To think that my own men would see me as unfit for battle! Yet they have asked me to stay home from the next war. They say that I can run things more smoothly from one central place. Ha! I can see through that line! They think I'm too old. Too old to fight for God. Do they find me too old for other things, too?

Entry 3

The 23rd day of the month Abib, in the year 966

I miss the battlefield. I wonder how many soldiers there are in Israel's army? Other nations say our army has as many as the grains of sand in the desert. I wonder. Are we successful because we are many? Or are we great and fearless warriors?

Tomorrow I will take the first census of the army. We will see how many men would turn out if another nation tried to invade us. Israel's army is strong and full of might.

I can't wait to count them all!

Entry 4

The 5th day of the month Ziv, in the year 966

David: God, I have done a foolish thing. I have sinned greatly in what I have done. I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant.

God: What is it, my Son? Tell me of these evil deeds.

David: Over the past months, I have been counting all the men in your army, O God.

God: Your spirit has been convicted rightly. Tell me, David. Why is this census a bad thing in my eyes?

David: Oh, God, you add to my anguish! It is YOUR army! YOU fight our battles for us. If it weren't for YOU, Israel wouldn't stand a chance of winning.

God: Yes . . .

David: Numbers don't matter, my king! It wouldn't matter if there were just two people, as long as you are in charge! I have been too proud. I forgot to rely on you.

God: Tomorrow, my servant Gad will come to you with words from me about what you should do. Sleep for now, and heed the words of my prophet.

David: I'm sorry, God. Truly I am. I will wait for your instructions.

God: Good night, my son. You know that I love you. I just don't always love what you do.

Entry 5

The 6th day of the month Ziv, in the year 966

Oh, what have I done to my people? The options that God provided for my punishment seemed so painful. I truly thought I had chosen the least painful of the three.

I am too old to be running across the country, hiding from my enemies. Three months of that would seem like eternity. I remember well my days as an outlaw, when Saul was king.

I couldn't bear to think of three years of famine for my people! So many people would die. It would be like the days of Joseph, with no brother to go to for comfort or help. I couldn't think of watching my people starve, either. So I chose the quickest way. Three days of plague didn't seem so bad. My heart is being ripped from my being! Seventy thousand of Israel's people have died for my sin!

O, God! Please have mercy upon the people of Israel. Why should they be punished for my sin? Why should your wrath move away from my household, upon your chosen people? I will do *anything*, God. Tell me what to do. Let your anger be turned upon me and my family. Have mercy upon the rest of the nation, O Lord!

Entry 6

The 8th day of the month Ziv, in the year 966

David: I bring a sacrifice of praise to you, my king!

God: You are forgiven, my servant. You are a man after my own heart. Although you have sinned against me, I will continue to forgive you. My promises will come true, David. Keep trying to serve me and ask for forgiveness when you fail. That is all I ask.

David: You are gracious, O God! The people have been saved. I humbly bow before you.

God: I love you, David. Rise up and go about your tasks as king.

Entry 7

The 27th day of the month Ziv, in the year 966

The Lord is my rock,
my fortress,
my deliverer.

My God is my rock
in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn
of my salvation.

He is my stronghold,
and my savior—
from violent men you save me.

I call to the Lord,
who is worthy of praise
and I am saved from my enemies.

Entry 8

The 3rd day of the month Ethanim, in the year 966

Today I proclaimed Jedidiah as king. My dear son, known by many as Solomon, found favor in the eyes of God at his birth. Bathsheba and I can rest in knowing that he will be Israel's king when my body lies in the burial caves of Jerusalem. The job of king may rest heavily upon his shoulders. This is my prayer for my beloved son, Solomon.

Endow the king with your justice, O God. Give the royal son your righteousness. Help him defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. Long may he live! May his name endure forever! May other kings and queens sing his praise. Praise to you, O God. You alone do marvelous deeds. May the whole earth be filled with your glory.

Entry 9

The 15th day of the month of Bul, in the year 966

Dear Solomon:

When you read these words, I will lie silent in my final resting place. You are young, my dear son. In my 40 years as king, I have learned many things. I want to pass on some of my knowledge to you.

Be strong. Show yourself a man. Observe what the Lord requires. Walk in his ways. Keep his decrees and his commands, as written in the laws of Moses. Do this so that you will prosper in all that you do. Do this so the Lord will keep his promise to me, that my descendants will always be on the throne of Israel.

At the end of your life, I want God to say: "Well done, good and faithful servant." Seek God, my son. God will always be with you. Hear God and do all that God says. Goodbye, my son.

David: The Servant King

Unit 3 Assessment

Part 1

Directions: Choose one of the words below to fit into each blank.

kindness	Bethlehem	shepherd	pity
family	Judah	Mephibosheth	Hebron
parable	sad	Psalms	king's
thanksgiving	sorry	deliver	forgive
lament	servant	consequences	confession
Jerusalem	covenant	praise	petition
Solomon	Saul	celebrated	joy
burial	Jesus		

1. David was a young _____ in _____ when he was anointed to be king of Israel.
2. God chose David to be king because he saw that David wanted to be God's _____.
3. David had to stay in hiding because _____ was jealous of him.
4. David was _____ when Saul and Jonathan were killed, so he wrote a _____.
5. After Saul's death, David located in _____ and became king of _____.
6. The people of Jabesh-Gilead gave Saul a proper _____. David promised to return their _____.
7. The Ark of the Covenant was taken to _____ after David became king of all Israel.
8. David _____ before the Lord when the Ark was safe in Jerusalem.
9. God made a _____ with David that his kingdom would live forever.
10. God's covenant with David was fulfilled in _____.
11. David's prayers included _____, _____, _____, and _____.
12. David wanted to show kindness to the _____ of Saul, so he sent for _____.
13. David promised Saul's grandson that he would always eat at the _____ table.
14. When David sinned, God was ready to _____ him because he was truly _____.
15. Nathan told David a story, to teach him about his sin. This story was a _____.
16. Sin brings _____.
17. _____ was David's son who succeeded him as king.
18. Many of the _____ were written by David.
19. According to Psalm 72, Jesus, the king who will reign forever, will _____ the needy and take _____ on the weak.
20. David wrote Psalm 32 to express the _____ that he felt in being forgiven.

Part 2

Directions: Write answers in complete sentences.

21. What do you think was the key to David’s success as a king?

22. When we sin, we often experience consequences. Does this mean that God has not forgiven us? Explain. _____

23. What advice have you taken from the story of David to help you choose your friends?

24. Explain the meaning of the word *covenant*. Then tell about a time when you might make a covenant with someone.

David: The Servant King

Unit 3 Assessment

Part 1

1. David was a young shepherd in Bethlehem when he was anointed to be king of Israel.
2. God chose David to be king because he saw that David wanted to be God's servant.
3. David had to stay in hiding because Saul was jealous of him.
4. David was sad when Saul and Jonathan were killed, so he wrote a lament.
5. After Saul's death, David located in Hebron and became king of Judah.
6. The people of Jabesh-Gilead gave Saul a proper burial. David promised to return their kindness.
7. The Ark of the Covenant was taken to Jerusalem after David became king of all Israel.
8. David celebrated before the Lord when the Ark was safe in Jerusalem.
9. God made a covenant with David that his kingdom would live forever.
10. God's covenant with David was fulfilled in Jesus.
11. David's prayers included praise, thanksgiving, petition, and confession.
12. David wanted to show kindness to the family of Saul, so he sent for Mephibosheth.
13. David promised Saul's grandson that he would always eat at the king's table.
14. When David sinned, God was ready to forgive him because he was truly sorry.
15. Nathan told David a story, to teach him about his sin. This story was a parable.
16. Sin brings consequences.
17. Solomon was David's son who succeeded him as king.
18. Many of the Psalms were written by David.
19. According to Psalm 72, Jesus, the king who will reign forever, will deliver the needy and take pity on the weak.
20. David wrote Psalm 32 to express the joy that he felt in being forgiven.

Part 2

21. What do you think was the key to David's success as a king?
David had a servant heart, and desired to follow God. He was truly sorry when he did wrong and willing to confess his sin. He accepted God's forgiveness and grace.
22. When we sin, we often experience consequences. Does this mean that God has not forgiven us? Explain.
Consequences are natural results of our sin, but God freely forgives us through grace.
23. What advice have you taken from the story of David to help you choose your friends?
The LORD looks on the heart, not outward appearance. (1 Samuel 16:7)
24. Explain the meaning of the word *covenant*. Then tell about a time when you might make a covenant with someone.
A covenant is a promise. Students should write about a situation where they might make a promise.