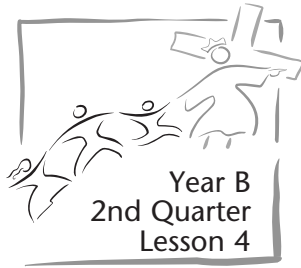


LESSON



Promises Are for Keeping

COMMUNITY

We respect one another.

References

1 Samuel 20:14, 15, 42; 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 713.

Memory Verse

"We have promised by the Lord that we will be friends" (1 Samuel 20:42, ICB).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that God always keeps His promises.

Feel a desire to keep promises.

Respond by doing what they say they're going to do.

The Message



People who love God keep their promises.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

David becomes king of Israel, as God had promised. One day he remembers the good things his friend Jonathan had done for him. He finds out that Jonathan has a son named Mephibosheth. David decides to give Jonathan's son the land that had belonged to Jonathan. He also invites Mephibosheth to live with him. David

does all this because he loved and respected Jonathan, and because he had made a promise to him to be kind to his family.

This is a lesson about community.

David kept his promise to Jonathan. God keeps His promises to us. When we make a promise, we want to keep it too.

FOUR

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>God's Sun Promise</i> B. <i>God's Rainbow Promise</i>	paper plates or paper circles, yellow crayons or markers, stapler or tape one sheet of paper for each child, crayons
* Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	See page 43. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	happy/sad face sticks (optional), adult actors in Bible-times costume, child actors in Bible-times costume, cardboard "harp," crutches or walking stick, Bible-times robe
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>God's Promises</i>	pictures or objects of God's promises (see activity), bag or box
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Rainbow of Promise</i>	letter-size paper, yarn, scissors, markers, glue

Teacher Enrichment

"The obligation to which one's word is pledged—if it does not bind him to perform a wrong act—should be held sacred. No consideration of gain, of revenge, or of self-interest can in any way affect the inviolability of an oath or pledge" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 506).

"David, in his covenant with Jonathan, had promised that when he should have rest from his enemies he would show kindness to the house of Saul. In his prosperity, mindful of this covenant, the king made inquiry, 'Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?' . . . Through

reports from the enemies of David, Mephibosheth had been led to cherish a strong prejudice against him as a usurper; but the monarch's generous and courteous reception of him and his continued kindness won the heart of the young man" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 713).

Do you keep the promises you make? Children learn by example. If adults can't keep their promises, how can we ask children to do so?

Room Decorations

Continue to use the outdoor scenery from Lesson 1 and the "throne room" from Lesson 2.

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. God's Sun Promise

You Need:

- ☐ paper plates or paper circles
- ☐ yellow crayons or markers
- ☐ stapler or tape

Distribute two paper plates or paper circles to each child. Have the children color them yellow and staple or tape them together, leaving an opening large enough to get their hand in. Say: **In the Bible we find a promise God made to everyone. Matthew 5:45 tells us that God makes the sun rise for everyone. Put your hand inside your sun and make it rise up high in the sky. Now make it go down, down, as it does at night. In the morning the sun comes up again. Make your sun go up, up, up. It's another day!** Repeat the cycle several times. **Does God keep His promises?**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What happens when the sky is cloudy and it's raining? Has God forgotten His promise? No. The sun shines behind the clouds. Even when we can't see it, it is there. God always does what He has promised to do. How do you feel about knowing that God will always do what He says He will do? Jesus always does what He says He's going to do, and people who love Jesus also keep their promises. Our Bible story is about David keeping a promise he made to his friend, Jonathan. Today's message is:**



People who love God keep their promises.

Say that with me.

B. God's Rainbow Promise

You Need:

- ☐ crayons
- ☐ one sheet of paper for each child

Say: **Once God made a promise to some people who had just come off of a boat and who may have been scared. The world and everything in it had been destroyed by a big flood. The people might have become scared whenever they saw rain, but God told them that the earth would never again be destroyed by a flood. Then He put a big rainbow in the sky so**

that they would remember His promise. There has never been another flood that destroyed the whole earth. God keeps His promises. He does what He said He would do.

Help the children draw a rainbow on their papers. Show them the right order for the crayons—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, (indigo), violet or purple.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you feel when someone doesn't do what they promised to do? How do you feel when someone does what they promised they would do? I'm very glad that God keeps His promises. And people who love God and want to be like God also keep their promises. Do you want to keep your promises? Our Bible story is about David keeping a promise he made to his friend, Jonathan. Today's message is:**



People who love God keep their promises.

Say that with me.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"God's Ways" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 259)

"Into My Heart" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 195)

"Care for One Another" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 262)

"Buddies" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 256)

Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Say: **We can be like Jesus. Our offering will help others.**

Prayer

Say: **Let's thank Jesus because He keeps His promises. Ask Jesus to help you keep the promises you make.**

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- ☐ happy/sad face sticks (optional)
- ☐ three adults in Bible-times costumes
- ☐ Bible-times costumes for children
- ☐ cardboard "harp"
- ☐ crutches or walking stick
- ☐ Bible-times robe

Beforehand, prepare happy/sad face sticks by cutting out two paper circles for each child. Draw a simple happy face on one circle, and a sad face on the other. Glue or tape a craft stick behind the circles so the children can hold them. Ask the children to raise the happy face or the sad face when the characters say they are happy or sad. (Option: Just have the children make a happy or sad face when appropriate.)

You will need three adults or teenagers to play King David, Mephibosheth, and Ziba. The children can be servants and do what the king commands. Use a cardboard harp. Crutches can be made by using two sticks with rags on the top of them. Make copies of

the script for the people playing David, Mephibosheth, and Ziba.

David: Oh! What a beautiful day! I should go get my harp and play and sing some songs *[bring out harp]*. What a nice harp! I've had it for such a long time. This harp reminds me of so many things . . . of when I was a shepherd boy, and I sang out in the fields. And it reminds me of King Saul. He wasn't very nice to me at times. It makes me **sad** to remember those years. *[Children raise their sad faces.]* I had to run and hide in caves. Oh, well! That's in the past now. But I feel so **happy** when I remember my friend Jonathan, King Saul's son. *[Children raise their happy faces.]* Jonathan was such a good friend. We had such good times together. We laughed together. We galloped our horses together. *[Make motion of galloping with the children.]* We shot our arrows at targets together. *[Make motion of shooting.]* Oh, how I miss Jonathan! I

remember how **sad** I was *[children raise their sad faces]* when I heard he had died in a battle along with his father.

Well . . . Wait a minute! I made a promise to Jonathan. I promised him I would be kind to his family. I wonder if any of his family is left. I have to find that out. It would make me very **happy** *[children raise happy faces]* if I found someone from Jonathan's family still alive!

Servants! *[Children come.]* Find a servant of Saul's for me. Bring him here! *[Children "find" the person playing Ziba and take him to David.]*

Ziba: *[bows]* You called for me, sir?

David: Yes, I did. What's your name?

Ziba: Ziba. I was a servant in Jonathan's house.

David: Ziba, is there anybody left from Jonathan's family still alive? I want to keep my promise to Jonathan and show them God's kindness.

Ziba: Yes, sir. One of Jonathan's sons is alive, but he was dropped when he was very young, and his feet are crippled.

David: I want to see him. I'm so **glad** *[children raise their happy faces]* he is alive. Tell me where he is. I want to bring him to my palace. Thank you, Ziba, for your help. You may go now. *[Ziba goes away.]*

David: Servants! Go get Jonathan's son, please! Tell him you are King David's servants, and that you are to bring him to my palace. *[The children walk to where Mephibosheth is sitting in a corner.]*

Mephibosheth: Who are you?

Servants: We are King David's servants.

Mephibosheth: What do you want?

Servants: The king orders you to come to his palace.

Mephibosheth: Do I have to go to King David's palace? Are you sure?

I don't want to go. I'm scared. You see, my grandfather Saul wasn't very nice to David. Do you know why the king wants to see me?

Servants: *[Shake their heads no.]*

Mephibosheth: Oh! How I wish my father were here! He and King David were very good friends! I don't want to see King David, but I'm sure I don't have a choice. OK, let's go. *[Mephibosheth, on crutches, goes to David's "palace." The servants help him.]*

David: Are you Jonathan's son? What is your name?

Mephibosheth: Yes, I'm Jonathan's son. My name is Mephibosheth, and I am your servant. *[He bows down before the king.]*

David: Rise, Mephibosheth. Don't be **sad** *[children raise their sad faces]* because of what your grandfather did to me. That's in the past. I want to give you all the land that once belonged to your grandfather Saul. And I want you to live here with me at the palace.

Mephibosheth: Why do you want to do that?

David: Because your father, Jonathan, was my best friend. I promised your father that I would look after his family. I want to keep my promise. That's why I sent for you. I will be **happy** *[children raise their happy faces]* to have you live with me and my family in the palace. And something else. Servants! *[The children stand up and bow before the king.]* Bring Ziba again! *[The children bring Ziba to the king.]*

David: Ziba, I have given Mephibosheth everything that belonged to his grandfather Saul and to his father, Jonathan. I want you and your sons to be the farmers of his land. Take care of the land and grow food there. But Mephibosheth is to live in the palace with me. You may go now.

Servants! Get some new clothes for Mephibosheth. Help him change. He'll

have the kind of clothes my sons wear. *[The children help Mephibosheth put on a new robe.]*

Servants! Please show Mephibosheth his new rooms. Mephibosheth, I'll see you in the dining room tonight. From now on, you'll eat with me and my family. I'm **happy** to be able to keep my promise to your father. *[The children raise their happy faces.]*

Mephibosheth: I'll be there. I'm **happy** too. *[Children shake their happy faces.]*

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:
What nice thing did David do for Mephibosheth? Did David keep his promise to Jonathan? How do you feel when someone promises you something and keeps their promise? How do you feel when someone promises you something and they don't keep their promise? Is it always easy to keep promises? Why? Should you make a promise if you think you might not be able to keep it? Who can help you keep your promises? Remember . . .



People who love God keep their promises.

Say that with me.

Bible Study

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 20:14, 15, 42; and 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13. Point to the verses and say:

This is where today's story is found in the Bible. Read aloud selected verses, paraphrasing as necessary.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did David promise Jonathan he would do? Who was the only person left in Jonathan's family? How did he become crippled?**

You Need:

☐ Bible

What did David do for Mephibosheth? Did David keep his promise? Do you want to keep your promises? Who always keeps His promises? Can God help you keep your promises too? Remember . . .



People who love God keep their promises.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- ☐ Bible

Memory Verse

Turn to 1 Samuel 20:42; point to the text and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God's Word, the Bible.** Read the verse aloud. **"We have promised by the Lord that we will be friends."** In the memory verse Jonathan is

reminding David that they have promised to be friends. Proceed to teach the memory verse, using motions as outlined below.



We

Point to self, then others.



have promised

Right hand over heart.



by the Lord

Point upward.



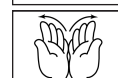
that we

Point to self, then others.



will be friends.

Hook index fingers together.



1 Samuel 20:42

Palms together, then open.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- ☐ pictures or objects to represent God's promises
- ☐ bag or box

God's Promises

In advance, gather pictures or objects relating to the promises that God has given us (to care for us, to protect us, help us, send rain, make the sun shine, heaven, Second Coming, the rainbow, etc.). Ask children to come and take something out of your bag or box and talk about the promise it represents.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do all these promises make you feel?** (important, happy, grateful) **How can we be sure that God keeps His promises?** (because we see them fulfilled every day; because the Bible says

so; because He loves us) **I'm glad God keeps His promises, aren't you?**

What kind of promises do you make? (to be kind to siblings, not to complain about your food, not to hit, to share toys, etc.) **Do you always keep your promises? Is it always easy? Who can help you?** (Jesus) **Because God always keeps His promises, He can help us keep our promises.**

Do you want to be like God? Do you want to keep promises as David did, and as God does all the time? Let's say our message together:



People who love God keep their promises.



Sharing the Lesson

Rainbow of Promise

You Need:

- ☐ letter-size paper
- ☐ yarn
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ markers
- ☐ glue

Distribute a letter-size paper for each child. Provide yarn of several rainbow colors cut into equal lengths to make a rainbow.

Say: **You can make a rainbow shape by gluing**

pieces of yarn onto the paper. What promise of God does the rainbow remind you of? While you are working, think about a promise you want to keep this week.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Did you think of a promise you want to keep this week?** Help each child write a promise on the back of their paper rainbow. (I'll put away my toys; I'll close the door gently; I'll share my toys with my brother; etc.)

Say: **Let your rainbow remind you that God keeps His promises, and that He can help you keep your promises.**

Take your rainbow home and share it with someone this week and tell them about David keeping his promise to Jonathan. The rainbow can also remind you of the promise you are going to keep this week. What promise will you keep this week?

Have each child repeat the promise you wrote for them. **Let's say our message one last time:**



People who love God
keep their promises.

(Adapted from Anita Reith Stohs, *Little Hands Can Do* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994], p. 12.)

Closing

Pray that the children will remember that promises are important, and that God always keeps His promises. Ask God to help the children keep the promises they make.

STUDENT LESSON

Promises Are for Keeping

References

1 Samuel 20:14, 15, 42; 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 713

Memory Verse

"We have promised by the Lord that we will be friends" (1 Samuel 20:42, ICB).

The Message

People who love God keep their promises.

King David looked up at the blue, blue sky. The king was remembering his youth. He thought about all the days he had spent taking care of his father's sheep. He remembered the special day when the prophet Samuel had come and had poured olive oil on his head and told him that God had chosen him to be the next king.

David remembered the days he had lived in the palace with King Saul. Then David thought about King Saul's son Jonathan. Jonathan had been his best friend.

David sighed. Jonathan had died as a soldier in a battle. David missed him. He remembered how they used to gallop their horses. How they used to shoot their arrows. How they had promised to be friends forever. Then he remembered that he had promised to be kind to Jonathan's family.

Suddenly David had a new thought: *Is anybody from Jonathan's family still alive?* King David sent for Ziba, who had been a servant in Saul's house. Ziba ran to the palace and bowed before the king. "Is anyone from Saul's family still alive?" King David asked Ziba. "If there is, I want to show them God's kindness."

"Yes," Ziba answered. "One of Jonathan's sons is alive. Mephibosheth, a crippled lad. He was hurt as a child and is crippled in both feet."

King David smiled. "I want to see him," he said. So the king sent servants to bring Mephibosheth to the palace.

Mephibosheth's stomach began to hurt when he heard King David's message. He knew that his grandfather, King Saul, had treated David badly. Why did King David want *him* to go to the palace? Was the king going to hurt him?

He knew he couldn't say no, but he really didn't want to see King David.

When Mephibosheth arrived at the palace, he bowed very low before King David. "I am your servant," he said.

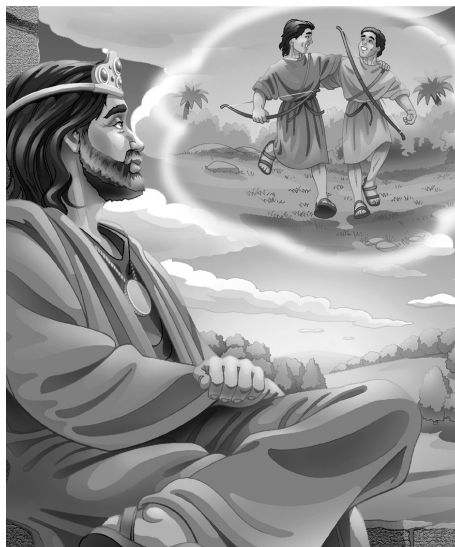
"Don't be afraid!" David said kindly. "Your father, Jonathan, was my best friend. That's the reason I wanted you to come here. I am giving you all the

land that once belonged to your grandfather Saul. And I want you to live here with me at the palace."

Mephibosheth's mouth dropped open with surprise. "Why do you want to do such nice things for me?"

"Because I loved your father very much," the king answered, "and I promised him I would take care of his family."

So it was that Mephibosheth moved into the palace. David always treated Mephibosheth as if he were his own son. And David and Mephibosheth soon became good friends too.



Do and Say

Sabbath

Each day this week, read the lesson story together and review the memory verse.

We Point to self, then to others.
have promised Put hand over heart.
by the Lord Point upward.
that we Point to self, then to others.
will be friends. Hook index fingers.
1 Samuel 20:42. . . . Palms together, then open.

Sunday

Together, read 1 Samuel 20:14, 15, 42; 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13. Ask: Did David keep the promise he made to Jonathan?

Encourage your child to share the rainbow they made in Sabbath School with someone this week and tell them the Bible story. (Or use colored yarn to make a rainbow on a piece of paper, or draw a picture of a rainbow.)

Monday

Discuss the promise your child made in Sabbath School. Has the promise been kept? Why?

If appropriate, show your child pictures of your wedding. Talk about the promises people make when they get married.

Tuesday

Use differently weighted objects to show your child how gravity

works. Ask: Why do these things always fall? Does God keep His promise about gravity? What if gravity didn't always work?

Wednesday

Go for a nature walk and look for God's promises (sun and rain for everyone, growing plants, rainbow, etc.). Make a collection or draw pictures of things that remind us of God's promises.



Thursday

Promise something to your child and keep your promise.

Read together Matthew 5:45. Did God keep this promise today? Remind your child that even if it was cloudy, the sun was shining behind the clouds.

Friday

Have your child tell the lesson story for family worship. Read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 713, together. How is your family like David's?

Talk about Jesus' promises to come back and take us to heaven. Sing songs about His promises.

Ask: Is it important to keep promises? Thank Jesus for keeping His promises. Ask Him to help you keep your promises.

