

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 5

David in Gath

David in Gath

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To show how fear can cause us to act foolishly, and that the answer to fear is to remember that God is with us, and that He is greater than anything that we might be afraid of.

Key Verses

1 Samuel 21:10-15—Main Teaching Passage

Romans 8:35-39

Joshua 1:9

Isaiah 43:1

Memory Verse - Proverbs 29:25

"The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Romans 12:9 (NIV).

Ask the kids to raise their hand if they are afraid of spiders. Repeat with snakes, clowns, getting needles, going to the dentist, etc.

Ask some of the kids to describe how that fear makes them feel. Ask them to describe what they do when they are faced with the object of their fear.

Show the students that fear can have a powerful affect on our lives and can cause us to act in foolish ways.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Having been warned by his friend Jonathan that Saul continued to seek David's life, David fled from Saul into the wilderness. Out of his fear of Saul, David left the land of Judah and ran to Gath, one of the Philistine cities, thinking that he would be safe.

Upon entering the city of Gath, David was recognized by the people. After all, David killed the Philistine giant Goliath, he was responsible for a great Philistine defeat, and now here he was hiding among his enemies. In attempting to escape one king (Saul) who wanted him dead, David landed on the doorstep of another king (Achish) who was his enemy. David's fear of Saul became a fear of Achish.

David's fear caused him to feign madness, pretending to chew on the doorposts and drooling all over himself. His act worked and the king, believing David to be a madman, released him and cast him out of the city.

David left Gath and returned to Judah where we are told that all those who were discontented rallied around him. David here became the commander of a small army of around 400 men.

David allowed his fear to control him and cause him to act foolishly. The man who was unafraid of the giant Goliath became powerless before much lesser men.

LOOK

Fear is an amazingly powerful emotion. Think about when you see a spider or a mouse. Even though you know that you are a thousand times bigger than the spider, and you know that the mouse can't hurt you in any real way, fear of these tiny animals can cause you to scream, jump in the air, or if you are really afraid, run away completely. Fear causes us to think thoughts we wouldn't normally think, and act in ways we wouldn't normally act.

David was afraid of Saul. He really shouldn't have been, should he? After all, David had single-handedly fought the giant Goliath, who was much bigger and stronger than Saul. Where was the faith that David showed when he fought Goliath? It had been replaced by fear, and it caused David to do something very foolish indeed.

David fled the country. I suppose he thought that if he went to another country, then Saul wouldn't be able to send his army after him, but where did David end up? In the city of Gath, in the country of the Philistines, the same country that Goliath came from.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

What was David thinking? He fled one enemy only to hand himself over to another. When the people in Gath recognized him, David became afraid again. In fact verse 12 tells us that he was “very much afraid of King Achish.” So afraid, in fact, that he started biting the door frames and drooling all over himself pretending to be insane.

There are many verse in the bible that encourage us to not be afraid. For example, Isaiah 43:1 says, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.” Joshua 1:9 says, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

David needed to remember that God was with him. The same God who helped him fight Goliath would not abandon David when the next trial or problem came along. Instead of trusting in God, David did things in his own strength. In doing so, he became more fearful and made worse and worse decisions.

God has promised us that He will be with us. He also tells us that He is a God of love, and that perfect love casts out all fear. In times of trouble or stress, remember Romans 8:35-39, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 29:25.

Ask the students if there is anything that they are afraid of that God cannot help them with? Help them to see that God can help them through any trial that they face.

Pray: Ask the Lord to help us trust in Him and not allow fear to overtake us. Pray for His strength and presence to support us in all things.

Parent Question: How did fear cause David to make bad choices?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Samuel 21 by David Guzik

David at Gath.

1. (10) David flees to Gath.

Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

a. David arose and fled that day: David's attempt to protect himself with clever lies instead of trusting God to protect him didn't bring lasting results. He had to flee.

b. Went to Achish the king of Gath: David was now among the Philistines. He must be discouraged or deceived to think he could find peaceful refuge among these enemies of Israel – especially as he carried Goliath's sword into Goliath's hometown.

i. It didn't make sense for the man who carried Goliath's sword to go to Goliath's hometown (1 Samuel 17:4). It didn't make sense for the man who was sustained by the sacred bread of God to find refuge among the pagans. It didn't make sense for the man after God's own heart to change his address to Gath.

2. (11-12) David's predicament in Gath.

And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him to one another in dances, saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands?'" Now David took these words to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

a. Is this not David the king of the land? The Philistines of Gath recognized David as the king of the land of Israel. These ungodly men understood David's destiny better than King Saul.

b. Did they not sing of him to one another in dances: The song and dance about David that swept the nation of Israel (1 Samuel 18:6-7) was also popular among the Philistines. If he didn't know it before, now David found that there was real price for fame.

c. David took these words to heart, and was very much afraid: David knew he was discovered and understood that King Achish would not let the man who killed Goliath go.

i. David's words in Psalm 56 help us understand what happened here. The title of that Psalm identifies as the song he wrote when the Philistines captured him in Gath. Apparently, although 1 Samuel 21 doesn't detail it, the Philistines captured David when he came to Gath. David thought he could find anonymity or sympathy among the ungodly Philistines in Gath, but he was wrong. Psalm 56 describes David's journey from fear to praising as a prisoner in Gath.

ii. Psalm 56 shows that the slide that started on the road from Jonathan and continued on into Gath is now stopped. David is on higher ground again. This was the difference between David and Saul. Both of them slipped but Saul kept sliding, while David turned back to the Lord.

3. (13-15) To escape, David pretends madness.

So he changed his behavior before them, feigned madness in their hands, scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

a. Pretended madness in their hands: David acted in a strange manner, scratching on the doors of the gate and letting saliva fall down on his beard. It was as if David foamed at the mouth.

i. Basically, David humiliated himself before the Philistines and acted like a madman. The saliva on the beard was especially convincing, because men in that culture would consider this something only a man out of his right mind would allow. "An indignity to the beard was considered an intolerable insult and would not have been permitted by a normal person." (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown)

b. This man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? David's plan worked. Achish decided that this wasn't David after all, or if it was he was such a pathetic specimen that he may as well let him go.

i. Was David walking in the Spirit or in the flesh when he pretended madness? Some commentators believe that David was in the flesh and trusting in himself. But the change of Psalm 56 happened before David's escape, and it made sense that the Lord would guide David into a path of escape that would humble him. When David tried to protect himself with lies and tried to find refuge among the ungodly, he really was acting crazy. When David repented, asked for mercy, and trusted again in the Lord, it was as if the Lord said, "You've been acting like a madman. Keep the act going and I'll get you out of this."

c. Psalm 34 is David's declaration of joy when he escaped from Gath with his life. The title of Psalm 34 reads, A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.

i. Psalm 34 begins beautifully: I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears (Psalm 34:1-4). David was amazed with gratitude to the Lord.

ii. David is especially joyful because the Lord got him out of a mess that David himself made. God's amazing goodness is shown when He delivers us when we don't really deserve it.