

1 Samuel 20:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee?

Analysis

And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee?

Jonathan's cry - 'Is not the arrow beyond thee?' - ostensibly addressed the servant but spoke to David hiding nearby. The question format emphasized the signal: beyond means danger, beyond means flee. David heard his friend's voice delivering news that would separate them for years. The rhetorical question demanded an answer the boy did not understand but David comprehended completely. Sometimes we must hear life-changing news in coded form, receiving destiny through indirect speech.

Historical Context

Shouted instructions during archery practice were completely normal. The distance between shooter and retriever required loud voice. Jonathan's question form ensured David could not miss the signal's meaning.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. When have you received significant messages through indirect means?
2. What emotions might David have experienced hearing Jonathan's coded message?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹא	הַנַּעַר	עַד	מָקוֹם	הַיָּצִי	אֲשֶׁר	יָרָה
was come	And when the lad	H5704	to the place	Is not the arrow	H834	had shot
H935	H5288		H4725	H2678		H3384
יְהוֹנָתָן	וַיִּקְרָא	יְהוֹנָתָן	אַחֲרָי	הַנַּעַר	וַיֹּאמֶר	הֵל וְאֵל
Jonathan	cried	Jonathan	after	And when the lad	and said	H3808
H3083	H7121	H3083	H310	H5288	H559	
הַיָּצִי	מִמֶּנּוּ	וְהִלָּאָה				
Is not the arrow	H4480	beyond				
H2678		H1973				

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 20:22 (Parallel theme): But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away.