

SHABBAT 23RD MAY 2020

1 Samuel – Chapter 20

¹⁸Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow will be the new moon; and you will be missed when your seat remains vacant. ¹⁹So the day after tomorrow, go down all the way to the place where you hid the other time, and stay close to the Ezel stone. ²⁰Now I will shoot three arrows to one side of it, as though I were shooting at a mark, ²¹and I will order the boy to go and find the arrows. If I call to the boy, 'Hey! the arrows are on this side of you,' be reassured and come, for you are safe and there is no danger—as the Lord lives! ²²But if, instead, I call to the lad, 'Hey! the arrows are beyond you,' then leave, for the Lord has sent you away. ²³As for the promise we made to each other, may the Lord be [witness] between you and me forever."

²⁴David hid in the field. The new moon came, and the king sat down to partake of the meal. ²⁵When the king took his usual place on the seat by the wall, Jonathan rose and Abner sat down at Saul's side; but David's place remained vacant. ²⁶That day, however, Saul said nothing. "It's accidental," he thought. "He must be unclean and not yet cleansed." ²⁷But on the day after the new moon, the second day, David's place was vacant again. So Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why didn't the son of Jesse come to the meal yesterday or today?" ²⁸Jonathan answered Saul, "David begged leave of me to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹He said, 'Please let me go, for we are going to have a family feast in our town and my brother has summoned me to it. Do me a favor, let me slip away to see my kinsmen.' That is why he has not come to the king's table."

³⁰Saul flew into a rage against Jonathan. "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman!" he shouted. "I know that you side with the son of Jesse—to your shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness! ³¹For as long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your kingship will be secure. Now then, have him brought to me, for he is marked for death." ³²But Jonathan spoke up and said to his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" ³³At that, Saul threw his spear at him to strike him down; and Jonathan realized that his father was determined to do away with David. ³⁴Jonathan rose from the table in a rage. He ate no food on the second day of the new moon, because he was grieved about David, and because his father had humiliated him.

³⁵In the morning, Jonathan went out into the open for the meeting with David, accompanied by a young boy. ³⁶He said to the boy, "Run ahead and find the arrows that I shoot." And as the boy ran, he shot the arrows past him. ³⁷When the boy came to the place where the arrows shot by Jonathan had fallen, Jonathan called out to the boy, "Hey, the arrows are beyond you!"

³⁸And Jonathan called after the boy, "Quick, hurry up. Don't stop!" So Jonathan's boy gathered the arrows and came back to his master.— ³⁹The boy suspected nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.— ⁴⁰Jonathan handed the gear to his boy and told him, "Take these back to the town." ⁴¹When the boy got there, David emerged from his concealment at the Negeb. He flung himself face down on the ground and bowed low three times. They kissed each other and wept together; David wept the longer.

⁴²Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace! For we two have sworn to each other in the name of the Lord: 'May the Lord be [witness] between you and me, and between your offspring and mine, forever!'"