

David and Jonathan

1 Samuel 20

by Don Falkos

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David said to Jonathan, "Your father wants to kill me."

Jonathan protested, "That's not true!"

David said, "Tomorrow the new moon festival begins. I will not attend. Tell your father I've gone home to Bethlehem for an annual family sacrifice. Gauge his reaction."

Jonathan made arrangements with David to hide by a stone pile in a particular field, "I'll talk to my father and find out how he feels about you. After the festival, I'll come out and shoot three arrows. Then I'll send a boy to retrieve them. If I tell him, 'They're on this side of you,' then you'll know all is well. But if I tell him, 'The arrows are still ahead of you,' then you'll know you have to leave immediately."

When Saul asked about David's absence from the festival, Jonathan gave David's excuse about a family sacrifice. Saul exploded with rage, "As long as he's alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!"

The next morning, Jonathan went out into the field where David was hiding. He told the boy who was with him, "Start running." Jonathan shot his arrows and shouted, "The arrows are still ahead of you. Hurry! Don't wait!" The boy gathered up the arrows and ran back.

Jonathan sent the boy back to town. Then David came out from behind the stone pile. The two men kissed each other and wept.

At last Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace. We have sworn loyalty to each other in the name of the Lord. The Lord is witness to a bond between us and our children forever." David left, and Jonathan went back home.