

YOU ARE THERE

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

DAVID: SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTION NOTES

As mentioned elsewhere, these notes are not the “answer key.” They are suggestions for where the discussion questions in this book can go, but feel free to go in entirely different directions. (In fact, feel free to introduce other questions.) The notes below are deliberately brief, so as to provide suggestions and pointers, but not “official” answers. In some cases, there are follow-up questions that you might add to the discussion.

1. DAVID & GOLIATH

- a. Possibles: should have: stood up to bully, cheater or gossip; opposed or corrected erroneous teaching; help someone who needs help, but might get you involved in sin (as with the Levites in the story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10); etc.
b. Study: recognize God’s power and willingness to help you, through study of Bible stories and what God tells us.
Experience: see what God can do in your life, and the lives of those around you.
- Possibles: Daniel and the lions’ den (Daniel 6); Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (Daniel 3); Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 13); Rahab (Joshua 2); etc.
- They are useful to recognize (false) reasons that people give for why we suffer, and to explain God’s relationship with us.

2. JONATHAN & DAVID

- a. Possibles: someone to help when you’re sick or weak; someone to correct you when you’re wrong and support you when you’re right; someone who will give you honest advice.
b. Someone who encourages you when you’re wrong; gives you bad advice; leads you into sin.
- Most important point: this is very rare, but it might happen to you. You can nearly always find a way to reconcile the conflict.*
Possibles: protecting someone when your parents tell you not to get involved; teaching someone that your parents tell you to stay away from.
- Synonymous: verses 2, 5, 6a, 6b, etc.
Contrasting: 21, 27
Progressive: 37, 40, 41
b. They emphasize the overall expression of the psalm — David’s confidence in God, and the evidence supporting that confidence.

3. AHIMELECH HELPS DAVID

- a. Jesus says there is “something greater than the Temple.” He means that obeying the Law is important, but that a need (David’s hunger, an ox stuck in a ditch on the Sabbath) can be more important.
b. *Important point: these are exceptions, not regular occurrences.*
Possibles: safely violating traffic laws to get a seriously injured person to the hospital; perhaps using force to defend your family; perhaps lying to save a life (as Rahab does in Joshua 2).
- a. David exposes Ahimelech to danger, but it is Saul who kills him, not David’s actions. David feels responsible (22:22), but the sin is Saul’s.
b. Possibles: perhaps suggesting a dangerous activity, or sending someone on an errand that results in injury, or not paying attention when you’re caring for a child.
You should consider the consequences of your actions and choices; the more you could have anticipated the danger, the more responsible you are.
- God’s lovingkindness, His help, His protection (“the shadow of your wings”), His support (“your right hand upholds me”), His eventual glory, His justice.

4. ABIGAIL GETS MARRIED

- a. First, the law: Paul says that a wife is in subjection to her husband in Moses’ Law (1 Corinthians 14:34), but the Law itself doesn’t explicitly say so. However, God’s law from the beginning is that wives are ruled by their husbands (Genesis 3:16). By taking food to David, Abigail disobeys Nabal.
However, we have seen where what is normally a sin appears to be approved, especially if it prevents a greater sin, including Rahab’s lie about the spies (Joshua 2:4-5) and Ahimelech giving David the consecrated bread (in the last lesson). Abigail’s actions stops the death of many men. We aren’t told that her

- action is correct, but other Bible stories seem to suggest it.
- a. Christ’s Law repeats a wife’s subjection to her husband (Ephesians 5:22), but Abigail’s action still seems to be the same type of approved example as Rahab’s action.
 - a. Nabal has stolen from David and his men. The Law specifies a penalty for theft, and it isn’t death (Exodus 22:1-15). Even more so, one man’s stupidity isn’t justification for killing other men. David is seeking vengeance, not justice.
b. Moses’ Law usually specifies repayment for a wrong (“eye for an eye,” Exodus 21). Christ’s Law emphasizes forgiveness and mercy, rather than vengeance (Romans 12:19). It is sometimes hard to accept that someone won’t fully pay for his or her sins against you; try to remember where you would be if you had to fully pay for your own sins.
c. This can be argued either way — should justice or mercy apply? (especially for a crime, that violates civil law)
A sincere plea for forgiveness should always be granted, but that doesn’t mean that the criminal won’t suffer the punishment mandated for the crime.
 - The article, below, lists several possible reasons to trust in God (along with our trust in the complete Bible that we have today). God’s trustworthiness gives us confidence and joy.

5. ABISHAI FINDS KING SAUL

- a. Many people would choose to kill Saul to stop his persecution. Of course, most of us won’t face that choice (kill to avoid being killed), but we can face similar choices (perhaps lying or gossiping to undermine someone else’s lies or gossip about you, or cheating in a game to “make up” for your opponent cheating).
b. Self-defense seems to be allowed (Exodus 22:2), but there is nothing in Moses’ Law about pre-emptive killing. Saul is violating the law in chasing David, and David is definitely being provoked, but it would still be a sin to kill Saul.
- a. We are required to obey the government.
b. We must obey, even if the government isn’t perfect. We are to disobey only if the government requires us to violate God’s law.
c. We can try to change the government if we disagree with it, especially in a democracy. But we still must obey.
- They don’t contradict. He asks God to punish those who persecute him, but he refuses to strike out himself. He recognizes the difference between his role and God’s role.

6. ABNER ENDS A CIVIL WAR

- a. He could keep running, but Asahel would probably outrun him. He could try to knock him out, but that’s easier said than done. He could simply give up, but few would do that.
b. Possibles (not all are good): leave; find someone in authority; pester back; find something more interesting for the pest to do; ask God for strength.
- a. David is loyal and looks after those who follow him, but he can react with emotion rather than good sense. Abner is loyal to his own leader (Saul and his family), and tries to find the best solution for everyone, but he can hold a grudge. Joab is practical (this can be both good and bad; more about this in Lesson 11) and a good strategist.
b. Possibles: loyalty; good sense; a good planner; someone who tries to follow God; etc.
c. It’s important that a religious leader understand God’s will. It’s good if other leaders do, also, but lacking that understanding doesn’t disqualify any other type of leader.
- Don’t fret or be envious about evil-doers (1); trust in God (2, etc.); be patient with God (7); love God and follow Him (23).

7. UZZAH SAVES THE ARK

- a. God kills him for touching the ark (Numbers 4:15). We have discussed committing a sin to prevent a greater sin, but (1) this sin was easily preventable otherwise (by using carrying poles) and (2) there are few sins greater than profaning God’s holiness.
b. People all over the world are respectful of God, but wrong; they are among the people that Jesus describes in Matthew 7:21. We must be very sure that we not only respect God, but that we obey Him in all that we do.

2. It's appropriate for David to celebrate the arrival of the ark, but what Michal seems to say is that his dancing is so vigorous that he's flashing his private parts (underwear isn't common at this time). That isn't wise, but should Michal despise him for it?

More importantly, they don't seem to be giving each other any of the consideration that a husband and wife should give each other. Neither is right here.

3. a. Find qualities in Psalm 15:2-5 and Psalm 24:4-6. David doesn't always match these qualities (he intends evil on Nabal and his servants (Lesson 4), and he deceives Bathsheba's husband Uriah (Lesson 9)). But he tries to match them.
b. None of us always matches his description. But when we fall, we shouldn't despair, but repent and turn back to God.

8. MEPHIBOSHETH, JONATHAN'S SON

1. a. Mephibosheth gets a life of relative comfort, living in the highest style of 1000 bc. (And he also avoids execution, which he might have thought possible.) Christ's disciples get an eternal life in heaven.
b. Mephibosheth grovels before David. Few Christians have actually lowered themselves to grovel in thanks to God. Have you? Should you? Can you continuously thank God?
2. First: make sure they realize that success isn't riches and comforts, but spiritual health and rewards.
"Repaying" can include (for example) giving money back to God, but it's more important to give yourself (your efforts and focus) to helping others find the same success that you've found. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
3. Lots of possible answers. For example, Psalm 105:40-41 describes the food and water that God gave in the wilderness, and assures us that God will protect and guide His people.

9. DAVID SINS, AGAIN & AGAIN

1. a. Adultery, deception, made Uriah drunk, murder (both Uriah and the men killed with him), coveting.
b. For example: a crime, then a cover-up to prevent discovery (common in politics). Cheating, then lying about it. Blackmail: someone finds out, then forces you to commit even more sin to avoid discovery.
c. In nearly every case, the follow-up sin is more harmful than the original sin. Recognize the path you're on, and try to realize that admitting your sin is better (but usually harder) than committing more sin to cover it up.
2. The temptation is to tell a lot more people about it, then confront him or her together. But that's not what Jesus tells us to do (Matthew 18:15). As with the previous question, doing the right thing can be hard. Ask God for strength and wisdom, and discuss it with the person one-on-one. If you are rejected, then it is time to get help from one or two others (Matthew 18:16).
3. There is very little specific here, which means that just about anyone can use this with few modifications ... and we will all need something like this from time to time.
a. There is more, but mainly David acknowledges his sin, and that it is against God (not just against Bathsheba and Uriah). He admits bloodguilt (his sin includes murder).
b. Again there is more, but mainly he admits his need to be purified, and that only God can do this.

10. ABSALOM CLAIMS THE THRONE

1. a/b. He's loyal to his sister. It leads to murder; he should have requested justice.
He's a natural leader. It leads to treason; he should have worked with David, rather than against him.
He's a good "people" person; he is good at working with people and understanding what they want. It also leads to hurting David, rather than helping him.
2. It's not so much that he loves his family too much, but that he is not good at expressing that love. Discipline is an important part of love, especially for a parent (Proverbs 3:11-12), and David fails to discipline either Amnon or Absalom.
b. By letting them do whatever they want to do.
c. By leading them to good choices, and correcting them when they're wrong. Both Amnon and Absalom die because their father chooses not to correct them.
3. a/b. Lots of possibilities, beginning with "humble yourself" (and appeal for relief) if someone has a hold over you (v. 3).

11. JOAB, A PRACTICAL MAN

1. a. There are good reasons for killing Absalom (he's the enemy, he's a traitor, he is a continuing drain on David's energy, he is a threat to David's rule), but the bottom line is that Joab's boss told him not to.
b. It's easier to make decisions if you're not having to take lots of other opinions into consideration. But it's important to consider what your ruler wants, whether it's God, the government, or your boss. If you don't know (and if it's an important decision), then you need to figure out as well as you can what your ruler wants you to do.
2. a. David is a man after God's own heart. He tries to obey, but he sometimes fails. As far as we can tell, when he realizes his sin, he turns to God for forgiveness — many of his psalms express his repentance. He seems to be pleasing to God.
b. Joab obeys God and David, unless there is something that makes better sense to Joab. He is a good commander of David's armies, but he kills Abner (2 Samuel 3), Absalom, and Amasa (chapter 20) based on his own judgment. He obeys David even when he realizes it violates God's law (killing Uriah and ordering the census, chapter 24). God is not pleased with someone who obeys Him only when it suits him.
3. Consider Psalm 141:5, Matthew 26:49, Proverbs 5:3-4. Correction from a good friend is far more useful and honest than a compliment from an enemy.

12. SOLOMON, THE WISE

1. a. Solomon is already wise (shown by his wish), but not as wise as he is after God's gift.
b. Solomon is famous because of his wisdom. He makes wise decisions as king, especially when he isn't personally involved in the decision. (It may be worth noting that he specifically asks for the ability to judge the nation.) While he follows God, he has a wonderful, peaceful reign.
c. 1 Kings 3:12. No one else has ever had the wisdom like Solomon has. We won't either, but we can gain wisdom from studying God's Word and praying for it (James 1:5).
2. Wide variety of possible answers. Wealth can accomplish good things, but the love of wealth can grow into a sinful weight. Power can also be both useful and a weight — it's easy to start forcing people to do the right thing, rather than allowing them to make the decision themselves.
3. Possessions, relationships and occupations don't need to be discarded ... unless they are becoming a weight that drags you into sin. They shouldn't come between you and God, distracting you and pulling you away from your duty and relationship with Him.

13. SOLOMON'S FRIENDS

1. a. It's unclear whether Tyre is part of the people that the Israelites were supposed to eliminate (but didn't). We don't see any indication that Hiram attempts to pull Solomon into idolatry or that Solomon attempts to teach Hiram about God (although Solomon shows his attitude toward God — both good and bad — in how he lives his life). Hiram's friendship doesn't seem to lead Solomon from God, but it doesn't seem to teach Hiram much about God, either.
b. You will have friendships throughout your life of various intensities. Many casual friends will know little about you, will not influence you much, and will learn little from you. You should take care that closer friends learn about God from you (both what you say and what you do), and that they don't influence you to sin.
2. Be aware of how God wants you to act; realize when you are being drawn into sin (and when you're better off leaving a friendship); keep your eye on God; remember the influence that God wants you to be on your friends; etc.
3. Marriage is a wonderful way to share — sharing love, companionship, experiences, confidences and trusts — truly becoming one with someone (Genesis 2:24, and repeated in the New Testament). When you marry more than once (or share these things outside of marriage), you are no longer "one" with someone — you are divided among your various mates.