

David's gentleness

**Bible verses:**

1 Samuel 24:1-22
David shames Saul

**Aim:**

To reflect upon the power of gentleness

**Today's fruit:**

Gentleness



In today's story David finally got his chance to stop Saul, but instead he showed gentleness and spared his life.

King Saul continued to feel jealousy toward David. Rather than talking to David, he listened to the whispers and gossip of others within his kingdom and grew more and more angry.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- Today's fruit sign: *Gentleness*



Start it

Play the whisper game (*Chinese Whispers*) with the children. Give one child a phrase to whisper to the next child and then pass it around the group. Ask the final child to reveal the message.

For the final round, place one of the adults in the middle of the chain. This adult needs to change the meaning of the message completely. Discuss with the children how messages can often be changed when we don't hear from the original source.

Say:

In our Bible story today King Saul made himself very angry by listening to the whispers of others instead of talking directly to David. We'll hear more about it later.

Sing it

Display the *Gentleness* sign.

Say:

Our fruit for today is gentleness. In our Bible story David has the choice between anger or gentleness. We'll find out later what choice he makes, but for now let's sing a song that talks about gentleness.

Song

'**The gentleness song**' by Cheeky Pandas (2:48)

Tell it

Say:

Last week we discovered how jealousy changed Saul's personality and made him want to kill David. Let's watch the clip to catch up on the story and see what happened next.

Video

David serves Saul (1 Samuel 24) by Saddleback Kids (4:16)

Say:

Saul chased David and his men out of the city forcing them to go into hiding. Saul was determined to find David and kill him, so he sent his soldiers – 3,000 of them – to search the land for David.

Ask:

Why do you think Saul was so determined to catch David?

Say:

As he was searching for David, Saul spotted a cave and decided to use it to go to the loo. In the story, it says that Saul went 'to relieve himself', which is a polite way of saying the same thing. He thought it was a quiet, safe place to be, but David and his men were hiding in the back of the cave. David's men were excited at the opportunity to finally kill their enemy.

Read:

'The men said to David, "Today is the day the Lord talked about! The Lord told you, 'I will give your enemy to you. You can do anything you want with him.'"

(1 Samuel 24:4 *ICB*)

Ask:

- What did David do instead of killing Saul?
- Why do you think he felt bad about it later?
- Have you ever done something to get someone back and regretted it later? You don't have to share what it was, but how did it make you feel?

Read:

'Later David felt guilty because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. He said to his men, "May the Lord keep me from doing such a thing to my master! Saul is the Lord's appointed king. I should not do anything against him, because he is the Lord's appointed king!" David used these words to stop his men. He did not let them attack Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went his way.'

(1 Samuel 24:5-7 *ICB*)

Say:

David rushed out of the cave and asked Saul an important question: 'Why do you listen when people say, "David plans to harm you"?' (1 Samuel 24:9 *ICB*). David had never done or said anything directly to Saul that would suggest he wanted to harm him. Saul had created this idea in his own head and listened to the lies of others who wanted to cause trouble.

Ask:

- Have you ever been in a situation where someone has told you a horrible thing that has been said about you?
- Did you believe them straight away? If so, why?
- How did you know for sure that the person said this horrible thing?

Say:

Sometimes we need to be careful when people pass on messages about what others have said about us. Saul was convinced that David wanted to do him harm, but one conversation outside a cave changed all that.

Read:

"You have seen something with your own eyes today. You have seen how the Lord put you in my power in the cave. But I refused to kill you. I was merciful to you. I said, 'I won't harm my master, because he is the Lord's appointed king.' My father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe, but I didn't kill you. Now understand and know I am not planning any evil against you. I did nothing wrong to you, but you are hunting me to kill me. May the Lord judge between us. And may he punish you for the wrong you have done to me! But I won't fight you. There is an old saying: 'Evil things come from evil people.' So I won't hurt you. Whom is the king of Israel coming out against? Whom are you chasing? You're not chasing someone who will hurt you! It's as if you are chasing a dead dog or a flea. May the Lord be our judge and decide between you and me. May the Lord support me and show that I am right. May he save me from you!"

(1 Samuel 24:10-15 *ICB*)

Ask:

What does David ask God to do?

Say:

David recognised that he could not control or change how Saul acted. He could only control his own actions. He asked God to support him and chose to be gentle with Saul rather than being angry and resentful. We can learn a lot from the way David responded to Saul's terrible behaviour. Saul did see the mistakes he had made and tried to put things right with David.

Read:

'He said, "You are right, and I am wrong. You have been good to me. But I have done wrong to you. You told me what good things you did. The Lord brought me to you, but you did not kill me. If a man finds his enemy, he won't send him away with goodness, will he? May the Lord reward you because you were good to me today. I know you will surely be king. You will rule the kingdom of Israel. Now make a promise to me. Promise in the name of the Lord that you will not kill my descendants. Promise me that you won't wipe out my name from my father's family.'"

(1 Samuel 24:17-21 *ICB*)

Say:

We leave the story of David and Saul in a happy place. If you want to know if the story kept its happy ending, you could read the rest of 1 Samuel when you get home.

Action it

Say:

David eventually became one of the greatest kings of Israel. God kept his promises and proved he could be trusted. Let's share our memory verse together.

Memory verse:

'Let us hold firmly to the hope that we have confessed. We can trust God to do what he promised.'

(Hebrews 10:23 *ICB*)

After you have shared the verse together, check that everyone understands the phrase 'the hope that we have confessed'. When we tell people we believe in Jesus, this isn't something we just say; it's something we truly believe. Our hope is in Jesus because he can be trusted.

Give the children paper and colour pencils/felt-tips to create their own version of the memory verse to display at home. Discuss with them what kind of images they link with the words of the memory verse. Encourage them to be creative as they draw their picture. This can be a reminder of the hope of Jesus Christ and the promise that God is trustworthy.

Pray it

Use the *Examples of gentleness* clip to help the children think about how they can be gentle with others. The clip shares a scenario that the children can discuss. The key questions are listed below with timings to pause the clip. There is also an opportunity to pause the clip for prayer.

Video

Examples of gentleness (Fruit of the Spirit) 5 Minute Family Devotional by Minno – Bible Stories for Kids

Watch: 0:00-1:48. ‘Ha, ha, very funny.’

Discuss with the children what they thought of the story.

Watch: 1:49-1:58.

Talk: How did Armin show gentleness toward Gabe?

Watch: 1:59-2:16.

Live: Do you think it’s hard to be gentle toward other people?

What is one way you can show gentleness?

Watch: 2:17-2:34.

Pray: Let’s ask God to show us opportunities to be gentle toward other people and to grow a spirit of gentleness in us.

Bring the session to a close in prayer.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



Explore It is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

David's gentleness

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:

1 Samuel 24:1-22
David shames Saul



Aim:

To reflect upon the power of gentleness



Today's fruit:

Gentleness



Create

Think back over the story of David and Saul. What was your favourite moment?

Create a picture that shows your favourite part of the story.



Watch

Snuggle up with someone at home and watch the Cheeky Pandas as they tell you a story about gentleness.

The beach: a story about gentleness by Cheeky Pandas



Song for the week

'The gentleness song' by Cheeky Pandas



Memory verse

'Let us hold firmly to the hope that we have confessed. We can trust God to do what he promised.'

(Hebrews 10:23 /CB)

**LIVING
OUT FAITH**

David's gentleness



Bible verses:
1 Samuel 24:4-7



Aim:
To learn about David's
gentleness



Today's fruit:
Gentleness



Memory verse

'Let us hold firmly to the hope that we have confessed. We can trust God to do what he promised.'

(Hebrews 10:23 ICB)



Start it

King Saul became angry because he listened to whispers that said untrue things when he should have spoken to David instead. What could we do when we hear unkind things being said about someone?



Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of 1 Samuel 24:4-7. David spared Saul's life from inside a dark cave, instead only cutting off a corner of his robe. By doing this, David showed gentleness.

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- I wonder what would we see or hear inside a cave?
- I wonder how we feel when we want to get revenge?
- Describe a time when you treated an animal or person gently.

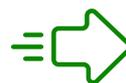
- Imagine what King Saul's robe would feel or look like.
- How would you feel if you were Saul, and realised that David had shown gentleness to him in the cave?



Sing It

'Shine! (from the inside out)' by Nick Jackson uploaded by Tangy Crayfish (2:20)

'Holy Spirit' for children by Ayi and her friends. Sing only the chorus (0:44-1:15)



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Whisper a simple message around the group seeing if you can get it back to the start.
- Make yourself as small as possible as if you are hiding within a cave.
- Play *What's the time Mr Wolf?* but use a piece of robe on the floor as the prize you are aiming to capture.
- Play *Follow the leader* as 'Saul' or 'David'
 - pretend you are King Saul marching around or a gentle David following and cutting the robe.