

Who will you side with? 1 Samuel 20 for Growth Groups

Welcome

Pray and Read **1 Sam 20**

First reactions to this?

Jonathan's relationships change with his father and with David in the 4 meetings of this chapter.

1. In the opening section (v1-10), how might we describe Jonathan's relationships with Saul and with David?

Towards Saul he is a naïve optimist: he feels his father trusts him and tells him everything.

Towards David, Jonathan is a trusting friend – ready to do whatever David suggests. And signaling his willingness to side with David if he knew his father had murderous intentions.

2. What deepens Jonathan's relationship with David in meeting 2 (v11-23)?

He vows to understand if Saul intends harm and promises to send David away in peace.

He prays that the LORD will be with David as he WAS with Saul (J seems to recognise D = God's messiah).

He seems to understand that David will be king long after Saul. Because he requests unfailing kindness (steadfast love) towards him and his family line.

He even recognises that God is establishing David's throne and cutting off David's enemies.

In short Jonathan sides with David instead of his father.

And the narrators comment of v16-17 repeats this so we don't miss it.

Jonathan's loyalty will be put into practice through his wise plan v18-23.

3. What damages Jonathan's relationship with Saul in meeting 3? (v24-34)?

Saul curses Jonathan's mother and he.

And declares the truth: that Jonathan has sided with David against Saul.

Saul declares why Jonathan had to choose a side: there can be only one king over God's people v31.

Jonathan finds out his father's true intentions v33.

And Jonathan is grieved but not for Saul. Instead for Saul's shameful treatment of David.

4. What happens in the final meeting (v35-42) that cements things?

He keeps his promise and sends David away from his father, and shows himself to be no threat towards David (he gives his weapons to the boy and approaches David unarmed and full of love).

And David shows his love for Jonathan – narrator's comment: David wept the most – because David gets that now, Jonathan who loves him, has to live in the king's house who will oppose him.

Jonathan reiterates the covenant – love between them; a future for Jonathan under David's rule.

5. Overall, what happens in this chapter for Jonathan?

Jonathan is forced to choose (v31).

6. Why does he side with David?

Because the Lord is with him, and is establishing David's throne (not Saul's).

And because all the positive aspects of the many contrasts (e.g. peace, life, honour, kindness, safety) are / will be connected to David. Whereas the opposites (harm, evil, shame, murderous intent) are with Saul.

7. What does Jonathan give up in siding with David?

His own kingdom. His family relationships. Peace with his father. Riches of Saul.

8. What are the ways Jonathan is a model disciple of Jesus for us to copy?

Makes the tough choice of having Jesus first. A model of Luke 14-25-27!! Grieves the shameful treatment of God's king. Seeks the promise and protection of the king God is putting in place. V14-15. Is prepared to be out of step with the world and in the firing line (v33). Promises love (v18-23) and follows through with action v38-42. +more...

Pray