

1 Samuel 20:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

Analysis

And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

Jonathan's rhetorical question - 'would not I tell it thee?' - affirms absolute commitment to David's safety over loyalty to his father. The phrase 'Far be it from thee' (chalilah) expresses horror at the thought of concealing danger. Jonathan's integrity meant he would warn David even of his own father's murderous plans. Such commitment tested the limits of family loyalty, choosing righteousness over blood ties. The answer Jonathan expected was obvious: of course he would warn David. Genuine friendship includes uncomfortable truth-telling.

Historical Context

Sons were expected to protect family secrets and interests. Jonathan's commitment to warn David against his father reversed normal expectations. This pledge placed him in potential conflict with both filial duty and royal obligation.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What loyalties might you need to subordinate to higher commitments to truth and righteousness?
2. How does Jonathan's willingness to warn David against his own father challenge conventional family loyalty?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוֹנָתָן	חָלֵל יִלָּה	כִּי יֹלֵךְ	אִם	אִדַּע	
said	And Jonathan	Far be it from thee			certainly	
H559	H3083	H2486	H1980	H3588	H518	H3045
אִדַּע	כִּי	כָּלְתָּ הָ	הָרָעָה	מֵעַם	אָבִי	לָבֹא
certainly		were determined	that evil		by my father	to come
H3045	H3588	H3615	H7451	H5973	H1	H935
עַל יָדְךָ	וְלֹא	אֶתְּ הָ	אֲנִי יִדְּ	לֹא:		
			upon thee then would not I tell			
H5921	H3808	H853	H5046	H0		

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