

1 Samuel 20:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not.
And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

Analysis

And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

The threefold urgency - 'Make speed, haste, stay not' - intensified the message to David. These words ostensibly hurried the servant but communicated deadly urgency to the hidden fugitive. Each term reinforced danger: speed indicated emergency, haste emphasized immediacy, 'stay not' commanded departure. The boy heard an impatient master; David heard a friend warning him to flee for his life. The innocent servant 'gathered up the arrows' and returned, his simple task complete, utterly unaware of the drama surrounding his actions.

Historical Context

Triple commands were emphatic in Hebrew rhetoric. The servant would interpret urgency as normal impatience. Jonathan's emotional state likely added genuine intensity to his voice, masking its true purpose behind apparent annoyance.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do urgency and haste in one context carry different meaning in another?
2. What does the servant's ignorance teach about how God uses unaware instruments?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּקְרָא אֶת יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרָיו בְּעָרְהָרָה הָיָה וְשָׁחָל אֶל תַּעֲמֹד
cried **And Jonathan** **after** **lad** **Make speed** **haste** H408 **stay**
H7121 H3083 H310 H5288 H4120 H2363 H5975

וַיִּלָּקְטוּ בְּעָרְהָרָה יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת הַחֹצֵי וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל
gathered up **lad** **And Jonathan** H853 H2678 **and came** H413
H3950 H5288 H3083 H935

אֶל־נָדָב:
to his master
H113