### 1 Samuel

## Chapter 20

1As a result, David had to flee the city of NaiOth.  
  
So he went to see JoNathan, and he asked him:  
  
 ‘What have I done?  
  
 ‘What’s my offence?  
  
 ‘How have I sinned against your father to make him be seeking my life so vigorously?’  
  
2And JoNathan replied:  
  
 ‘That isn’t really what’s happening… He isn’t looking to kill you. There’s no way that my father would do anything, whether great or small, without telling me.  
  
 ‘So, why would my father hide such a thing from me? It just isn’t so!’  
  
3But David told JoNathan:  
  
 ‘Your father knows that I’ve found favor in your eyes, so he told the others:  
  
 ‘Don’t say anything to JoNathan, because he cares for him.’  
  
 ‘But, as Jehovah lives and as you live... The only thing that’s certain between your father and me is death.’  
  
4And JoNathan said to David:  
  
 ‘Then, do whatever you wish… How can I help you?’  
  
5And David told him:  
  
 ‘Look, tomorrow is the New Moon [Festival] and I’m supposed to come here to eat with the king. However, I want you to send me away... And thereafter, I’ll go out into the fields and hide there sometime after noon.  
  
 6‘And when your father notices that I’m missing, I want you to say this to him:  
  
 ‘David asked me to excuse him, because he had to return to his city of BethLehem to offer a sacrifice for the Festival on behalf of his whole tribe.’  
  
 7‘And if he says, ‘Fine!’ then your servant is at peace with him... But if he gives you a harsh reply, it’ll indicate that he’s got evil plans for me.  
  
 8‘Now, you’ve shown great mercy to your servant, for you’ve made a sacred agreement with me in front of Jehovah... However, if you really believe that your servant has done anything wrong, then condemn me to death and take me to your father.’  
  
9But JoNathan replied:  
  
 ‘That won’t happen!  
  
 ‘Do you think that if I find that my father has evil plans for you, I won’t tell you?  
  
10And David said to JoNathan:  
  
 ‘Then, who will you send to tell me if your father answers harshly?’  
  
11And JoNathan replied:  
  
 ‘Come, let’s walk out into the fields.’  
  
And they both walked outside [of the city].  
  
12Then JoNathan said to David:  
  
 ‘Jehovah the God of IsraEl knows that I’ll question my father at least two or three times. And if things look good for you, I’m not going to send you to [live in] the fields.  
  
 13‘May God [curse] me and add to it if I’ll allow anything bad to happen to you!  
  
 ‘[However, if the message is bad], I’ll tell you and send you away in peace. Then Jehovah will have to watch over you as He once did my father.  
  
 14‘But throughout the rest of my life, you must agree to deal with me in the mercy of Jehovah!  
  
 ‘And after I die, 15you must be merciful to my house throughout the age, so that when Jehovah destroys the enemies of David from the face of the earth, 16the name of JoNathan will always remain in the house of David, even if Jehovah should allow me to die at the hands of your enemies!’  
  
17And thereafter, JoNathan swore an oath to David because of his love for him… For he loved him as much as his own life.  
  
18He said:  
  
 ‘Tomorrow is the New Moon, and they’ll be watching your chair.  
  
 19‘But after three days, keep an eye out, then come back here and sit behind this boulder. 20For I’ll come here and I’ll shoot three arrows at a target... 21And when I send my servant to look for them; if I say to him:  
  
 ‘They’re in front of you, so go pick them up.’  
  
 ‘Then you’ll know that you can return safely, because everything is peaceful. As Jehovah lives, let’s do it this way, so there’s no miscommunication.  
  
 22‘But if I tell the young man:  
  
 ‘The arrows are way beyond you.’  
  
 ‘Then you’ll know that I’m sending you away to Jehovah!  
  
 23‘Now, when it comes to these things that you and I have agreed to, may Jehovah serve as the witness between you and me throughout the age.’  
  
  
24So thereafter, David went off into the fields and hid out.  
  
And when the New Moon [Festival] started, the king arrived to eat at his table as usual (as always, he sat in his chair by the wall), 25and JoNathan and AbNer were seated there next to him.  
  
Then everyone looked over to where David usually sat, 26and Saul didn’t say anything that day, for he thought it was just a coincidence (he thought that David had likely become unclean and had gone to cleanse himself).  
  
27But on the next day (the 2nd day of the month), Saul looked at the place where David sat, and he asked his son JoNathan:  
  
 ‘Why isn’t JesSe’s son here?  
  
 ‘This is the second day that he hasn’t come to the table!’  
  
28And JoNathan replied:  
  
 ‘He asked to be excused so he could go to his city of BethLehem. 29He asked me to send him there so he could offer a sacrifice on behalf of his whole tribe.  
  
 ‘But, since you’ve put me in charge of my brothers, and if it pleases you, let me go to check on my brother and find out why he hasn’t come to the table of the king.’  
  
30Well at that, Saul became furious with JoNathan and said to him:  
  
 ‘You son of a divorced woman!  
  
 ‘Don’t you know that when you call JesSe’s son [your ‘brother’], it shames you, and it shames the nakedness of your mother?  
  
 31‘For, as long as JesSe’s son is alive on this earth, my kingdom will never be yours!  
  
 ‘Now, go and catch that young man, for he’s the son of Death!’  
  
32But JoNathan asked his father Saul:  
  
 ‘Why must he die?  
  
 ‘What did he do?’  
  
33Then Saul grabbed his spear and shoved it towards JoNathan in an attempt to kill him; and that’s when JoNathan finally realized that his father was planning to kill David.  
  
34As a result, he got up from the table in a fit of rage, and he wouldn’t eat anything for the rest of that day, because he was devastated by the fact that his father wanted to do away with David.  
  
  
35So the next morning, JoNathan went out into the field with his servant to meet with David as he’d told him that he would, 36and he instructed his servant to run and search for the arrows after he shot them.  
  
37Well, he shot way over [the target], and when his servant got to the place where he shot them, JoNathan yelled:  
  
 ‘They’re way out beyond that.’  
  
38And he added:  
  
 ‘Hurry, don’t just stand there!’  
  
As a result, after JoNathan’s servant finally retrieved all the arrows that his master had shot, 39he really didn’t understand what was actually happening... But JoNathan and David both understood the meaning of this.  
  
40Then JoNathan handed his weapons to his servant and told him to take them back to the city.  
  
41And after he left, David stood up from [inside an enclosed area] and fell with his face to the ground, bowing before [JoNathan] three times. Then each kissed his friend and wept over each other until David [couldn’t cry any more].  
  
42And JoNathan said to David:  
  
 ‘Now, go in peace!  
  
 ‘As we both swore oaths to each other in the Name of the Lord, Jehovah is the witness between you and me, and between your offspring and my offspring throughout the ages.’  
  
Then David got up and left, and JoNathan returned to the city.