

“Loyalty Wanted” Part II *1 Samuel 20:1-42
Wednesday, March 4, 2026
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1 Samuel 17: David kills Goliath and wins Saul’s favor.

1 Samuel 18: Jonathan and David become friends; David moves to the king’s court.

1 Samuel 19: Saul tries to capture David and have him killed several times. Saul fails because God uses the loyal people, Jonathan, Michal, and Samuel, to protect David.

Thought of the Passage: “Loyalty Stands Firm Despite Conflict, Danger, Hurt, Misunderstandings; Loyalty Is Rooted In Love.”

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| 1. David’s Fear and Jonathan’s Assurance | 1 Samuel 20:1–11 |
| 2. The Loyalty Covenant Between Friends | 1 Samuel 20:12–23 |
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1. David’s Fear and Jonathan’s Assurance - 1 Samuel 20:1–11

1 Samuel 20:1-2 David’s Fear

1 Samuel 20:1 Then - Context (chapter 19, David fled to Naioth)**David fled from Naioth in Ramah, ... “What have I done? What is my iniquity? And what is my sin before your father, that he is seeking my life?”**

David could have remained in hiding until Saul died, but he had questions.

1 Samuel 20:2 He said to him, “Far from it, you shall not die.

Jonathan keeps insisting that David will not die.

People will disappoint us, they will hurt us, so yes, do expect it. Keep your eyes on Christ. **Hebrews 12:2**

(1 Sam 21). David writes, **Psalm 56:3 When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You.**

1 Samuel 20:3 Jonathan’s Assurance - ‘Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.’ But truly as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death.”

We are all just one step away from death.

James 4:14, Hebrews 9:27, Psalm 90:12

1 Samuel 20:4 “Whatever you say, I will do for you.” What can I do? How can I help?] “The ministry of presence.”

Proverbs 17:17 (NLT) A friend is always loyal and a brother is born to help in time of need. [**Loyalty Listens, Comforts, and Reassures in Times of Fear**]

1 Samuel 20:5-7 The Plan

1 Samuel 20:5 “Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, -Monthly feast.

**1 Samuel 20:6 If your father misses me at all,
1 Samuel 20:7 If he says, 'It is good,' your servant will be safe; but if he is very angry, know that he has decided on evil.**

David is willing to give Jonathan the benefit of the doubt.

1 Samuel 20:8 Therefore deal kindly with your servant, ... But if there is iniquity in me, put me to death yourself; - I am putting my life in your hands.

Jonathan was a capable warrior. **1 Samuel 14:6**, 1 Samuel 18:4, 1 Samuel 31

1 Samuel 20:9 NLT: "Never!" Jonathan exclaimed. "You know that if I had the slightest notion my father was planning to kill you, I would tell you at once."

**1 Samuel 20:10 "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"
1 Samuel 20:11**

2. The Loyalty Covenant Between Friends - 1 Samuel 20:12-23

**1 Samuel 20:12 behold, if there is good feeling toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you? - I will send someone.
[Loyalty Warns, Protects, and Acts Courageously]**

1 Samuel 20:13 If it please my father to do you harm, may the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also, if I do not make it known to you - I will warn you ... And may the LORD be with you as He has been with my father

1 Samuel 20:14-17 Covenant Established.

1 Samuel 20:14-15 If I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the LORD, ... 15 You shall not cut off your lovingkindness from my house forever, - the Lord will deal with your enemies.

1 Samuel 20:16-17 "... loved him as he loved his own life." (2nd mention)

Love your neighbor as yourself: Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27, Romans 13:9, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8. Matthew 22:36-39 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'
Rea (Heb.) "Fellow, companion, friend, associate, or fellow countryman."

John 15:13-15, Jesus calls his disciples "friends".

1 Samuel 20:18-23 The Arrows Signal

1 Samuel 20:18-20 Here is the code and the cypher:

Good News: 1 Samuel 20:21 'Go, find the arrows.' ... 'Behold, the arrows are on this side of you, get them,' then come; for there is safety for you

Bad News: 1 Samuel 20:22 'Behold, the arrows are beyond you,' go, for the LORD has sent you away.

1 Samuel 20:23 behold, the LORD is between you and me forever.”
[Loyalty Reflects God’s Steadfast Love]

3. Loyalty Tested At The Banquet - 1 Samuel 20:24–34

1 Samuel 20:24–27 David’s Absence – “Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal, either yesterday or today?” [Son of Jesse – low birth]

1 Samuel 20:28 “David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem,

1 Samuel 20:29

1 Samuel 20:30 Then Saul’s anger burned against Jonathan

Saul knows Jonathan is loyal to David rather than being loyal to his own father.

Matthew 10:34–37 Loyalty to the Lord can bring division.

Luke 12:49-53 Christ Divides Men. Luke 14:26-27

1 Samuel 20:31-34 Jonathan’s Grief and Righteous Anger

1 Samuel 20:31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Jonathan is the prince, next in line for the Crown. ... **for he must surely die.”**

1 Samuel 19:6, Saul promised David would not die; he has changed his mind.
Death needs God’s permission.

1 Samuel 20:32 “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?”
[Loyalty Confronts and Defends] Christian, there is a time to take a stand.

1 Samuel 20:33 Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down;
His hate for his enemy is greater than his love for his son.

“... so Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death.”

Discernment: *“ability to judge between truth and error.”*

The foundation for discernment is **Wisdom:** “the application of truth to life.”

James 3:5, James 3:13, James 3:17-18

Matthew 10:16 (NLT) “Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves.

1 Samuel 20:34 Then Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, ... for he was grieved over David Grieved: *“emotional pain, sorrow, vexation.”*
[Loyalty Is Costly]

Loyalty can cost public embarrassment, loss of popularity and acceptance, promotions, money, time, sweat, tears, and suffering.

Discipleship Is Costly, Matthew 16:24

4. The Painful Farewell - 1 Samuel 20:35–42

1 Samuel 20:35-40 – The Secret Arrow Signal

1 Samuel 20:35-36 Jonathan is risking it all in this conspiracy to commit treason.

1 Samuel 20:37 “Is not the arrow beyond you?”

1 Samuel 20:38-39 And Jonathan’s lad picked up the arrow and came to his master. **39 only Jonathan and David knew about the matter.**

David is now a fugitive marked for death.

1 Samuel 20:40 “Go, bring them to the city.”

1 Samuel 20:41 A Heartfelt Goodbye - And they kissed each other and wept together, but David wept the more.

Farewells are difficult. Psalm 116:15, Acts 20:17–38 Paul’s Farewell to the Ephesians.

1 Samuel 20:42 “Go in safety, ... ‘The LORD will be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.’”

15-20 years later, King David has the chance to honor his promise with Jonathan’s son, **Mephibosheth** (2 Samuel 9:1–13). **2 Samuel 21:7**

[Loyalty Keeps Promises]

Better not to make an oath you cannot keep. **Matthew 5:37**

- David is an example of a kind King
- Mephibosheth paints the picture of a “dead dog” – a sinner.

Even through a painful separation, a loyal person remains steadfast.

Application:

- 1. A Loyal Friend Loves And Suffers Together. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**
- 2. Our Loyalty Points to God’s Lovingkindness Lamentations 3:22-23**
- 3. Loyalty Is Costly – Expect Persecution 2 Timothy 3:12**
- 4. Loyalty In Separation – Distance May Separate Us Physically, But God’s Covenant Keeps Us United. 1 Samuel 20:42^a**