

A Sad Parting (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 20

David Questions Jonathan

- 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!”
- 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!”
- 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!”
- 4 Jonathan replied to David, “Tell me what I can do for you.”

The Test

- 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.
- 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.’
- 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.
- 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?”
- 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?”
- 10 David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?”
- 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,

Jonathan’s Covenant With David

- 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?
- 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.
- 14 While I am still alive, extend to me the loyalty of the LORD, or else I will die!
- 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
- 16 and called David’s enemies to account.” So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David.
- 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.

Jonathan Arranges to Convey the Outcome of the Test

- 18 Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty.
- 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.
- 20 I will shoot three arrows near it, as though I were shooting at a target.
- 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 no problem.
- 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.
- 23 With regard to the matter that you and I discussed, the LORD is the witness between us forever!”
- 24a So David hid in the field.

Saul Tries to Kill Jonathan

- 24b When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat his meal.
- 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.
- 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.”
- 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?”
- 28 Jonathan replied to Saul, “David urgently requested that he be allowed to go to Bethlehem.
- 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.”

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?”

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!”

32 Jonathan responded to his father Saul, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?”

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.

Jonathan and David’s Parting

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.

35 The next morning Jonathan, along with a young servant, went out to the field to meet David.

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.

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?”

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.

39 (Now the servant did not understand any of this. Only Jonathan and David knew what was going on.)

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.”

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.

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.

Ahimelech the Priest Helps David (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 21:1–12

David and His Men Eat the Holy Bread

1 David went to Ahimelech the priest in Nob. Ahimelech was shaking with fear when he met David, and said to him, “Why are you by yourself with no one accompanying you?”

2 David replied to Ahimelech the priest, “The king instructed me to do something, but he said to me, ‘Don’t let anyone know the reason I am sending you or the instructions I have given you.’ I have told my soldiers to wait at a certain place.

3 Now what do you have at your disposal? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever can be found.”

4 The priest replied to David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread at my disposal. Only holy bread is available, and then only if your soldiers have abstained from sexual relations with women.”

5 David said to the priest, “Certainly women have been kept away from us, just as on previous occasions when I have set out. The soldiers’ equipment is holy, even on an ordinary journey. How much more so will they be holy today, along with their equipment!”

6 So the priest gave him holy bread, for there was no bread there other than the bread of the Presence. It had been removed from before the LORD in order to replace it with hot bread on the day it had been taken away. [\[Matt 12:3–4\]](#)

7 (One of Saul’s servants was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, who was in charge of Saul’s shepherds.)

8 David said to Ahimelech, “Is there no sword or spear here at your disposal? I don’t have my own sword or equipment in hand due to the urgency of the king’s instructions.”

9 The priest replied, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the valley of Elah, is wrapped in a garment behind the ephod. If you wish, take it for yourself. Other than that, there’s nothing here.” David said, “There’s nothing like it! Give it to me!”

David Flees to Gath

10 So on that day David arose and fled from Saul. He went to King Achish of Gath.

11 The servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one that they sing about when they dance, saying,

‘Saul struck down his thousands,
But David his tens of thousands?’”

12 David thought about what they said and was very afraid of King Achish of Gath.

In God I Trust (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

Psalm 56

*For the music director; according to the yonath-elem-rechovim style;***A prayer of David, written when the Philistines captured him in Gath.**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, for men are attacking me!
All day long hostile enemies are tormenting me.
- 2 Those who anticipate my defeat attack me all day long.
Indeed, many are fighting against me, O Exalted One.
- 3 When I am afraid,
I trust in you.
- 4 In God—I boast in his promise—
in God I trust, I am not afraid.
What can mere men do to me?
- 5 All day long they cause me trouble;
they make a habit of plotting my demise.
- 6 They stalk and lurk;
they watch my every step,
as they prepare to take my life.
- 7 Because they are bent on violence, do not let them escape!
In your anger bring down the nations, O God!
- 8 You keep track of my misery.
Put my tears in your leather container!
Are they not recorded in your scroll?
- 9 My enemies will turn back when I cry out to you for help;
I know that God is on my side.
- 10 In God—I boast in his promise—
in the LORD—I boast in his promise—
- 11 in God I trust, I am not afraid.
What can mere men do to me?
- 12 I am obligated to fulfill the vows I made to you, O God;
I will give you the thank-offerings you deserve,
13 when you deliver my life from death.
You keep my feet from stumbling,
so that I might serve God as I enjoy life.

David Escapes Gath By Feigning Insanity (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 21:13–15

- 13 He altered his behavior in their presence. Since he was in their power, he pretended to be insane, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard.
- 14 Achish said to his servants, “Look at this madman! Why did you bring him to me?”
- 15 Do I have a shortage of fools, that you have brought me this man to display his insanity in front of me? Should this man enter my house?”

I Will Bless the Lord at All Times (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

Psalm 34

Written by David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, causing the king to send him away.

- 1 I will praise the LORD at all times;
my mouth will continually praise him.
- 2 I will boast in the LORD;
let the oppressed hear and rejoice!
- 3 Magnify the LORD with me!
Let’s praise his name together!
- 4 I sought the LORD’s help and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 Those who look to him for help are happy;

- their faces are not ashamed.
- 6 This oppressed man cried out and the LORD heard;
he saved him from all his troubles.
- 7 The LORD's angel camps around
the LORD's loyal followers and delivers them.
- 8 Taste and see that the LORD is good! [cf. [1 Pet 2:3](#)]
How blessed is the one who takes shelter in him!
- 9 Remain loyal to the LORD, you chosen people of his,
for his loyal followers lack nothing!
- 10 Even young lions sometimes lack food and are hungry,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- 11 Come children! Listen to me!
I will teach you what it means to fear the LORD.
- 12 Do you want to really live?
Would you love to live a long, happy life?
- 13 Then make sure you don't speak evil words
or use deceptive speech!
- 14 Turn away from evil and do what is right!
Strive for peace and promote it!
- 15 The LORD pays attention to the godly
and hears their cry for help.
- 16 But the LORD opposes evildoers
and wipes out all memory of them from the earth. [[1 Pet 3:10–12](#)]
- 17 The godly cry out and the LORD hears;
he saves them from all their troubles.
- 18 The LORD is near the brokenhearted;
he delivers those who are discouraged.
- 19 The godly face many dangers,
but the LORD saves them from each one of them.
- 20 He protects all his bones;
not one of them is broken. [[John 19:36](#); cf. [Exod 12:46](#); [Num 9:12](#)]
- 21 Evil people self-destruct;
those who hate the godly are punished.
- 22 The LORD rescues his servants;
all who take shelter in him escape punishment.

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