GENESIS TO REVELATION | BIBLE ACCOUNT

David and Jonathan's Friendship

1 Samuel 18:1-4;20:1-42



YOUR BIBLE READING

A faithful friend cares about another person’s safety.

Inside: two extended reading pages, a thoughtful reflection, creative activities and a grown-up guide.

AGES 6-10 WITH AN ADULT • 6 COLORFUL A4 PAGES • ENGLISH ONLY

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 1 OF 2

A Friendship Makes a Promise

1 Samuel 18:1-4;20:1-42



David and Jonathan became close friends. Jonathan loved David as he loved himself, and the two made a covenant, a serious promise of friendship. Jonathan was King Saul's son. He gave David the robe he wore and his clothing, sword, bow, and sash. The gifts made their friendship visible in action. Saul kept David with him that day instead of letting him return to his father's home as before.

Later, David came to Jonathan with an urgent question: why was Saul trying to kill him? Jonathan at first said that his father would not do such a thing without telling him. David insisted that the danger was real and that Saul might hide it from Jonathan because of their friendship. Jonathan agreed to help. Listening to his friend's warning would require him to consider something painful about his own father's intentions.

David planned to be absent from the coming royal meal. If Saul accepted the absence calmly, that would suggest safety; if he became angry, it would reveal danger. Jonathan would find out and bring word. The friends went into the field to arrange how David could learn the result. Jonathan promised to warn him and send him away safely if Saul meant harm. He also asked for lasting kindness toward his own household.

The two renewed their covenant before God, extending their promise to their descendants. Jonathan then arranged a signal with arrows. If he told the boy collecting them that they were nearby, David could come because it was safe. If he said the arrows were beyond the boy, David must leave. Only Jonathan and David would understand the message. David hid in the field while Jonathan returned to find out what Saul would do.

Remember: Friendship can be brave, truthful, and kind.

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 2 OF 2

A Warning in the Field

1 Samuel 18:1-4;20:1-42



At the new moon meal, David's place was empty. Saul said nothing on the first day, but asked Jonathan about him on the second. Jonathan gave the explanation they had agreed to use. Saul became furious and demanded that David be brought to him to die. Jonathan asked what David had done to deserve death. Saul hurled a spear at Jonathan, making the danger unmistakable. Jonathan left the table in anger and grief.

The next morning, Jonathan went to the field at the appointed time with a boy to gather his arrows. He shot beyond the boy and called out the agreed warning. Then he told the boy to hurry and not delay. The boy collected the arrows without knowing the hidden meaning. What sounded like instructions for gathering arrows was a message David could understand: he was not safe to return and needed to leave.

Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and sent him back to the city. When the boy was gone, David came out of hiding. He bowed to the ground three times, and the friends kissed each other and wept. David wept the most. Their grief is stated in the account. The warning had helped protect him, but it also meant that they had to part instead of continuing their friendship in the same place.

Jonathan told David to go in peace and remembered the promise they had made in God's name between themselves and their descendants. David left, and Jonathan returned to the city. Their love had involved gifts, a serious commitment, careful listening, and a warning given even when the threat came from someone close to Jonathan. The account ends with a separation, but not with the friendship being treated as unimportant because the friends could no longer remain together.

Pause and think: How can a caring friend take a warning seriously while getting safe adult help?

THINK, NOTICE & GROW

A Faithful Friend Takes Safety Seriously



Jonathan first doubts David's warning, then agrees to find out. In ordinary life, taking a friend seriously can begin with listening rather than arguing that their problem cannot be real. You do not have to investigate danger on your own. If someone says they are being threatened or harmed, help them reach a trusted adult who can respond safely and take responsibility for protection.

A promise of friendship should never require you to hide abuse, accept harm, or face weapons. Jonathan's warning is part of an ancient danger, not a secret signal children need to copy. What safe words could you use if a friend asks you to keep a dangerous secret? You can care about the friendship while explaining that an adult's help is needed.

Friends sometimes have to live, learn, or spend time in different places. Feeling sad about that does not mean the friendship was a failure. With a caregiver, think of an appropriate way to remember someone or stay in contact if both families agree. A kind message, a shared memory, or gratitude for past help can honor a friendship without demanding that nothing ever change.

A SMALL STEP FOR TODAY

Jonathan’s friendship becomes honest warning and practical help when David’s life is in danger.

How can a caring friend take a warning seriously while getting safe adult help?

Read, Remember & Create

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Think about the reading

1. Why did Jonathan send David a warning?

2. Why did the friends cry?

2 Put the ideas in order

Write 1, 2 and 3 for the order these ideas appear in the reading.

- ☐ Jonathan warned David, and the friends said goodbye.
- ☐ David and Jonathan promised lasting friendship.
- ☐ Jonathan learned that David was in danger.

3 Draw a meaningful picture

Draw two friends helping each other reach a safe place.

Tell someone how your picture connects to the reading.

Read & Grow Together

Read and learn with context

This English edition is designed for ages 6-10 with an adult. Read both extended readings together, or enjoy one each day. Pause at unfamiliar words, invite questions and use the reflection page to connect the story with everyday life. These are retellings and lessons with explanations; read the listed Bible passage for context. Poetry, parables, letters and symbolic visions are identified by type.

Remember this

Friendship can be brave, truthful, and kind.
Original memory thought, not a direct Bible quotation. Related passage: 1 Samuel 20:12-17,42

A thoughtful conversation

Jonathan's loyalty protects someone from an unsafe adult. Do not teach that loyalty means keeping dangerous secrets; children should tell a safe adult when anyone may be harmed.

Activity answers

1. He learned that Saul truly intended to harm David.
2. They cared for each other and had to say goodbye.
Sequence boxes, top to bottom: 3, 1, 2. Personal responses and drawings will vary.

Optional prayer

God, teach us to be truthful friends who care for one another. Amen.

Print and share

Each pack has 6 pages. Print on A4 at Actual Size (100%). The worksheet is page 5. You may print just that page, or use the separate 150-page activity book. The collection contains 150 packs in Bible book order, 15 volumes and one ZIP. Catalog pack IDs stay the same when new readings are added.

Sources and sharing

English retellings, lessons, reflections and activities by DigiPick (2026), based on 1 Samuel 18:1-4;20:1-42. Source checked with the public-domain World English Bible. Illustration © Sweet Publishing; 09_1Sa_18_08_RG.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0. Source: unfoldingWord. Resized proportionally, without cropping.
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