Preschool–Grade 6

David Spares Saul

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Repay evil with good. Let God be the judge.
Bible passage: 1 Samuel 24:1–22. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil." *1 Samuel 24:17 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a bath towel, a strip of paper, 4 paper strips, a marker, tape, a soft ball, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 4 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at 1 Samuel 24:6 and 1 Samuel 24:17.

1. Opening game: Tiptoe to the Robe (5 minutes)

One child is "Saul." He sits on a chair with his eyes closed and the towel over his shoulders like a robe. Tuck the paper strip loosely under one corner of the towel. One at a time, the other kids tiptoe up and try to take the strip without a sound. If Saul hears someone, he points at them, and they go back. Ask: *Was it hard to get that close without being heard?* Say: "Today we will hear how David got close enough to touch a king, and what he chose to do."

2. Bible story: David Spares Saul (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Samuel 24, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Saul was the king of Israel. God had chosen **David** to be the next king (1 Samuel 16:13), and Saul was angry and jealous (18:8–9). Saul was hunting David to take his life (24:11). Someone told Saul, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi" (24:1). So Saul took three thousand chosen men and went to look for David on the rocks of the wild goats (24:2).

By the road there were sheepcotes, pens for sheep, and a cave. Saul went into the cave. He did not know that David and his men were hiding in the sides of the cave (24:3)!

David's men said this was the day God had told him about: God had put his enemy in his hand (24:4). David got up and quietly cut off the **skirt**, a corner piece, of Saul's robe, and Saul did not know (24:4). But afterward David's heart smote him. That means he felt bad, even about cutting the robe (24:5). **Read 1 Samuel 24:6 from your Bible:** "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." Say: "That means: God chose Saul to be king, so I will not hurt him." David stopped his men, and they did not hurt Saul (24:7).

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

The story continues: Saul got up and walked out of the cave. Then David came out too and called after him, "My lord the king." When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down with his face to the ground (24:8). David held up the piece of Saul's robe and said, "see the skirt of thy robe in my hand" (24:11). He had cut it off, but he had not hurt Saul. David said, "The LORD judge between me and thee," and, "mine hand shall not be upon thee" (24:12). That means: God will decide who is right, and I will never hurt you.

Saul said, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" and he cried out loud (24:16). Then Saul said, "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil" (24:17). That means: "You did right, and I did wrong. I was mean to you, but you were good to me." Saul even said he knew David would surely be king (24:20). Then Saul went home (24:22).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who was hunting David? *(King Saul, 1 Samuel 24:1–2)*
2. Where were David and his men hiding? *(In the sides of a cave, 24:3)*
3. What did David cut off? *(The skirt, a corner piece, of Saul's robe, 24:4)*
4. Why did David not hurt Saul? *(God had chosen Saul as king, the LORD's anointed, 24:6)*
5. What did Saul do when he heard David? *(He cried, 24:16)*

4. Memory verse: Verse Strips (5 minutes)

Tape the 4 strips up in order: *And he said to David, / Thou art more righteous than I: / for thou hast rewarded me good, / whereas I have rewarded thee evil. 1 Samuel 24:17.* Explain the old words: **righteous** means doing what is right; **rewarded** means paid back; **whereas** means but. Saul said these words to David. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Saul did evil to David, but David paid him back with good. Jesus did even more for us. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when someone is unkind to you, don't pay them back. Do something good for them instead, and let God take care of the rest.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **David spares Saul word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/david-spares-saul-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/david-spares-saul-craft), or **Good for Evil:** kids stand in a circle. Say something unkind that could happen ("Someone takes your crayon." "Someone says you can't play."). Toss the soft ball to a child, who tells one good thing to do back. Then they toss it back to you. After every few turns, ask a question from part 3.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You are the judge, and You always do right. Help us repay evil with good, like David did. When someone is unkind to us, help us be kind back. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks why Saul wanted to hurt David: Saul was jealous because the LORD was with David and all Israel and Judah loved him (1 Samuel 18:8–9, 18:12, 18:16). Being jealous made Saul do wrong things. God helped David do right.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post