

1 Samuel 20 Commentary

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TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES

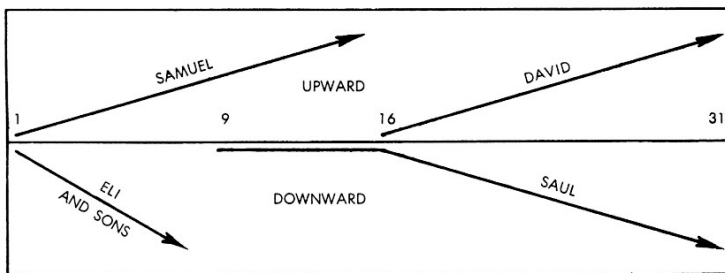
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

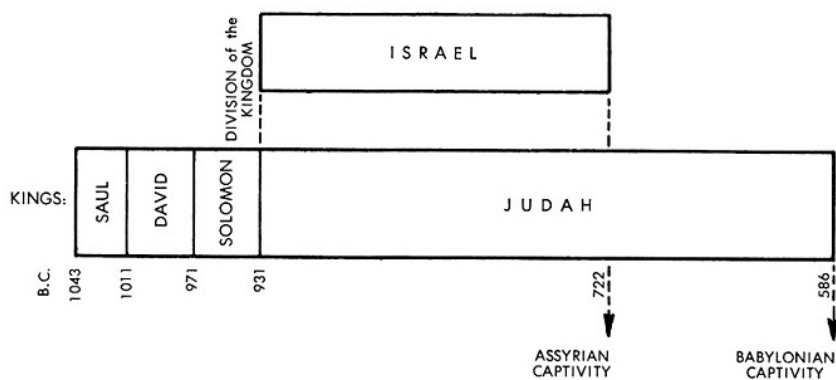
[The Ryrie Study Bible](#)

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Map on Left [ESV Global Study Bible](#), on right [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#)
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Overlappings in 1 Samuel



First Three Kings of Israel

1	9	16	31
SAMUEL —prophet, priest, judge	SAUL —man after man's heart	DAVID —man after God's heart	
—birth —childhood —judgeship	—choice —reign —rejection	—anointing —pursuit —exile	

Main Characters in 1 Samuel

MAPS TRACING DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL 1 SAMUEL 19-24

[Click here for an excellent map with DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL with Numbered Movements of David](#) - Copyright Faithlife / Logos Bible Software (<https://www.logos.com>).

Below is a summary from the [ESV Global Study Bible](#) of 18 places David fled

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The following notes are modified from ESV notes to include the related Scriptures.

David's growing reputation fueled Saul's jealousy which soon flamed into a desire to murder David (1Sa 19:9-10).

- (1) David fled from Saul in Gibeah (1Sa 19:9-10) and then from his home (1Sa 19:11-17)
- (2) After Saul tried unsuccessfully to kill him in his home, he fled to Samuel at Naioth in Ramah (1Sa 19:18)
- (3), Saul sought David in Naioth of Ramah, but the Spirit saved him (1Sa 19:19-24), and he fled back to meet Jonathan in Gibeah where Jonathan sent an "arrow-gram" warning David of Saul's determination to kill him (1Sa 20:1-42)
- (4). David then fled to Ahimelech the priest at Nob where he collected food and Goliath's sword. (1Sa 21:1-9)
- (5), David briefly sought refuge in the Philistine city of Gath (1Sa 21:10-15)
- (6) David then escaped to set up headquarters at the cave of Adullam where his army swelled to 400 men. (1Sa 22:1-2)
- (7), In order to protect his parents from harm, David left them in the care of the king of Moab at Mizpah (1Sa 22:3-4)
- (8) and went to live in "the stronghold", the cave of Adullam (1Sa 22:1, 4)
- (9). Prophet Gad warns David and he went to the forest of Hereth (1Sa 22:5)
- (10) and then left to rescue nearby Keilah from some Philistine raiding parties. (1Sa 23:1-5)
- (11) When David heard that Saul was coming to Keilah, he and his 600 men fled Keilah. (1Sa 23:9-13) David relocated to the wilderness of Ziph (1Sa 23:14)
- (12) After the men of Ziph betrayed David to Saul (1Sa 23:19-20), David and his men went to live in the wilderness of Maon (1Sa 23:24-25) and narrowly escaped capture there by Saul (1Sa 23:26-28)
- (13) . Fleeing the strongholds of Engedi (1Sa 23:29) David again evaded capture by Saul and refused an opportunity to take Saul's life. (1Sa 24:1-22)
- (14) After Samuel's death (1Sa 25:1) David went to the wilderness of Paran (1Sa 25:1)
- (15). While he was there, David was again betrayed to Saul by the men of Ziph and refused another

opportunity to take Saul's life. (1Sa 26:1-25)

(16) Finally, David and his men sought refuge with Achish, the king of Gath (1Sa 27:1-12)

Below is another map from the Holman Bible Atlas ([digital book](#); [Hardcover](#))

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1 Samuel 20:1 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity? And what is my sin before your father, that he is seeking my life?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:1 κα π δρᾱ Δαυιδ κ Ναυαθ ν Ραμα κα ρχεται ν πιον Ιωναθαν κα επεν τ πεπο ηκα κα τ τ δ κημ μου κα τ μ ρτηκα ν πιον το πατρ ς σου τι πιζητε τ ν ψυχ ν μου

LXE 1 Samuel 20:1 And David fled from Navath in Rama, and comes into the presence of Jonathan; and he said, What have I done, and what is my fault, and wherein have I sinned before thy father, that he seeks my life?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:1 And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

NET 1 Samuel 20:1 David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came to Jonathan and asked, "What have I done? What is my offense? How have I sinned before your father? For he is seeking my life!"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:1 David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came to Jonathan and asked, "What have I done? What did I do wrong? How have I sinned against your father so that he wants to take my life?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:1 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said before Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:1 Then David fled from Naioth at Ramah and went to Jonathan and asked, "What have I done? What is my crime? How have I wronged your father, that he is trying to take my life?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:1 David now fled from Naioth in Ramah and found Jonathan. "What have I done?" he exclaimed. "What is my crime? How have I offended your father that he is so determined to kill me?"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:1 David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came before Jonathan and said, "What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin against your father that he is trying to take my life?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:1 Fleeing from the huts at Ramah, David went and confronted Jonathan, 'What have I done, what is my guilt, how have I wronged your father, for him to want to take my life?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:1 David fled from the sheds near Ramah, and went to Jonathan. "What have I done?" he asked him. "What crime or what offense does your father hold against me that he seeks my life?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:1 And David fleeth from Naioth in Ramah, and cometh, and saith before Jonathan, 'What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what my sin before thy father, that he is seeking my life?'

- fled: 1Sa 19:19-24 23:26-28 Ps 124:6-8 2Pe 2:9
- What have: 1Sa 12:3 24:11,17 Ps 7:3-5 18:20-24 2Co 1:12 1Jn 3:21
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID FLEES FROM PROPHET TO THE CROWN PRINCE

[Alan Redpath](#) - This was the beginning of a very unhappy time in David's life, a dark and lonely experience which nevertheless played a tremendous part in the making of his character

THOUGHT - See Dr Gene Getz's thoughts on applying the friendship of Jonathan and David to our lives.

Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said to Jonathan - Where did they meet? It could hardly have been at the

royal palace, or Saul's spies would have related this to the king. Undoubtedly it was somewhere near Gibeah, Saul's royal residence.

Barnes - While Saul was under the constraining influence of the spirit of prophecy, David escaped from Naioth, and, probably by Samuel's advice, returned to Saul's court to commune with Jonathan. Nothing could be a better evidence of his innocence than thus putting himself in Jonathan's power.

What have I done? What is my iniquity ('avon)? And what is my sin (chattat/chattath) before your father, that he is seeking my life - Three questions from David, all having to do with misdeeds of some sort. While David undoubtedly knew he was not perfect, he knew of no great sin against King Saul that would warrant his death warrant. It seems that David was a bit naive in not grasping that Saul was insanely jealous of David's repeated successes.

Spurgeon - David had an enemy upon the throne; and God gave him a friend in the heir to the throne. If thou hast an enemy, thou hast also a friend; God sets the one over against the other in his providence, do thou set the one over against the other in thy thoughts, and be thou comforted thereby. David might have been very heavy at heart about Saul, and so he was; but Jonathan came in to be the makeweight on the other side, and turn the scale in favor of the son of Jesse. Of him David enquired, "What is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?"

Gene Getz - When Jonathan tried to answer (David's) questions positively and reassure him, David remained skeptical and nervous. In fairness to David, we must acknowledge that he was right about Saul. Jonathan was deceived. David may have been frightened and anxious, but he had an accurate picture of his relationship with the king of Israel. Saul hated him desperately and was determined to take his life. **David's problem was that he didn't trust God to protect and deliver him. He had lost perspective on the past. What about "the lion," "the bear" and "the giant Goliath"? Seemingly, he even ignored what had just transpired in Ramah, when God intervened and protected him from Saul. Lost in a maze of his current circumstances, he proceeded to take matters into his own hands.** The results were tragic! David's first scheme (1Sa 20:5-7) (Borrow [David: God's man in faith and failure](#))

Henry Blackaby - What Have I Done? ([The Experience](#)) 1 Samuel 20:1

David's life was tragic in many ways. He did his best in every situation he was in, and he loved God with all his heart. He was literally minding his own business when he was plucked from the shepherd's field and made special assistant to the king. He served King Saul faithfully, but instead of enjoying the king's favor, he received only his wrath. King Saul noticed David's success and grew jealous. He envied David's popularity. Rather than appreciating David as a friend, Saul tried to murder him as an enemy.

David was bewildered. He had done nothing wrong. Why did King Saul hate him so much? It didn't make sense. David grew to recognize that jealousy and hatred never make sense. Bitterness isn't rational. When people are miserable with their own lives, they become angry and jealous of others' happiness. And, as the saying goes, "Hurt people, hurt people." Poor David was a victim of his own success. The more successful he became, the more Saul hated him.

Don't be surprised if this happens to you as well. If God honors you as you obey him, your life will stand in sharp contrast to those whom God is not blessing. They may grow envious of you. They may resent your holy life because it reveals their disobedience for what it is. They may seek to bring you down to their level. Don't be discouraged. Understand that anytime someone walks with God there will be those who will resent him. The religious leaders of Jesus' day resented his life so much they killed him. Yet it is better for you to walk with God and have integrity than to ever settle for lukewarm Christianity as some do.

1 Samuel 20:2 He said to him, "Far from it, you shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me. So why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so!"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:2 κα ε πεν α τ Ιωναθαν μηδαμ ς σοι ο μ ποθ ν ς δο ο μ ποι σ πατ ρ μου μα μ γα μικρ ν κα ο κ ποκαλ ψει τ τον μου κα τ τι κρ ψει πατ ρ μου τ μα το το ο κ σπιν το το

LXE 1 Samuel 20:2 And Jonathan said to him, Far be it from thee: thou shalt not die: behold, my father will not do any thing great or small without discovering it to me; and why should my father hide this matter from me? This thing is not so.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:2 And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so.

NET 1 Samuel 20:2 Jonathan said to him, "By no means are you going to die! My father does nothing large or

small without making me aware of it. Why would my father hide this matter from me? It just won't happen!" (Note - The translation follows the Qere, many medieval Hebrew mss, and the ancient versions in reading "he will not do," rather than the Kethib of the MT ("do to him").)

CSB 1 Samuel 20:2 Jonathan said to him, "No, you won't die. Listen, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without telling me. So why would he hide this matter from me? This can't be true."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:2 And he said to him, "Far from it! You shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me. And why should my father hide this from me? It is not so."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:2 "Never!" Jonathan replied. "You are not going to die! Look, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without confiding in me. Why would he hide this from me? It's not so!"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:2 "That's not true!" Jonathan protested. "You're not going to die. He always tells me everything he's going to do, even the little things. I know my father wouldn't hide something like this from me. It just isn't so!"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:2 He said to him, "Far from it! You shall not die. My father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me; and why should my father hide this from me? Never!"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:2 He replied, 'You must not think that! You are not going to die. My father, you see, does nothing, important or unimportant, without confiding in me, so why should my father hide this from me? It is not true.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:2 Jonathan answered him: "Heaven forbid that you should die! My father does nothing, great or small, without disclosing it to me. Why, then, should my father conceal this from me? This cannot be so!"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:2 And he saith to him, 'Far be it! thou dost not die; lo, my father doth not do anything great or small and doth not uncover mine ear; and wherefore doth my father hide from me this thing? this thing is not.'

- God forbid: 1Sa 14:45 Ge 44:7 Jos 22:29 24:16 Lu 20:16
- show it me: Heb. uncover mine ear, 1Sa 20:12 9:15 *marg: Ps 40:6 Isa 50:5 Joh 15:15 17:8
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN "PROPHESIES" DAVID WOULD NOT DIE

He said to him, "Far from it, you shall not die- Jonathan's words are actually prophetic whether he knew it or not.

Spurgeon - And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: He could not think that his father really intended to take the life of his friend.

Behold ([hinneh](#)), **my father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me. So why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so** - NET - "Why would my father hide this matter from me? It just won't happen!" Jonathan explains what David would not die at the hands of Saul. The **NLT** helps rendering it "He always tells me everything he's going to do, even the little things. I know my father wouldn't hide something like this from me. It just isn't so!"

[Barnes](#) - Jonathan's unwillingness to believe evil of his father is one of the many admirable traits in his character.

Spurgeon - One admires Jonathan for defending Saul; he will not believe anything bad of his father. Children should never believe anything evil of their parents unless it is forced upon them; this rule is a part of the command, "Honour thy father and thy mother."

1 Samuel 20:3 Yet David vowed again, saying, "Your father knows well that I have found favor in your sight, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But truly as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:3 καὶ περὶ θῆ Δαυὶδ τῷ Ἰωνᾶθαν καὶ ἐπεὶ γινώσκων ὁ δὲν πατὴρ σου τί ἐρηκάχῃ νύ φθαλμὸς σου καὶ ἐπεὶ μὴ γινώτω τὸ τῷ Ἰωνᾶθαν μὴ ὁ βόληται ἀλλὰ ζῆκριοις καὶ ζῆψυχῇ σου τί καθ' ἐπὶ πόνυ μὴ πλησθαι νύ μόνον μου καὶ τὸ θάνατον τοῦ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:3 And David answered Jonathan, and said, Thy father knows surely that I have found grace in thy sight, and he said, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he refuse his consent: but as the Lord lives and thy soul lives, as I said, the space is filled up between me and death.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:3 And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.

NET 1 Samuel 20:3 Taking an oath, David again said, "Your father is very much aware of the fact that I have found favor with you, and he has thought, 'Don't let Jonathan know about this, or he will be upset.' But as surely as the LORD lives and you live, there is about one step between me and death!"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:3 But David said, "Your father certainly knows that you have come to look favorably on me. He has said, 'Jonathan must not know of this, or else he will be grieved.'" David also swore, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you yourself live, there is but a step between me and death."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:3 But David vowed again, saying, "Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he thinks, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But truly, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:3 But David took an oath and said, "Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said to himself, 'Jonathan must not know this or he will be grieved.' Yet as surely as the LORD lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:3 Then David took an oath before Jonathan and said, "Your father knows perfectly well about our friendship, so he has said to himself, 'I won't tell Jonathan-- why should I hurt him?' But I swear to you that I am only a step away from death! I swear it by the LORD and by your own soul!"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:3 But David also swore, "Your father knows well that you like me; and he thinks, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But truly, as the LORD lives and as you yourself live, there is but a step between me and death."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:3 In reply, David swore, 'Your father knows very well that I enjoy your favour, and thinks, "Jonathan must not know about this or he will be upset." But, as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, there is only a step between me and death.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:3 But David replied: "Your father is well aware that I am favored with your friendship, so he has decided, 'Jonathan must not know of this lest he be grieved.' Nevertheless, as the LORD lives and as you live, there is but a step between me and death."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:3 And David sweareth again, and saith, 'Thy father hath certainly known that I have found grace in thine eyes, and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved; and yet, Jehovah liveth, and thy soul liveth, but -- as a step between me and death.'

- **vowed:** De 6:13 Jer 4:2 Heb 6:16
- **but truly:** 1Sa 25:26 27:1 2Sa 15:21 2Ki 2:2,4,6
- **soul:** 1Sa 1:26 17:55 Jer 38:16
- **step:** 1Sa 27:1 De 28:66 Ps 116:3 1Co 15:30,31 2Co 1:9,10
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID VOWS TO JONATHAN

Yet David vowed ([shaba](#) derived from "seven") **again, saying** - This is the first of two oaths in this passage.

Your father knows well that I have found favor in your sight, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' - David's words seem reasonable. Saul knew Jonathan and David were friends. So it follows that Saul would withhold information related to David because he did not want to grieve David (Do we really see Saul express that much compassion?).

But truly as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death - NLT = "But I swear to you that I am only a step away from death! I swear it by the LORD and by your own soul!" This was literally true for 3 times David's steps dodged Saul's spear. One misstep by David and we would have been dead. But of course, God is sovereignly protecting David from Saul.

Yesterday I was born: to-day I live: tomorrow I must die.

-- Spurgeon

Spurgeon - He had so often escaped, as it were by the skin of his teeth, from his cruel persecutor, that he knew himself to be in a position of extreme peril. He wanted Jonathan to believe the truth, namely, that Saul was seeking to kill him, and that he was in great danger from the wrath of the king; therefore he took a double oath that it was even so. It is not for Christians to imitate David in this respect, for our Lord's command to his disciples is, "Swear not at all; but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Don Fortner in a solemn sermon entitled ['Will You Die Tonight?'](#) writes Blessed is that person who thus lives in the immediate prospect of eternity.

There is an hour when I must part
With all I hold most dear:
And life, with its best hopes, will then
As nothingness appear.

There is an hour when I must sink
Beneath the stroke of death;
And yield to Him Who gave it first
My struggling, vital breath.

There is an hour when I must stand
Before the judgment-seat, (either 2Co 5:10 or Rev 20:11-15)
And all my sins, and all my foes,
In awful vision meet.

There is an hour when I must look
On one eternity,
And nameless woe, or blissful life,
My endless portion be.

C. STANFORD. The nearness of heaven is suggested by the epithet "veil." Christians, there is only a veil between us and heaven! A veil is the thinnest and frailest of all conceivable partitions. It is but a fine tissue, a delicate fabric of embroidery. It waves in the wind; the touch of a child may stir it, and accident may rend it; the silent action of time will moulder it away. The veil that conceals heaven is only our embodied existence; and, though fearfully and wonderfully made, it is only wrought out of our frail mortality. So slight is it, that the puncture of a thorn, the touch of an insect's sting, the breath of an infected atmosphere, may make it shake and fall. In a bound, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, in the throb of a pulse, in the flash of a thought, we may start into disembodied spirits, glide unabashed into the company of great and mighty angels, pass into the light and amazement of eternity, know the great secret, gaze upon splendors which flesh and blood could not sustain, and which no words lawful for man to utter could describe! Brethren in Christ, there is but a step between you and death; between you and heaven there is but a veil!

Living on the Edge Read 1 Samuel 20:3

Some people live on the edge because they choose to. They bungee jump, sky dive and engage in other extreme sports just for the thrill of it. Others live on the edge not by choice, but because circumstances have placed them in dangerous places.

David fell into this latter category. He had sought to serve Saul faithfully and defend his country and his king with passion. But his success in these efforts only managed to arouse the king's jealousy. When women came out of the cities singing David's praises (1 Sam. 18:6-8), Saul became enraged and began to plot to do away with the young man he now viewed as a threat to his throne. David soon found himself only one step ahead of a king who was trying to kill him. But in the midst of these circumstances, David knew that God was with him and would preserve him (Ps. 34:6).

Many Christians today also live on the edge. They live in countries where the penalty for being a Christian is death. They live in nations where famine is claiming the lives of thousands. They live in drug-infested neighborhoods where drive-by shootings and gang killings are commonplace. Yet they also can claim God's presence and protection (Ps. 34:7).

Perhaps you live on the edge. Though your life is not in danger, you may be living on the edge in terms of your job, your family or your marriage. Perhaps you feel that at any moment one or more of these could fall apart and leave you helpless. Put your trust in

the God of David. Let Him provide what you need to move away from the edge. ([Courtesy of Back to the Bible](#))

Christ can take the edge out of living.

Spurgeon - Sermon Excerpt - [BUT A STEP](#) - "There is but a step between me and death."—1 Samuel 20:3.

THIS was David's description of his own condition. King Saul was seeking to destroy him. The bitter malice of that king would not be satisfied with anything short of the blood of his rival. Jonathan did not know this. He could not believe so badly of his father as that he could wish to kill the champion of Israel, the brave, true-hearted young David; and so he assured David that it could not be so—that he had not heard of any plots against him. But David, who knew better, said, "It is certainly so. Your father seeks my blood, and there is but a step between me and death."

Now, it was by knowing his danger that David escaped. Had he remained as ignorant of his own peril as his friend Jonathan had been, he would have walked into the lion's mouth, and he would have fallen, by the hand of Saul. But to be forewarned is to be forearmed; he was, therefore, able to save his life because he perceived his danger. It would have been a very unwise person who should have said, "Do not tell David about it. You see that he is very happy in Jonathan's company. Do not disturb him. It will only make him fret. Do not tell him about Saul's anger." But a true and wise friend would acquaint David of his danger, in order that he might seize the opportunity to escape. So also to-night somebody might say, "Many people now present are in great danger, and do not dare to think about death; do not mention the unpleasant subject to them." Well, sirs, if my object were to please you, if my desire were to seem as one who playeth a merry tune upon a goodly instrument, I certainly should not speak to you of death and danger. But, then, it would be infamous to allow men and women to stand in infinite jeopardy and not to warn them; and it is kindness to speak to those who are carelessly at ease and tell them salutary truth. It will not put them in danger; but it may, God blessing it, be the means of their escaping from eternal ruin. So, I pray you, while I talk upon this theme, which may seem to be a sad one, ask God to make it a great blessing to those who hitherto have been sporting upon the brink-of fate without thinking of the solemnities of eternity.

It is rather a notable state of things, is it not, for David to be conscious of danger, and to be telling his friend Jonathan that he is in danger? I do not often meet with the case now. If I am the Jonathan, I have to keep on warning David of his danger, and I find it very difficult to wake up my friend to a sense of that danger. I should like to live to see the day in which David would come to Jonathan—I mean in which men in danger would come to me—and say, "There is but a step between me and death." "We love to see care for the soul, and concern about a future state. Whenever God's Holy Spirit is at work we do see it: sinners begin to be aware of their condition, and they come and tell us of their danger, and enquire for the way of escape. It is the simplest thing in the world to tell the awakened sinner how he may find peace; the difficulty lies in awakening the sinner. To cheer those who are alarmed is such good work that we would sit up all night at it. We can never have too much of it. To bind up the broken in heart when the Master gives us his gospel, is the most pleasant duty out of heaven. The worst of it is, that we cannot persuade them that they need to be broken in heart, or lead them to feel that they are in peril; but still shutting their eyes to all the truth they will go wildly on, determined not to know. Too many act as if it were folly to look a few days ahead, as if it were a work of supererogation to foresee the evil, a needless sorrow to think of eternity.

To-night I want to press the truth home, as far as it is truth, upon each person here present, that there is, or there may be, but a step between him and death. First, **in some sense this is true of everybody**, "There is a step, and but a step, between me and death." Secondly, **to some it is peculiarly true**. There are many persons—and some of them are here to-night—who might say with emphasis, "There is but a step between me and death" When I have spoken upon those two things, I shall then say, "Suppose that it is not so"; and conclude by saying, "Suppose that it is so."

(FULL SERMON [BUT A STEP](#))

[Chuck Smith - "ONE STEP FROM ETERNITY"](#)

Intro. Saul is obsessed with an ungodly jealousy of David which has prompted him to try twice to kill David with a javelin. In the next several chapters we will find him chasing David all over the countryside trying to catch him to kill him.

I. JONATHAN THE SON OF SAUL HAS BECOME A VERY CLOSE ALLY TO DAVID. THERE WAS A BEAUTIFUL BOND BETWEEN THEM.

A. In the previous chapter we found David fleeing to Samuel who was in Naioth of Ramah.

1. Saul had sent servants down to capture David, but the Spirit of God was so heavy they would just begin to prophesy when they came near Samuel and David.
2. After this happened to three groups of servants, Saul finally came down himself, and before he got there, he

began to prophesy.

3. David fled from Naoth and met with Jonathan. This is where our story picks up here in chapter 20.

B. David asked Jonathan what he had done, what was his sin or iniquity against Saul that he was so determined to take David's life?

C. Jonathan insisted that David would not die, that Jonathan was sure his father would not do anything against David without first telling him.

D. David said that his father knew the friendship between them so that he was hiding his intentions from Jonathan.

E. Here is where David declared "As truly as the Lord lives, there is only a step between me and death."

II. IN REALITY THAT IS TRUE OF ALL OF US, WE ARE JUST A STEP AWAY FROM DEATH.

A. James asked, "What is life?" then he said, it is as a vapor that appears for a moment then vanishes.

B. In our early years we do not think much about death, we seem to have a feeling of immortality. Death seems to be removed far down the road.

C. As we get older we begin to realize our mortality, but still think of death as being down the road yet a ways.

D. The truth of the matter is that none of us know just when death is going to come knocking at our door.

E. The Bible says that it is appointed once unto man to die.

1. God is the One who has made that appointment, and you do not know just when that appointment is made.

2. Often the appointment comes far sooner than a person anticipated.

3. Jesus spoke a parable of a certain rich man.

Lk 12:16 The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Lk 12:17 And he thought to himself, "What shall I do, because I do not have enough room to store all my fruit?"

Lk 12:18 And he said, "I know what I will do: I will pull down my barns, and build bigger; and there will I store all my fruit and my goods.

Lk 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have enough goods stored up to last for many years; take it easy, eat, drink, [and] be merry.

Lk 12:20 But God said unto him, "Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of you: then who shall own all those things, which you have provided?"

4. This man thought that he had it made, and that he would be able to just relax and enjoy life for many years, but God had different thoughts.

5. He was just a step away from death and did not even know it.

6. This is so often true of a person, you may be much closer to death than you really imagine. You may be thinking of your security for many years to come, but God is saying, "You fool, you are just a step away from eternity."

7. We know that death often comes without advance warning, we are often shocked when we hear of the untimely death of a friend in some accident.

a. Those working at their desks in the World Trade Center who were at the point of impact by those planes, had no advance warning.

b. They were just a step away from death, and did not even know it.

E. In the Old Testament we have the story of Belshazzar the king of Babylon.

1. Though the city of Babylon was under siege, he had such confidence in the defenses of the city, that he threw a great party.

2. While the enemy outside the great walls were planning his destruction, he was getting drunk.

3. When he ordered that the holy vessels that his grandfather took from the temple in Jerusalem be brought in

that they might drink their wine from those gold and silver cups, and while they were praising the gods of gold and silver suddenly they saw a hand writing on the wall strange words Mene, mene, tekel upharsin.

4. At the sight he suddenly sobered up and called for the wise men to interpret the writing for him, which they were unable to do.

5. Finally Daniel was brought in and interpreted for him the words. He heard these fateful words.

6. Daniel first preached him a sermon. He told him that he was well aware of his grandfather from whom he had inherited the kingdom, how in his pride, God humbled him, Daniel said now you in your pride have not humbled yourself before Him, but have ordered the sacred vessels that were brought from the temple in Jerusalem to be brought in that you might drink your wine from them, and you have praised the gods of gold and silver, but the God in whose hand your very breath is, you have not glorified.

a. You are dependant upon God for your very breath. Yet so many use that very breath to curse God.

b. The breath of Belshazzar was fouled with the smell of wine.

Dan 5:26 This [is] the interpretation of the words: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. (It's all over, you are washed up.)

Dan 5:27 TEKEL; You have been weighed in the balances, and are found wanting.

Dan 5:28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

6. We read, "And that night was Belshazzar slain."

a. One moment drinking and celebrating, and in a short time he is in eternity.

b. He did have a little warning, you may not however get an advance notice.

7. Perhaps God is weighing you in His divine balances of justice just now, will He find you wanting?

III. IN THE LIGHT OF THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE, AND THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH HOW SHOULD I LIVE?

A. Moses said:

Ps 90:12 So teach [us] to number our days, that we may apply [our] hearts unto wisdom.

1. I should live a holy and righteous life, for I never know when I will take that step into eternity.

2. I should live my life in such a way that God is pleased with me, so when I take that step, I will step into His kingdom of light rather than stepping into the kingdom of darkness.

B. Jesus said to His disciples: Be ready, for the Son of man is coming at an hour when ye think not. He then spoke a parable to them.

Lk 12:42 Who is the faithful and wise servant, whom the lord shall make ruler over his household, to give [them their] portion of meat in due season?

Lk 12:43 Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing.

Lk 12:44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

Lk 12:45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delays His coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

Lk 12:46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he is not expecting Him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in pieces, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

Lk 12:47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not [himself], neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many [stripes].

C. We should live so that at whatever moment the Lord says this is your last step, we will be ready to step into His kingdom.

1. Not everyone has a warning as to when death might come.

2. Many who have died took that last step not knowing that it was the last step.

3. God is under no obligation to warn you.

4. You may be planning a death bed repentance, but you may not get that chance.

5. It may be that some day you are planning to get right with God, to clean up your act and serve the Lord.

6. You have no guarantee that God is going to wait for that day.

D. You may be telling God that you want to come to Him on your terms' that you will choose the time and place.

1. Many people have made that mistake.

2. We must come to God on His terms. Who do I think that I am that I can dictate the terms to God?

3. The governor Felix said to Paul the Apostle that he would talk to him again about salvation on a more convenient day, tragically for him, that more convenient day never came.

4. Now is the time to get right with God.

ROM 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now [it is] high time to awake out of sleep: for now [is] our salvation nearer than when we believed.

5. Paul wrote, God has said I have heard you in the accepted time and I will help you in the day of salvation. Paul adds, behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

1 Samuel 20:4 Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:4 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν πρ ς Δαυιδ τ πιθυμε ψυχ σου κα τ ποι σω σοι

LXE 1 Samuel 20:4 And Jonathan said to David, What does thy soul desire, and what shall I do for thee.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:4 Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.

NET 1 Samuel 20:4 Jonathan replied to David, "Tell me what I can do for you."

CSB 1 Samuel 20:4 Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:4 Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:4 Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you want me to do, I'll do for you."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:4 "Tell me what I can do to help you," Jonathan exclaimed.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:4 Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:4 At which, Jonathan said to David, 'Whatever you think best, I will certainly do for you.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:4 Jonathan then said to David, "I will do whatever you wish."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:4 And Jonathan saith to David, 'What doth thy soul say? -- and I do it for thee.'

- desireth: Heb. speaketh, or thinketh
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN ACQUIESCES TO DAVID'S DESIRES

Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you - Literally - "whatever your soul says, I will do for you." **NET** - ""Tell me what I can do for you." **NJB** - "Whatever you think best, I will certainly do for you."

Spurgeon - Such was his love for David that he would make no exception; whatever there was that David wished him to do, he would do it for him. Love promises large things. One is reminded here of the love of Christ, and of how he says, "Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

1 Samuel 20:5 So David said to Jonathan, "**Behold**, tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field until the third evening.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:5 κα ε πεν Δαυιδ πρ ς Ιωναθαν δο δ νεομην α ριον κα γ καθ σας ο καθ σομαι μετ

το βασιλῶς φαγεῖν καὶ ἀποστείλες με καὶ κρυβόσμαι ἐν τῷ πεδῶς ὁ δὲ λησ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:5 And David said to Jonathan, Behold, to-morrow is the new moon, and I shall not on any account sit down to eat, but thou shalt let me go, and I will hide in the plain till the evening.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even.

NET 1 Samuel 20:5 David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am certainly expected to join the king for a meal. You must send me away so I can hide in the field until the third evening from now.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:5 So David told him, "Look, tomorrow is the New Moon, and I'm supposed to sit down and eat with the king. Instead, let me go, and I'll hide in the field until the third night.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:5 David said to Jonathan, "Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit at table with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field till the third day at evening.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:5 So David said, "Look, tomorrow is the New Moon festival, and I am supposed to dine with the king; but let me go and hide in the field until the evening of the day after tomorrow.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:5 David replied, "Tomorrow we celebrate the new moon festival. I've always eaten with the king on this occasion, but tomorrow I'll hide in the field and stay there until the evening of the third day.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:5 David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at the meal; but let me go, so that I may hide in the field until the third evening.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:5 David replied, 'Look, tomorrow is New Moon and I ought to sit at table with the king, but you must let me go and hide in the countryside until the evening.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:5 David answered: "Tomorrow is the new moon, when I should in fact dine with the king. Let me go and hide in the open country until evening.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:5 And David saith unto Jonathan, 'Lo, the new moon is to-morrow; and I do certainly sit with the king to eat; and thou hast sent me away, and I have been hidden in a field till the third evening;

- **the new moon:** The months of the Hebrews were lunar months, and they reckoned from one new moon to another: and, as their feasts, particularly the passover, were reckoned according to this, they were very scrupulous in observing the first appearance of each new moon. On these new moons, they offered sacrifices, and feasted together: but the gathering together of all the families of a tribe on such occasions seems to have taken place only once in the year. 1Sa 20:6 Nu 10:10 28:11 2Ki 4:23 Ps 81:3 Col 2:16
- **that I may:** 1Sa 20:19 19:2 Ps 55:12 Pr 22:3 Joh 8:59 Ac 17:14
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID'S PLAN REGARDING SUPPER WITH SAUL

So David said to Jonathan, "Behold ([hinneh](#)), tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king.- That David would even propose this sit down meal with Saul is amazing after having escaped 3 spear pinnings, a escape through a window and the escape from Naioth. So in David's plan in 1Sa 20:5-7 one has to ask where was God in David's "arrow-gram" plan? The answer is that He was not in the plan! And there is no evidence that David even inquired of the LORD regarding this plan! Can we not see David is beginning to slip from his former faith so beautifully attested to in his confrontation with Goliath...

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, Whom you have taunted. 46 **"This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands**, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that **the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.**" (1Sa 17:45-47)

Where was David's "giant faith" in his struggle with a puny king who had been rejected by Yahweh? What happened to David's God-consciousness? Somehow, some way, David had lost his spiritual bearings. Clearly his former formidable faith was now fading into feeble faith. "The David we once knew would have said to Jonathan that day—"This struggle between your father and me is the LORD's. He will deliver me just as He did in Ramah." Instead, he came up with his own scheme. He left God out of the picture."

THOUGHT - Before we are too hard on David, can we not all identify with our former "giant" faith fading quickly because of fear, especially fear of men (Pr 29:25, Ps 118:6)? I certainly can and since [I live in a "glass house"](#) I will not sling stones at David! Praise God for the fact that God does not give up on us, His elect, beloved children (1Jn 3:1+, 1Th 1:4+), when (not "if" but "when"!) our faith sags! It is times like these, that we need to make a conscious choice of our will (even our will being continuously energized by His Spirit - Php 2:13NLT+) and recall to mind, consciously remembering the non-lying God's (Titus 1:2+, Nu 23:19+) steadfast promise "that He Who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." (Php 1:6+ - [remind yourself of this truth by listening to Steve Green's song](#) 1Th 5:24+). And then we need to run to His Book (cf Pr 18:10+) and read His precious and magnificent promises (2Pe 1:4+), confident in the faith strengthening power of His Word, which Paul attests to in Romans 10:17+ writing that "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Hallelujah, thank You Lord God. Amen.

Warren Wiersbe - It was customary for each Jewish family to hold a feast at the new moon (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15; Ps. 81:3), and Saul would expect David to attend. If Saul's son-in-law and leading military hero didn't attend the feast, it would be an insult to the king as well as the family, so David's absence would help reveal Saul's genuine attitude toward David. (Borrow [Be successful](#))

But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field until the third evening- NLT = "tomorrow I'll hide in the field and stay there until the evening of the third day."

NEW MOON [SMITH] The first day of the lunar month was observed as a holy day. In addition to the daily sacrifice there were offered two young bullocks, a ram and seven lambs of the first year as a burnt offering, with the proper meat offerings and drink offerings, and a kid as a sin offering. (Numbers 28:11-15) As on the Sabbath, trade and handicraft work were stopped, (Amos 8:5) and the temple was opened for public worship. (Isaiah 66:23; Ezekiel 46:3) The trumpets were blown at the offering of the special sacrifices for the day, as on the solemn festivals. (Numbers 10:10; Psalms 81:3) It was an occasion for state banquets. (1 Samuel 20:5-24) In later, if not in earlier, times fasting was intermitted at the new moons. Judith 8:6. The new moons are generally mentioned so as to show that they were regarded as a peculiar class of holy days, distinguished from the solemn feasts and the Sabbaths. (1 Chronicles 11:31; 2 Chronicles 2:4; 8:13; 31:3; Ezra 3:5; Nehemiah 10:33; Ezekiel 45:17) The seventh new moon of the religious year, being that of Tisri, commenced the civil year, and had a significance and rites of its own. It was a day of holy convocation. The religious observance of the day of the new moon may plainly be regarded as the consecration of a natural division of time.

John Walton - New Moon festival. Keyed to its use of a lunar calendar, ancient Israel marked the first day of the month, with its "new moon" phase, as a festival day (every twenty-nine or thirty days). As on the Sabbath all work was to cease (see Amos 8:5), and there were sacrifices to be made (Num 28:11–15). In the monarchy period the king became a prominent figure in these celebrations (see Ezek 45:17), and this may explain the political importance of Saul's feast. The festival continued to be observed in the postexilic period as well (Ezra 3:5; Neh 10:33). New Moon festivals were also prominent in Mesopotamia from late in the third millennium down to the Neo-Babylonian period in the middle of the first millennium b.c. ([IVP Background Commentary](#))

Unger - New Moon (Heb. rōsh hōdesh, "beginning of a month," Num. 10:10; 28:11). The ordinary new moons, i.e., all except the seventh, were raised out of the rank of ordinary days, but not to that of festivals. They may be called demi-feast days and will therefore be inserted here.

Origin. Many nations of antiquity celebrated the returning light of the moon with festivals, sacrifices, and prayers. Some believe that the object of Moses in providing for this occasion was to suppress heathen celebrations of the day. There was, however, a deeper meaning in this observance. The new moon stood as the representative of the month. For an individual day, a burnt offering that emphasized consecration to the Lord rather than atonement was sufficient. But for the month, because of sins committed and remaining unexpiated during the course of the month, a special sin offering for atonement was required. Thus, on the ground of the forgiveness and reconciliation with God thereby obtained, the people might be able in the burnt offering to consecrate their lives anew to the Lord.

Mode of Ascertaining the New Moon. As the festivals, according to the Mosaic law, were always to be celebrated on the same day of the month, it was necessary to fix the commencement of the month. This was determined by the appearance of the new moon; for the new moon was reckoned not by astronomical calculation, but by actual personal observation. On the thirtieth day of the month watchmen were placed on commanding heights around Jerusalem to watch the sky. As soon as each of them detected the moon he hastened to a house in the city kept for this purpose and was there examined by the president of the Sanhedrin. When the evidence of the appearance was deemed satisfactory, the president stood up and formally announced it, uttering the words, "It is

consecrated.” The information was immediately sent throughout the land from the Mount of Olives by beacon fires on the tops of the hills. The religious observance of the day of the new moon may plainly be regarded as the consecration of a natural division of time.

Sacrifices. These were of two types: (1) the usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings, and (2) special sacrifices, consisting of two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, as a burnt offering, with their grain and drink offerings. A goat was also presented as a sin offering, at which time the priests blew the silver trumpets (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15). It is evident from the writings of the prophets and from postexilic documents that the New Moon was an important national festival. It was often called a feast along with the Sabbath (Ps. 81:3; Isa. 1:13; Ezek. 46:1; Hos. 2:11), on which all business ceased (Amos 8:5), the pious Israelites waited on the prophets for edification (2 Kings 4:23), many families and clans presented their annual thank offerings (1 Sam. 20:6, 29), social gatherings and feasting were indulged in (vv. 5, 24), and the most devout persons omitted fasting (Judith 8:6). (Borrow [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary](#))

QUESTION - [What was the significance of the new moon in Bible times?](#)

ANSWER - The significance of the new moon in Bible times is that it marked the beginning of a new month (the [Hebrew calendar](#) is lunar-based), and it was a time when the Israelites were to bring an offering to God. The beginning of the month was known not by astronomical calculations but by the testimony of messengers appointed to watch for the first visible appearance of the new moon. As soon as the first sliver was seen, the fact was announced throughout the whole country by signal fires on the mountaintops and the blowing of trumpets. The Hebrew word for “month” (*hodesh*) literally means “new moon.”

In Numbers 28:11, the New Moon offering is commanded for the first time: “On the first of every month, present to the Lord a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram and seven male lambs a year old, all without defect.” Each of the animal sacrifices was to be accompanied by a grain offering and a drink offering (verses 12–14). In addition to [burnt offerings](#), a goat was to be sacrificed to the Lord as a sin offering (verse 15). The New Moon festival marked the consecration to God of each new month in the year. New Moon festivals were marked by sacrifices, the blowing of trumpets over the sacrifices (Numbers 10:10), the suspension of all labor and trade (Nehemiah 10:31), and social or family feasts (1 Samuel 20:5).

As with any religious ritual, **there was a danger of observing the New Moon festivals without a true heart to follow God** Later in their history, the Israelites continued to observe the New Moon festivals **outwardly**, even after their **hearts had turned cold toward God**. They readily parted with their bulls and lambs and goats, but **they would not give up their sins**. They relied on the **outward** observations to cleanse them, even though there was still evil in their **hearts** (1Sa 16:7). God had severe words for such hypocrisy: “Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them” (Isaiah 1:13–14). Sin is hateful to God, and no amount of ritual or ceremony or sacrament can make up for a sinful heart. “Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being” (Psalm 51:6, ESV; see also Hosea 6:6).

Observance of New Moon festivals and their sacrifices is no longer required. When the perfect Sacrifice, the spotless Lamb of God, appeared, He rendered the observation of these ordinances no longer necessary. All the righteous requirements of the Law were fulfilled by Him (Matthew 5:17), and His work on the cross means that no longer are sacrifices for sin required. Paul reminds us of this fact: “Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ” (Colossians 2:16–17). [GotQuestions.org](#)

1 Samuel 20:6 "If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for the whole family.'

BGT 1 Samuel 20:6 ν πισκεπτε μενος πισκψητα με πατρ σου κα ρε ς παραιπο μενος παρ τ σατο π μο
Δαυιδ δραμε ν ως ε ς Βηθλεεμ τ ν π λιν α το τι θουσ α τ ν μερ ν κε λ τ φυλ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:6 And if thy father do in anywise enquire for me, then shalt thou say, David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethleem his city, for there is there, a yearly sacrifice for all the family.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.

NET 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father happens to miss me, you should say, 'David urgently requested me to let him go to his city Bethlehem, for there is an annual sacrifice there for his entire family.'

CSB 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father misses me at all, say, 'David urgently requested my permission to quickly go

to his town Bethlehem for an annual sacrifice there involving the whole clan.'

ESV 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the clan.'

NIV 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father misses me at all, tell him, 'David earnestly asked my permission to hurry to Bethlehem, his hometown, because an annual sacrifice is being made there for his whole clan.'

NLT 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father asks where I am, tell him I asked permission to go home to Bethlehem for an annual family sacrifice.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.'

NJB 1 Samuel 20:6 If your father notices my absence, you must say, "David insistently asked me for permission to hurry over to Bethlehem, his home town, because they are holding the annual sacrifice there for the whole clan."

NAB 1 Samuel 20:6 If it turns out that your father misses me, say, 'David urged me to let him go on short notice to his city Bethlehem, because his whole clan is holding its seasonal sacrifice there.'

YLT 1 Samuel 20:6 if thy father at all look after me, and thou hast said, David asked earnestly of me to run to Beth-Lehem his city, for a sacrifice of the days is there for all the family.

- **Bethlehem:** 1Sa 17:58 Joh 7:42
- **sacrifice:** or, feast, 1Sa 9:12 16:2-5
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID'S TEST PROPOSAL

If your father misses me at all - NJB = "If your father notices my absence". This is hardly a probability. Saul missed David three times literally with his spear and he would surely miss him with his eyes this time.

Then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for the whole family' - David is giving the details of the plan for their secret communication. David's statement is not necessarily true (but see Spurgeon below), much like Michal had lied to Saul about David's threatening her which forced her to help him. None of these people were sinless, but like today there were some (certainly Jonathan and David would be in that group) that sin LESS!

Spurgeon - The family of David was a godly household, and they had a meeting, not for pleasure-making, but for sacrifice; a special family gathering for worship, and David must needs be there. He spake no untruth; he did desire to go to Bethlehem.

Gene Getz - There also was an element of dishonesty in David's strategy. True, he may have planned to go to Bethlehem to sacrifice with his family someday, but there's no evidence he ever did or that he really planned to go at that moment. Furthermore, David asked Jonathan to give the impression he had already gone to Bethlehem (1Sa 20:27–29), when in reality he was waiting "in the field" for a report on Saul's behavior (v. 24).

This was just the beginning of David's verbal distortions. One lie often leads to another—and this is exactly what happened to David. **take matters into his own hands.** The results were tragic! David's first scheme (1Sa 20:5-7)

John Walton - annual family sacrifice. The tradition of an annual family sacrifice had also been reflected in the family of Hannah and Elkanah (see comment on 1Sa 1:3). This was separate from the agricultural festivals and pilgrimages (2Ch 8:13). In David's time this meant an ingathering of the family at the clan site, Bethlehem. Since it represented a higher level of obligation and familial loyalty, the annual sacrifice could easily serve as a valid excuse for David to absent himself from Saul's monthly celebration of the new moon. ([IVP Background Commentary](#))

1 Samuel 20:7 "If he says, 'It is good,' your servant will be safe; but if he is very angry, know that he has decided on evil.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:7 ν τ δε ε π γαθ ζ ε ρ ν η τ δο λ σου κα ν σκληρ ζ ποκριθ σοι γν θι τι συντετ λεσται
κακ α παρ α το

LXE 1 Samuel 20:7 If he shall say thus, Well,-- all is safe for thy servant: but if he shall answer harshly to

thee, know that evil is determined by him.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:7 If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.

NET 1 Samuel 20:7 If he should then say, 'That's fine,' then your servant is safe. But if he becomes very angry, be assured that he has decided to harm me.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Good,' then your servant is safe, but if he becomes angry, you will know he has evil intentions.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Good!' it will be well with your servant, but if he is angry, then know that harm is determined by him.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Very well,' then your servant is safe. But if he loses his temper, you can be sure that he is determined to harm me.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Fine!' you will know all is well. But if he is angry and loses his temper, you will know he is determined to kill me.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Good!' it will be well with your servant; but if he is angry, then know that evil has been determined by him.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, "Very well," your servant is safe, but if he flies into a rage, you may be sure that he has some evil plan.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'Very well,' your servant is safe. But if he becomes quite angry, you can be sure he has planned some harm.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:7 If thus he say: Good; peace is for thy servant; and if it be very displeasing to him -- know that the evil hath been determined by him;

- **It is good:** De 1:23 2Sa 17:4
- **evil:** 1Sa 20:9 25:17 Es 7:7
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAUL'S REACTION THE BAROMETER OF GOOD/EVIL

If he says, 'It is good,' your servant (['ebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)) will be safe ([shalom](#) = peace; Lxx - [eirene](#)) - NAB - "'Very well,' your servant is safe" David is trusting Saul's words to be a true reflection of his actions. There certainly may be an element of trusting in the sovereignty of the Lord. However, this is still somewhat surprising for we have seen Saul repeatedly in essence [speak out of both sides of his mouth](#), making vows and proceeding to break them! And vows are more solemn than casual comments. Note David's humility and [deference](#) toward Jonathan as thrice (here and next verse two times!) refers to himself as **your servant** (['ebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#))! This is the heart of a man who would be king! This is the heart Jehovah desires for all of His children to manifest! "The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and **before honor comes humility** (Pr 15:33, study what is associated with humility - you may be surprised! = Pr 18:12, 11:2, 16:19, 22:4, 29:23; Ps 10:17, 34:2, 37:11!!! Ps 69:32, Ps 76:9, Isa 57:2)

but if he is very angry ([charah](#)), **know that he has decided on evil** - I like the NJB which says "if he flies into a rage, you may be sure that he has some evil plan." These words would be trustworthy for sure, "for out of the heart come evil thoughts, **murders**, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders." (Mt 15:19+).

1 Samuel 20:8 "Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. But if there is iniquity in me, put me to death yourself; for why then should you bring me to your father?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:8 κα ποισεις λεος μετ το δολου σου τι εσγαγες ες διαθκην κυρ ου τ ν δο λ ν σου μετ σεαυτο κα εστιν δικα ν τ δο λ σου θαν τωσ ν με σ κα ως το πατρ ς σου να τ ο τωσ ε σ γεις με

LXE 1 Samuel 20:8 And thou shalt deal mercifully with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thyself: and if there is iniquity in thy servant, slay me thyself; but why dost thou thus bring me to thy father?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:8 Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

NET 1 Samuel 20:8 You must be loyal to your servant, for you have made a covenant with your servant in the LORD's name. If I am guilty, you yourself kill me! Why bother taking me to your father?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:8 Deal faithfully with your servant, for you have brought me into a covenant with you before the LORD. If I have done anything wrong, then kill me yourself; why take me to your father?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:8 Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:8 As for you, show kindness to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with you before the LORD. If I am guilty, then kill me yourself! Why hand me over to your father?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:8 Show me this loyalty as my sworn friend-- for we made a solemn pact before the LORD-- or kill me yourself if I have sinned against your father. But please don't betray me to him!"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:8 Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a sacred covenant with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself; why should you bring me to your father?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:8 Show your servant faithful love, since you have bound your servant to you by a pact in Yahweh's name. But if I am guilty, then kill me yourself -- why take me to your father?"

NAB 1 Samuel 20:8 Do this kindness for your servant because of the LORD'S bond between us, into which you brought me: if I am guilty, kill me yourself! Why should you give me up to your father?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:8 and thou hast done kindness, to thy servant, for into a covenant of Jehovah thou hast brought thy servant with thee; -- and if there is in me iniquity, put thou me to death; and unto thy father, why is this -- thou dost bring me in?"

- **deal kindly:** Ge 24:49 47:29 Jos 2:14 Ru 1:8 Pr 3:3
- **for:** 1Sa 20:16 1Sa 18:3 1Sa 23:18
- **if there:** Jos 22:22 2Sa 14:32 Ps 7:4,5 Ac 25:11
- **why :** 1Ch 12:17 Ps 116:11
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 20:16 So Jonathan made ([karath](#)) a *covenant* (Added by translators) with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD require it at the hands of David's enemies."

1 Samuel 18:3+ Then Jonathan **made** ([karath](#)) a **covenant** ([beriyth](#)) with David because he loved him as himself.

1 Samuel 23:18+ So the two of them **made** ([karath](#)) a **covenant** ([beriyth](#); Lxx = [diatheke](#)) **before the LORD**; and David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house.

BEFORE THE LORD - 20x in 19v in 1 Samuel in NASB - 1 Sam. 1:12; 1 Sam. 1:15; 1 Sam. 1:19; 1 Sam. 1:22; 1 Sam. 2:17; 1 Sam. 2:18; 1 Sam. 2:21; 1 Sam. 6:20; 1 Sam. 7:6; 1 Sam. 10:19; 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Sam. 11:15; 1 Sam. 12:3; 1 Sam. 12:7; 1 Sam. 15:33; 1 Sam. 21:6; 1 Sam. 21:7; 1 Sam. 23:18; 1 Sam. 26:19

DAVID REMINDS JONATHAN OF THEIR BINDING COVENANT

Therefore deal kindly ([hesed](#); Lxx - [poieo eleos](#) = do mercy, compassion) **with your servant** ([lebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)), **for** (term of explanation) **you have brought your servant** ([lebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)) **into a covenant** ([beriyth](#); Lxx = [diatheke](#)) **of the LORD** ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) **with you.** = CSB = "Deal faithfully with your servant, for you have brought me into a covenant with you before the LORD." David's request for Jonathan to be faithful to him is based on their solemn, binding covenant. Notice that while it was a covenant between two men, David still refers to it as **a covenant of the LORD** ("before the LORD"), which attests to the sacred

nature of the agreement they had made (cf "before the LORD" in 1Sa 23:18+).

THOUGHT - The covenant between David and Jonathan was sacred and was a covenant the LORD had witnessed and certified. Dear husband or wife, your covenant entered into years ago is no different. It was made before the LORD. It is sacred. It is not to be profaned or broken. If you are considering separating or divorce, could I encourage you to do the study of covenants in the Bible before you make the final decision? If you have a heart for God, I can assure you that His Spirit will work in both of your hearts (if you are willing to set down together over His Word). God is in the "resurrection business," and He literally "resurrected" our dead marriage over 20 years ago (we were both believers at that time). He can do the same in your marriage beloved. How blessed it will be to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, having held fast to your covenant vows! See [Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage](#) and [My Testimony to God's Grace](#).

But if there is iniquity ('[avon](#)'; Lxx - [adikia](#)) **in me, put me to death** (command!) **yourself** - David is referring to sin against Saul and saying if it is so, then Jonathan should kill him. David is not claiming a sinless state (1Jn 1:8+)!

for (term of explanation) **why then should you bring me to your father** - **NET** = "Why bother taking me to your father?" Get it over with here and now. It's as if David would rather be killed by Jonathan than Saul!

Kindly ([02617](#)) [hesed/chesed/heced](#) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, 20-see note, Is 54:5, Je 31:32] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's hesed His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8 trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21). Hesed expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises.

Hesed translated - deeds of devotion(2), devotion(1), devout(1), faithfulness(1), favor(2), good(1), kindly(7), kindness(32), kindnesses(1), loveliness(1), lovingkindness(176), lovingkindnesses(7), loyal deeds(1), loyalty(6), mercies(1), merciful(2), mercy(1), righteousness(1), unchanging love(2).

Hesed in 1Sa-2Chr - 1 Sam. 15:6; 1 Sam. 20:8; 1 Sam. 20:14; 1 Sam. 20:15; 2 Sam. 2:5; 2 Sam. 2:6; 2 Sam. 3:8; 2 Sam. 7:15; 2 Sam. 9:1; 2 Sam. 9:3; 2 Sam. 9:7; 2 Sam. 10:2; 2 Sam. 15:20; 2 Sam. 16:17; 2 Sam. 22:51; 1 Ki. 2:7; 1 Ki. 3:6; 1 Ki. 8:23; 1 Ki. 20:31; 1 Chr. 16:34; 1 Chr. 16:41; 1 Chr. 17:13; 1 Chr. 19:2; 2 Chr. 1:8; 2 Chr. 5:13; 2 Chr. 6:14; 2 Chr. 6:42; 2 Chr. 7:3; 2 Chr. 7:6; 2 Chr. 20:21; 2 Chr. 24:22; 2 Chr. 32:32; 2 Chr. 35:26;

1 Samuel 20:9 Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I should indeed learn that evil has been decided by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you about it?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:9 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν μηδαμ ς σοι τι ν γιν σκων γν τι συντετ λεσται κακ α παρ το πατρ ς μου το λθε ν π σ κα ν μ ε ς τ ς π λεις σου γ παγγελ σοι

LXE 1 Samuel 20:9 And Jonathan said, That be far from thee: for if I surely know that evil is determined by my father to come upon thee, although it should not be against thy cities, I will tell thee.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

NET 1 Samuel 20:9 Jonathan said, "Far be it from you to suggest this! If I were at all aware that my father had decided to harm you, wouldn't I tell you about it?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:9 "No!" Jonathan responded. "If I ever find out my father has evil intentions against you, wouldn't I tell you about it?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:9 And Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I knew that it was determined by my father that harm should come to you, would I not tell you?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:9 "Never!" Jonathan said. "If I had the least inkling that my father was determined to harm you, wouldn't I tell you?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:9 "Never!" Jonathan exclaimed. "You know that if I had the slightest notion my father was

planning to kill you, I would tell you at once."

NRS 1 Samuel 20:9 Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I knew that it was decided by my father that evil should come upon you, would I not tell you?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:9 Jonathan replied, 'Perish the thought! If I knew for sure that my father was determined to do you a mischief, would I not have told you?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:9 But Jonathan answered: "Not !! If ever I find out that my father is determined to inflict injury upon you, I will certainly let you know."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:9 And Jonathan saith, 'Far be it from thee! for I certainly do not know that the evil hath been determined by my father to come upon thee, and I do not declare it to thee.'

- **then would:** 1Sa 20:38,42 19:2
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN REAFFIRMS HIS COVENANT LOYALTY TO JONATHAN

Jonathan said, "Far be it from you!- NJB = 'Perish the thought!' The thought of putting David to death which David had just mentioned.

For if I should indeed learn that evil has been decided by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you about it- Jonathan is saying he is loyal to David and will not withhold "bad news" from his father. Remember they have cut covenant and that is the most intimate association known in the ancient world. They were friends by covenant, where "friends" conveys a much deeper meaning than it does in our culture where it is used more loosely.

John Kitto - The Farewell—I Samuel 20

In the remarkable turning of the heart of Saul—so full when he set out of fell, and probably bloody, purposes, and the long enhancement in which he lay, several objects may be discerned—first, to magnify the power of the Lord over the hearts of men; then, to protect Samuel and his college from the king's wrath, for we must not reckon too much upon his forbearance even towards the aged prophet, when we consider what was afterwards done to the priests at Nob for the shelter they gave to David; and, lastly, it was designed to frustrate all the king's objects, and to give the son of Jesse an opportunity of escaping to a safe distance before he became himself again.

David now saw clearly that his life at Saul's court was ended, and that it only remained for him, thenceforth, to keep himself beyond the reach of Saul, and await in patience the progress of events. This was probably also the purport of the advice that he received from Samuel.

Yet he took advantage of Saul's state to return to Gibeah, wasting, as some may deem, the precious time which might have served him well for his escape. But every generous heart will appreciate his motive in subjecting himself to this risk—it was to see once more his beloved Jonathan, the friend and brother of his soul, and to obtain his sanction to the step he was about to take. The interview between these two generous and high-minded young men, is deeply interesting; and although there are longer speeches in the historical Scriptures, there is no conversation—with the natural changes of interlocution—reported at equal length. The object of David was to convince his friend of the reality of the danger he was in, and the necessity for his departure. This was opposed by Jonathan, partly from the love he bore to David, and the pain he would feel in being for a long indefinite period separated from him, and partly from the charity that thinketh no evil, rendering him reluctant to judge harshly of his father. He could not bring himself to believe that, after the oath which Saul had taken to make no attempt against David's life, he had any real intention to destroy him. He urged, that he was in his father's confidence, and would surely have known had any such intention existed. The reader will do well to note the admirable delicacy of David's reply to this—"Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes, and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved; but truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but one step between me and death." To avoid giving pain to Jonathan, he avoids implying or expressing that his father had any mistrust of him, and gives it quite another turn, as if Saul concealed his designs upon David from his son only to spare his feelings.

Jonathan could not, however; be satisfied without further proof of his father's present state of feeling towards David. He probably hoped, from David's account, that whatever had been his intentions, a more effectual change had been wrought in him at Ramah, than his friend supposed. To satisfy him, David agreed to defer his flight. It was arranged that he should visit his family at Bethlehem, and return in three days to his former place of concealment, near the stone of Ezel, where, by a concerted signal, Jonathan was to apprise him of the result, it being uncertain but that he might be so watched, as to render another interview unsafe. The next day

was the feast of the [new moon](#), when the king was wont to entertain the high officers of his court; and David, as his son-in-law, and a high military officer, had a seat at his table. Saul knew that David had been seen at Gibeah, and concluded that the change which he had seen come over himself at Naioth, had led him to think that there was nothing more to fear. He therefore expected he would appear in his place at the feast; but his place remained empty. The king made no remark then, supposing that some accident prevented his attendance, and that he would doubtless be present the following day; for that day also was a feast for the new moon being proclaimed, according to its actual appearing; and the appearance being uncertain, sometimes in the evening, at noon, or at midnight, two days were observed as a feast in honor of the occasion. Still David was absent, and Saul asked Jonathan, with all the indifference he could assume—"Wherefore came not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor today?" Jonathan answered, that he had asked for, and obtained, his permission to attend a family celebration at Bethlehem. On hearing this, the king could restrain himself no longer. Looking upon his son as one who was infatuated by his love for David, into madly throwing away his own prospects and those of his house, he broke forth into violent and insulting abuse of him. To any oriental, nothing is so grievously insulting as a reproach cast upon his mother—so Saul, to sting his son to the uttermost, spoke contemptuously of his mother, regardless of the fact, that Jonathan's mother was his own wife,—“Thou son of the perverse, rebellious woman,” etc. There are some traces of this form of abuse, in principle, among the least refined portion of our own population; but in the East, no man is too high or too refined to be above it. Even a son will abuse his brother by casting contumely upon his mother, regardless of the fact that she is also his own mother, and whom, as such, he venerates and loves.⁴⁵⁰ The mother herself is not held to be affronted in such cases, but the son who hears such words applied to her is insulted, and is meant to be insulted, beyond expiation. Jonathan, however, remembered that the man who spoke was his father, and that the lot of his friend was in the balance; so he restrained himself, and the king went on to tell him that while the son of Jesse lived, the prospect of his own inheritance of the crown was nothing worth. This is the first time Saul had expressed that conviction, showing that the previous flight of David to Samuel had turned into certainty the suspicions he had before entertained. Even this did not move the firm friendship of Jonathan, who seems to have himself, before this, reached the conviction that David was indeed the man chosen of God to reign—according to the announcement of Samuel, which must have been known to him—and to have brought his mind to acquiesce in it, seeing that the man so chosen was one whom he loved as his own soul. It was in the recollection of this, among the other manifestations of his deep and self-sacrificing affection, that David, in a later day, characterized Jonathan's regard for him in the memorable words, “Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman.” So now, in this trying moment, Jonathan ventured to speak for his friend, urging justly that a man was to be judged by his acts and intentions, and those of David were laudable and pure. “Wherefore,” he asked, “shall he be slain? What hath he done?” The answer was from the javelin of the infuriated king, which this time he cast at his own son. He missed; and his son, regardless of the insult and danger to himself, but seeing from this that his father was determined to slay David, arose from the table and went out “in fierce anger,” leaving his food untasted.

Early the next morning he went out with his bow into the field, where David was concealed, attended by a boy, the words used to whom, in directing him to find the arrows, which his master shot, as if at a mark, formed the signal previously agreed upon. The signal was that of danger. But the lad having been sent back to the town with the arrows, and there being no one in sight, the two friends could not refuse themselves the satisfaction of one more farewell interview. It is, and was, the custom, in approaching a sovereign or prince, to pause, and bow at regulated intervals. Xenophon ascribes the origin of the practice to Cyrus,⁴⁵¹ but it was of earlier date, although he may have first introduced it among the Persians. David thus testified the respect due to Jonathan's high station, in advancing to meet him; but when they came near, everything but their heart-brotherhood was forgotten: “They kissed one another, and wept one with another until David exceeded.” But time was precious, and delay dangerous, so bidding each other hastily farewell, they separated, to have but one more stolen interview in life.

1 Samuel 20:10 Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:10 κα ε πεν Δαυιδ πρ ς Ιωναθαν τ ς παγγελε μοι ν ποκριθ πατ ρ σου σκληρ ς

LXE 1 Samuel 20:10 And David said to Jonathan, Who can tell me if thy father should answer roughly?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer thee roughly?

NET 1 Samuel 20:10 David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:10 So David asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:10 Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you roughly?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:10 David asked, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:10 Then David asked, "How will I know whether or not your father is angry?"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:10 Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:10 David then said to Jonathan, 'Who will let me know if your father gives you a harsh answer?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:10 David then asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father gives you a harsh answer?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:10 And David saith unto Jonathan, 'Who doth declare to me? or what if thy father doth answer thee sharply?'

- **answers:** 1Sa 20:30-34 25:10,14,17 Ge 42:7,30 1Ki 12:13 Pr 18:23
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

WE NEED A SAFE PLAN TO COMMUNICATE

Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly ([qasheh](#)) - David knows Jonathan cannot come to tell him in person because he would be followed and David would be discovered by Saul's spies.

Spurgeon's sermon excerpt from the introduction - [A Word for the Persecuted](#) "What if thy father answer thee roughly?"—1 Samuel 20:10.

IT was not an unlikely thing that his father would answer Jonathan roughly. Saul had taken great umbrage against David, while Jonathan, his eldest son, on the contrary, loved David as his own soul. Jonathan could hardly think that his father really meant harm to so good a man as David, and he expressed to David that opinion, and then David, to be prepared for the worst, put to him this question, "What if thy father answer thee roughly?" It did so turn out. Saul answered his son with bitter words, and in the desperation of his anger he even hurled a javelin at him to smite him; yet Jonathan did not for-sake David, he clung to him with all the faithfulness of love, and until his death, which was much mourned by David, he remained his fast and faithful friend. Now, this question of David to Jonathan is one which I wish to put this morning to all believers in Christ, especially to the younger ones who have lately entered into covenant with the great Son of David, and who, in the ardour of their hearts, feel that they could live and die for him. I want to put before them the supposition that they will meet with opposition from their dearest friends, that perhaps their father, brother, husband, or uncle will answer them roughly, or perhaps their mother, wife, or sister will become a persecutor to them. What then? What will they do under such circumstances? Will they follow the Lord through evil report? "What if thy father answer thee roughly?"

Remember that this supposition is a very likely one. There are a few Christians so favourably circumstanced that all their friends accompany them in the pilgrimage to heaven. What advances they ought to make in the sacred journey! What excellent Christians they ought to be! They are like plants in a conservatory—they ought to grow and bring forth the loveliest flowers of divine grace. But there are not very many who are altogether in that case. The large proportion of Christians find themselves opposed by those of their own family, or by those with whom they labour or trade. Is it not likely to be so? Was it not so from the beginning? Is there not enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman? Did not Cain slay his brother Abel because he was accepted of the Lord? In the family of Abraham was there not an Ishmael born after the flesh, who persecuted Isaac, who was born after the Spirit? Was not Joseph hated of his brethren? Was not David persecuted by Saul, Daniel by the Persian princes, and Jeremiah by the kings of Israel? Has it not ever been so? Did not the Lord Jesus Christ himself meet with slander, cruelty, and death, and did he not tell us that we must not look for favour where he found rejection? He said plainly, "I came not to send peace upon the earth, but a sword;" and he declared that the immediate result of the preaching of the gospel would be to set the son against the father and the father against the son, so that a man's foes should be they of his own household. Did he not carefully inquire of every recruit who wished to enlist in his army, "Have you counted the cost?" Have you not admired his perfect honesty and admirable caution in dealing with men, when he bids them remember that if they follow him they must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and be content to be hated of all men for his sake? He warns us not to expect that the disciple will be above his Master, for if men have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, they will assuredly confer no sweet titles upon his household. Since our Lord has forewarned us, it is well for us to stand ready for the trial which he predicts, and to ask ourselves whether we are ready to bear oppression for Christ's sake. I press the question upon you who think of avowing yourselves believers, for most likely it will come practically home to you, and it is well when you begin to build a house to calculate whether you will be able to finish it.

There are very many of God's servants here, whose life is made bitter by the continual worry they endure from their ungodly relatives and associates. Often do they sigh for the wings of a dove to fly away and be at rest. I feel the deepest sympathy with them, and it is not only with the intention of forearming the younger ones, but with the hope of cheering and consoling those who have been long in the fiery furnace, that I shall speak this morning upon this text, "What if thy father answer thee roughly?" (Read

1 Samuel 20:11 Jonathan said to David, "Come, and let us go out into the field." So both of them went out to the field.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:11 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν πρ ς Δαυιδ πορε ου κα μ νε ε ς γρ ν κα κ πορε ονται μφ τεροι ε ς γρ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:11 And Jonathan said to David, Go, and abide in the field. And they went out both into the field.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:11 And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

NET 1 Samuel 20:11 Jonathan said to David, "Come on. Let's go out to the field." When the two of them had gone out into the field,

CSB 1 Samuel 20:11 He answered David, "Come on, let's go out to the field." So both of them went out to the field.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:11 And Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:11 "Come," Jonathan said, "let's go out into the field." So they went there together.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:11 "Come out to the field with me," Jonathan replied. And they went out there together.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:11 Jonathan replied to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:11 Jonathan then said to David, 'Come on, let us go out into the country,' and the pair of them went out into the country.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:11 (Jonathan replied to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." When they were out in the open country together,

YLT 1 Samuel 20:11 And Jonathan saith unto David, 'Come, and we go out into the field;' and they go out both of them into the field.

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN AND DAVID IN THE FIELD

Jonathan said to David, "Come, and let us go out into the field." So both of them went out to the field- Note that from verse 11 to verse 17 David does not speak, while Jonathan reviews the covenant (1Sa 18:1-4+) between them. Then in 1Sa 20:18-23 Jonathan presents his clever plan for communicating Saul's plans to David via "arrow-gram!"

Warren Wiersbe - Jonathan went beyond the immediate crisis to deal with future events. He knew that David would one day become king, and he prayed that the Lord would bless his reign. In their covenant, they agreed that Jonathan would serve next to David as second in command (23:16–18), and now Jonathan asked that if anything happened to him, David would promise not to wipe out his household, and David agreed. The phrase “the kindness of the Lord” (1Sa 20:14) shows up in 2 Samuel 9 where David’s compassionate care of Jonathan’s crippled son, [Mephibosheth](#), is described.....David never had a co-regent because Jonathan was killed in battle (1Sa 31:1–2), and David rejected Saul’s daughter Michal as his wife and she died childless (2Sa 6:16–23). Had she borne any children, it would have brought confusion into the royal line. (Borrow [Be successful](#))

Spurgeon - "To get quite alone, that they might express to one another the feelings of their inmost hearts, and also might consult together without any risk of being overheard." (Spurgeon)

1 Samuel 20:12 Then Jonathan said to David, "The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if there is good feeling toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:12 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν πρς Δαυιδ κ ριος θες Ισραηλ ο δ εν πι νακριν τ ν πατ ρα μου ς ν
καιρ ς τρισ ς κα δο γαθ ν περ Δαυιδ κα ο μ ποστε λω πρς σ ε ς γρ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:12 And Jonathan said to David, the Lord God of Israel knows that I will sound my father as I
have an opportunity, three several times, and, behold, if good should be determined concerning David, and I
do not send to thee to the field,

KJV 1 Samuel 20:12 And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my father
about to morrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not
unto thee, and shew it thee;

NET 1 Samuel 20:12 Jonathan said to David, "The LORD God of Israel is my witness. I will feel out my father
about this time the day after tomorrow. If he is favorably inclined toward David, will I not then send word to you
and let you know?

CSB 1 Samuel 20:12 "By the LORD, the God of Israel, I will sound out my father by this time tomorrow or the
next day. If I find out that he is favorable toward you, will I not send for you and tell you?

ESV 1 Samuel 20:12 And Jonathan said to David, "The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have
sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if he is well disposed toward David,
shall I not then send and disclose it to you?

NIV 1 Samuel 20:12 Then Jonathan said to David: "By the LORD, the God of Israel, I will surely sound out my
father by this time the day after tomorrow! If he is favorably disposed toward you, will I not send you word and
let you know?

NLT 1 Samuel 20:12 Then Jonathan told David, "I promise by the LORD, the God of Israel, that by this time
tomorrow, or the next day at the latest, I will talk to my father and let you know at once how he feels about you.
If he speaks favorably about you, I will let you know.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:12 Jonathan said to David, "By the LORD, the God of Israel! When I have sounded out my
father, about this time tomorrow, or on the third day, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send
and disclose it to you?

NJB 1 Samuel 20:12 Jonathan then said to David, 'By Yahweh, God of Israel! I shall sound my father this time
tomorrow; if all is well for David and I do not then send and inform you,

NAB 1 Samuel 20:12 Jonathan said to David: "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, I will sound out my
father about this time tomorrow. Whether he is well disposed toward David or not, I will send you the
information.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:12 And Jonathan saith unto David, 'Jehovah, God of Israel -- when I search my father, about
this time to-morrow or the third day, and lo, good is towards David, and I do not then send unto thee, and have
uncovered thine ear --

- O Lord: This verse is evidently deficient. The LXX. have [kyrios ho Theos Israel oiden,] "The Lord God of Israel doth know;" the Syraic and Arabic, "The Lord God of Israel is witness;" either of which makes good sense. But two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. supply the word {chai,} "liveth;" and the text reads thus: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, when I have sounded my father,--if there be good unto David, and I then send not unto thee," etc.; which is a still better sense. Jos 22:22 Job 31:4 Ps 17:3 139:1-4
- sounded: Heb. searched, Pr 20:5 25:2,3
- show it thee: Heb. uncover thine ear, 1Sa 20:2
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN CALLS GOD AS WITNESS THAT HE WILL BE TRUTHFUL

Then Jonathan said to David, "The LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)), the God of Israel, be witness! - Jonathan calls on Yahweh to witness. ESV = "The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness!"

When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow, or the third day, **behold ([hinneh](#)), if there is good feeling toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you** - NET - I will feel out my father about this time the day after

tomorrow. If he is favorably inclined toward David, will I not then send word to you and let you know?

The Power Of Two

In G. K. Chesterton's novel *The Man Who Was Thursday*, an undercover policeman infiltrates a lawless group that is dedicated to throwing the world into chaos. He is gripped with fear until he discovers an ally within the group.

Chesterton writes of the policeman's feelings at finding a friend: "Through all this ordeal his root horror had been isolation, and there are no words to express the abyss between isolation and having one ally. It may be conceded to the mathematicians that four is twice two. But two is not twice one; two is two thousand times one."

When David was being pursued by the jealous and irrational King Saul, he had a friend who risked great danger to stand with him. Jonathan, Saul's own son, pledged his loyalty to David and warned him of his father's intention to kill him (1 Samuel 20:31-42). Later, when Saul pursued David into the wilderness, Jonathan "arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God" (23:16).

What a wonderful gift we give by standing faithfully with a friend in need! There is incredible encouragement and power when two people are allied in life. Whose hand can you strengthen by being a friend today?—David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help me be the kind of friend
That makes my friend secure;
So he can find new strength and hope
His trials to endure.
—D. De Haan

A true friend helps you keep going when you feel like giving up.

1 Samuel 20:13 "If it please my father to do you harm, may the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also, if I do not make it known to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And may the LORD be with you as He has been with my father."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:13 τ ὁ ε ποι σαι θε ς τ Ἰ ωνάθαν κα τ ὁ ε προσθε ῃ τι νο σω τ κακ πι σ κα ποκαλ ψω τ
τον σου κα ξαποστελ σε κα πελε σ ε ς ε ρ νην κα σται κ ριος μετ σο καθ ς ν μετ το πατρ ς μου

LXE 1 Samuel 20:13 God do so to Jonathan and more also: as I shall also report the evil to thee, and make it known to thee, and I will let thee go; and thou shalt depart in peace, and the Lord shall be with thee, as he was with my father.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:13 The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father.

NET 1 Samuel 20:13 But if my father intends to do you harm, may the LORD do all this and more to Jonathan, if I don't let you know and send word to you so you can go safely on your way. May the LORD be with you, as he was with my father.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:13 If my father intends to bring evil on you, may God punish Jonathan and do so severely if I do not tell you and send you away so you may go in peace. May the LORD be with you, just as He was with my father.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:13 But should it please my father to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:13 But if my father is inclined to harm you, may the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away safely. May the LORD be with you as he has been with my father.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:13 But if he is angry and wants you killed, may the LORD strike me and even kill me if I don't warn you so you can escape and live. May the LORD be with you as he used to be with my father.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:13 But if my father intends to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan, and more also, if I do not disclose it to you, and send you away, so that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:13 may Yahweh bring unnameable ills to Jonathan and worse ones too! If my father intends to do you a mischief, I shall tell you so and let you get away, so that you can be safe. And may Yahweh be with you as he used to be with my father!

NAB 1 Samuel 20:13 Should it please my father to bring any injury upon you, may the LORD do thus and so to Jonathan if I do not apprise you of it and send you on your way in peace. May the LORD be with you even as he was with my father.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:13 thus doth Jehovah do to Jonathan, and thus doth He add; when the evil concerning thee is good to my father, then I have uncovered thine ear, and sent thee away, and thou hast gone in peace, and Jehovah is with thee, as he was with my father;

- **The Lord do:** 1Sa 3:17 25:22 Ru 1:17 2Sa 3:35 19:13 1Ki 19:2 20:10
- **the Lord be:** 1Sa 17:37 Jos 1:5 1Ch 22:11,16 Mt 28:20 Php 4:9
- **been with my father:** 1Sa 10:7 11:6-13 14:47 2Sa 7:15
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN TWICE CALLS UPON YAHWEH

If it please my father to do you harm, may the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also, if I do not make it known to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. - NLT - "But if he is angry and wants you killed, may the LORD strike me and even kill me if I don't warn you so you can escape and live."

And may the LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) be with you as He has been with my father - Jonathan blesses David. The implication is that he now knows that David is to be the next king of Israel.

1 Samuel 20:14 "If I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the LORD, that I may not die?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:14 κα μ ν τι μου ζ ντος κα ποι σεις λεος μετ μο κα ν θαν τ ποθ νω

LXE 1 Samuel 20:14 And if indeed I continue to live, then shalt thou deal mercifully with me; and if I indeed die,

KJV 1 Samuel 20:14 And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not:

NET 1 Samuel 20:14 While I am still alive, extend to me the loyalty of the LORD, or else I will die!

CSB 1 Samuel 20:14 If I continue to live, treat me with the LORD's faithful love, but if I die,

ESV 1 Samuel 20:14 If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the LORD, that I may not die;

NIV 1 Samuel 20:14 But show me unfailing kindness like that of the LORD as long as I live, so that I may not be killed,

NLT 1 Samuel 20:14 And may you treat me with the faithful love of the LORD as long as I live. But if I die,

NRS 1 Samuel 20:14 If I am still alive, show me the faithful love of the LORD; but if I die,

NJB 1 Samuel 20:14 If I am still alive, show your servant faithful love; if I die,

NAB 1 Samuel 20:14 Only this: if I am still alive, may you show me the kindness of the LORD. But if I die,

YLT 1 Samuel 20:14 and not only while I am alive dost thou do with me the kindness of Jehovah, and I die not,

- the kindness: 2Sa 9:3 Eph 5:1,2
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN CALLS ON DAVID

TO SHOW COVENANT MERCY

If I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness ([hesed](#); Lxx - [poieo eleos](#) = do mercy, compassion) of the LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)), that I may not die - As noted above, Jonathan is now clearly aware David is the king in waiting and is asking for his mercy.

1 Samuel 20:15 "You shall not cut off your lovingkindness from my house forever, not even when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:15 ο κ ξαρς λε ς σου π το ο κου μου ως το α νος κα ε μ ν τ ξα ρειν κ ριον το ς χθρο ς Δαυιδ καστον π προσ που τ ς γ ς

LXE 1 Samuel 20:15 thou shalt not withdraw thy mercy from my house for ever: and if thou doest not, when the Lord cuts off the enemies of David each from the face of the earth,

KJV 1 Samuel 20:15 But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.

NET 1 Samuel 20:15 Don't ever cut off your loyalty to my family, not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth

CSB 1 Samuel 20:15 don't ever withdraw your faithful love from my household-- not even when the LORD cuts off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:15 and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:15 and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family--not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:15 treat my family with this faithful love, even when the LORD destroys all your enemies from the face of the earth."

NRS 1 Samuel 20:15 never cut off your faithful love from my house, even if the LORD were to cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:15 never withdraw your faithful love from my family. When Yahweh has exterminated every enemy of David's from the face of the earth,

NAB 1 Samuel 20:15 never withdraw your kindness from my house. And when the LORD exterminates all the enemies of David from the surface of the earth,

YLT 1 Samuel 20:15 but thou dost not cut off thy kindness from my house unto the age, nor in Jehovah's cutting off the enemies of David, each one from off the face of the ground.'

- **shall:** 1Sa 24:21 2Sa 9:1-7 21:7
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DO NOT CUT OFF LOVINGKINDESS FROM MY FAMILY

You shall not cut off your lovingkindness ([hesed](#)) from my house forever, not even when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth - In context **lovingkindness** is a covenant word so that Jonathan is basing his request on their solemn, binding agreement.

Spurgeon - In Jonathan's great love, he wished not only to be David's friend himself, but that all his children should be in love with the same valiant hero. Brethren, our love to Christ makes us long to see our children love him, too. I will not believe that you have any love to Christ unless you pray that your boys and your girls may also love him. Dear children of godly parents, our heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may love your mother's God, and trust your father's Savior.

You shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever. —1 Samuel 20:15

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:1-23

It's one thing to tell a friend you care. It's quite another to show it.

When David and Jonathan made a pact of friendship (1 Sam. 18:1-4), neither of them knew to what extent Jonathan would have to go to show his care for David. But it didn't matter. Undaunted by danger, Jonathan courageously acted to save David's life (20:1-23).

When we develop close friendships, we may also be called on to demonstrate by our actions that we care. The acrostic C-A-R-E can help us remember four key elements of friendship.

CHALLENGE your friend to grow spiritually. A good friend knows the importance of turning the conversation toward matters of faith.

AFFIRM your friend's value. A phone call or a note can let your friend know how important he or she is and can keep your friendship strong.

RESPECT the feelings and wishes of your friend. No one wants a friend with whom ideas, dreams, and concerns fall on deaf ears. A good friend is a great sounding board.

ENCOURAGE your friend through compliments and by doing good deeds. Your friend will feel better after having been in your presence.

Do you have a friend you should care for today? By: Dave Branon [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

THINKING IT OVER

Read Proverbs 27:17. What does it mean for friends to "sharpen" each other as iron sharpens iron? Do any of your friendships sharpen you?

See a friend in need? Be a friend in deed.

1 Samuel 20:16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD require it at the hands of David's enemies."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:16 ξαρθ ναι τ νομα το Ιωναθαν π το ο κου Δαυιδ κα κζητσαι κ ριος χθρο ς το Δαυιδ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:16 should it happen that the name of Jonathan be discovered by the house of David, then let the Lord seek out the enemies of David.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies.

NET 1 Samuel 20:16 and called David's enemies to account." So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:16 Then Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD hold David's enemies accountable."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:16 And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD take vengeance on David's enemies."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD call David's enemies to account."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:16 So Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, saying, "May the LORD destroy all your enemies!"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:16 Thus Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD seek out the enemies of David."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:16 do not let Jonathan's name be exterminated with Saul's family, or may Yahweh call David to account!"

NAB 1 Samuel 20:16 the name of Jonathan must never be allowed by the family of David to die out from

among you, or the LORD will make you answer for it."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:16 And Jonathan covenanteth with the house of David, and Jehovah hath sought it from the hand of the enemies of David;

- **made:** Heb. [karath](#) = cut 1Sa 18:3 Ge 15:18
- **May the Lord:** 1Sa 25:22 31:2 2Sa 4:7,8 21:8
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 18:3+ Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

Genesis 15:18+ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

JONATHAN CUTS A SECOND COVENANT WITH DAVID

So - Having made requests of David, Jonathan desires to solidify them with a second covenant.

Jonathan made ([karath](#) = cut) **a covenant** (added by translators) **with the house of David** - This covenant would appear to be a reiteration of the covenant made (cut) in 1Sa 18:3. As an aside Strong's Concordance defines *karath* as 'to covenant i.e. make an alliance or bargain, orig. by cutting flesh and passing between the pieces.' We see the prototype for this pattern in Genesis 15:8-18, 17+ when Yahweh Himself passed between the cut flesh of the animals signifying that He initiated this unconditional, solemn, unbreakable covenant with Abram. See this ritual again described in Jer 34:18, 19, 20 where the men of Judah broke the covenant. There is no evidence in this passage that Jonathan and David performed this ritual of passing between pieces of cut flesh.

Saying, "May the LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) require it at the hands of David's enemies - Jonathan prays a blessing over David's enemies. Require it means to kill or destroy David's enemies. Think about what Jonathan is praying for David! He is ultimately praying that his own father Saul would be killed, a prayer that God answered in 1Sa 31:1-6+.

Spurgeon - Thus were these two men bound together by ties of mutual love; may we be thus bound to Jesus! Oh, that there may be such love between us and our Lord as shall even excel the love of Jonathan and David!"

Friends in Faith

A man's enemies will be the members of his own household.—Matthew 10:36

Read 1 Samuel 20:1–42

When Jesus began His public ministry, His family was shocked. At one point, when He was preaching to a large crowd in a house, his family members tried to remove Him by force, claiming that He had lost His mind (Mark 3:21). Jesus warned His followers that allegiance to Him would create fault lines in some of our most important relationships. Jonathan shared a similar experience when he threw his lot in with David.

At first, Jonathan wanted to believe that there was still hope that his father could be favorable toward David (1Sa 20:2, 9). But David, who by now has seen the king make several attempts on his life, was understandably skeptical (1Sa 20:3). The two formulated a plan that would enable Jonathan to sound out his father. To seal it, Jonathan entered into a covenant in which David promised to show him "unfailing kindness like the LORD's kindness" (1Sa 20:14). Jonathan, in turn, asked the Lord to "call David's enemies to account" (1Sa 20:16). Jonathan would have realized that he was speaking of his father, Saul, when he made this promise to his friend. Jonathan also knew that his decision to support David was an implicit renunciation of any claim he might have to succeed Saul as king (1Sa 20:31). Jonathan's choice was decidedly not political. He and David had "sworn friendship with each other in the name of the LORD" (1Sa 20:42). Theirs was a lifelong commitment based on a common faith in God as much as it was a union of like-minded friends. Have you experienced rejection from friends or family because of your faith? Jesus promised, ". . . no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life" (Luke 18:29–30). David and Jonathan were friends in faith! Thank God for the true and wise friends He's given you over the years. And praise the Lord for His friendship— "[What a Friend We Have in Jesus](#)"! ([Courtesy of Today in the Word](#))

Blooming in the Right Spot

So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David. 1 Samuel 20:16

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 20:30–34

“A weed is any plant that grows where you don’t want it,” my father said, handing me the hoe. I wanted to leave the corn plant that had “volunteered” among the peas. But Dad, who had grown up on a farm, instructed me to pull it out. That lone cornstalk would do nothing but choke the peas and rob them of nutrients.

Human beings aren’t plants—we have minds of our own and God-given free will. But sometimes we try to bloom where God doesn’t intend us to be.

King Saul’s son, the warrior-prince Jonathan, could have done that. He had every reason to expect to be king. But he saw God’s blessing on David, and he recognized the envy and pride of his own father (1 Samuel 18:12–15). So rather than grasping for a throne that would never be his, Jonathan became David’s closest friend, even saving his life (19:1–6; 20:1–4).

Some would say that Jonathan gave up too much. But how would we prefer to be remembered? Like the ambitious Saul, who clung to his kingdom and lost it? Or like Jonathan, who protected the life of a man who would become an honored ancestor of Jesus?

God’s plan is always better than our own. We can fight against it and resemble a misplaced weed. Or we can accept His direction and become flourishing, fruitful plants in His garden. He leaves the choice with us. By: Tim Gustafson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, please forgive us for those times when we act as if You have planted us in the wrong place. Help us see what You have for us to do today.

God invites us to participate with Him in taking the Gospel to our world.

1 Samuel 20:17 Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:17 κα προσθετο τι Ιωναθαν μσαι τ Δαυιδ τι γπησεν ψυχ ν γαπ ντος ατ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:17 And Jonathan swore yet again to David, because he loved the soul of him that loved him.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

NET 1 Samuel 20:17 Jonathan once again took an oath with David, because he loved him. In fact Jonathan loved him as much as he did his own life.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:17 Jonathan once again swore to David in his love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:17 And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:17 And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:17 And Jonathan made David reaffirm his vow of friendship again, for Jonathan loved David as he loved himself.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:17 Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him; for he loved him as he loved his own life.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:17 Jonathan then renewed his oath to David, since he loved him like his very soul.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:17 And in his love for David, Jonathan renewed his oath to him, because he loved him as his very self.)

YLT 1 Samuel 20:17 and Jonathan addeth to cause David to swear, because he loveth him, for with the love

of his own soul he hath loved him.

- **Love:** 1Sa 18:1,3 De 13:6 2Sa 1:26 Pr 18:24
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN'S REQUEST BASED ON THEIR MUTUAL LOVE

Jonathan made David vow ([shaba](#) derived from "seven"; Lxx - [omnuo](#)) **again because of his love** ([ahabah](#)) **for him, because he** (Jonathan) **loved** ([ahab/ahab](#)) **him** (David) **as he loved** ([ahab/ahab](#); Lxx = [agapao](#)) **his own life** - What's the "key word" in this vow? **THOUGHT** - Think of your marriage vows! **NIV** = "And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself." Note two terms of explanation (**because**), first explaining why Jonathan reaffirmed the original covenant (**his love**) and second (**because**) describing the selfless nature of that love!

Love ([0160](#))([ahabah](#) from [ahab/ahab](#)) describes a powerful, intimate love between a man and a woman (Gen. 29:20; Song 2:4, 5, 7); love between friends (2 Sam. 1:26); God's love for His people (Isa. 63:9; Hos. 3:1). Frequently, it is associated with forming a covenant, which enjoins loyalty (Deut. 7:8).

Gilbrant - The noun form of the verb 'āhiv, 'āhāvāh means "love," except for an isolated instance where it seems to follow the Arabic root and means "leather" (Song 3:10). This Hebrew word is used of love between God and man, but usually refers to love between people. Jacob loved Rachel, for example (Gen. 29:20). Love between a man and woman is described beautifully in the Song of Songs. Here, 'āhāvāh is used often (SS 2:4, 3:5, etc.). **Love is the basis of covenants made in the OT.** Jonathan and David made a covenant of friendship in 1 Sa. 18:3 and reaffirmed it in 1 Sa 20:17. God keeps his promises because He loves his people (Dt. 7:8) (ED: AND BECAUSE HE KEEPS HIS COVENANT WITH ABRAM!). And those who love the Lord keep his covenant (Isa. 56:6).

Hiram, king of Tyre, and the mysterious Queen of Sheba both told Solomon that it was because of Yahweh's love for his people that Solomon was made king over Israel (2 Chr. 2:11, 9:8). God's example of covenant-keeping love is illustrated in the life of the prophet Hosea. Hosea was told to show his love again to his wife, Gomer even though she had been unfaithful (Hos. 3:1). Proverbs contains a handful of maxims using the word 'āhāvāh. Love covers wrong (10:12); a meal of vegetables with love is better than meat without it (15:17) and forgiving an offense promotes love (17:9).

Ahabah - 29v - love(28), lovesick*(2), lovingly(1). Gen. 29:20; 1 Sam. 20:17; 2 Sam. 1:26; 2 Sam. 13:15; Ps. 109:4; Ps. 109:5; Prov. 5:19; Prov. 10:12; Prov. 15:17; Prov. 17:9; Prov. 27:5; Eccl. 9:1; Eccl. 9:6; Cant. 2:4; Cant. 2:5; Cant. 2:7; Cant. 3:5; Cant. 3:10; Cant. 5:8; Cant. 7:6; Cant. 8:4; Cant. 8:6; Cant. 8:7; Isa. 63:9; Jer. 2:2; Jer. 2:33; Jer. 31:3; Hos. 11:4; Zeph. 3:17

G Campbell Morgan - For he loved him as he loved his own soul.—1 Sam. 20.17

The story of David and Jonathan is one of the most beautiful idylls in the Bible, and so also in all literature. Its beauty is enhanced in the sacred Scriptures because it is set in relation to an exceedingly dark background. Love is always beautiful, but the full richness of its colours is only discovered in the presence of suffering and of adversity. From the account of the beginnings of this friendship (chapter 18) it would seem that Jonathan's love for David was earlier than (and the inspiring cause of) David's love for Jonathan. Indeed, the whole story seems to warrant us in saying that love had an even finer expression in Jonathan than in David. There was less, perhaps, of selfishness in it. He was heir-apparent to the throne, but he knew that God had chosen David for that position, and without any pang of regret he acquiesced in the Divine will, and remained the friend of David, loving him more rather than less because he was the anointed of Jehovah. Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul. That is the basis of real friendship. It is the love of complete selflessness, which substitutes the interests of the loved one for those of self. Such love is not common. It is, however, often manifested, and it shines with all beauty. Experience does not find, in all life's course, many such friends. Happy is the man or woman who has found one such. And yet, perhaps, there is a higher happiness, that, namely, of being such a friend to someone else. David was blessed in Jonathan, but in the deep experience of his own soul Jonathan was supremely blessed in such love for David. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

[Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) - go to page 1064- FRIENDSHIP

A number of features of biblical friendship are conventional if compared to ancient cultures in general. In the classical tradition, for

example, conventions prescribed that friends (1) are equals and are similar in class, interests and character, (2) share meals and spend time together and (3) follow virtue. While not explicitly stated, these motifs are present in biblical pictures of friendship as well. One of the psalmists, for example, speaks of “my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread” (Ps 41:9 RSV), and another psalmist addresses his friend as “you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend. We used to hold sweet converse together; within God’s house we walked in fellowship” (Ps 55:13–14 RSV).

In both classical and biblical traditions, a friend was a support and a counselor. For example, “a friend loves at all times” (Prov 17:17 RSV); that is, even in bad times. Again, “faithful are the wounds [criticisms] of a friend” (Prov 27:6 RSV); and “the pleasantness of one’s friend springs from his earnest counsel” (Prov 27:9 NIV). But as in classical culture, biblical writers also think in terms of the category of false friends who give bad counsel or betray, such as Job’s “comforters” or Judas, whom Jesus calls “friend” (Mt 26:50; see also 2 Sam 13:3; Ps 41:9; 55:12–14; Jer 38:22; Lam 1:2; Mic 7:5). The disciples in their abandonment of Jesus and Peter in his denial likewise enact the familiar category of friends who prove faithless in the time of crisis.

The classical tradition held a special place for friendship between males, and we catch hints of this exaltation of male friendship in the Bible too. In his elegy for Jonathan, David asserts that his friendship with Jonathan meant more to him than his relations with any of the women in his life: “Your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (2 Sam 1:26 RSV). Similarly, the most famous NT example of friendship, that between Jesus and his disciples, involves a masculine group. Even so supreme a precept as one’s willingness to die for a friend, extolled in various classical sources referring to Damon and Pythias or Pylades and Orestes, is paralleled by Christ’s teaching, “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn 15:13 RSV; see also 2 Sam 16:16–17 and 1 Chron 27:33).

Friendship with God. What, then, is distinctive about the biblical image of friendship? Aristotle thought there could be no friendship between a god and a man, any more than a man could be a friend to his slave or his tools, because they were too dissimilar in nature. But the Bible radically rejects secular thought on this point. Few things could be more unnatural and incomprehensible to the pagan imagination than the willingness of the God who created the universe out of nothing to become a friend of mortals whose lives are a mere breath. The whole plan of salvation is an act of friendship whereby God took on human likeness so that people might take on his likeness, transforming enemies into friends (Phil 2:5–8; Heb 2:17; 1 Jn 3:2). The high point of this motif is Jesus’ statement to his disciples, “No longer do I call you servants ... but I have called you friends” (Jn 15:15 RSV).

Friendship with God goes beyond simply the personal loyalty implied by any friendship; it includes faith and obedience as well. The psalmist states forthrightly that “the friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him” (Ps 25:14 RSV). In three scripture references Abraham is identified as the friend of God (2 Chron 20:7; Is 41:8; Jas 2:23). The last of these links God’s friendship toward Abraham with Abraham’s faith and actions of obedience; indeed, Abraham is a byword for obedient faith. In the very conversation in which Jesus announced to his disciples that he considered them his friends, he added, “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (Jn 15:14). Friendship with God is thus not a friendship between equals, and the loyalty God expects has an exclusive quality that does not characterize human friendships. On the issue of allegiance, James wrote, “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (Jas 4:4 RSV).

In other ways the friendship of God has the qualities of human friendship. Friendship implies favor toward one’s friend, and the friendship of God entails just such favor, as witnessed by Job’s statement late in his time of suffering that God’s earlier favor toward him was the era when “the friendship of God was upon my tent” (Job 29:4 RSV). Friendship implies the sharing of information about oneself. Psalm 25:14 links the friendship of God with the fact that God makes his covenant known to his friends.

The Imagery of Friendship. The Bible uses two consistent images in its representation of friendship.

The first is the knitting of souls.

Deuteronomy provides the earliest mention of this category of a “friend who is as your own soul” (Deut 13:6 RSV), a companion of one’s inmost thoughts and feelings, resulting in an intense emotional attachment. It is well illustrated by Jonathan and David’s friendship: “The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam 18:1 RSV; cf. 20:17). Characteristic expressions of this union of hearts are an affectionate embrace or kiss, weeping, gift-giving and vows of loyalty. After the slaying of Goliath, Jonathan made a covenant with David, and the gestures of friendship were Jonathan’s giving David the gifts of his robe, armor and weapons (1 Sam 18:3–4). David and Jonathan also pledged to protect each other’s families after either one’s death (1 Sam 20:11–16), a promise David subsequently kept by giving sanctuary to Jonathan’s son Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9). Later, when Saul’s wrath required David to flee, there was a moving departure scene between the soul-mates: “They kissed one another, and wept with one another,” departing in peace because they had sworn in the name of the Lord that God would bind them and their descendants forever (1 Sam 20:41–42).

Examples of this kind of friendship in the NT are chiefly identified by use of the word [philia](#), the Greek term for friendship, and its cognates. Characteristics similar to the friendship of Jonathan and David’s are evident in such friendship. Jesus wept for the death

of Lazarus, whom he called “our friend Lazarus” (Jn 11:11). In the same account, the Greek word for friend is used to describe Jesus’ love for his friend Lazarus (Jn 11:3, 35–36). Jesus and John “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (Jn 20:2) embraced freely (Jn 13:23), and Jesus made a covenant with him to look after his mother after his death (Jn 19:26–27). One sign of the “soul-knit” relationship between believers in the NT is the greeting with a “holy kiss” (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14). Given such familiarity, “friend” naturally became another name for believers or brothers in the Lord: “The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them” (3 Jn 15 RSV). The privileges and roles of a biblical soul mate, then, involve intimacy, loyalty and a strong emotional attachment.

The second image that the Bible uses to represent friendship is the face-to-face encounter, an “interface.”

This is literally the image used for Moses’ relationship to God: in the tabernacle God spoke to Moses “face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Ex. 33:11; see also Num. 12:8). The face-to-face image implies a conversation, a sharing of confidences and consequently a meeting of minds, goals and direction. In three scripture verses Abraham is identified as “the friend of God” (2 Chron 20:7; Is 41:8; Jas 2:23). Behind the epithet may lie the event of Abraham’s hosting of three angelic visitors, one of whom was God (Gen 18). Following the meal, after the two angels had proceeded to Sodom to warn Lot, God takes Abraham into his confidence, asking himself, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?” (Gen 18:20). God and Abraham then engage in a dialogue based on the intimacy of friends, with the imagery of Abraham’s drawing near to God (Gen 18:23; see Near, Drawing Near) and the give-and-take dialogue in which Abraham and God deliberate over the fate of Sodom. A form of friendship is implied, surely, by the NT image of the believer’s one day seeing God “face to face” (1 Cor 13:12).

One of the benefits of face-to-face encounters between friends is the heightened insight and stimulation that such encounters produce. A proverb that highlights this mutual sense of well-being is the famous one in Proverbs 27:17: “Iron sharpens iron, and one friend sharpens another” (KJV). This is similar to the statement of English Renaissance essayist Francis Bacon that conversation makes a “ready” person-ready for the world, ready for practical action.

Summary.

Friendship entails responsibilities and benefits. The proverb that “a friend loves at all times” (Prov 17:17) expresses both an obligation and a benefit. In a similar vein is the proverb that “there are friends who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Prov 18:24 RSV). In the Bible friendship is a mutual improvement activity, honing one for godly use. Biblical friendship is a face-to-face encounter, signifying proximity, intimate revelation and honesty. It is also a bonding of affections and trust, knitting one’s very soul to another. In its ultimate reaches, it is union with God.

The Value Of Friends

Jonathan . . . loved [David] as he loved his own soul. — 1 Samuel 20:17

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:12-17

John Chrysostom (347–407) was one of the great preachers in the early church. He was given the name Chrysostom, which means “golden-mouthed,” because of his eloquent sermons.

Here is one of his insights on the value of friends: “Such is friendship, that through it we love places and seasons; for as . . . flowers drop their sweet leaves on the ground around them, so friends impart favor even to the places where they dwell. With friends even poverty is pleasant. . . . It would be better for us that the sun were exhausted than that we should be without friends.”

The story of Jonathan and David illustrates the value of friendship. Though David was hunted by the demented King Saul, he drew encouragement from his friendship with Saul’s son. “Jonathan . . . loved [David] as he loved his own soul” (1 Sam. 20:17). Their relationship was characterized by trust, understanding, and encouragement. How difficult it would have been for David to endure this unjust persecution without the nourishment of friendship based in the Lord (v.42).

The ancient voice of Chrysostom and the witness of David and Jonathan are reminders of the need to nurture the friendships God has given us. By: Dennis Fisher

Since I have no gold to give,
And love alone must make amends, "
My daily prayer is while I live—
“God, make me worthy of my friends.”
—Sherman

A friend is the first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out.

1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed because your seat will be empty.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:18 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν α ριον νουμην α κα πισεπε σ τι πισεπε σεται καθ δρα σου

LXE 1 Samuel 20:18 And Jonathan said, To-morrow is the new moon, and thou wilt be enquired for, because thy seat will be observed as vacant.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said to David, To morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.

NET 1 Samuel 20:18 Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the New Moon; you'll be missed because your seat will be empty.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said to David: "Tomorrow is the New Moon festival. You will be missed, because your seat will be empty.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:18 Then Jonathan said, "Tomorrow we celebrate the new moon festival. You will be missed when your place at the table is empty.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:18 Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon; you will be missed, because your place will be empty.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:18 Jonathan then said to David, 'Tomorrow is New Moon; your absence will be noticed, since your place will be empty.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:18 Jonathan then said to him: "Tomorrow is the new moon; and you will be missed, since your place will be vacant.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:18 And Jonathan saith to him, 'To-morrow is new moon, and thou hast been looked after, for thy seat is looked after;

- new moon: 1Sa 20:5
- and thou shalt: Among the forms of salutation and compliment used in Persia, one was, "according to my mode of notation in italics, {Ja i shama khali bud pish yaran,} signifying, Thy place or seat was empty among thy friends. This phrase, or the greater part of it, was frequently addressed to myself when coming into a circle of Persian acquaintances, after an absence of several days or weeks. It reminded me of a passage in the First book of Samuel, (ch. 20:18.) And thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. And again, David's place was empty." Sir W. Ouseley's Travels, vol i. preface, p.16.
- empty: Heb. missed
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID WILL BE MISSED ON NEW MOON

Then - Marks progression in the narrative.

Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the [new moon](#), and you will be missed because your seat will be empty- Saul is not stupid and will notice his adversary is absent from the feast!

Spurgeon - "David was not a nobody; if he was away, he was missed. I wish that all attendants at the house of prayer would remember that, when they are away, they are missed. Perhaps some of you have come to-night from some little chapel where you will be greatly missed; I am not going to thank you for coming here, because I am possibly unconsciously causing pain to your pastor, and I do not want to rob him of one of his sheep. David's seat is empty to-night, and he will be missed."

F B Meyer - 1 Samuel 20:18 Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.

Jonathan and David had entered into a covenant, each loving the other as his own soul. Anxious to shield his friend from the wrath of his father, Jonathan discloses to David the plan by which he shall know how matters fared in the royal palace. David's vacant seat suggests a lesson for us.

There are a good many empty seats in our houses. Those that occupied them can never do so again; they have gone never to return again, and we miss them sorely.

Let us see to it that we do not leave our seats in the home circle needlessly vacant. Let not the mother be away at the dance, or even at the religious meeting, when she should be at home, joining in her children's evening prayers. Let the father be very sure that God has called him elsewhere, before he habitually vacates his place in the evening family circle. Let each of us avoid giving needless pain to those we love by leaving empty seats. But if God calls us away to His service, then for those who miss us, another Form shall glide in, and sit in the vacant chair; and they will become conscious that the Master is filling the gap, and beguiling the weary moments.

Above all, let not your seat be empty in the house of God, at the ordinary service, or at the Lord's Table. We are too prone to allow a trifle to deter us from joining in the sacred feasts. At such times we are missed, our empty seat witnesses against us; there is a lack in the song and prayer, which cries out against us; there is a distinct loss to the power of the service, which is in proportion to the number of earnest souls present. Oh that there may be no empty seats at the marriage supper, vacated through our unfaithfulness!

1 Samuel 20:19 "When you have stayed for three days, you shall go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself on that eventful day, and you shall remain by the stone Ezel.

LXE 1 Samuel 20:19 And thou shalt stay three days, and watch an opportunity, and shalt come to thy place where thou mayest hide thyself in the day of thy business, and thou shalt wait by that ergab.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:19 And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel.

NET 1 Samuel 20:19 On the third day you should go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself the day this all started. Stay near the stone Ezel.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:19 The following day hurry down and go to the place where you hid on the day this incident began and stay beside the rock Ezel.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:19 On the third day go down quickly to the place where you hid yourself when the matter was in hand, and remain beside the stone heap.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:19 The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid when this trouble began, and wait by the stone Ezel.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:19 The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid before, and wait there by the stone pile.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:19 On the day after tomorrow, you shall go a long way down; go to the place where you hid yourself earlier, and remain beside the stone there.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:19 The day after tomorrow your absence will be very marked, and you must go to the place where you hid on the day of the deed, and stay beside that mound.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:19 On the following day you will be missed all the more. Go to the spot where you hid on the other occasion and wait near the mound there.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:19 and on the third day thou dost certainly come down, and hast come in unto the place where thou wast hidden in the day of the work, and hast remained near the stone Ezel.

- **hide:** 1Sa 20:5 19:2
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**JONATHAN'S INSTRUCTIONS -
RENDEZVOUS AT THE STONE EZEL**

When you have stayed for three days - Three days may have been the length of celebration of New Moon festival (we know they had at least two feast days because Saul became angry on the second one), but in any event it was the specific timing for the rendezvous.

you shall go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself on that eventful day (in the day of the business), **and you shall remain by the stone** [Ezel](#) - **Ezel** means separation or departure, both of which transpired after their final meeting (there would be one final meeting - 1Sa 23:16-18+) What is that eventful day? We cannot state with certainty. Ryrie suggests "Either a reference to 19:2 or to some unrecorded occasion when Saul schemed to kill David."

Spurgeon "Thus be arranged how to let David know in case he was in danger. Love is thoughtful, love would keep its object out of harm's way; therefore, as we love any, let us try to preserve them from sin, let us endeavor to warn them when temptation is near, that they may not fall by the hand of the enemy."

Warren Wiersbe has a interesting comment on **Ezel** - It seems that David had a special hiding place that only Jonathan knew about, the place by the stone Ezel where David hid when all his trouble with Saul began (1Sa 19:2; 20:19). The Hebrew word ezel means "the departure," a significant thing when you realize that it was there that David and Jonathan departed from each other and David departed from the service of Saul (Borrow [Be successful](#))

Easton's Dictionary on [Ezel](#) (meaning = a separation or departure) -- (1Sa 20:19), a stone, or heap of stones, in the neighbourhood of Saul's residence, the scene of the parting of David and Jonathan (1Sa 20:42). The margin of the Authorized Version reads, "The stone that sheweth the way," in this rendering following the Targum.

1 Samuel 20:20 "I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:20 καὶ γὰρ τρισσεσωτάς σὺ χεῖρας κοντίζων κτμπὼν ἐς τὸν ἀματταρὶ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:20 And I will shoot three arrows, aiming them at a mark.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark.

NET 1 Samuel 20:20 I will shoot three arrows near it, as though I were shooting at a target.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:20 I will shoot three arrows beside it as if I'm aiming at a target.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:20 And I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:20 I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:20 I will come out and shoot three arrows to the side of the stone pile as though I were shooting at a target.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:20 I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:20 For my part, the day after tomorrow I shall shoot three arrows in that direction, as though at a target.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:20 On the third day of the month I will shoot arrows, as though aiming at a target.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:20 'And I shoot three of the arrows at the side, sending out for myself at a mark;

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN'S THREE ARROW TEST

I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target- Any spies for Saul would not be suspicious of a warrior practicing his archery technique! They might wonder why he so badly missed the target.

1 Samuel 20:21 "And **behold**, I will send the lad, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I specifically say to the lad, **Behold**, the arrows are on this side of you, get them,' then come; for there is safety for you and no harm, as the LORD lives.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:21 καὶ ὁ ποστὲλ τὸ παιδί ριον λῶν δερὸ ερμὸι τὴν σχίζαν νῦν ἐπὶ τῶν λῶν τὸ παιδαρὸν δεσχεζὰ πσο καὶ δελαβὰ τὴν παρὰ γνοῦ τι ἐρνησοὶ καὶ οκσπιν λῶς ζῆκ ριος

LXE 1 Samuel 20:21 And behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go find me the arrow. 22 If I should expressly say to the lad, The arrow is here, and on this side of thee, take it; then come, for it is well with thee, and there is no reason for fear, as the Lord lives: but if I should say thus to the young man, The arrow is on that side of thee, and beyond; go, for the Lord hath sent thee away.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:21 And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the LORD liveth.

NET 1 Samuel 20:21 When I send a boy after them, I will say, "Go and find the arrows." If I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them,' then come back. For as surely as the LORD lives, you will be safe and there will be no problem.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:21 Then I will send the young man and say, 'Go and find the arrows!' Now, if I expressly say to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you-- get them,' then come, because as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no problem.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:21 And behold, I will send the boy, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you, take them,' then you are to come, for, as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:21 Then I will send a boy and say, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to him, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; bring them here,' then come, because, as surely as the LORD lives, you are safe; there is no danger.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:21 Then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back. If you hear me tell him, 'They're on this side,' then you will know, as surely as the LORD lives, that all is well, and there is no trouble.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:21 Then I will send the boy, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you, collect them,' then you are to come, for, as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:21 I shall then send a servant to go and find the arrows. If I say to him, "The arrows are this side of you, get them," come out, since all will be well for you and nothing the matter, as sure as Yahweh lives.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:21 I will then send my attendant to go and recover the arrows. If in fact I say to him, 'Look, the arrow is this side of you; pick it up,' come, for you are safe. As the LORD lives, there will be nothing to fear.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:21 and lo, I send the youth: Go, find the arrows. If I at all say to the youth, Lo, the arrows are on this side of thee -- take them, -- then come thou, for peace is for thee, and there is nothing; Jehovah liveth.

- as the: Jer 4:2 5:2 12:16 Am 8:14
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ARROWS ON ONE SIDE SIGNAL SAFETY

And behold, I will send the lad, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I specifically say to the lad, **Behold ([hinneh](#)), the arrows are on this side of you, get them,' then come; for there is safety for you and no harm, as the LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) lives -**
NLT - Then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back. If you hear me tell him, 'They're on this side,' then you will know, as surely as the LORD lives, that all is well, and there is no trouble.

1 Samuel 20:22 "But if I say to the youth, **Behold, the arrows are beyond you,' go, for the LORD has sent you away.**

BGT 1 Samuel 20:22 ντδε ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνσκὸν δεσχεζὰ πσο καὶ πκεῖνα πορεοῦ τι ξαπσταλκν σεκ ριος

LXE 1 Samuel 20:22 If I should expressly say to the lad, The arrow is here, and on this side of thee, take it; then come, for it is well with thee, and there is no reason for fear, as the Lord lives: but if I should say thus to

the young man, The arrow is on that side of thee, and beyond; go, for the Lord hath sent thee away.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away.

NET 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to the boy, "Look, the arrows are on the other side of you," get away. For in that case the LORD has sent you away.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say this to the youth: 'Look, the arrows are beyond you!' then go, for the LORD is sending you away.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to the youth, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go, for the LORD has sent you away.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then you must go, because the LORD has sent you away.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I tell him, 'Go farther-- the arrows are still ahead of you,' then it will mean that you must leave immediately, for the LORD is sending you away.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go; for the LORD has sent you away.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to him, "The arrows are ahead of you," then be off, for Yahweh himself will be sending you away.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:22 But if I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrow is beyond you,' go, for the LORD sends you away.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:22 And if thus I say to the young man, Lo, the arrows are beyond thee, -- go, for Jehovah hath sent thee away;

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ARROWS BEYOND DAVID SIGNAL DANGER!

But if I say to the youth, '**Behold** ([hinneh](#)), the arrows are beyond you,' go, for the LORD([Jehovah](#) - [Yahweh](#)) has sent you away - NLT = But if I tell him, 'Go farther-- the arrows are still ahead of you,' then it will mean that you must leave immediately, for the LORD is sending you away. Note how Jonathan see [Jehovah](#) as sovereign over these events and thus in full control of the safety of His beloved!

1 Samuel 20:23 "As for the agreement of which you and I have spoken, **behold, the LORD is between you and me forever."**

BGT 1 Samuel 20:23 καὶ τὸ μαρτυροῦν γὰρ σὺ καὶ ἐγὼ ὁ κύριος μετὰ σοὶ καὶ ἐν ἐμοὶ ὡς αἰὼς

LXE 1 Samuel 20:23 And as for the word which thou and I have spoken, behold, the Lord is witness between me and thee for ever.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:23 And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be between thee and me for ever.

NET 1 Samuel 20:23 With regard to the matter that you and I discussed, the LORD is the witness between us forever!"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:23 As for the matter you and I have spoken about, the LORD will be a witness between you and me forever."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:23 And as for the matter of which you and I have spoken, behold, the LORD is between you and me forever."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:23 And about the matter you and I discussed--remember, the LORD is witness between you and me forever."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:23 And may the LORD make us keep our promises to each other, for he has witnessed

them."

NRS 1 Samuel 20:23 As for the matter about which you and I have spoken, the LORD is witness between you and me forever."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:23 And as regards the agreement we made, you and I, why, Yahweh is witness between us for ever.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:23 However, in the matter which you and I have discussed, the LORD shall be between you and me forever."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:23 as to the thing which we have spoken, I and thou, lo, Jehovah is between me and thee -- unto the age.'

- **the agreement:** 1Sa 20:14,15
- **the Lord:** 1Sa 20:42 Ge 16:5 31:50
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN REAFFIRMS THEIR COVENANT IS FOREVER

As for the agreement of which you and I have spoken, behold ([hinneh](#)), the LORD ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) is between you and me forever - Who better to have between you than [Jehovah](#)!

THOUGHT- Would it be true that we could all make this statement about our covenant of marriage, that [Jehovah](#) Himself would be between us, uniting us, yea, even "gluing" us as "one flesh" forever. Amen.

1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the field; and when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:24 κα κρ πτεται Δαυιδ ν γρ κα παραγ νεται μ ν κα ρχεται βασιλε ς π τ ν τρ πεζαν το φαγε ν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hides himself in the field, and the new month arrives, and the king comes to the table to eat.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

NET 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat his meal.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the field. At the New Moon, the king sat down to eat the meal.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid himself in the field. And when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the field, and when the New Moon festival came, the king sat down to eat.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid himself in the field, and when the new moon festival began, the king sat down to eat.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid himself in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat at the feast to eat.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the country; New Moon came and the king sat down to his meal.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:24 So David hid in the open country. On the day of the new moon, when the king sat at table to dine,

YLT 1 Samuel 20:24 And David is hidden in the field, and it is the new moon, and the king sitteth down by the food to eat,

- the king: Ps 50:16-21 Pr 4:17 15:17 17:1 21:3,27 Isa 1:11-15 Zec 7:6 Joh 18:28
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID HIDES SAUL SITS

So David hid in the field; and when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food- David patiently prepares for the "arrow-gram" message.

1 Samuel 20:25 The king sat on his seat as usual, the seat by the wall; then Jonathan rose up and Abner sat down by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:25 κα κ θισεν βασιλε ς π τ ν καθ ὄραν α το ς παξ κα παξ π τ ς καθ ὄρας παρ το χον κα προ φθασεν τ ν Ιωναθαν κα κ θισεν Αβεννηρ κ πλαγ ὡν Σαουλ κα πεσκ πη τ προς Δαυιδ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:25 And he sat upon his seat as in former times, even on his seat by the wall, and he went before Jonathan; and Abenner sat on one side of Saul, and the place of David was empty.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.

NET 1 Samuel 20:25 The king sat down in his usual place by the wall, with Jonathan opposite him and Abner at his side. But David's place was vacant.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:25 He sat at his usual place on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat facing him and Abner took his place beside Saul, but David's place was empty.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:25 The king sat on his seat, as at other times, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:25 He sat in his customary place by the wall, opposite Jonathan, and Abner sat next to Saul, but David's place was empty.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:25 He sat at his usual place against the wall, with Jonathan sitting opposite him and Abner beside him. But David's place was empty.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:25 The king sat upon his seat, as at other times, upon the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood, while Abner sat by Saul's side; but David's place was empty.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:25 He sat in his usual place with his back to the wall, Jonathan sat facing him and Abner sat next to Saul; but David's place was empty.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:25 taking his usual place against the wall, Jonathan sat facing him, while Abner sat at the king's side, and David's place was vacant.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:25 and the king sitteth on his seat, as time by time, on a seat by the wall, and Jonathan riseth, and Abner sitteth at the side of Saul, and David's place is looked after.

- as at other times: Jdg 16:20
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ALL SEATS OCCUPIED EXCEPT DAVID'S SEAT

The king sat on his seat as usual, the seat by the wall - Note his seat by the wall probably out of fear someone might attack from behind.

then Jonathan rose up and Abner sat down by Saul's side - Jonathan was opposite Saul who had his chief military man at his side, presumably giving him a sense of added security.

but David's place was empty - This would be the text for Saul's temperament.

1 Samuel 20:26 Nevertheless Saul did not speak anything that day, for he thought, "It is an accident, he is not clean,

BGT 1 Samuel 20:26 καὶ οὐκ ἔφησεν Σαουλ ὁ δὲ νύκτωρ ἐπεὶ συνέβη μὴ καθαροῦ εἶναι τὸν κεκαθριστά

LXE 1 Samuel 20:26 And Saul said nothing on that day, for he said, It seems to have fallen out that he is not clean, because he has not purified himself.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean.

NET 1 Samuel 20:26 However, Saul said nothing about it that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to make him ceremonially unclean. Yes, he must be unclean."

CSB 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul did not say anything that day because he thought, "Something unexpected has happened; he must be ceremonially unclean-- yes, that's it, he is unclean."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:26 Yet Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul said nothing that day, for he thought, "Something must have happened to David to make him ceremonially unclean--surely he is unclean."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul didn't say anything about it that day, for he said to himself, "Something must have made David ceremonially unclean."

NRS 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul did not say anything that day; for he thought, "Something has befallen him; he is not clean, surely he is not clean."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul said nothing that day, thinking, 'It is sheer chance; he is unclean.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:26 Saul, however, said nothing that day, for he thought, "He must have become unclean by accident, and not yet have been cleansed."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:26 And Saul hath not spoken anything on that day, for he said, 'It is an accident; he is not clean -- surely not clean.'

- **he is not clean:** Lev 7:21 11:24,27,31,40 15:5,16,17,19-21 Nu 19:16
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAUL SILENT ABOUT DAVID'S ABSENCE

Nevertheless Saul did not speak anything that day, for he thought ("said to himself"), "It is an accident, he is not clean ([tahor](#); Lxx - [katharos](#)), surely he is not clean ([tahor](#); Lxx - [katharizo](#)) - Saul reasons that David is absent because he is ritually unclean. So notice that Saul said nothing about David's absent, but note the repetition of his thought (clean mentioned twice), as if he could not get this thought out of his mind. While he may have been consuming food, he was consumed with envy, suspicion and animosity toward David.

Warren Wiersbe points out that "The feast consisted primarily of meat from the new moon fellowship offerings **ED**: THIS IS A BIT IRONIC AS SAUL HAD ANYTHING BUT "FELLOWSHIP" IN MIND FOR DAVID!), and anyone ceremonially unclean was prohibited from participating (Lev. 7:20–21). Perhaps David had touched something unclean, or he may have had intercourse with his wife (Lev 15:16–18). If so, all he had to do was separate himself from other people for that day, bathe his body, and change clothes, and he could come back into society the next day." (Borrow [Be successful](#))

John Walton - ceremonial uncleanness. Saul considers David's absence to be likely due to ritual impurity. No one could participate in cultic activity, like the New Moon festival, when in a state of uncleanness. This could occur in a variety of ways: contact with bodily discharges such as semen or blood; contact with the dead or the diseased; and contact with an object that has come in contact with something that is unclean (see the laws of impurity and the methods for ritual cleansing in Lev 11–15). Bathing, a waiting period, sacrifices and examination by a priest were the principal means of purification. ([IVP Background Commentary](#))

BGT 1 Samuel 20:27 κα γενθη τ παριον το μηνς τ μρ τ δευρ κα πεσκη τπος το Δαυιδ κα επεν Σαουλ πρς Ιωναθαν τν υ ν α το τ τι ο παραχγονεν υς Ιεσσα κα χθς κα σμερον π τν τρ πεζαν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:27 And it came to pass on the morrow, on the second day of the month, that the place of David was empty; and Saul said to Jonathan his son, Why has not the son of Jessae attended both yesterday and today at the table?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:27 And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to day?

NET 1 Samuel 20:27 But the next morning, the second day of the new moon, David's place was still vacant. So Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why has Jesse's son not come to the meal yesterday or today?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:27 However, the day after the New Moon, the second day, David's place was still empty, and Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why didn't Jesse's son come to the meal either yesterday or today?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:27 But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has not the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:27 But the next day, the second day of the month, David's place was empty again. Then Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:27 But when David's place was empty again the next day, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse been here for the meal either yesterday or today?"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:27 But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. And Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the feast, either yesterday or today?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:27 On the day after New Moon, the second day, David's place was still empty.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:27 On the next day, the second day of the month, David's place was vacant. Saul inquired of his son Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to table yesterday or today?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:27 And it cometh to pass on the second morrow of the new moon, that David's place is looked after, and Saul saith unto Jonathan his son, 'Wherefore hath the son of Jesse not come in, either yesterday or to-day, unto the food?'

- Wherefore: 1Sa 18:11 19:9,10,15
- the son: 1Sa 22:7-9,13,14 25:10 Isa 11:1,2 Mt 13:55 1Pe 2:4
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DAVID'S SEAT EMPTY A SECOND DAY STIRS SAUL'S IRE

It came about the next day, the second day of the new moon, that David's place was empty- This second day would be a supreme text for Saul and this time instead of reasoning to himself he asks Jonathan who is seated across from him at the table.

So Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal, either yesterday or today- It is difficult to imagine Saul does not have a clue why David is not present. Notice Saul does not use his name but refers to him as "son of Jesse." Saul has already tried repeatedly to kill David! Instead of "stuck pig" for the feast it might have been "stuck" David!

Spurgeon - David was the son of Jesse, but he was Saul's own son-in-law; yet, out of contempt, the angry king calls him "the son of Jesse."

1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan then answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem,

BGT 1 Samuel 20:28 κα πεκρθη Ιωναθαν τ Σαουλ κα επεν ατ παρ τηται Δαυιδ παρ μο ως ες Βηθλεεμ τν π λιν α το πορευθ ναι

LXE 1 Samuel 20:28 And Jonathan answered Saul, and said to him, David asked leave of me to go as far as Bethlehem his city;

KJV 1 Samuel 20:28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem:

NET 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan replied to Saul, "David urgently requested that he be allowed to go to Bethlehem.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan answered, "David asked for my permission to go to Bethlehem.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan answered, "David earnestly asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan replied, "David earnestly asked me if he could go to Bethlehem.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem;

NJB 1 Samuel 20:28 Saul said to his son Jonathan, 'Why did not the son of Jesse come to the meal either yesterday or today?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:28 Jonathan answered Saul: "David urgently asked me to let him go to his city, Bethlehem.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:28 And Jonathan answereth Saul, 'David hath been earnestly asked of me unto Bethlehem,

- 1Sa 20:6
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN BEGINS THE RUSE

A [ruse](#) is an attempt to deceive someone with false information or stratagem.

Jonathan then answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem- This was the test statement agreed upon for David had said "If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for the whole family.'" (1Sa 20:6).

1 Samuel 20:29 for he said, 'Please let me go, since our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to attend. And now, if I have found favor in your sight, please let me get away that I may see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:29 κα ε πεν ξαπ στειλον δ με τι θυσα τς φυλς μ ν ν τ π λει κα νετε λαντο πρς με ο δελφο μου κα ν ν ε ε ρηκα χ ριν ν φθαλμο ς σου διασωθ σομαι δ κα ψομαι το ς δελφο ς μου δι το το ο παραγ γονεν π τ ν τρ πεζαν το βασιλ ως

LXE 1 Samuel 20:29 and he said, Let me go, I pray thee, for we have a family sacrifice in the city, and my brethren have sent for me; and now, if I have found grace in thine eyes, I will even go over and see my brethren: therefore he is not present at the table of the king.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

NET 1 Samuel 20:29 He said, 'Permit me to go, for we are having a family sacrifice in the city, and my brother urged me to be there. So now, if I have found favor with you, let me go to see my brothers.' For that reason he has not come to the king's table."

CSB 1 Samuel 20:29 He said, 'Please let me go because our clan is holding a sacrifice in the town, and my brother has told me to be there. So now, if you are pleased with me, let me go so I can see my brothers.' That's why he didn't come to the king's table."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:29 He said, 'Let me go, for our clan holds a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away and see my brothers.'

For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:29 He said, 'Let me go, because our family is observing a sacrifice in the town and my brother has ordered me to be there. If I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away to see my brothers.' That is why he has not come to the king's table."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:29 He said, 'Please let me go, for we are having a family sacrifice. My brother demanded that I be there. So please let me get away to see my brothers.' That's why he isn't here at the king's table."

NRS 1 Samuel 20:29 he said, 'Let me go; for our family is holding a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your sight, let me get away, and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:29 Jonathan answered Saul, 'David insistently asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem. "Please let me go," he said, "for we are holding the clan sacrifice in the town and my brothers have ordered me to attend. So now, if I enjoy your favour, let me get away and see my brothers." That is why he has not come to the king's table.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:29 'Please let me go,' he begged, 'for we are to have a clan sacrifice in our city, and my brothers insist on my presence. Now, therefore, if you think well of me, give me leave to visit my brothers.' That is why he has not come to the king's table."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:29 and he saith, Send me away, I pray thee, for a family sacrifice we have in the city, and my brother himself hath given command to me, and now, if I have found grace in thine eyes, let me go away, I pray thee, and see my brethren; therefore he hath not come unto the table of the king.'

- my brother: 1Sa 17:28
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN FINISHES THE EXPLANATION OF DAVID'S ABSENCE

for he said, 'Please let me go, since our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to attend- Notice that in comparison to 1Sa 20:6 Jonathan adds to the ruse by telling Saul David's brother had commanded him (not mentioned in 1Sa 20:6) to attend the family festival.

And now, if I have found favor in your sight, please let me get away that I may see my brothers- Jonathan adds somewhat to David's original words.

For this reason he has not come to the king's table - Saul now knows David's absence on day 1 was not ritual uncleanness. Jonathan had said nothing at that time, but now offers the test statement he and David had agreed upon which causes Saul to lash out against him in the next verse.

1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:30 κα θυμ θη ργ Σαουλ π Ιωναθαν σφ δρα κα ε πεν α τ υ κορασ ων α τομολο ντων ο γ ρ ο δα τι μ τοχος ε σ τ υ λεσσαι ε ρ α σχ νην σου κα ε ρ α σχ νην ποκαλ ψεως μητρ ς σου

LXE 1 Samuel 20:30 And Saul was exceedingly angry with Jonathan, and said to him, Thou son of traitorous damsels! for do I not know that thou art an accomplice with the son of Jessae to thy shame, and to the shame of thy mother's nakedness?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

NET 1 Samuel 20:30 Saul became angry with Jonathan and said to him, "You stupid traitor! Don't I realize that to your own disgrace and to the disgrace of your mother's nakedness you have chosen this son of Jesse?

CSB 1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul became angry with Jonathan and shouted, "You son of a perverse and

rebellious woman! Don't I know that you are siding with Jesse's son to your own shame and to the disgrace of your mother?

ESV 1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:30 Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:30 Saul boiled with rage at Jonathan. "You stupid son of a whore!" he swore at him. "Do you think I don't know that you want him to be king in your place, shaming yourself and your mother?"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan. He said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:30 Saul flew into a rage with Jonathan and said, 'Son of a rebellious slut! Don't I know that you side with the son of Jesse to your own shame and your mother's dishonour?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:30 But Saul was extremely angry with Jonathan and said to him: "Son of a rebellious woman, do I not know that, to your own shame and to the disclosure of your mother's shame, you are the companion of Jesse's son?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:30 And the anger of Saul burneth against Jonathan, and he saith to him, 'Son of a perverse rebellious woman! have I not known that thou art fixing on the son of Jesse to thy shame, and to the shame of the nakedness of thy mother?'

- Saul's: Job 5:2 Pr 14:29 19:12,19 21:24 25:28 27:3 Jas 1:19,20
- Son of , Pr 15:2 21:24 Mt 5:22 Eph 4:31 6:4
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAUL'S ANGER BURNED AGAINST JONATHAN

Then - Marks progression in the narrative.

Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness - Now Saul's anger spills over on his own son!

Spurgeon - "He was in such a passion that he began to abuse his own wife, the mother of his own son. In the East, if you want to sting a man most severely, give ill names to his mother; and surely, in the West as well, if anyone has anything to say against a man's mother, it cuts her son to his heart if he is what he ought to be."

NET Note - Heb "son of a perverse woman of rebelliousness." But such an overly literal and domesticated translation of the Hebrew expression fails to capture the force of Saul's unrestrained reaction. Saul, now incensed and enraged over Jonathan's liaison with David, is actually hurling very coarse and emotionally charged words at his son. The translation of this phrase suggested by Koehler and Baumgartner is "bastard of a wayward woman" (HALOT 796 s.v. עוה), but this is not an expression commonly used in English. A better English approximation of the sentiments expressed here by the Hebrew phrase would be "You stupid son of a bitch!" (**ED**: WOE! cf NJB = 'Son of a rebellious slut!') However, sensitivity to the various public formats in which the Bible is read aloud has led to a less startling English rendering which focuses on the semantic value of Saul's utterance (i.e., the behavior of his own son Jonathan, which he viewed as both a personal and a political betrayal [= "traitor"]). But this concession should not obscure the fact that Saul is full of bitterness and frustration. That he would address his son Jonathan with such language, not to mention his apparent readiness even to kill his own son over this friendship with David (v. 33), indicates something of the extreme depth of Saul's jealousy and hatred of David.

Wiersbe comments that "The king's tirade seems to disparage his own wife, but rightly understood, his words describe his son as the lowest of the low. According to Saul, Jonathan's treachery in befriending David indicated that he was not Saul's son at all but the son of some other man, for a son of Saul would never betray his father. Therefore, Jonathan was slandering his own mother and saying she was a common prostitute, a rebel against the Law of Moses, and a woman who practiced perversion. Because Jonathan

helped David and didn't protect his father's throne, he had shamed his mother as much as if he had exposed her nakedness. She bore him to be the successor to his father, and now Jonathan had refused the crown in favor of the son of Jesse. The king was shouting, "You are no son of mine! You must be illegitimate!" (Borrow [Be successful](#))

A Genuine Friend

Two are better than one. — Ecclesiastes 4:9

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 20:32-42

In the novel *Shane*, a friendship forms between Joe Starrett, a farmer on the American frontier, and Shane, a mysterious man who stops to rest at the Starrett home. The men first bond as they work together to remove a giant tree stump from Joe's land. The relationship deepens as Joe rescues Shane from a fight and Shane helps Joe improve and guard his farmland. The men share a sense of mutual respect and loyalty that reflects what Scripture says: "Two are better than one If they fall, one will lift up his companion" (Eccl. 4:9-10).

Jonathan and David modeled this principle as well. Circumstances tested their friendship when David suspected that King Saul wanted him dead. Jonathan doubted this, but David believed it to be true (1 Sam. 20:2-3). Eventually, they decided David would hide in a field while Jonathan questioned his father about the matter. When Saul's deadly intent became clear, the friends wept together and Jonathan blessed David as he fled (v.42).

You have a genuine friend in Jesus if you have accepted His offer of salvation—a friend who is always loyal; one who lifts you when you stumble. He has shown you the greatest love one friend can have for another—love that led Him to sacrifice His life for you (John 15:13). By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
—Scriven

Jesus is your most trusted Friend.

Friends In The Night

The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. — 1 Samuel 18:1

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:30-42

Do you have someone you could call in the middle of the night if you needed help? Bible teacher Ray Pritchard calls these people "2 a.m. friends." If you have an emergency, this kind of friend would ask you two questions: "Where are you?" and "What do you need?"

Friends like that are crucial during difficult times. Jonathan was that type of friend for David. Jonathan's father, King Saul—who was filled with envy at David's popularity and God's blessing on him—tried to kill him (1 Sam. 19:9-10). David escaped and asked his friend for help (ch. 20). While David hid in the field, Jonathan sat at dinner with his father and quickly realized that Saul did indeed intend to kill David (vv.24-34).

Because of their deep friendship, Jonathan "was grieved for David" (v.34). He warned him of his father's plan and told him he should leave (vv.41-42). David recognized what a good friend he had in Jonathan. The Bible says they wept together, "but David more so" (v.41). Their souls were "knit" together.

Do you have loving Christian friends you can count on in a crisis? Are you someone your friends would call a "2 a.m. friend"? By: Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank God for you, good friend of mine,
Seldom is friendship such as thine;
How very much I wish to be
As helpful as you've been to me.
—Clark

A true friend stands with us in times of trial.

Best Friends

The righteous should choose his friends carefully. — Proverbs 12:26

Today's Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:30-42

When I signed up for a popular Internet social network, I was shocked to be greeted with the words, "You have no friends." Although I knew it was untrue, I still felt sad for a moment. The idea that anyone, even an impersonal Web site, would call me friendless was upsetting. Friends are essential for our emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being.

Friends listen to our heartaches without blaming us for having problems. They defend us when we're under attack. They are happy when we succeed and sad when we fail. They give us wise counsel to keep us from making foolish choices. They even risk making us angry for the sake of making us right. My friends have done all of this and more for me.

Perhaps the best-known friendship in the Bible is that of Jonathan and David. Jonathan was heir to the throne of his father Saul. But he knew that the Lord had chosen David for that role, so he risked his own life to save his friend (1 Sam. 20).

As the Bible shows us, we need to choose friends carefully (Prov. 12:26). The very best friends are those who are friends with God and who strengthen our relationship with Him (1 Sam. 23:16). By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I do not ask for many friends,
But give me, Lord, the few
Whose loyalty and faithfulness
Are first of all to You.
—Meadows

True friends are like diamonds—precious and rare.

1 Samuel 20:31 "For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Therefore now, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:31 π ι π σ α ς τ ς μ ρ α ς ς υ ς ι ε σ σ α ι ζ π τ ς γ ς ο χ τ ο ι μ α σ θ σ ε τ α ι β α σ ι λ ε α σ ο υ ν ν ο ν π ο σ τ ε λ α ς λ α β τ ν ν ε α ν α ν τ ι υ ς θ α ν τ ο υ ο τ ο ς

LXE 1 Samuel 20:31 For so long as the son of Jessae lives upon the earth, thy kingdom shall not be established: now then send and take the young man, for he shall surely die.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die.

NET 1 Samuel 20:31 For as long as this son of Jesse is alive on the earth, you and your kingdom will not be established. Now, send some men and bring him to me. For he is as good as dead!"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:31 Every day Jesse's son lives on earth you and your kingship are not secure. Now send for him and bring him to me-- he deserves to die."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:31 As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:31 As long as that son of Jesse is alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives upon the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:31 As long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your royal rights are secure. Now have him fetched and brought to me; he deserves to die.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:31 Why, as long as the son of Jesse lives upon the earth, you cannot make good your

claim to the kingship! So send for him, and bring him to me, for he is doomed."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:31 for all the days that the son of Jesse liveth on the ground thou art not established, thou and thy kingdom; and now, send and bring him unto me, for he is a son of death.'

- send: 1Sa 20:8 19:6,11-15
- shall surely die: Heb. is the son of death, 1Sa 26:16 2Sa 19:28 Ps 79:11
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAUL AFFIRMS DAVID MUST DIE IF JONATHAN IS EVER TO REIGN

For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Therefore now, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die - Saul knew that Jonathan knew where David was hiding. Saul is commanding his son to go and get David so he could kill him!

Spurgeon - "Saul knew that David, and not Jonathan, was to succeed him on the throne. He gives Jonathan warning of that fact, yet seeks his rival's life."

1 Samuel 20:32 But Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:32 καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰωναθὰν τῷ Σαουλ λέγων, ποθεν σκεῖται πεπονήκειν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:32 And Jonathan answered Saul, Why is he to die? What has he done?

KJV 1 Samuel 20:32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?

NET 1 Samuel 20:32 Jonathan responded to his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:32 Jonathan answered his father back: "Why is he to be killed? What has he done?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:32 Then Jonathan answered Saul his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:32 "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" Jonathan asked his father.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:32 "But why should he be put to death?" Jonathan asked his father. "What has he done?"

NRS 1 Samuel 20:32 Then Jonathan answered his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:32 Jonathan retorted to his father Saul, 'Why should he die? What has he done?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:32 But Jonathan asked his father Saul: "Why should he die? What has he done?"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:32 And Jonathan answereth Saul his father, and saith unto him, 'Why is he put to death? what hath he done?'

- Wherefore: 1Sa 19:5 Pr 24:11,12 31:8,9 Joh 7:51
- what hath: Mt 27:23 Lu 23:22, cast, 1Sa 18:11 19:10,11 Pr 22:24 Ec 9:3 Jer 17:9, whereby, 1Sa 20:7 Ec 7:9
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN ASKS SAUL ABOUT DAVID'S CRIME

But Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" - Saul refuses to reveal David's hiding place and even tries to reason with his father. But Saul is "out of control" and in no mood to be reasoned with.

Spurgeon quips "Very reasonable questions, very properly put."

1 Samuel 20:33 Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down; so Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:33 κα π ρεν Σαουλ τ ὀ ρυ π Ιωναθαν το θανατσαι ατν κα γνω Ιωναθαν τι συντετ λεσται κακ α α τη παρ το πατρ ς α το θανατσαι τ ν Δαυιδ

LXE 1 Samuel 20:33 And Saul lifted up his spear against Jonathan to slay him: so Jonathan knew that this evil was determined on by his father to slay David.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

NET 1 Samuel 20:33 Then Saul threw his spear at Jonathan in order to strike him down. So Jonathan was convinced that his father had decided to kill David.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:33 Then Saul threw his spear at Jonathan to kill him, so he knew that his father was determined to kill David.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:33 But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:33 But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:33 Then Saul hurled his spear at Jonathan, intending to kill him. So at last Jonathan realized that his father was really determined to kill David.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:33 But Saul threw his spear at him to strike him; so Jonathan knew that it was the decision of his father to put David to death.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:33 But Saul brandished his spear at him to strike him, and Jonathan realised that his father was determined that David should die.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:33 At this Saul brandished his spear to strike him, and thus Jonathan learned that his father was resolved to kill David.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:33 And Saul casteth the javelin at him to smite him, and Jonathan knoweth that it hath been determined by his father to put David to death.

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAUL ANSWERS SON WITH A SPEAR!

Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down - NIV = "Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him." Saul is furious and totally controlled by his anger (v30 - **Saul's anger burned against Jonathan**) and in a fit of passion sought to kill Jonathan, his own son, the heir apparent to the throne (in his eyes).

So - term of conclusion. The test had been carried out and the answer was clear!

Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death - [The die was caste](#). Saul's heart was hardened to the point of no return and would not rest until his enemy was murdered.

Spurgeon - Behold the love of Jonathan and David! Here was a brother born for adversity, who clung to his friend in the day of danger, and even jeopardized his own life that he might defend David. Let us see here a faint emblem of what our great Friend, the Lord Jesus, has done for us.

1 Samuel 20:34 Then Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat food on the second day of the new moon, for he was grieved over David because his father had dishonored him.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:34 κα νεπ δῆσεν Ιωναθαν π τς τραπ ζης ν ργ θυμο κα ο κ φαγεν ν τ δευτ ρ το μην ς ρτον τι θρα σθη π τ ν Δαυιδ τι συνετ λεσεν π α τ ν πατ ρ α το

LXE 1 Samuel 20:34 And Jonathan sprang up from the table in great anger, and did not eat bread on the second day of the month, for he grieved bitterly for David, because his father determined on mischief against him.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

NET 1 Samuel 20:34 Jonathan got up from the table enraged. He did not eat any food on that second day of the new moon, for he was upset that his father had humiliated David.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:34 He got up from the table in fierce anger and did not eat any food that second day of the New Moon, for he was grieved because of his father's shameful behavior toward David.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:34 And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had disgraced him.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:34 Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger; on that second day of the month he did not eat, because he was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:34 Jonathan left the table in fierce anger and refused to eat on that second day of the festival, for he was crushed by his father's shameful behavior toward David.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:34 Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food on the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, and because his father had disgraced him.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:34 Hot with anger, Jonathan got up from the table and ate nothing on the second day of the month, being upset about David -- and because his father had insulted him.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:34 Jonathan sprang up from the table in great anger and took no food that second day of the month, for he was grieved on David's account, since his father had railed against him.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:34 And Jonathan riseth from the table in the heat of anger, and hath not eaten food on the second day of the new moon, for he hath been grieved for David, for his father put him to shame.

- in fierce: Ec 7:20 Eph 4:26
- he was grieved: Mk 3:5
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN'S ANGRY REACTION

Then - Marks progression of the narrative. Clearly the spear did not strike Jonathan but it does infuriate him!

Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat food on the second day of the new moon- This statement is almost humorous that Jonathan did not eat food on the second day. Seeing a spear coming your direction might tend to spoil one's appetite for food!

for he was grieved over David because his father had dishonored him - This could be interpreted two ways, that Jonathan was grieved because his father had dishonored David (most translations convey this sense). Or it could be read as NJB "being upset about David -- and because his father had insulted him (JONATHAN)."

Friends for Life

[Jonathan] was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David. 1 Samuel 20:34

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 20:26–34

William Cowper (1731–1800), the English poet, found a friend in his pastor, John Newton (1725–1807), the former slave trader. Cowper suffered from depression and anxiety, attempting to die by suicide more than once. When Newton visited him, they'd go on long walks together and talk about God. Thinking that Cowper would benefit from engaging creatively and having a reason to write his poetry, the minister had the idea to compile a hymnal. Cowper contributed many songs, including "God Moves in a Mysterious Way." When Newton moved to another church, he and Cowper remained strong friends and corresponded regularly for the rest of

Cowper's life.

I see parallels between the strong friendship of Cowper and Newton with that of David and Jonathan in the Old Testament. After David defeated Goliath, "Jonathan became one in spirit with David," loving him as himself (1 Samuel 18:1). Although Jonathan was the son of King Saul, he defended David against the king's jealousy and anger, asking his father why David should be put to death. In response, "Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him" (20:33). Jonathan dodged the weapon and was grieved at this shameful treatment of his friend (v. 34).

For both sets of friends, their bond was life-giving as they spurred each other on to serve and love God. How might you similarly encourage a friend today? By: Amy Boucher Pye

What role does friendship play in your sense of well-being? How could you show God's love to someone and build them up?

Jesus, help me to enjoy Your friendship and fellowship.

Play Michael Smith's "[Friends are Friends Forever](#)"

1 Samuel 20:35 Now it came about in the morning that Jonathan went out into the field for the appointment with David, and a little lad was with him.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:35 καὶ γενθὴ πρωὶ καὶ ἔλθεν Ἰωνᾶθαν εἰς γρὺν καθ' ἣν ἔτατο εἰς τὸ μαρτυρεῖν Δαυὶδ καὶ παιδὶ ῥιον μικρὸν μετ' αὐτόν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:35 And morning came, and Jonathan went out to the field, as he appointed to do for a signal to David, and a little boy was with him.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:35 And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

NET 1 Samuel 20:35 The next morning Jonathan, along with a young servant, went out to the field to meet David.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:35 In the morning Jonathan went out to the field for the appointed meeting with David. A small young man was with him.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him a little boy.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:35 In the morning Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting with David. He had a small boy with him,

NLT 1 Samuel 20:35 The next morning, as agreed, Jonathan went out into the field and took a young boy with him to gather his arrows.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him was a little boy.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:35 Next morning, Jonathan went out into the country at the time agreed with David, taking a young servant with him.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:35 The next morning Jonathan went out into the field with a little boy for his appointment with David.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:35 And it cometh to pass in the morning, that Jonathan goeth out into the field for the appointment with David, and a little youth is with him.

- at the time: 1Sa 20:19 2Sa 20:5
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MORNING APPOINTMENT PREPARATION FOR THE "ARROW-GRAM"

Now it came about in the morning that Jonathan went out into the field for the appointment with David, and a little lad was

with him - This appointment was the day following the angry outburst by Saul. You would have to believe that at this juncture Saul surely has spies eyes on Jonathan. This makes the "arrow-gram" mode of communicating critically important and beyond suspicion of even the cleverest spy.

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly

Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. Hebrews 13:5

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Samuel 20:35–42

A dear friend of mine sent me a text message that said, "I'm so glad we can tell each other the good, the bad, and the ugly!" We have been friends for many years, and we have learned to share our joys and our failures. We recognize we are far from perfect, so we share our struggles but we also rejoice in each other's successes.

David and Jonathan had a solid friendship too, beginning with the good days of David's victory over Goliath (1 Sam. 18:1–4). They shared their fears during the bad days of Jonathan's father's jealousy (1 Sa 18:6–11; 20:1–2). Finally, they suffered together during the ugly days of Saul's plans to kill David (20:42).

Good friends don't abandon us when external circumstances change. They stay with us through the good and the bad days. Good friends also may point us to God in the ugly days, when we may feel tempted to walk away from our Lord.

Real friendships are a gift from God because they exemplify the perfect Friend, who remains loyal through the good, the bad, and the ugly days. As the Lord reminds us, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). By: Keila Ochoa ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Dear Lord, I thank You for the good friends You have placed in my life, but above all, I thank You for Your friendship.

Read about [living in the power of the Spirit and serving one another in love](#)

A friend is the first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out.

1 Samuel 20:36 He said to his lad, "Run, find now the arrows which I am about to shoot." As the lad was running, he shot an arrow past him.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:36 κα ε πεν τ παιδαρ δρ με ε ρ μοι τ ς σχ ζας ν α ς γ κοντ ζω κα τ παιδ ριον δραμε κα α τ ς κ ντιζε τ σχ ζ κα παρ γαγεν α τ ν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:36 And he said to the boy, Run, find me the arrows which I shoot: and the boy ran, and Jonathan shot an arrow, and sent it beyond him.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:36 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

NET 1 Samuel 20:36 He said to his servant, "Run, find the arrows that I am about to shoot." As the servant ran, Jonathan shot the arrow beyond him.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:36 He said to the young man, "Run and find the arrows I'm shooting." As the young man ran, Jonathan shot an arrow beyond him.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:36 And he said to his boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:36 and he said to the boy, "Run and find the arrows I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:36 "Start running," he told the boy, "so you can find the arrows as I shoot them." So the boy ran, and Jonathan shot an arrow beyond him.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:36 He said to the boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:36 He said to his servant, 'Run and find the arrows which I am going to shoot,' and the servant ran while Jonathan shot an arrow ahead of him.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:36 There he said to the boy, "Run and fetch the arrow." And as the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him in the direction of the city.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:36 And he saith to his youth, 'Run, find, I pray thee, the arrows which I am shooting;' the youth is running, and he hath shot the arrow, causing it to pass over him.

- Run: 1Sa 20:20,21
- beyond him: Heb. to pass over him, 1Sa 20:21,22
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ARROW BEYOND SIGNALLED DANGER AT HAND

He said to his lad, "Run, find now the arrows which I am about to shoot." As the lad was running, he shot an arrow past him - As promised Jonathan shot three arrows (1Sa 20:20), one flying far beyond the lad which made it necessary for Jonathan to shout. But these words were of course meant for David not the lad but a spy would not know that to be the case.

1 Samuel 20:37 When the lad reached the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the lad and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"

BGT 1 Samuel 20:37 κα λθεν τ παιδ ριον ως το τ που τ ς σχ ζης ο κ ντιζεν Ιωναθαν κα νεβ ησεν Ιωναθαν π σω το νεαν ου κα επεν κε σχ ζα π σο κα π κεινα

LXE 1 Samuel 20:37 And the boy came to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan shot; and Jonathan cried out after the lad, and said, The arrow is on that side of thee and beyond thee.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee?

NET 1 Samuel 20:37 When the servant came to the place where Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan called out to the servant, "Isn't the arrow further beyond you?"

CSB 1 Samuel 20:37 He came to the location of the arrow that Jonathan had shot, but Jonathan called to him and said, "The arrow is beyond you, isn't it?"

ESV 1 Samuel 20:37 And when the boy came to the place of the arrow that Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the boy and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"

NIV 1 Samuel 20:37 When the boy came to the place where Jonathan's arrow had fallen, Jonathan called out after him, "Isn't the arrow beyond you?"

NLT 1 Samuel 20:37 When the boy had almost reached the arrow, Jonathan shouted, "The arrow is still ahead of you.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:37 When the boy came to the place where Jonathan's arrow had fallen, Jonathan called after the boy and said, "Is the arrow not beyond you?"

NJB 1 Samuel 20:37 When the servant reached the spot to which Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan shouted after him, 'Is not the arrow ahead of you?'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:37 When the boy made for the spot where Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan called after him, "The arrow is farther on!"

YLT 1 Samuel 20:37 And the youth cometh unto the place of the arrow which Jonathan hath shot, and Jonathan calleth after the youth, and saith, 'Is not the arrow beyond thee?'

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KEY PHRASE "ARROWS BEYOND"

When the lad reached the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the lad and said, "Is not the

arrow beyond you? - Jonathan had stated that "if I say to the youth, 'Behold, the arrows are beyond you,' go, for the LORD has sent you away."

1 Samuel 20:38 And Jonathan called after the lad, "Hurry, be quick, do not stay!" And Jonathan's lad picked up the arrow and came to his master.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:38 κα νεβ ησεν Ιωναθαν π σω το παιδαρ ου α το λ γων ταχ νας σπε σον κα μ στ ς κα ν λεξεν τ παιδ ριον Ιωναθαν τ ς σχ ζας πρ ς τ ν κ ριον α το

LXE 1 Samuel 20:38 And Jonathan cried out after his boy, saying, Make all speed, and stay not. And Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows, and brought the arrows to his master.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

NET 1 Samuel 20:38 Jonathan called out to the servant, "Hurry! Go faster! Don't delay!" Jonathan's servant retrieved the arrow and came back to his master.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:38 Then Jonathan called to him, "Hurry up and don't stop!" Jonathan's young man picked up the arrow and returned to his master.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:38 And Jonathan called after the boy, "Hurry! Be quick! Do not stay!" So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:38 Then he shouted, "Hurry! Go quickly! Don't stop!" The boy picked up the arrow and returned to his master.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:38 Hurry, hurry, don't wait." So the boy quickly gathered up the arrows and ran back to his master.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:38 Jonathan called after the boy, "Hurry, be quick, do not linger." So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:38 Again Jonathan shouted after the servant, 'Quick! Hurry, do not stand around.' Jonathan's servant picked up the arrow and brought it back to his master.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:38 Again he called to his lad, "Hurry, be quick, don't delay!" Jonathan's boy picked up the arrow and brought it to his master.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:38 and Jonathan calleth after the youth, 'Speed, haste, stand not;' and Jonathan's youth gathereth the arrows, and cometh unto his lord.

- Ps 55:6-9 Pr 6:4,5 Mt 24:16-18 Mk 13:14-16 Lu 17:31,32
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN'S ORDER TO HIS LAD

And Jonathan called after the lad, "Hurry, be quick, do not stay!"- Note Jonathan uses 3 words to emphasize the need to obey immediately

And Jonathan's lad picked up the arrow and came to his master- Obedience.

1 Samuel 20:39 But the lad was not aware of anything; only Jonathan and David knew about the matter.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:39 κα τ παιδ ριον ο κ γνω ο θ ν π ρεξ Ιωναθαν κα Δαυιδ γνωσαν τ μα

LXE 1 Samuel 20:39 And the boy knew nothing, only Jonathan and David knew.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:39 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

NET 1 Samuel 20:39 (Now the servant did not understand any of this. Only Jonathan and David knew what

was going on.)

CSB 1 Samuel 20:39 He did not know anything; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:39 But the boy knew nothing. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:39 (The boy knew nothing of all this; only Jonathan and David knew.)

NLT 1 Samuel 20:39 He, of course, suspected nothing; only Jonathan and David understood the signal.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:39 But the boy knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:39 The servant suspected nothing; only Jonathan and David knew what was meant.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:39 The boy knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew what was meant.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:39 And the youth hath not known anything, only Jonathan and David knew the word.

- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ARROW-GRAM MESSAGE SUCCESSFUL

But the lad was not aware of anything The lad has no clue about what has just transpired and how he had been part of one of the more important "arrow-grams" ever sent, for it would assure that David escaped safely.

only Jonathan and David knew about the matter - The lad did not know and any spying eyes would not have known.

Spurgeon "I believe a very large majority of churchgoers know no more of what the preaching is about than did Jonathan's lad when he ran after the arrows. Their flight David well understood, but the lad knew nothing of the matter. Too many are merely the stolid, unthinking, slumbering worshipers of an unknown God."

1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, "Go, bring them to the city."

BGT 1 Samuel 20:40 κα Ιωναθαν δωκεν τ σκε η ατο π τ παιδ ριον ατο κα επεν τ παιδαρ ατο πορε ου ε σελθε ε ς τ ν π λιν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:40 And Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy, and said to his boy, Go, enter into the city.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:40 And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city.

NET 1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his equipment to the servant who was with him. He said to him, "Go, take these things back to the city."

CSB 1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his equipment to the young man who was with him and said, "Go, take it back to the city."

ESV 1 Samuel 20:40 And Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city."

NIV 1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and said, "Go, carry them back to town."

NLT 1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and told him to take them back to town.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:40 Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city."

NJB 1 Samuel 20:40 Jonathan then gave his weapons to his servant and said, 'Go and carry them to the town.'

NAB 1 Samuel 20:40 Then Jonathan gave his weapons to this boy of his and said to him, "Go, take them to the city."

YLT 1 Samuel 20:40 And Jonathan giveth his weapons unto the youth whom he hath, and saith to him, 'Go, carry into the city.'

- artillery: Heb. instruments, Rather weapons, as the word {kelim} also denotes; and here means the bow, quiver, and arrows.
This is probably the only place in our language in which the word artillery is not applied to cannon or ordinance, but simply to weapons of war.
- his lad: Heb. the lad that was his
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS HELPER TO "GO"

Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, "Go, bring them to the city.

Spurgeon - But the lad knew not any thing." - I believe a very large majority of churchgoers know no more of what the preaching is about than did Jonathan's lad when he ran after the arrows. Their flight David well understood, but the lad knew nothing of the matter. Too many are merely the stolid, unthinking, slumbering worshipers of an unknown God.

1 Samuel 20:41 When the lad was gone, David rose from the south side and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed three times. And they kissed each other and wept together, but David wept the more.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:41 κα ς ε σ λθεν τ παιδ ριον κα Δαυιδ ν στη π το εργαβ κα πεσεν π πρ σωπον α το κα προσεκ νησεν α τ τρ ς κα κατεφ λησεν καστος τ ν πλησ ον α το κα κλαυσεν καστος τ πλησ ον α το ως συντελε ας μεγ λης

LXE 1 Samuel 20:41 And when the lad went in, then David arose from the argab, and fell upon his face, and did obeisance to him three times, and they kissed each other, and wept for each other, for a great while.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:41 And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

NET 1 Samuel 20:41 When the servant had left, David got up from beside the mound, knelt with his face to the ground, and bowed three times. Then they kissed each other and they both wept, especially David.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:41 When the young man had gone, David got up from the south side of the stone Ezel, fell with his face to the ground, and bowed three times. Then he and Jonathan kissed each other and wept with each other, though David wept more.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:41 And as soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times. And they kissed one another and wept with one another, David weeping the most.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:41 After the boy had gone, David got up from the south side of the stone and bowed down before Jonathan three times, with his face to the ground. Then they kissed each other and wept together--but David wept the most.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:41 As soon as the boy was gone, David came out from where he had been hiding near the stone pile. Then David bowed three times to Jonathan with his face to the ground. Both of them were in tears as they embraced each other and said good-bye, especially David.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:41 As soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He bowed three times, and they kissed each other, and wept with each other; David wept the more.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:41 As soon as the servant had gone, David stood up beside the mound, threw himself to the ground, prostrating himself three times. They then embraced each other, both weeping copiously.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:41 When the boy had left, David rose from beside the mound and prostrated himself on the ground three times before Jonathan in homage. They kissed each other and wept aloud together.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:41 The youth hath gone, and David hath risen from Ezel, at the south, and falleth on his face to the earth, and boweth himself three times, and they kiss one another, and they weep one with another, till David exerted himself;

- and fell: 1Sa 25:23 Ge 43:28 2Sa 9:6
- and they kissed: 1Sa 10:1 Ge 29:11,13 45:15 2Sa 19:39 Ac 20:37
- David exceeded: 1Sa 18:3 2Sa 1:26
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

David and Jonathan by Rembrandt, c. 1642

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW

Parting is such sweet sorrow is a quote from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, spoken by Juliet in act 2, scene 2. The scene in which this sentence appears takes place on a balcony attached to Juliet's bedroom (the famed 'balcony scene'), towards the end of which Juliet says:

‘Sweet, so would I
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow.’

When the lad was gone - Which preserved the secrecy of their arrangement. One has to wonder how Jonathan could go out to meet David without a spy seeing his movement. Could God providentially have hidden Jonathan's movement? Just wondering?

David rose from the south side and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed three times - We see David's humility toward Jonathan. The irony of the future king bowing to the one who would have been king.

And they kissed each other and wept together, but David wept the more - They express the preciousness of their friendship. There is nothing off-color in this passage. They had deep love for each other as men of God. They knew this would be parting and that David would never return to the royal palace until Saul passed on and David was crowned king.

David wept the most. Why? Because he recognized what Jonathan had done for him. He had risked his life to save him. And he had done it gladly, without complaint, because that's what friends do for each other.

TSK - The separation of two such faithful friends was equally grievous to them both, but David's case was the more deplorable: for when Jonathan was returning to his family and friends, David was leaving all his comforts, even those of God's sanctuary, and therefore his grief exceeded Jonathan's; or, perhaps it was because his temper was more tender and his passions stronger. They referred each other to the **covenant of friendship** that was between them, both of them being comforted thereby in this very mournful separation:--"We have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, for ourselves and our heirs, that we and they will be faithful and kind to each other from generation to generation."

Jewish interpretation of Jonathan and David - The sages characterized the relationship between Jonathan and David in the following Mishnah:

“Whenever love depends on some selfish end, when the end passes away, the love passes away; but if it does not depend on some selfish end, it will never pass away. Which love depended on a selfish end? This was the love of Amnon and Tamar. And which did not depend on a selfish end? This was the love of David and Jonathan. (Avot 5:16)”[\[9\]](#)

Rabbi Shimon ben Tzemach Duran (Spain, North Africa 14th–15th century) delineated the significance of this mishnah:

“Anyone who establishes a friendship for access to power, money, or sexual relations; when these ends are not attainable, the friendship ceases...love that is not dependent on selfish ends is true love of the other person since there is no intended end.” (Magen Avot – abridged and adapted translation)[\[9\]](#)

Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - go to page 1636- KISS

Every kiss is an outward expression of some presumed kind of intimacy. Biblical examples illustrate the wide variety of the nature of that shared intimacy and the degree of mutual commitment involved. Aside from Judas's treacherous kiss, the vast majority of references to kissing are in the OT, and most of these occur in a family context. Kissing as an erotic activity was known and enjoyed in this era, but the image of kissing is primarily between males in the context of a family.

By far the most common biblical examples of kissing involve the warm emotional embracing of relatives or close friends. These are variously indications of intimacy restored (e.g., Joseph and his brothers, Gen 45:15), the intimacy of reconciliation (Jacob and Esau, Gen 33:4; the prodigal son, Lk 15:20) or intimacy disrupted (Naomi and her daughters-in-law, Ruth 1:9; Paul and the

Ephesian elders, Acts 20:37). They also record, in somewhat ritual fashion, occasions of reconciliation, farewell and so forth. All are heavily charged with emotion, as is the extravagant kiss of homage and adoration of the forgiven woman in Luke 7:38. The more formal and conventional "holy kiss" of the early church (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14) indicates the believers' shared intimacy in the grace of Christ.

The passion of the seductive kiss of illicit lovemaking is well illustrated by the footloose and wayward wife of Proverbs 7:13, who gives hints of the secret pleasures in store for her simpleton victim when she has lured him between the sheets. Appropriate romantic kissing is celebrated in the Song of Songs: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth" (Song 1:2 NIV).

Of course kissing may represent nothing more than the cynical promises of political campaigning. Absalom's kiss (2 Sam 15:5–6), which stole the hearts of the people of Israel, has its modern counterpart in today's electioneering. Such feigned intimacy may or may not deliver the goods. Judas's kiss (Lk 22:47), like Joab's sham overture that hoodwinked the unwary Amasa (2 Sam 20:10), was the ultimate in treachery, violating all propriety and social convention.

The illicit intimacy with foreign gods is well expressed by Hosea's outraged astonishment, "Men kiss calves!" (Hos 13:2 RSV). Job also recognized the possibility of secret enticement to worship the astral deities with a kiss of homage (Job 31:26–27). Finally, the metaphorical use of this figure of intimacy (e.g., "righteousness and peace kiss each other," Ps 85:10 NIV) is an indication of how varied are the images of intimacy associated with the idea of kissing.

See also FAMILY; IDOLATRY; MOUTH; SEX; SONG OF SONGS.

1 Samuel 20:42 Jonathan said to David, "Go in safety, inasmuch as we have sworn to each other in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.' " Then he rose and departed, while Jonathan went into the city.

BGT 1 Samuel 20:42 κα ε πεν Ιωναθαν πορε ου ε ς ε ρ νην κα ς μωμ καμεν με ς μφ τεροι ν ν ματι κυρ ου λ γοντες κ ριος σται μ ρτυς ν μ σον μο κα σο κα ν μ σον το σπ ρματ ς μου κα ν μ σον το σπ ρματ ς σου ως α νος

--- 1 Samuel 21:1 κα ν στη Δαυιδ κα π λθεν κα Ιωναθαν ε σ λθεν ε ς τ ν π λιν

LXE 1 Samuel 20:42 And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, and as we have both sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be witness between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever--even so let it be. And David arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

KJV 1 Samuel 20:42 And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

NET 1 Samuel 20:42 Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for the two of us have sworn together in the name of the LORD saying, 'The LORD will be between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'" Then David got up and left, while Jonathan went back to the city.

CSB 1 Samuel 20:42 Jonathan then said to David, "Go in the assurance the two of us pledged in the name of the LORD when we said: The LORD will be a witness between you and me and between my offspring and your offspring forever." Then David left, and Jonathan went into the city.

ESV 1 Samuel 20:42 Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever.'" And he rose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

NIV 1 Samuel 20:42 Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD is witness between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants forever.' " Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.

NLT 1 Samuel 20:42 At last Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for we have sworn loyalty to each other in the LORD's name. The LORD is the witness of a bond between us and our children forever." Then David left, and Jonathan returned to the town.

NRS 1 Samuel 20:42 Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since both of us have sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.'" He got up and left; and Jonathan went into the city.

NJB 1 Samuel 20:42 Jonathan then said to David, 'Go in peace. And as regards the oath that both of us have sworn by the name of Yahweh, may Yahweh be witness between you and me, between your descendants and mine for ever.'

--- 1 Samuel 21:1 David then got up and left, and Jonathan went back to the town.

NAB 1 Samuel 20:42 At length Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, in keeping with what we two have sworn by the name of the LORD: 'The LORD shall be between you and me, and between your posterity and mine forever.'"

--- 1 Samuel 21:1 Then David departed on his way, while Jonathan went back into the city.

YLT 1 Samuel 20:42 and Jonathan saith to David, 'Go in peace, in that we have sworn -- we two -- in the name of Jehovah, saying, Jehovah is between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed -- unto the age;' and he riseth and goeth; and Jonathan hath gone in to the city.

- Go in peace: 1Sa 20:22 1:17 Nu 6:26 Lu 7:50 Ac 16:36
- forasmuch as: or, the Lord be witness of that which, etc. 1Sa 20:23
- And he arose: 1Sa 23:18
- 1 Samuel 20 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JONATHAN REITERATES THE COVENANT BETWEEN THEM

Jonathan said to David, "**Go in safety, inasmuch as we have sworn** ([shaba](#) derived from "seven"; Lxx - [omnuo](#)) **to each other in the Name of the LORD** ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)), **saying, 'The LORD** ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) **will be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever** - Their covenant included their offspring and was to last forever, clearly a foreshadowing of the covenant of the Son of David with all would enter into the eternal covenant with him by grace through faith. Indeed, this would be fulfilled in 2Sa 9:1-8+ and 2Sa 21:7 as David's spares [Mephibosheth](#).

TECHNICAL NOTE - NET NOTE - Beginning with 1Sa 20:42b, the verse numbers through 1Sa 21:15 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 20:42b ET = 21:1 HT, 21:1 ET = 21:2 HT, 21:2 ET = 21:3 HT, etc., through 21:15 ET = 21:16 HT. With 1Sa 22:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

Then he rose and departed, while Jonathan went into the city- Jonathan went back to the royal residence and David begins 10 years of running for his life!

Warren Wiersbe points out that this "was not their last meeting (1Sa 23:16–18), but it was certainly a profoundly emotional farewell. They both wept, but David wept the most. He didn't know how many years of exile lay before him, and perhaps he might never see his beloved friend again. Eastern peoples aren't ashamed to weep, embrace, and kiss one another when they meet or when they part (Gen. 31:55; Acts 20:37). Jonathan's, "Go in peace" must have encouraged David. Both men reaffirmed their covenant, knowing that the Lord heard their words and saw their hearts. David left and traveled three miles to the priestly city of Nob, and Jonathan returned to Gibeath and continued to be an officer in his father's army. Ten years later, the Philistines would kill Saul, Jonathan, and his brothers on the battlefield (1Sa. 31:1–6). (Borrow [Be successful](#))

Play Michael Smith's

["Friends are Friends Forever"](#)

Packing up the dreams God planted
In the fertile soil of you
Can't believe the hopes He's granted
Means a chapter in your life is through

But we'll keep you close as always
It won't even seem you've gone
'Cause our hearts in big and small ways
Will keep the love that keeps us strong

And friends are friends forever
If the Lord's the Lord of them
And a friend will not say never

'Cause the welcome will not end

Though it's hard to let you go
In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long
To live as friends

With the faith and love God's given
Springing from the hope we know
We will pray the joy you'll live in
Is the strength that now you show

But we'll keep you close as always
It won't even seem you've gone
'Cause our hearts in big and small ways
Will keep the love that keeps us strong

And friends are friends forever
If the Lord's the Lord of them
And a friend will not say never
'Cause the welcome will not end

Though it's hard to let you go
In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long
To live as friends