

1 Samuel 20:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be between thee and me for ever.

Analysis

And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be between thee and me for ever.

Jonathan's declaration 'the LORD be between thee and me for ever' places God at the center of their covenant. This divine mediation transforms human friendship into sacred bond. The 'for ever' ('ad 'olam) extends commitment beyond their lifetimes to eternal significance. Human covenants grounded in divine presence gain stability that merely human arrangements lack.

Historical Context

Invoking deity as covenant witness and enforcer was standard ancient practice. Israel's distinctive contribution was understanding Yahweh as active participant in human relationships, not merely distant observer. The eternal dimension transcended mortal limitations.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does placing God at the center of relationships transform them?
2. What friendships in your life would benefit from explicit recognition of God's mediating presence?

Interlinear Text

וְהָדָבָר	אֲשֶׁר	דִּבַּרְנוּ	אֲנִי	וְאַתָּה
And as touching the matter	H834	which thou and I have spoken	H589	H859
H1697		H1696		
הִנֵּה ה'	יְהוָה ה'	בֵּינִי י'	וּבֵינֶךָ	עַד
H2009	of behold the LORD	H996	H996	be between thee and me for
	H3068			H5704
				ever
				H5769

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 20:42 (References Lord): 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.

Genesis 31:50 (Parallel theme): If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

Genesis 16:5 (References Lord): And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.