

Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 100.2)

LESSON 23 (STUDY NOTES)

“The Lord Be Between Thee and Me For Ever”

Hook	David proves one of the most important but also complex characters in the Bible. This lesson focuses on the exemplary love of Saul’s children for David—Jonathan and David’s wife Michal.
Goal	Class members should take from these narratives a greater appreciation for friendship, and reflect on how we can be better friends to those around us.
Overview	(see below)
Conclusion	

1. Sunday School

- a. Discussion of the narratives, work closely through moments of David and Jonathan’s relationship
 - i. 1 Samuel 18: Introduction to their relationship
 - ii. 18:19ff Jonathan guards David against his father
 - iii. 19: Michal deceives her father and tells David to escape
 - iv. Jonathan pleads with David to save his house, David swears by love for Jonathan
 - v. Saul gets VERY angry at Jonathan (we see some Israelite swearing)
 - vi. 19:41: touching scene of close friendship
 - vii. 23: David and his men still in hiding (David is running for much of this reading)
 - viii. 23:17 Jonathan finds David in hiding, they renew their covenant
 - ix. 24: Counterpoint to Saul’s insane hatred; David could have killed Saul but does not. Saul repents and acknowledges David will be king
- b. Counterpoint of friendship: jealousy and hatred
 - i. Beware of Pride quote
- c. Discussion on friendship
 - i. What is the importance of friendship?
 1. Elder Jensen friend quote:
 - ii. Friendship in a gospel context (how it lines up with other principles)
 - iii. Friendship with God (John 15:15; James 2:23; Abraham was called a friend of God)
 - iv. How can we be better friends?
- d. Intimacy?
- e. Conclusion I

(these are stories where the Gospel discussion approach differs radically from the academic approach)

2. Scholarship

- a. Jonathan and David's "love" and friendship in literary perspective
- b. The historical Jonathan and David (go over ABD article on Jonathan)
- c. What do we learn from these stories?
- d. What can we draw from the disparity between these two accounts?

Kugel with characteristic clarity takes down the hero of the Bible:

"David was the head of what was now basically a full-fledged guerilla army. He and his men, fighting for the Philistines, probably were directly involved in Saul's death. David then forced and bribed his way into power in Judah. Later, with Ishboshet and Abner conveniently dead (and after a period of some intense fighting alluded to in 2 Sam. 3:1), David essentially took over Saul's leaderless kingdom to the north by force. There may have been some ceremonial niceties afterward, but what really occurred was a military coup. In view of all this, the moving elegy that David is said to have composed upon Saul's death is now eyed with as much suspicion as the rest. It too, modern scholars say, is simply part of the Bible's massive cover-up of a brutal takeover (How to Read the Bible, 484).

3. Study Notes

- a. Return to the narratives (bring up issues such as 18:10, "evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul")
- b. Friendships and social norms (including intimacy, the fact we don't talk about close guy "love" as in these narratives)
- c. Boundary navigating in friendships (including when to disengage, getting needs met, venting etc) (families and friendship, friends as new families, etc)
- d. Conclusion II

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1999/04/friendship-a-gospel-principle?lang=eng>

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/happiness-in-world/201002/what-makes-true-friend>

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?159499-1/book-discussion-bowling-alone>

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/06/25/reviews/000625.25talbott.html>

article about nurture rewiring men's brain

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1989/04/beware-of-pride?lang=eng>

The central feature of pride is enmity—enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen. *Enmity* means "hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition." It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us. Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God's. When we direct our pride toward God, it is in the spirit of "my will and not thine be done."

The proud make every man their adversary by pitting their intellects, opinions, works, wealth, talents, or any other worldly measuring device against others. In the words of C. S. Lewis: “Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. ... It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.” (*Mere Christianity*, New York: Macmillan, 1952, pp. 109–10.)

Elder Jensen friend quote: (the entire talk is so incredible... just read it)

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1999/04/friendship-a-gospel-principle?lang=eng>

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of ‘Mormonism.’”¹ That thought ought to inspire and motivate all of us because I feel that friendship is a fundamental need of our world. I think in all of us there is a profound longing for friendship, a deep yearning for the satisfaction and security that close and lasting relationships can give. Perhaps one reason the scriptures make little specific mention of the principle of friendship is because it should be manifest quite naturally as we live the gospel. In fact, if the consummate Christian attribute of charity has a first cousin, it is friendship. To paraphrase the Apostle Paul slightly, friendship “suffereth long, and is kind; [friendship] envieth not; ... seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ... [friendship] never faileth.”

Brothers and sisters, my message today is very simple: if we truly want to be tools in the hands of our Heavenly Father in bringing to pass His eternal purposes, we need only to be a friend. Consider the power of each one of us, 10 million strong, of our own free will and choice reaching out to those not yet of our faith in unconditional friendship. We would no longer be accused of offering warm bread and a cold shoulder. Imagine the consequences for good if each active family in the Church offered consistent concern and genuine friendship to a less-active family or a new-member family. The power is in each one of us to be a friend. Old and young, rich and poor, educated and humble, in every language and country, we all have the capacity to be a friend.

Bowling alone (book)
Discussion: