

[Lesson 23](#): “The Lord Be Between Thee and Me For Ever” (See L23 [Study Guide](#))

Purpose: To encourage us to be true to our friends, as Jonathan and David were, and avoid being consumed by jealousy and hatred, as Saul was.

1. Jonathan and David make a covenant of friendship. Saul, jealous of David, tries to kill him.

- Read and discuss [1 Samuel 18:1–16](#).

- 1 Samuel 18:1-5. The “soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.”

“As Saul’s son, Jonathan was next in line to be king. However, the prophet Samuel had anointed David to become the next king... While David was greatly honored by the people for his success in battle, Jonathan received little attention for his own success on the battlefield (1 Samuel 14:1-16).” (*Lesson Manual*)

Why do you think Jonathan was not jealous of David or threatened by him?

- 1 Samuel 18:6-9. “And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him”.

Why is it sometimes difficult to be happy about the success of others?

†1. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland †2. Elder Neal A. Maxwell

How do jealousy and pride affect our spiritual well-being? †3. President Ezra Taft Benson

- 1 Samuel 18:5, 14-16. “And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him.”

What do you think it means to “behave [ourselves] wisely” when we are successful?

2. Saul fails in three more attempts to take David’s life.

- Read and discuss [1 Samuel 18:17–30](#); [19:1–18](#).

- 1 Samuel 18:20-25. Saul sought no dowry for Michal, but he “thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.”

- 1 Samuel 19:1-7. “Saul spake to Jonathan [and] all his servants, that they should kill David.”

What does it mean to be a true friend? How are you true to your family and friends?

- 1 Samuel 19:9-10. “And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin”.

- 1 Samuel 19:11-19. “Saul also sent messengers unto David’s house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning”.

3. David and Jonathan renew their covenant of friendship, and Jonathan saves David’s life.

- Read and discuss [1 Samuel 20](#).

- 1 Samuel 20:1-4, 13-17. “Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.”

- 1 Samuel 20:23. Jonathan said, “the Lord be between thee and me forever.”

How did faith in God influence the friendship of Jonathan and David? †4. Elder Neal A. Maxwell

How should our love of God affect our love of others?

What will we do if our friends ask us to do things that are wrong or they seek to do things that are wrong?

- 1 Samuel 20:24-33, 35-42. Jonathan warns David with an arrow shot.

4. Saul is consumed by hatred for David. David spares Saul’s life.

- Read and discuss [1 Samuel 23–24](#).

- 1 Samuel 23:1-5. “And the Lord said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.”

- 1 Samuel 23:7-13. “Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?”

What changed Saul from a righteous king to someone willing to destroy an entire city to kill one person?

How can we rid ourselves of jealousy or hatred?

- 1 Samuel 23:16. Jonathan “went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.”

How can we strengthen our friends in God?

- 1 Samuel 24:1-22. The story of Saul sleeping in David’s cave. (See note 4a, “the portion that symbolized his authority”.)

- 1 Samuel 24:6-12. Why did David refuse to harm Saul?

What does David’s example teach us about revenge and about responding to those who do evil to us?

†5. President David O. McKay

Next Week: L24 “Create in Me a Clean Heart”; See L24: [Class Member Study Guide](#).

(You can download a free LDS Institute manual at: [Old Testament Student Manual: Religion 301 and 302](#).) † •

†1. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “Who is it that whispers so subtly in our ear that a gift given to another somehow diminishes the blessings we have received? Who makes us feel that if God is smiling on another, then He surely must somehow be frowning on us? You and I both know who does this—it is the father of all lies.[3] It is Lucifer, our common enemy, whose cry down through the corridors of time is always and to everyone, ‘Give me thine honor.’[4]

“It has been said that envy is the one sin to which no one readily confesses, but just how widespread that tendency can be is suggested in the old Danish proverb, ‘If envy were a fever, all the world would be ill.’ The parson in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* laments it because it is so far-reaching—it can resent anything, including any virtue and talent, and it can be offended by everything, including every goodness and joy.[5] As others seem to grow larger in our sight, we think we must therefore be smaller. So, unfortunately, we occasionally act that way.” (“[The Other Prodigal](#),” *Ensign*, May 2002, 63)

†2. **Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** “When we are struggling to learn to love, we can have faith in God’s developmental plans for others as well as for ourselves. Then we do not feel threatened by those who are our superiors or who are becoming such. The more unselfish we are, the more able we are to find joy in their successes, all the while rejoicing without comparing. In any case, our only valid spiritual competition is with our old selves, not with each other. True love and friendship enable us to keep that perspective. The things about other people that truly matter are their qualities such as love, mercy, justice, and patience, and their service to others.” (*Not My Will, But Thine*, 70)

†3. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** “Saul became an enemy to David through pride. He was jealous because the crowds of Israelite women were singing that ‘Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands’ (1 Samuel 18:7; see also 1 Samuel 18:6, 8).

“The proud stand more in fear of men’s judgment than of God’s judgment. . . . ‘What will men think of me?’ weighs heavier than ‘What will God think of me?’ . . .

“Fear of men’s judgment manifests itself in competition for men’s approval. The proud love ‘the praise of men more than the praise of God’ (John 12:42–43). Our motives for the things we do are where the sin is manifest. Jesus said He did ‘always those things’ that pleased God (John 8:29). Would we not do well to have the pleasing of God as our motive rather than to try to elevate ourselves above our brother and outdo another?”

“Some prideful people are not so concerned as to whether their wages meet their needs as they are that their wages are more than someone else’s. Their reward is being a cut above the rest. . . .

“When pride has a hold on our hearts, we lose our independence of the world and deliver our freedoms to the bondage of men’s judgment. The world shouts louder than the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. The reasoning of men overrides the revelations of God, and the proud let go of the iron rod” (in “[Beware of Pride](#),” *Ensign*, May 1989, 5).

†4. **Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** “Can one expect human relationships to be deep and lasting sources of purpose and meaning without having truth at their center? Can there be friendships such as the friendship of Jonathan and David outside the context of absolute values? . . .

“Friendships formed in the context of floating values are apt to be floating friendships – devoid of real acceptance, depth, and continuity, the very things that friendship is intended to supply in the first place.

“When humans are thrown together in more and more temporary relationships in which selfishness is emphasized, in which sensation is sought, we will constantly disappoint each other because we will always be taking. . . .” (*That My Family Should Partake* [Walt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 90)

†5. **President David O. McKay:** “As men of the priesthood, as women of the Church, [we have the responsibility] to make our homes such as will radiate to our neighbors harmony, love, community duties, loyalty. Let our neighbors see it and hear it. Never must there be expressed in a Latter-day Saint home an oath, a condemnatory term, an expression of anger or jealousy or hatred. Control it. Do not express it. You do what you can to produce peace and harmony, no matter what you may suffer.” (Conference Report, [April 1963](#), 130)

Recommended Reading:

1. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “[The Other Prodigal](#),” *Ensign*, May 2002, 62. (re envy)
2. Nancy Jensen, “[Old Testament Lesson #23](#)” (re David, Nabal, and Abigail) *LDS Gospel Doctrine Plus*.
3. Cheryl Condie Kempton, “[Fasting—A Gift of Joy](#),” *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 10. [D&C L17](#) last quote.
4. Dennis R. Peterson, see [D&C L16](#) last page.

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