

1 Samuel 20:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

Analysis

And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

Jonathan expands the explanation with details lending credibility: family sacrifice, brother's command, polite request. The phrase 'if I have found favour in thine eyes' uses deferential language. Mentioning the brother's command shifted responsibility away from David's initiative. Jonathan concluded definitively: 'Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.' The elaborate explanation provided cover while testing Saul's true response. Every detail had been planned to create plausible reason for absence while provoking revelation of Saul's intentions.

Historical Context

Family sacrifices at ancestral locations were regular religious obligations. Brothers typically organized family gatherings, making this detail believable. The polite request formula 'if I have found favour' was standard deferential speech.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do careful details create believable explanations?
2. What does Jonathan's elaborate response reveal about the preparation required for difficult conversations?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁפָּט	ה	זָבֵח	כִּי	בְּאַלְמָנָה	שְׁלַח	בְּיִ	וַיֹּאמֶר
And he said	Let me go	H4994	H3588	hath a sacrifice	I pray thee for our family	H2077	H4940
H559	H7971						
וְעַתָּה	אַךְ	לֵ	נָ	צִוָּה	וְהַ	אָ	בְּעֵיר
H0	in the city	H1931	H6680	he hath commanded	H0	and my brother	H251
H5892							
אֵם	מִצְמָא	אֶתְתִּי	לִ	בְּעֵין	יְ	לְתָה	אֲפָ
H518	me to be there and now if I have found	H4672	H2580	favour	H5869	let me get away	H4422
לֹא	כִּי	עַל	אֲפָ	אַךְ	אֶת	וְאֶ	וְאֶרְאָה
H4994	I pray thee and see	H7200	H251	and my brother	H5921	H3651	H3808
בְּמִלְחָמָה	שְׁלָמָה	בְּאַלְמָנָה	בְּאַלְמָנָה	Therefore he cometh	table	not unto the king's	
H935	H413	H7979	H4428				