

Aim of lesson

To show that we can trust God through even the greatest difficulties. When we do trust him, God gives us the joy of knowing that he loves us and that we can trust him with confidence; a joy that will matter more to us than any external circumstances, whether good or bad.

Bible background

1 Samuel 19 and 26; Psalms 59; 52; 34; 56; 57; 142; 63; 54.

Outline of lesson

Preparing to be king

Ask the class what sort of life they would expect if they were promised that they were going to be made king or queen. What things would they look forward to, or plan to do?

Fleeing from Saul

Go through the first section in the workbook together to see what life was like for David on the run. The following list is a summary of what happened to him. It is not intended to be taught in this form, but it is included to clarify the background events and show which Psalms relate to this period in David's life.

1 Samuel	Psalm
19:1-17 Saul tries to kill David, and Michal helps him escape	59
19:18-24 David flees to Samuel	
20 He goes back to Jonathan	
21:1-9 He flees to the priest at Nob.	52
21:10-15 He flees to Achish, pretends to be mad.	34, 56
22:1-4 He flees to a cave, and takes his parents to Moab.	57, 142
22:5 He flees to the wilderness of Judah	
22:20-23 Abiathar flees and joins him.	
23:1-14 He saves Keilah.	
23:15-18 He flees to the wilderness of Ziph, Jonathan comes.	63
23:19-29 Surrounded, but saved when Saul is called away.	
24 In the wilderness of Engedi, the cave, Saul's skirt.	
25 Samuel dies; in the Wilderness of Paran; Nabal and Abigail	
26 In the wilderness of Ziph; spares Saul again	54
27, 29 David goes to the Philistines and is sent away	
30 David saves Ziklag and his wives	

How did David feel about all his trials?

In the next section in the workbook, the class could use one of the following psalms for the question about how David felt, or they could use all three, by dividing into groups. Each group could list their findings on a large sheet and then report back to the whole class about David's trusting relationship with God as seen in their particular psalm. The following questions and references may be useful to start them thinking:

- Psalm 34 What reason does David give for praising God? See verses 4-10,15-22.
 What does he tell those who hear the psalm to do, and why? See verses 3,8,9,11-14.
- Psalm 57 How does David describe to God how he feels about his position? See verses 3,4,6.
 How does he describe God's protection? See verses 1,3.
 What does he ask God for? See verse 1.
 What does David say he will do? See verses 1,7,8,9.
 Why? verse 10.
- Psalm 63 How does David express how much God matters to him?
 What things does he say that God is more important than? See verses 1,2,3,5,7.
 How does he describe God's protection of him? See verses 7,8.
 How do you think David shows faith in God's promise in verse 11?

The battle to be King

Saul's visit to the witch at Endor was covered in Lesson 29 'Digging deeper', but if the children are not familiar with the how Saul died, now is a good opportunity to remind them.

This section in the workbook looks at the events following Saul's death. Help the class to look up the references and to sort out the rather complicated story of what seems to have been a period of seven years of civil war.

Digging deeper

Capturing Jerusalem

The capture of Jebus / Jerusalem is an interesting account, not just as a piece of history but as an illustration of how cities were constructed to withstand a siege. Other cities, like Megiddo, also have the remains of water shafts that would have allowed the inhabitants to have maintained a water supply.

Mephibosheth

There is one final detail relating to the house of Saul – what happened to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth? Many kings would have seen him as a possible rival and put him to death, but not David.

Relevance to our lives

You may like to have the class write one verse or one idea for a psalm, showing the way in which they see God as their protector. Consider how David used the figures of a tower, a rock, the shadow of wings, a hiding place, etc. Put the whole together as a psalm next week.

Prayer

Lord God, being with you is the place where we feel safe. Thank you for protecting us as you protected David. Help us to feel the joy of being confident of receiving your care and love, even when things are difficult.

Other suggestions for activities

The experience of David in the cave, when he cut off the hem of Saul's robe, would be a good incident for them to dramatise. The class should be encouraged to think about David's feelings of fear and of trust by considering what he might have said.

Having looked at the psalms that David wrote whilst he was on the run, the class may like to write a psalm together appropriate to those circumstances.