



# 1 SAMUEL

## David and Jonathan Part Ways, Part 1

1 Samuel 20:1-23

### Icebreaker

Who was your best friend growing up? What is it about a best friend that makes us willing to do whatever is necessary to help them?

### Context

In chapter 19, we read of Saul's family confronting Saul concerning his plans to kill David. Jonathan tried to reason with his father to not scheme against David. Michal, the wife of David and youngest daughter of Saul, resorted to deception to save David. When Saul sent messengers to kill David, who had taken refuge with Samuel, the messengers were overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and prophesied in Samuel's presence. Finally, Saul himself is overwhelmed by God's Spirit and finds himself removing his royal robes and prophesying, which allows David to escape once again.

Chapter 20 is a huge transition in the book. In this chapter, all of the information we have been privileged to learn as the reader is confirmed to the participants in the story. Jonathan realizes that David is going to be king, Saul confirms he has every intention of killing David to try and retain the kingdom for Jonathan, and chapter 20 is the last major interaction we have with Jonathan.

As is mentioned in the sermon, a key theme in this portion of chapter 20 is *Hesed* or steadfast love. *Hesed* is a very important idea in the Old Testament because it is one of the main words used to describe God's love towards man, man's love towards God, and is one of the words used to describe how people or groups interact with one another. While there are many nuances to the term, a key point is that it describes loyalty between two people or groups that always leads to action. In other words, it is love expressed in both words and actions towards others.

### Discuss

1. Based on David's three questions, who could be to blame for what is happening between Saul and David?



Application: What is the problem with always blaming others for our problems/difficulties?

What is the problem with always blaming ourselves for problems/difficulties?

How do we strike a balance between these two extremes?

2. How does it make you feel for a friend to offer help with no strings attached? Why is Jonathan's offer to help David so significant?

Application: Read 1 Peter 5:5. What are some ways we can live out this verse in our families?

3. Why does David tell Jonathan that he would rather Jonathan kill him than to deliver him to Saul?
4. Between David and Jonathan, who is having a hard time understanding what is really happening? Up through verse 8, do you think David was concerned who Jonathan would choose to support if had to choose between Saul or David?
5. Is it permissible (or ethical) for Jonathan to be deceptive with Saul in this situation? Why or why not?
6. Why is it so hard to share "bad" news with people we love?

Read Psalm 15:1-2 & Zechariah 8:16-17. Why is it important that we speak the truth to one another? Read Ephesians 4:15. Why is this an important modifier to how we share truth with others?

Read 2 Timothy 4:3 and John 3:19-20. According to these verses, why do some people reject hearing the truth about what is happening around them?

7. What is Jonathan telling David when Jonathan invokes God as a witness between them?
8. What blessing is Jonathan asking God to give to David that had been given to Saul? What is the implication of this blessing for Jonathan?
9. When a new ruling family comes into power, what happens to the old ruling family? What is the significance of what Jonathan is asking David to do in verse 14? What is Jonathan asking David to do in verse 15? Why does Jonathan appeal to the steadfast love of the Lord in verse 14, but appeals to the steadfast love of David in verse 15?
10. Read verse 23. To whom are we ultimately responsible for our actions? What are some ways we can teach our children to remember that God is ultimately the one who holds us accountable for our choices?

