



Trusting God In the Cave 2: The Cave of Choice

By Deborah Wassenberg

Introduction:

This is a follow-up lesson to Trusting God in the Cave: the Bible story of David in the Cave of Adullam. If you and your team have gone to the effort of designing a cave in your Children's Church space, why not use it for a second lesson? If your budget can extend to a climbing wall experience, this is the time to do it! (This lesson can be taught as a stand-alone, too.)

Entrance Chamber:

Reuse your created cave entrance to your teaching space using black tarpaulin or plastic, or painted boxes to form a tunnel or passage.

Bible Lesson: Saul Chases David & David Spares His Life

Bible References: 1 Samuel 23:1-29; 24:1-22; Psalm 142

Storyteller: Clint Cobble the Caver is back!

Character: Clint Cobble is an experienced caver (aka potholer in the UK, or a spelunker in the US). He is going to teach the Bible Lesson inside a 'cave'. You will need to stick pictures of the lesson on the wall, but hide them temporarily with a screen until it's time for the lesson. Alternatively, if you have multiple rooms, you could create another tunnel for the children to enter into another 'cave'. Clint will use a torch to light up the pictures as he teaches.

Costume: Wetsuit or overall, harness (optional), sneakers or boots, gloves

Props: Ropes, a helmet with a headlamp and a small torch attached to the headband used for backup, a hand torch, karabiners (optional, hanging from the harness for effect)

Visuals You Will Need:

These visuals remain hidden on the wall of the 'cave' until the torchlight illuminates them. You may like to add glitter to make them luminescent!

1. David and his mighty men
2. King Saul and his army

3. The Ziphites/Around the mountain
4. Ibex and En Gedi (pages 7 & 8)
5. Saul and David in the cave
6. David cutting the corner of Saul's robe
7. David restraining his men
8. David calling to Saul and showing the piece of the robe
9. Saul sad and leaving
10. Words on signs: Cave of Choice/Revenge/Mercy/Fear/Trust

Words:

1. In our last lesson, we learned that David was running for his life.
King Saul is trying to kill him because he knows God has anointed David to be the next king of Israel.
David and his mighty men had just saved the people living in the town of Keilah from an attack by the Philistines.
So that was where he and his men were staying.
2. Saul was told that David was in Keilah.
King Saul said, 'God has delivered David into my hands, for David has imprisoned himself by entering a town with gates and bars.'
Saul called up all his forces for battle.
He would destroy the whole town unless they handed David over to him.
3. So David and his men (now numbering about 600) left Keilah and kept moving from place to place.
Day after day, Saul searched for him, but God did not let David fall into his hands.
The Ziphites, people from David's own tribe of Judah, decided to betray him.
They told Saul where David was hiding in their hills.
Saul told them to spy on David and his men.
'Find out about all the hiding places David uses and come back to me with definite information.'
Eventually, the Ziphites told King Saul that David was in the desert.
A wilderness with canyons and cliffs, and caves that served as strongholds.
Saul and his army went into the desert, too.
As Saul was going along one side of a mountain, David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away.
As Saul's forces were closing in on David, a messenger arrived to speak urgently to King Saul.
'Come quickly! The Philistines are raiding the land.'
So Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to fight them.
4. David and his men lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.
I've travelled to En Gedi.
It's in the desert along the western shore of the Dead Sea in Israel.
I walked into a deep canyon.
I was hot and thirsty but then I heard the sound of water, and I came upon a waterfall, pouring fresh water into a pool!
It was refreshing.

While I was cooling off, I was being watched by wild goats (Ibex) who climbed easily up and down the rocks. (*Photograph on page 6*)
En Gedi means 'the spring of the young goat'.
I saw for myself that En Gedi was a lush desert oasis and a perfect place for David and his men to hide.

5. After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told,
'David is in the Desert of En Gedi.'
So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the 'Crag of the Wild Goats.'
David and his men retreated into a large cave, hoping to hide until Saul and his army had passed by.
But Saul needed to go to the bathroom.
So he went into the cave all by himself.
His bodyguards and soldiers were left outside.
David and his men were far back in that very cave!
6. David's men said to him, 'This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'
They thought this was David's God-given chance to kill Saul.
David pulled out his sword.
He crept up on King Saul...and cut off a corner of his robe.
But he immediately felt bad about it.
7. David knew God had put Saul in a position of authority.
To kill Saul would be doing things his way, not God's way.
Even cutting his kingly robe was disrespectful.
God would deal with Saul when the time was right.
David would be king when the time was right.
He said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lay my hand on him, for he is the anointed of the Lord.'
Saul left the cave without suspecting a thing.
8. David left the cave and showed himself to Saul, calling out,
'My lord the king!'
When Saul looked back, there was David, bowed face down on the ground.
David knew Saul could kill him right then, but he trusted God.
He said to Saul, 'Why do you listen when people say, 'David wants to harm you'? You have seen something with your own eyes today.
The Lord put you in my power in the cave.
They said I should kill you, but I was merciful.
I said, 'I won't harm my master, because he is the Lord's appointed king.'
My father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand!
I cut off the corner of your robe, but I didn't kill you.
Now, understand and know I am not planning any evil against you.
I did nothing wrong to you, but you are hunting me to kill me.
May the Lord judge between us, and may he punish you for the wrong you have done to me!'

9. Saul asked, 'Is that your voice, David, my son?'
And he cried loudly.
Saul said, 'You are a better man than I am.
You have been good to me, but I have done wrong to you.
The Lord handed me over to you, but you did not kill me.
People don't normally let an enemy get away like this, do they?
May the Lord reward you because you were good to me today.
I know you will surely be king, and you will rule the kingdom of Israel.
Now swear to me by the LORD that you will not kill my descendants and that
you won't wipe out my name from my father's family.'
So David made the promise to Saul.
Then Saul went back home, and David and his men went back up to their
hideout in the cave.
10. David had a choice in that cave, didn't he?
He could have had his revenge on King Saul.
Saul had accused him of things that were not true.
He had made David leave his home and live on the run.
He had tried to kill David repeatedly.
But David chose to show mercy to Saul.
He could have acted in fear to save his own life, but chose to trust in God.

Ministry to the Children:

You might feel like you are in a dark cave, a place where nothing has gone right, and it might not even be your fault! You may get the chance to hurt the people who are causing you grief. You have a choice to make. Do you take revenge? Do you live in fear? Or do you choose mercy and trust God to help you? You are not forgotten or unseen. God's purpose for your life cannot be prevented or spoiled by other people, unless you decide to take matters into your own hands. What you choose to do in the dark times will affect what happens in your life! Trust God like David did, and when the time is right, He will promote you.

God gives you a choice. When you choose to follow Him, you're choosing a life filled with love, joy, and purpose. He transfers you from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13). You are rescued from darkness into light!

All you need to do is tell Jesus you're sorry for your sins, receive His forgiveness, and ask Him to come into your heart. He will—and as you follow Him, you will live in the light for the rest of your life.

Memory Verse: Psalm 32:7

'You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.'

Three Points of Contact:

One of the basic rules of rock climbing is the Three Points of Contact rule. This means that three body parts should always be touching the wall. Only take one hand or foot off the wall at any time and use it to grab the next hold. There's no need to take both feet off and drag your legs up. Likewise, you're likely to lose balance if you move both hands at once.

Like Twister: Create a horizontal climbing wall by writing the words of the Memory Verse out on red, green, yellow and blue cardboard 'holds' instead of circles. Use the spinner from the Twister game. Children must use three points of contact and try to reach a word. If they fall 'off the wall', they're out! Collect all the words and assemble the verse to recite aloud together.

Morning Tea: Food Ideas

Goat (Kid) Food: Savoury mix of lattice cereal, pretzels, 'goats' cheese crackers and chocolate lollies 'dumped' into a 'feeding trough'.

Date Loaf: I'm not sure if the kids will go for it, but your volunteers would enjoy a slice with a cuppa.

Guano: Bat droppings - Chocolate Crackles!

Ice Cave: A cave with permanent ice - Icy Poles or Zooper Doopers

Rocks: Rocky road or chocolate-coated lolly mix

Game: Ins and Outs

You Will Need:

- 8 balls of different sizes
- 8 circles of different sizes (from hula hoop size and down)

What to do:

Create 2 teams, one team tries to get all the balls inside all the circles, while the other team tries to get all the balls outside all the circles!



Craft: Goats

You'll find a variety of 'goat' crafts on the internet.

- Paper plate goats
- Cardboard tube goats
- Cut and paste and colour goats
- Headbands
- Stick puppet goats

Activity Sheets: Ibex Colouring Sheet

Photocopy the ibex colouring sheet on page 9 for children to colour (it's copyright-free).





