1Samuel 20

1Samuel 20:1–42   **The Covenant Between Jonathan and David**

Outline of Chapter 20:

Charts and Maps:

Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	

Introduction: With 1Sam. 20, I have decided to change the way I list the translations. I personally know which translations are quite literal and which are paraphrases; however, to the unlearned, one might be tempted to notice that most of the translations favor this translation rather than that, so they side with the majority. In some cases, we have found that all of the translations except for Young might be in agreement, and Young is correct. He is probably the most literal of the literal translations. Therefore, I am going to group the translations; however, within their group, I will simply put them in alphabetical order. I began doing this at this time; however, I backtracked and fixed all of 1Samuel.

> McGee's comments: *David's life is in jeopardy until Saul's death. During these days of exile—possibly a period of ten years—David is hunted like a wild animal. He is a nomad, a vagabond. Living in caves in the wilderness, he endures many hardships and privations. However, he is being tested and trained in God's school. He takes the full course and graduates magna cum laude. He becomes Israel's greatest king—in fact, the world's greatest king—and a man after God's own heart. Many of the wonderful Psalms of David are written during this rough and rugged period.*[1]

One of the reasons that there are those who teach that many books were written by two different authors and then woven together is the fact that there are some seemingly parallel incidents. In this chapter, we will again see a covenant between David and Jonathan and Jonathan will again meet up with David secretly in a field, and there will be a code between them that no one else will be aware of. This is obviously very similar to 1Sam. 18;

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[1] J. Vernon McGee; *I & I1Samuel;* Thru the Bible Books; ®El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 103.

however, simply because there are similar incidents which are recorded from time to time does not mean that two different authors wrote about the same tradition, each putting their own spin on it, and then both diversions from the truth were put together in the same book. Sometimes we have similar incidents which happen to us; sometimes, we have a day, or a week, which has parallels to a previous day or week.

Briefly, David and Jonathan meet in secret, and David tells Jonathan that his father Saul is out to kill him. Although Jonathan does not believe this, he first makes a pact with David and then he formulates a plan by which he can contact David when he determines if his father is so inclined or not. At the Feast of the New Moon, Jonathan realizes that his father is out to kill David, regardless. So Jonathan warns David, and David flees.

In vv. 1–3, David meets with Jonathan, and asks why his father Saul is out to kill him. Jonathan cannot believe that this is true, as his father would not take such a course of action behind his back. In vv. 4–7, David tells Jonathan that he will skip the New Moon Festival hosted by King Saul, which is apparently a 2 or 3 day affair. When Saul notices that David is missing, Jonathan is to feel him out, to see whether or not Saul is out to kill David. David ends his proposal with, "And if I have done some iniquity, then you kill me for it; don't haul me to your father's." (v. 8). In vv. 9–23, Jonathan does two things: he clearly makes a lifetime pact with David which will extend to David's ancestors and his own (vv. 12–15) and he sets up a means by which he can signal David surreptitiously (vv. 18–22).

As David hides in the field, Saul sits down to the New Moon Festival (v. 24). Saul sees that David's chair is empty, and he makes a mental note of it on the first day, assuming that David had possibly made himself unclean in some way (vv. 25–26—interestingly enough, Saul does **not** conclude, "I am a homicidal maniac who has already made several attempts on David's life—that's why he's not here"). On the second day of the festival, David, of course, is not there, and Saul questions his son Jonathan. Jonathan says that David had a previous engagement with his family at a sacrificial meal in Bethlehem (vv. 27–29; see v. 6). Suddenly, Saul explodes, chewing Jonathan out for siding with David. When Jonathan asks, "What has David done to deserve death?" Saul hurls a javelin at him, which is the height of disrespect. Jonathan refuses to eat for the rest of the day (vv. 30–34).

Jonathan takes his personal servant out to the field where David is, supposedly to get in some target practice. He uses this to signal David. When he realizes that he has not been followed, and that he, his servant and David are alone in that field, he sends his servant back to the palace (vv. 35–40). Once the lad is gone, Jonathan and David hug one another and kiss, and say goodbye. Jonathan's final words again emphasize that God would be between he and David and between their ancestors forever (vv. 41–42).

David and Jonathan Meet up and Discuss a Plan

David Tries to Convince Jonathan of Saul's Deadly Intentions

Slavishly literal: Moderately literal:

And so flees David from Naioth in the Ramah and so he comes and so he says to faces of Jonathan, "What have I done, what [is] my crime, and what [is] my sin to faces of your father that [he] is seeking my soul?"	1Samuel 20:1	**David then fled Naioth in Ramah, and went before Jonathan, and said, "What have I done, what [is] my crime, and what is [my] sin before your father that he is seeking my life?"**

David then fled Naioth in Ramah and he went to Jonathan, and said to him, "Just what have I done or what is my crime or what is my sin that has caused your father to seek my life?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic text	And so flees David from Naioth in the Ramah and so he comes and so he says to faces of Jonathan, "What have I done, what [is] my crime, and what [is] my sin to faces of your father that [he] is seeking my soul?"
The Septuagint	And David fled from Navath in Rama, and comes into the presence of Jonathan; and he said, "What have I done, and what [is] my fault, and where have I sinned before your father, that he seeks my life?"

Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David escaped from Prophets Village. Then he ran to see Jonathan and asked, "Why does your father Saul want to kill me? What have I done wrong?"
NJB	Fleeing from the huts at ramah, David went and confronted Jonathan, 'What have I done, what is my guilt, how have I wronged your father, for him to want to take my life?'
NEB	David now fled from Naioth in Ramah and found Jonathan. "What have I done?" he exclaimed. "What is my crime? How have I offended your father that he is so determined to kill me?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	David fled from the pastures at ramah, came to Jonathan, and asked, "What have I done? What crime am I guilty of? What sin have I committed against your father that he's trying to kill me?"
JPS (Tanakh)	David fled from Naioth in Ramah; he came to Jonathan and said, "What have I done, what is my crime and my guilt against your father, that he seeks my life?"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said to [lit., *before*] Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity And what is my sin before your father, that he is seeking my life?"
Young's Updated LT	And David flees from Naioth in Ramah and comes and says before Jonathan, "What have I done? What *is* my iniquity And what *is* my sin before your father that he is seeking my life?"

What is the gist of this verse? David leaves Naioth and finds Jonathan. He asks Jonathan why his father is trying to kill him.

1Samuel 20:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bârach (בָּרַח) [pronounced *baw-RAHKH*]	*to go through, to flee*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1272 BDB #137

1Samuel 20:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
nâvôyth (נָוִית) [pronounced naw-VOYTH]	*pasture, meadow; habitation of a shepherd;* and is transliterated *Naioth*	proper noun; location	Strong's #5121 BDB #627
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
Râmâh (רָמָה) [pronounced raw-MAW]	*height, high place;* transliterated *Ramah*	feminine noun used primarily as a proper noun; with the directional hê here	Strong's #7413 BDB #928

Also spelled Râmâth (רָמַת) [pronounced *raw-MATH*].

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3ʳᵈ person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM	*face, faces*	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*.

This sort of wording is used because, when Saul is not in the palace, then Jonathan would be considered the highest ranking official. Therefore, one would come *before* Jonathan.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

1Samuel 20:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
Jonathan: is also spelled Yôwnâthân (יוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yoh-naw-THAWN*].			

Translation: David then fled Naioth in Ramah, and went before Jonathan, and said,...   In the previous chapter, Saul became much more overt in his attack upon David, sending men to David's home to arrest him so that he could be executed. David escaped through his second story wall window and he fled to Samuel in Ramah. Samuel took him to what is probably a suburb of Ramah, Naioth, where he apparently was running the first seminary. Saul tracked David down, but when he sent his own men again to arrest David, they were overpowered by God the Holy Spirit and were unable to arrest David. Saul eventually went to Naioth himself and was also overcome by the Holy Spirit, so that he not only became involved in theological discussions, but he found himself so exhausted that he fell asleep, half-naked, right there in the seminary.

David, of course, was there, although nothing is said about him at the end of 1Sam. 19. The focus is upon Saul and Saul's officers. However, David is in Naioth, Saul is also there, and Saul is asleep before him in the seminary. We don't know if David was in the seminary when Saul came in; however, we can be reasonably assured that David came in and looked down at Saul sleeping or was told that Saul had been discussing theological issues with the other students and had fallen asleep. David was familiar with Saul's radical mood changes and did not want to hang around until Saul woke up. However, since Saul was there, it was safe for David to, at least temporarily, return to Ramah and to his only true ally, Jonathan. David, still thinking that there must be some way to reason with Saul, went to Jonathan in order to figure out just exactly what had Saul in such a rage.

Also, interestingly enough from the previous chapter, very little is said about Samuel. No verbal interchange between Samuel and anyone else is recorded, and the only interaction recorded is between David and him, when he takes David to his seminary in Naioth.

1Samuel 20:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
mâh (מֶה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
The vowel point is actually a segol here, which is how mâh is spelled when mâh precedes certain letters.			
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ǵaw-SAWH]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	1st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: ..."What have I done,...   We will have three approaches which David takes to Saul's anger with him. He first asks Jonathan, *"What have I done?"* That is, what has David said to offend Saul; what act of disrespect has David committed, or what misunderstanding might exist about something that David has done to cause Saul to be so angry. David is assuming that there is a rational, human explanation for this.

1Samuel 20:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâh (מֶה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
The vowel point is actually a segol here, which is how mâh is spelled when mâh precedes certain letters.			
ʿâvôwn (עֲוֹן) [pronounced ğaw-VOHN]	*iniquity, crime, offense, transgression, depraved action, guilt, punishment from wrongdoing*	masculine singular noun with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5771 BDB #730

Translation: ...what [is] my crime,... Usually when a warrant has been issued for a person's arrest, it is because they have committed some crime. There is some civil or criminal law which has allegedly been broken and David wants to know what that might have been. David asks Jonathan point blank, "What crime have I committed?"
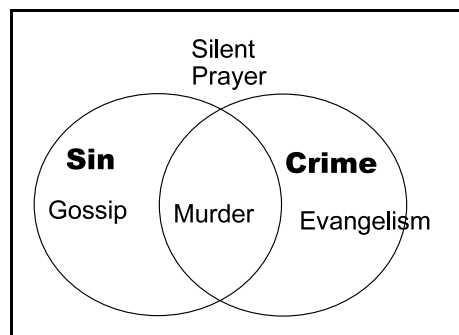
1Samuel 20:1d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâh (מֶה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
The vowel point is actually a segol here, which is how mâh is spelled when mâh precedes certain letters.			
chaţţâʾth (חַטָּאת) [pronounced *khat-TAWTH*]	*sin* or *sin-offering*	feminine singular noun with a 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #2403 BDB #308

Translation: ...and what is [my] sin... Not all crimes are necessarily sins (e.g., the crime of evangelism in some countries) and certainly, not all sins are crimes (e.g., the sin of homosexuality). David asks what sin has he committed that causes Saul to make attempts on his life. David is simply assuming that there is a rational explanation for Saul's behavior. David believes that Saul thinks that David beat his wife (Saul's daughter); Saul thinks that David is organizing a revolution against him; Saul thinks that David has been spreading lies and rumors behind Saul's back. David thinks that there is some rational explanation for Saul's hatred, some misunderstanding that could be cleared up. Let's see if I can put this in a different perspective: let's say that you have a disagreement with your superior, and you have been allowed to express your opinion, and you believe that logically, there is no other position to take but yours. In fact, you cannot imagine someone having a differing viewpoint, and you figure, once you present the facts, any reasonable person will be persuaded. Most of us have been in that position and most of us have been shut down, despite the reasonableness of our position.[2]

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[2] I recall a situation when I used to distribute a phone list with all my student's phone numbers on it (with their permission, of course). One parent, over a period of nearly a dozen years of doing this, called up and complained, saying that his daughter was unable or incapable to give this sort of permission. So, the next year, since parental permission became an issue, I got written permission from every parent before preparing such a list and when called in by my principal for this infraction, I assumed that, all I had to do is show him the parental consent forms (which is our basic approach to a great many school activities). To me, this was a logical and irrefutable approach. I was wrong and the principal actually expressed the opinion that I was undermining his authority. In my mind, the parental consent forms were in obedience to his authority. My point in all this is, David assumed that there was a rational explanation for Saul's behavior, and once he unearthed that, the problem

We also get a chance here to differentiate between these two terms, *iniquity* (or, *crime*) and *sin*. *Sin,* in general, is a transgression either against God or against man. A *crime* is a violation of a particular law. The simplest way to represent this is with a Venn diagram. Silent prayer would be an example of something which is neither a sin nor a crime; evangelism in some countries could be made into a crime; murder everywhere is both a crime and a sin; gossip is a sin, but not a crime.

Venn Diagram Illustrating Sin and Crime

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1Samuel 20:1e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEM*	*face, faces*	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of.* When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of.*			
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
bâqash (בָּקַש) [pronounced *baw-KAHSH*]	*to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask, to seek with desire and diligence*	Piel participle	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nephesh (נֶפֶש) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*]	*soul, life, living being, desire*	feminine singular noun with a 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

Translation: ...before your father that he is seeking my life?" David assumes that there is something which he has done, inadvertently, which has set Saul off. In his own mind, David simply needs to figure out what this transgression is, and then he can smooth over his relationship with Saul. Neither he nor Jonathan fully appreciate just exactly how far gone Saul is. No amount of reasoning will curtail Saul's efforts to kill David.

could be solved.

And so he says to him, "Far be it! You will not die. Behold to him [or, *not*] does my father a word great or a word small and he is not uncovering my ear. And why hides my father from me the word the this? Without this!"

1Samuel 20:2

He answers him, "Profanity! You will not die! Listen, my father does not do anything, great or small, without disclosing [it] to me [lit., *in my ear*]. Furthermore, why would my father hide this matter from me? [It is] not so [lit., *not this*]!"

Jonathan answered him, "Impossible! You are not going to be executed! Listen to me—my father does not do anything, great or small, without revealing it to me. Furthermore, why would my father his this thing from me? It just cannot be!"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic text	And so he says to him, "Far be it! You will not die. Behold to him [or, *not*] does my father a word great or a word small and he is not uncovering my ear. And why hides my father from me the word the this? Without this!"
Septuagint	And Jonathan said to him, "Far be it from you; you will not die. Behold, my father will not do anything great or small without discovering it to me; and why should my father hide this matter from me? This thing is not so."
Significant differences	Apart from the interpretation of the final phrase, there are no significant differences; however, there are a couple of phrases which probably caused problems for the translators of the LXX.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"My father can't be trying to kill you! He never does anything without telling me about it. Why would he hide this from me? It's can't be true!"
NLT	"That's not true!" Jonathan protested. "I'm sure he's not planning any such thing, for he always tells me everything he's going to do, even the little things. I know he wouldn't hide something like this from me. It just isn't so!"
TEV	Jonathan answered, "God forbid that you should die! My father tells me everything he does, important or not, and he would not hide this from me. It just isn't so!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan answered, "That's unthinkable You're not going to die! My father does nothing without telling me, whether it's important or not. Why should my father hide this from me? It's just not that way."
JPS (Tanakh)	He replied, "Heaven forbid! You will not die. My father does not do anything, great or small, without disclosing it to me; why should my father conceal this matter from me? It cannot be!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And he said to him, "Far from it, you shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me [lit., *and he does not uncover my ear*]. So why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so!"
Young's Updated LT	And he said to him, "Far be it! You do not die. Lo, my father does not do anything great or small and does not uncover my ear; and why does my father hide from me this thing? This *thing* is not!"

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan protests that his father withholds nothing from him, and he both assures David that he will not be executed and there is nothing which David has done.

1Samuel 20:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
châlîylâh (חָלִילָ ה) [pronounced *khaw-LEE-law*]	*far be it [from me or you], to profane [something], a profanity!, a blasphemy!*	adverb, substantive, interjection	Strong's #2486 BDB #321
Châlîylâh might be updated to *no way, impossible, ridiculous, absurd, that's wrong, that's so wrong, you're completely mistaken*.			
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to die*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: He answers him, "Profanity! You will not die! Jonathan's initial remark is one of great disbelief. It might be updated to *no way, impossible, you're wrong*. He cannot believe his ears. Recall that he just recently spoke with his father and convinced Saul of David's loyalty in 1Sam. 19:1–6. Saul had told Jonathan that he wanted to execute David and Jonathan talked him out of it.

You may wonder, *how can this be? Jonathan is in the palace with Saul; Jonathan is in all of the staff meetings. Jonathan is aware of Saul's mental illness. So, how does Jonathan not know how wacked out Saul is?* Reasonable questions, all. First of all, with regards to mental illness: when you are close to someone or to a situation, you often lose your perspective. For instance, if your husband or wife is mentally ill, you may not even be aware of it. Their behavior which would alert any stranger, goes unnoticed by you. You see what they do, but you are so close, you do not recognize it as mental illness. Recall back in 1Sam. 18:14–18 where Saul's staff decided that something needed to be done about Saul's erratic behavior and it was suggested that a musician be brought in to calm him. Do you recall seeing Jonathan's name in that narrative? No; Jonathan was not in on this music-therapy. He did not recognize how serious his father's condition was, and therefore, was not a part of the discussion of how to calm King Saul when he begins entering into such a state. Now, I don't say this so that you can go home and carefully examine all of your family members to determine whether they should be put into therapy or not. I'm simply pointing out *why* Jonathan did not recognize Saul's terrific mental illness (which involved demon influence).

So Jonathan tells David, "Impossible! You are not going to be executed!" In fact, this idea is so impossible in Jonathan's mind that he does not even use the Hiphil of mûwth (which would mean *to execute*) but he uses the Qal form, which means simply *to die*. It seems so far fetched to Jonathan that he refuses to even say the word *to execute*. More precisely, Jonathan says, "That suggestion is profane! You will not die!" In Jonathan's mind, he has already settled this matter with his father. He reasoned with his father, and his father recognized the logic

of his argument and agreed with him. This tells us that when Saul organized his men on several occasions to go and seize David (1Sam. 19), that Jonathan was carefully left out of those talks. In fact, Saul probably saw to it that Jonathan was completely out of the palace at that time. Saul knew for certain what Jonathan's feelings were and, although Saul was a paranoid schizophrenic,[3] he could still function as a very crafty person. He had the ability and the wherewithal to keep Jonathan from knowing about his plans. So all that went on in the previous chapter, Jonathan is unaware of. In Jonathan's mind, what had happened that he was aware of was because of a temporary fit of madness; and that he had reasoned with his father since then and his father had come to his senses. As far as he was concerned, Saul no longer desired to kill David.

1Samuel 20:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
There are two alternate readings to the lâmed preposition with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix: (1) Some manuscripts have the negation lôʾ (לֹא) [pronounced *low*] here (see above). (2) Some have the lâmed preposition followed by a conjunction (which makes little sense).			
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *ğaw-SAWH*]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
dâᵇvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced *gaw-DOHL*]	*great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing*	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
ʾô (אוֹ) [pronounced *oh*]	*or, or rather, otherwise, also, and*	conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14
dâᵇvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
qâţôn (קָטֹן) [pronounced *kaw-TOHN*]	*small, insignificant;* a word particularly used for *youth, younger*	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6995 & #6996 BDB #882

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[3] I believe that the term *schizophrenic* is no longer used, but *bipolar* is used instead. Saul would be possibly diagnosed as bipolar with paranoiac delusions.

1Samuel 20:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
gâlâh (גֶּלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*]	*to make naked; to disclose, to reveal, to uncover [one's ear to hear something]; to make [a land] naked of inhabitants; to emigrate, to be led into exile*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1540 BDB #162
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾôzen (אֹזֶן) [pronounced *OH-zen*]	*ear*	feminine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #241 BDB #23

Translation: Listen, my father does not do anything, great or small, without disclosing [it] to me [lit., *in my ear*]. Jonathan is chief of staff. He is a great general. Saul does everything with Jonathan—or so Jonathan thinks. It would never occur to Jonathan that his father would plot against anyone behind his back. Even with David, Saul originally took Jonathan aside and said, "We need to execute him!" (1Sam. 19:1). Jonathan is so used to being in on everything, that he does not realize that the events of 1Sam. 19 took place (except that he certainly knows that Saul went to Samuel and prophesied). However, he does not associate that with a plot to kill David. His father used to confer with Samuel all of the time. No matter what Jonathan heard, no doubt that his father spoke to him first and straightened him out. "You know, son, I tried to speak with Samuel the other day." Saul explained. So Jonathan does not associate what is common knowledge ("Is Saul among the prophets?" 1Sam. 19:24) with a plot to kill David. So, as far as Jonathan is concerned, all that Saul does or plans to do, major or minor, is run by him first. In Jonathan's mind, that is the sort of relationship that he and his father have. He does not realize that there is this intense burning hatred for David that Saul has been able to conceal from his son, and that he often daily considers methods of killing David.

On televison (and I am sure this happens in real life), you have the married couple and one of them says to the other, "I don't know you anymore!" Or words to that affect. This is Jonathan and Saul. There are profound changes in Saul's character that Jonathan does not see. So, in his mind, Jonathan believes that Saul proposes every move that he plans to make first to Jonathan. Furthermore, he believes that he knows his father well enough to know that he would not do anything like make a concerted effort to kill David.

1Samuel 20:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 20:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
maddu´a (מַדּוּעַ) [pronounced *mah-DOO-ahǵ*]	*why, wherefore, on what account,* and it is probably a contraction of a word which means *what being known*	adverb	Strong's #4069 BDB #396
çâthar (סָתַר) [pronounced *saw-THAHR*	*to hide, to cover over*	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5641 BDB #711
´â^bv (אָב,) [pronounced *aw^bv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than*	preposition of separation with the 1st person singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
´êth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâ^bvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw^b-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*]	*here, this, thus*	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: Furthermore, why would my father hide this matter from me? Saul has already revealed to Jonathan that he wanted to kill David (1Sam. 19:1) and Jonathan talked him out of it (1Sam. 19:4–6). As far as Jonathan is concerned, if his father revealed this to him before, he certainly would not hide it from him now. Jonathan sees himself as a sounding board for his father (and believes that Saul sees him in this same way). Obviously, Jonathan believes that he can still reason with his father (as he did at the beginning of 1Sam. 19) and that his father will respect and listen to his opinions (my feeling is that he and Saul had this sort of a relationship up to a point).[4]

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[4] Please allow me this digression: you will recall that Jonathan, on two occasions, has taken matters into his own hands. In 1Sam. 13:3, he attacked a Philistine outpost. In 1Sam. 14, he attacked the entire Philistine army with only an aide. Now later, when Goliath challenges any man to come forward, Jonathan must have been itching to fight him. What probably occurred after 1Sam. 14 is that he and his father came to an agreement as to the limits of Jonathan's actions, and that Jonathan probably agreed to acquiesce to Saul's wishes. He no doubt insisted upon input on foreign and domestic policies, which Saul likely granted him. Therefore, Jonathan can reasonably assume that on matters like the execution of David, that his father would talk to him first (as he did in 1Sam. 19:1). This theory of Saul and Jonathan's relationship explains Saul and Jonathan's behavior, actions and expectations throughout 1Sam. 17–31. It also explains any presumed contradictions or why some of these accounts do not seem to jive on the surface.

1Samuel 20:2d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾêyin (אַיִן) [pronounced *AYH-yin*]	*in the condition of being not = without, nothing, no, not*	negative construct	Strong's #369 BDB #34
zôʾth (זאֹת) [pronounced *zoth*]	*here, this, thus*	feminine singular of zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260

Translation: [It is] not so [lit., *not this*]!" Giving an exact translation to these two words is difficult; however, the gist is fairly clear, "This just cannot be! It's impossible! No way!"

You may wonder, *how can they even be discussing this? Clearly, Saul intends to kill David!* Again, Jonathan is too close to his father to recognize that he has gone over the edge. He is too close to his father to realize that Saul's predisposition to kill David is more than a fit of madness that comes and goes. The madness has come and it has stayed with Saul. Furthermore, Jonathan has no idea that Saul has carefully hidden from him the most recent incidents of the previous chapter. As far as Jonathan is concerned, what Saul has done is the result of a couple fits of madness—and this madness was well-known to everyone in the palace, and the music-therapy seemed to help mollify Saul.

> Jamieson, Fausset and Brown agree, commenting: *Jonathan could not be persuaded there was any real danger after the oath his father had taken; at all events, he felt assured his father would do nothing without telling him. Filial attachment naturally blinded the prince to defects in the parental character and made him reluctant to believe his father capable of such atrocity.*[5]

And so swears again David and so he says, "Knowing has known your father that I have found grace in your [two] eyes and he says, 'Will not know this Jonathan lest he grieves.' And indeed living of Yᵉhowah and a living of your soul that about a step between me and the death."	1Samuel 20:3	**So again David swore, saying, "Your father certainly knows that I have found grace in your eyes and he thinks [lit., *says*], 'Jonathan should not know about this or he will grieve [lit., *lest he grieve*].' But, [as] certainly Yᵉhowah lives and as your soul lives, [there is but] a step between me and death."**

David swore to Jonathan, "Your father undoubtedly knows that I have found grace in your sight, so he has determined that you would not know about his plans or you will be upset. But, just as certainly as Jehovah lives and just as certainly as your soul lives, there is but a misstep between me and death."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic text	And so swears again David and so he says, "Knowing has known your father that I have found grace in your [two] eyes and he says, 'Will not know this Jonathan lest he grieves.' And indeed living of Yᵉhowah and a living of your soul that about a step between me and the death."
The Septuagint	And David answers Jonathan, and says, "Your father knows certainly that I have found grace in your sight and he said, 'Let not Jonathan know this, lest he refuse

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[5] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:1–3.

his consent.' But [as] the Lord lives and your soul lives, as I said, [a space] is filled up between me and death."

Significant differences	There are no significant differences until the end; what is said is unclear and it is possible that the LXX was trying to clear this up.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Jonathan, I swear it's true! But your father knows how much you like me, and he didn't want to break your heart. That's why he didn't tell you. I swear by the living LORD and by your own life that I'm only one step ahead of death."
NLT	Then David took an oath before Jonathan and said, "Your father knows perfectly well about our friendship, so he has said to himself, 'I won't tell Jonathan—why should I hurt him?' But I swear to you that I am only a step away from death! I swear it by the Lᴏʀᴅ and by your soul."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	But David took an oath, saying, "Your father certainly knows that you support me, so he said ⌊to himself⌋, 'Jonathan must not know about this. It will bring him distress.' But I solemnly swear, as the LORD and you live, I'm only one step away from death."
JPS (Tanakh)	David swore further, "You father knows well that you are fond of me and has decided: Jonathan must not learn of this or he will be grieved. But, as the Lᴏʀᴅ lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Yet David vowed again, saying, [lit., *and said*] "Your father knows well that I have found favor in your sight, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But truly as the Lᴏʀᴅ lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly [lit., *about*] a step between me and death."
Young's Updated LT	And David swears again, and says, "Your father has certainly known that I have found grace in your eyes, and he says, 'Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' And yet, Jehovah lives and your soul lives, but—as a step between me and death."

What is the gist of this verse? David knows that Saul has kept his hatred from Jonathan; and David realizes that he lives precariously, given Saul's hatred.

1Samuel 20:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וֹ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâbvaʿ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced *shawᵇ-VAHG̱*]	*to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
ʿôwd (עוֹד) [pronounced *g̱ohd*]	*still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet*	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728

1Samuel 20:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mâtsâʾ (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*]	*to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*	1st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
chên (חֵן) [pronounced *khayn*]	*grace, favor, blessing*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2580 BDB #336
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced *GAH-yin*]	*spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring*	feminine dual noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

Translation: So again David swore, saying, "Your father certainly knows that I have found grace in your eyes... David, as a more impartial witness, recognizes what is going on. He knows that Saul knows of Jonathan's affection for him. The relationship between David and Jonathan explains why Saul has not confided in Jonathan. The idea is, "Your father has his murderous intentions from you because he knows that I have found grace in your sight."

1Samuel 20:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
zôʾth (זֹאת) [pronounced *zoth*]	*here, this, thus*	feminine singular of zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced *pen*]	*lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent,* or, *so that* [plus a negative]	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
ʿâtsaᵇv (עָצַב) [pronounced *gaw-TSAHᵇV*]	*to be in pain, to be hurt, to be grieved, to be afflicted*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6087 BDB #780 (see #781)

Translation: ...and he thinks [lit., *says*], 'Jonathan should not know about this or he will grieve [lit., *lest he grieve*].' The verb ʾâmar is occasionally used for what a person thinks, rather than what he says out loud. Because of Jonathan's love for David, Saul knows full well that if he makes it clear that he is going to execute David no matter what, that Jonathan will be upset. Therefore, rather than upset his son, Saul carefully excludes him from his meetings to arrest and kill David. David could have obviously gone into more detail: Jonathan would then be also placed in a position of having to choose between David and his father, and Saul certainly would not want Jonathan placed in that position as well (not for Jonathan's sake, but for his own).

1Samuel 20:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾûwlâm (אוּלָם) [pronounced *oo-LAWM*]	*but, but indeed, yet, however*	a very strong adverbial adversative	Strong's #199 BDB #19

1Samuel 20:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*]	*living, alive*	adjective construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*]	*living, alive*	adjective construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*]	*soul, life, living being, desire*	feminine singular noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kaph or kᵉ (כ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*like, as, according to; about, approximately;* combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning *as, often, when, as soon as*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
pesaʿ (פֶשַׂע) [pronounced *PEH-sahǵ*]	*a step, a stride*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6587 BDB #832
Pesaʿ is found only here and its verbal cognate is only found in Isa. 27:4.			
bayin (בַּיִן) [pronounced *bah-YIN*]	*in the midst of, between, among;* when found twice, it means *between*	preposition with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּיִן) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among;* when found twice, it means *between*	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
This is simply an alternate spelling of bayin, found previously.			
mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced *MAW-veth*]	*death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4194 BDB #560

Translation: But, [as] certainly Yᵉhowah lives and as your soul lives, [there is but] a step between me and death." The idea is that, all it would take on the part of David is a misstep, and Saul will kill him. Saul has tried to pierce him with a javelin on two occasions (1Sam. 18:11 19:10). Saul has clearly stated his intentions to his staff, including Jonathan (1Sam. 19:1). He has sent soldiers to his home to take him (1Sam. 19:11). Then Saul has thrice sent out soldiers to pursue David in Naioth (1Sam. 19:20–21). And Saul himself then went to Naioth, for

the purpose of killing David (1Sam. 19:19:22). Saul will do anything to kill David, and David recognizes that clearly (as did even his wife, Saul's daughter). Any misstep could have resulted in David's death.

> McGee: *What a statement! —"there is only a step between me and death." It was not only that way in David's day, it is also that way today. Whether we drive the freeways of the city or the highways of the country, you and I are within a step of death. Isaiah said that there is only a heartbeat between you and death. Death can come at any time. That is the reason we ought to be ready at any moment to move out into eternity and into the presence of God. How many folks have made every arrangement for this life but none for the next life! Are you a saved individual—that is, are you trusting Christ as Saviour—so that if you should die at this moment you would go into the presence of God? Let me caution you not to put off accepting Christ as your Lord and Saviour any longer.*[6]

Previously, I mentioned how someone close to a mentally ill person might not perceive the full depth of their illness. So, how did Michal know, but Jonathan did not? Simple: Jonathan spent a lot of time with his father. Michal spent her time with David. So Michal's take on her father is a more objective one. Furthermore, Saul was careful to keep all of the incidents mentioned above secret from Jonathan (except for the staff meeting in 1Sam. 19:1 and perhaps the first javelin throw). As David's wife, Michal would have known about both attacks with a javelin, and she probably knew about her father's order to kill David, even though this was certainly not reported to her by her father (women have their ways). If someone were going to try to warn David, it is reasonable that they would warn his wife Michal. Finally, what particularly blinds Jonathan to his father's evil intent is his father's oath to him in 1Sam. 19:6.

And so says Jonathan unto David, "What says your soul and I will do to you."	1Samuel 20:4	**Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever your soul says I will do for you."**

Then David said to Jonathan, "Whatever you want me to do, I will do."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says Jonathan unto David, "What says your soul and I will do to you."
Septuagint	And Jonathan said to David, "What does your soul desire, and what will I do for you?"

Significant differences	In the MT, it sounds as if Jonathan is willing to do whatever David requests; and in the LXX, he is asking David what he would like him to do.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Then Jonathan said, "Tell me what to do, and I'll do it."
NJB	At which, Jonathan said to David, 'Whatever you think best, I will certainly do for you.'
NLT	"Tell me what I can do!" Jonathan exclaimed.
TEV	Jonathan said, "I'll do anything you want."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan said to David, "I'll do whatever you say."
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you want, I will do it for you."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

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[6] J. Vernon McGee; *I & I1Samuel;* Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 107.

Updated Emphasized Bible	And Jonathan said to David,— I will do for you <whatever your soul desires.> [So it should be as per the Aramaic and Septuagint.
NASB	Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say [lit., *your soul says*], I will do for you."
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan says to David, "What does your soul say? And I do it for you."

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan agrees to do whatever David asks of him.

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<tr><td>ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]</td><td>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</td><td>3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect</td><td>Strong's #559 BDB #55</td></tr>
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<tr><td>ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]</td><td>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</td><td>directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)</td><td>Strong's #413 BDB #39</td></tr>
<tr><td>Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]</td><td>beloved and is transliterated David</td><td>masculine proper noun</td><td>Strong's #1732 BDB #187</td></tr>
<tr><td>mâh (מָה) [pronounced maw]</td><td>what, how, why</td><td>interrogative; exclamatory particle</td><td>Strong's #4100 BDB #552</td></tr>
<tr><td>ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]</td><td>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</td><td>3rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect</td><td>Strong's #559 BDB #55</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Owen lists this as the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect because the 3rd person masculine singular form is identical to the 2nd person feminine singular form.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">In the Aramaic and in the Septuagint, the verb is desires, wants, giving us: "Whatever your soul desires, I will do for you."[7]</td></tr>
<tr><td>nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]</td><td>soul, life, living being, desire</td><td>feminine singular noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix</td><td>Strong's #5315 BDB #659</td></tr>
<tr><td>wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]</td><td>and</td><td>simple wâw conjunction</td><td>No Strong's # BDB #251</td></tr>
<tr><td>ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ğaw-SAWH]</td><td>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</td><td>1st person singular, Qal imperfect</td><td>Strong's #6213 BDB #793</td></tr>
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[7] Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 309.

1Samuel 20:4			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever your soul says I will do for you." Jonathan has an open mind. He may be certain in his own soul that his father means David no harm, but he is not so foolish as to completely discount what David has said to him. David made it clear that his life is truly in danger. Jonathan recognizes that there may be some truth in this matter. In fact, it is Jonathan's willingness to listen to David and to consider that David may be right, which will guide David as to what he should do. Jonathan offers to do whatever it is that David wants for him to do.

Application: I want you to notice what David does *not* do: he does not expect God to suddenly appear as a burning bush or a cloud overhead and guide him in his next step. God is guiding David and will guide David throughout the rest of his life, but God's guidance will be more subtle than getting direction from following a cloud overhead. Secondly, notice that David does not pray for guidance. I cannot tell you how many times I have been told to pray to God for guidance or how many times I have heard others tell me how they prayed to God for guidance. Listen carefully: God is not going to appear to you in your prayers, in your sleep, or give you any other sort of divine apparition to lead you to your left or to your right. God will guide you and rarely is His guidance so subtle that you are left clueless. The key is Bible doctrine. If you know God's Word and if you are in fellowship, God is going to guide you. As I type this, I am sitting 2500 miles away from where I was brought up. I listened to many friends who told me that they could not wait to graduate and move out of Sacramento. I was not one of those people. I liked Sacramento, I loved my family and I loved my friends. For all intents and purposes, God picked me up and moved me here. When I began considering that maybe I had to move, I had three choices come to me, and Houston was in a distant 3ʳᵈ place, as per my own personal choice. In retrospect, I cannot even imagine moving to those other two places; I cannot imagine remaining in Sacramento.

Recently, I ended my career (at least temporarily) as a teacher. God essentially forced me to stop. I would be in my old classroom today if I were the one who chose each step to take. In the transition, certainly, I prayed to God—but more to accept His guidance, rather than to ask for guidance. As a young Christian, I often pondered, "Should I go left, should I go right? What does God want me to do?" After years of Bible study, I know how to get into fellowship; I know what takes me out of fellowship; and guidance, even though I am at a point where I do wonder, *what will I be doing 6 months from now?,* I am also confident that God will place that before me. My point in all of this is, they key to divine guidance is not praying to God *for* that guidance; the key is knowing His Word and being in fellowship.

And so says David unto Jonathan, "Behold a new moon tomorrow and I sitting I will sit with the king to eat and you will send me away and I will be hidden in the field until the evening the third.	1Samuel 20:5	**David answered Jonathan, "Listen, tomorrow [is] a new moon and I should be sitting with the king to eat; however, let me go and I will stay hidden in the field until the third evening.**

Then David answered Jonathan, "Listen, tomorrow is the new moon and I customarily sit with the king for dinner; however, give me leave and I will remain hidden in a field until the third evening.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says David unto Jonathan, "Behold a new moon tomorrow and I sitting I will sit with the king to eat and you will send me away and I will be hidden in the field until the evening the third.
Septuagint	And David said to Jonathan, "Behold, tomorrow [is] the new moon and I will not on any account sit down to eat, but you will let me go and I will hide in the plain until the evening.

Significant differences	In the Hebrew, David would customarily sit down for a meal with the king on the next day; in the Greek, David indicates that *no way would he sit down with the king tomorrow*. The overall meaning of this verse remains unchanged.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David answered: Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival, and I'm supposed to eat dinner with your father. But instead, I'll hide in a field until the evening of the next day.
NLT	David replied, "Tomorrow we celebrate the new moon festival. I've always eaten with your father on this occasion, but tomorrow I'll hide in the field and stay there until the evening of the third day.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	David replied, "Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival, when I should sit and eat at the king's ⌊table⌋. But let me go and hide in the countryside for two more nights.
JPS (Tanakh)	David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am to sit with the king at the meal. Instead, let me go and I will hide in the countryside until the third [meaning uncertain] evening.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	David said to Jonathan, Tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit at the table with the king; but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field till the third day at evening.

Updated Emphasized Bible	And David said to Jonathan—
	    Listen! ‖The new moon‖ is tomorrow and ‖I‖ must not sit with the king to eat,
	    —let me go then and hide myself in the field until the evening..

NASB	So David said to Jonathan, "Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field until the third evening.
Young's Updated LT	And David says unto Jonathan, "Lo, the new moon *is* tomorrow, and I do certainly sit with the king to eat; and you have sent me away, and I have been hidden in a field until the third evening.

What is the gist of this verse? It was customary for David to share a meal with Saul at the new moon. David is going to skip this meal, and hide out in a field instead.

To help explain what is happening—David is at a loss as to what to do. His life is in danger and he goes to his closest friend to try to sort things out. To some extent, David might even be searching for a second opinion. In any case, Jonathan is a person that David can trust with his life (which is what David is doing in meeting with him). Jonathan will provide a new perspective, a second opinion, and David will decide from that what to do.

Now, you or I may view this situation and think, "Duh, David, Saul is trying to kill you. You might as well leave town. Things aren't going to get better." Even if you have not read ahead; even if you do not know what is going to occur, you're still thinking, "David, this is pretty obvious. You need to get out of town." That is God's guidance.

He has patiently beat David over the head with His guidance. David has to leave the city of Saul and become a fugitive. This should be clear to you. That is how God's guidance works. He is able to guide us and He is infinitely patient in doing so.

You may, particularly if you are a new believer or a believer lacking doctrine, ask, "Aren't there other things that David could do besides leave town? Couldn't he overthrow Saul's government? After all, David is the next king and Samuel has clearly told him that." Here's the problem with that scenario: there is nothing in the Law which suggests that David should overthrow his current government. There is no Bible doctrine which indicates to David that once his government has become corrupt enough, then it is time for him to topple it, for the good of all. Nowhere do we find that in Scripture. David's options are to (1) remain in the city of Saul and be found and killed; (2) remain in the city of Saul and attempt to overthrow the present government, a criminal act for which there is no Scriptural support; or, (3) leave Gibeah. Do you see how simple this is? David does not have to pray to God and ask God, "Should I go left or right?" Now, David may not like God's guidance, and I don't blame him. I can't tell you how sad I was on my first night living in Houston. However, God's guidance is clear and unequivocal, and not ascertained by prayer.

1Samuel 20:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
chôdesh (חֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-desh*]	*new moon, month*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2320 BDB #294
mâchâr (מָחָר) [pronounced *maw-KHAWR*]	literally, *tomorrow;* but figuratively can stand for *in time to come, in the future, later on, down the road* (chronologically speaking)	adverb of time	Strong's #4279 BDB #563
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 20:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾânôkîy (אָנֹכִי) [pronounced *awn-oh-KEE*]	*I, me*	1ˢᵗ person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᴮV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #3427 BDB #442

A Qal infinitive absolute is a verb which can act like noun, a verb or an adverb. When used as a complement of affirmation, it may be rendered *surely, indeed;* and when it is a complement of improbability and condition, we render it *at all, freely, indeed*. Although I could not find substantiation for this, I suspect that the infinitive absolute may also be used to describe what customarily takes place, because when it is used with other verbs, it often describes simultaneous action. The use of the personal pronoun here also suggests that this was a customary activity.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᴮV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442

Here is an excellent place to learn a little textual criticism. The Septuagint inserts a negative in here because the translators realize that David has no intention of sitting with the king. This is because either they do not understand the text which is here (which means that this is something that David would customarily do) or that they understood it, but felt that translating this with a negative better explained the point that David was making. Often the key to understanding the differences between various texts is, was something added or omitted and would there have been a logical reason why a translator would have added or omitted this word? In this case, the translator added the negative and he (or they) had a logical reason for doing so. We should understand this passage *without* the negative.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced *ǥeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
melekᵉ (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced *aw-KAHL*]	*to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: David answered Jonathan, "Listen, tomorrow [is] a new moon and I should be sitting with the king to eat;... Apparently, at the new moon, Saul gathered with his staff and officers and ate a meal with all of them. It is not clear for how many meals this continued. It seems to be implied (in the next part of this verse) that this meal may have carried on for three days.

Now, what David is doing here is supposing that everything is alright. He is supposing that Saul's attacks upon him have been the result of a freak emotional imbalance. This is not what David believes, but what Jonathan believes. So, David sets up a scenario whereby he is safe, but that they assume that Saul's previous attacks may have been simply aberrations. "Now, if everything is hunky dory, then I would normally attend the New Moon

Feast at the palace tomorrow. However, I will hide out instead. Here is what you will do...” And then David presents to Jonathan what he could say to his father to determine for himself whether or not David is safe in the presence of Saul.

The New Moon Feast is found in Scripture in Num. 10:10 and 28:11–15. It is properly performed by the Aaronic priesthood and the sacrifices were laid out in the latter passage. However, Saul's celebration of this was probably a bastardization of the celebration, which is not something which should strike us as being out of the ordinary. After all, two of our most popular celebrations, Christmas and Easter, are both bastardizations of what it is that they purport to celebrate. They are a mixture of heathen celebrations with some Christian overtones.

> Clarke comments: *The months of the Hebrews were lunar months, and they reckoned from new moon to new moon. And as their other feasts, particularly the passover, were reckoned according to this, they were very scrupulous in observing the first appearance of each new moon. On these new moons they offered sacrifices, and had a feast; as we learn from Num 10:10; Num 28:11. And we may suppose that the families, on such occasions, sacrificed and feasted together.*[8]

> JB&F comment further: The beginning of a new month or moon was always celebrated by special sacrifices, followed by feasting, at which the head of a family expected all its members to be present. David, both as the king's son-in-law and a distinguished courtier, dined on such occasions at the royal table, and from its being generally known that David had returned to Gibeah, his presence in the palace would be naturally expected. This occasion was chosen by the two friends for testing the king's state of feeling. As a suitable pretext for David's absence, it was arranged that he should visit his family at Beth-lehem, and thus create an opportunity of ascertaining how his non-appearance would be viewed.[9]

1Samuel 20:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâlach (שָׁלַ ח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth* [branches], *to shoot* [an arrow]	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Piel perfect with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çâthar (סָ תַר) [pronounced *saw-THAR*	*to be hidden, to lie hid; to be covered over; to hide onself*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #5641 BDB #711
bᵉ (בַ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
sâdeh (שָׂדֶ ה) [pronounced *saw-DEH*]	*field, land, open field, open country*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

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[8] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:5.
[9] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:5.

1Samuel 20:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced ĝahd]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʿereb (עֶרֶב) [pronounced ĜEH-reᵇv]	*evening, sunset*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6153 BDB #787
shᵉlishîym (שְׁלִשִׁים) [pronounced shᵉli-SHEEM]	*third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]*	masculine/feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026

The Septuagint does not translate this final word. David is to remain there, according to the Septuagint, until the evening, which we would assume, the evening of the New Moon Feast. However, Jonathan will not contact David until at least the second evening of the New Moon Feast (in fact, it appears to be on the second or the third day that Jonathan contacts David). Therefore, we may reasonably assume that Jonathan here has told David to remain hiding in the field until the third evening of the feast. His intention will be to contact David before that time.

Translation: ...however, let me go and I will stay hidden in the field until the third evening. The perfect tense of *to hide* designates not only completed action but here indicates that David will *remain* hidden until this third evening. The idea is not necessarily that he and Jonathan will meet in three days. However, this is the maximum duration that David will remain hidden. Given their relationship and given the paranoia of Saul, it is unclear as to how soon Jonathan would be able to break away and find David. There is also the possibility, mentioned in v. 5a, that this new moon meal might last three days, which I think is the case here. Whatever animals are slaughtered are eaten until the group finishes off the animal (or animals) completely.

Gill suggests a slightly different time line. With the Jews, the day begins at sunset. So, the *third [day] [in the] evening* could refer to the evening of the second day (which, begins the third day for Jews).[10] This way, we don't simply have David just hanging out for three days, but he is giving a specific time to meet Jonathan. Furthermore, David is not hiding in the same place for the next 2+ days. He is able to hide wherever he chooses; however, he needs to be in the field on the evening which begins the 3rd day.

If a visit, visits me your father and you have said, 'Asking leave, asked leave from me David to run [to] Bethlehem his city for a slaughter of the days there to all of the family.'	1Samuel 20:6	**If your father definitely misses me, you will say, 'David earnestly asked leave from me to run [to] his city Bethlehem for the yearly sacrifice there for the entire family.'**

If your father makes an issue out of missing me, then tell him, 'David passionately requested leave from me because his family attends a yearly sacrifice in his city Bethlehem.'

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	If a visit, visits me your father and you have said, 'Asking leave, asked leave from me David to run [to] Bethlehem his city for a slaughter of the days there to all of the family.'

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[10] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:5.

Septuagint	And if your father does in anyway inquire for me, then you will say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem, his city, for [there is] there a yearly sacrifice for all the family.'
Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	If Saul wonders where I am, tell him, "David asked me to let him go to his hometown of Bethlehem, so he could take part in a sacrifice his family makes there every year."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	If your father really misses me, tell him, 'David repeatedly begged me to let him run to Bethlehem, his hometown, because his relatives are offering the annual sacrifice there.'
JPS (Tanakh)	If your father notes my absence, you say, 'David asked my permission to run down to his home town, Bethlehem, for the whole family has its annual sacrifice there.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked *leave* of me to run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for the whole family.'
Young's Updated LT	If your father at all look after me and you have said, 'David asked earnestly of me to run to Bethlehem, his city, for a sacrifice of the days *is* there for all the family.'

What is the gist of this verse? David suggests a plan so that Jonathan can determine for himself how his father really feels about David. When Saul asks about David, Jonathan is to tell him that David is with his family in Bethlehem for a family feast.

1Samuel 20:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #6485 BDB #823

1Samuel 20:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
It is very difficult to give *pâqad* one or two English translations. (1) It can be used in a good sense *to go* to someone or to a place. (a) *to visit;* (b) to go in order to inspect and/or explore; hence *to search;* (c) *to review, to number, to inventory;* also, therefore, *to miss, to find wanting* (in this review or inventory); (d) to go to someone to take care of them; hence, *to look after;* also, *to look to another for help.* (2) Pâqad can be used in a causal sense (generally, then found in the Hiphil): (a) *to set* (someone over anything); (b) *to commit, to charge to the care of;* (c) *to deposit* anywhere. (3) The third set of meanings center around going to someone in a bad sense. Hence: (a) *to fall upon, to attack;* (b) used of God *to chastise* [the wicked]. There are further considerations depending upon the preposition which follows.			
Here, the sense is not simply to take inventory and notice that David is missing from the meal, but to be noticeably upset about it; hence the doubling of *pâqad.*			
ʾâᵇv (אָ ב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: If your father definitely misses me,... We have a repetition of the verb *pâqad,* which has a variety of uses, listed above in the exegesis. The key to this word is generally human contact. Saul will go around and speak with most everyone at this meal, thus having personal contact with them. As he does, he takes a mental inventory of who is there and who is not. In his mental inventory, he might realize that David is missing. That would be a simple use of the verb *pâqad*. However, here, Saul is said not simply *to miss* David, in his inventory, but to definitely miss David. The idea is that Saul makes an issue of this. He is verbal about missing David. In this case, Jonathan is to say something to his father.

1Samuel 20:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâmar (אָ מַ ר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
shâʾal (שָ אַ ל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*]	*to ask for oneself, to ask leave*	Niphal infinitive absolute	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
shâʾal (שָ אַ ל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*]	*to ask for oneself, to ask leave*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
min (מִ ן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than*	preposition of separation with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

	1Samuel 20:6b		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced *roots*]	*to run*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
bêyth lechem (לֶחֶם בַּיִת) [pronounced *bayth-LEH-khem*]	*house of bread* and is transliterated *Bethlehem*	proper noun, location	Strong's #1035 BDB #111
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced *ĝeer*]	*encampment, city, town*	feminine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
zebach (זֶבַח) [pronounced *ZEHᵝ-vakh*]	*slaughtered animal [used in a sacrificial offering], slaughter, sacrifice, slaughterings, sacrificial animal*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2077 BDB #257
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced *yaw-MEEM*]	*days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year*	masculine plural noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced *shawm*]	*there, thither, whither*	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*]	*the whole, all of, the entirety of, all;* can also be rendered *any of* with a plural noun	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
mishpâchâh (מִשְׁפָּחָה) [pronounced *mish-paw-KHAWH*]	*family, clan, sub-tribe, class (of people), species (of animals),* or *sort (of things)*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4940 BDB #1046

Translation: ...you will say, 'David earnestly asked leave from me to run [to] his city Bethlehem for the yearly sacrifice there for the entire family.' Then Jonathan is to tell his father that David asked permission to take leave of this dinner. However, again, just like we have with *pâqad,* the verb shâʾal is doubled, giving it great emphasis. So David does not simply request leave from this meal, but it is an earnest request, a passionate request.

With this, we have the verb *to run*. The idea is that David had to leave immediately and suddenly for this sacrifice in Bethlehem. Bethlehem is the city of David's family (see 1Sam. 16), so this would make sense. In our culture, we tend to have family reunions at funerals and weddings, and occasionally during some holidays; in the ancient world, the family could be gathered for a yearly sacrifice. The animal would be slaughtered, but there would be a meal as well, made from the sacrificed animal. The words used here would indicate that this request was a very strong request and that David had to take his leave immediately in order to get to Bethlehem in time.

Quite obviously, David is asking Jonathan to lie to his father, which Jonathan will do. The idea is that Saul is unjustly trying to have David killed. Saul has declared David a dead man; and primarily because David is the heir

to his throne. Therefore, what we have here is a planned political assassination. I would think that, under these circumstances, that David would have the right to lie. I've got to admit to being a little confused on this issue in this circumstance. Gill, on the other hand, suggests that this could be a true request. It is possible that David's family was meeting in Bethlehem, and David is close enough to Bethlehem to go there and then to return for Jonathan's report. He writes: *it was customary for the family of Jesse one day in a year, and as it should seem on a first day of the month, and perhaps the first day of the first month, or New Year's Day, to have an anniversary feast by way of gratitude and thankfulness for the mercies of the year past, and for the continuance of them for time to come; in which the family rejoiced together at the great goodness of God unto them, 1Sa 9:12.*[11] Since David's actual presence in Bethlehem is not stated but only implied, David would not even have to go to Bethlehem in order for this statement to be, more or less, true. I'm not certain that I buy into either of these theories, but either one would easily solve the problem of David asking Jonathan to lie to his father. In any case, the fact that Saul does not question this tells us that it was customary for families to have gatherings with somewhat of a religious purpose. Given that the Tent of God may not be in service at this point in time, also gives us a good reason to suspect that the religious feasts were practiced a little more free-form than what is prescribed in Scripture.

Given that David has herein asked Jonathan to lie to his father, it might be instructive to examine the concept of lying a little more. Therefore, let me offer you...

Gleason Archer's Three Points on Lying

1. Scripture records a number of sins, including lies. This does not mean that the Bible condones sin in any way. This particular sin of lying is not, therefore, approved by God.
2. Just because an incident is recorded in Scripture, this does not mean that person was *acting responsibly on the highest level of faith or furnishing a valid example of conduct that believers might justifiably follow today*.
3. *The duty to tell only what is true does not necessarily carry with it the obligation to tell the whole truth about the matter, especially if lives would be endangered or lost as a result of this information, or if divulging all the details would violate a trust of secrecy or amount to a betrayal of another's confidence.*[12]

If thus he says, 'Good,' [then] peace to your servant; and if in anger he is angry to him, [then] know that completed the evil from with him.	1Samuel 20:7	**If thus he says: 'Good,' [then there is] peace [and safety] to your servant; but if he is clearly angry [lit., *in anger, he is angry*] within [lit., *with reference to*] himself, [then] know that evil had been accomplished from with him.**

If he says, "That's good,' then it is safe for your servant; however, if he is clearly angry, even if he tries to hide it, then know that he had planned harm to come to me, even at that meal.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text   If thus he says, 'Good,' [then] peace to your servant; and if in anger he is angry to him, [then] know that completed the evil from with him.

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[11] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:6. 1Sam. 9:12 reads, by the way: And they replied to them and said, He is. See, he is before you. Hurry now, for today he will come into the city, for the people have a sacrifice in the high place.

[12] These three points were taken from *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties;* Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 175–176.

Septuagint	If he says thus: 'Good,' safe for your servant; but if he answers harshly to you, know that evil is determined by him.

Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	If your father says it's all right, then I'm safe. But if he gets angry, you'll know he wants to harm me.
NAB	If he says, 'Very well,' your servant is safe. But if he becomes quite angry, you can be sure he has planned some harm.
NLT	If he says, 'Fine!' then you will know all is well. But if he is angry and loses his temper, then you will know he was planning to kill me.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	If he says, 'Good!' then I will be safe. But if he gets really angry, then you'll know for sure that he has decided to harm me.
JPS (Tanakh)	If he says, 'Good,' your servant is safe; but if his anger flares up, know that he is resolved to do [me] harm.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"If he says [lit., *says thus*], 'It is good,' your servant *shall be* safe; but if he is very angry, know that he has decided on evil.
Young's Updated LT	If thus he says: 'Good; peace *is* for your servant.' And if it be very displeasing to him—know that the evil has been determined by him;...

What is the gist of this verse? David offers up two possible scenarios to Jonathan. First, after telling his father that David has gone to Bethlehem to be with his family, if Saul says, "Good" then he is clearly over his rage. However, if Saul is noticeably angry, then he plotted evil against David for that meal.

1Samuel 20:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced *koh*]	*so, thus, here, hence*	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ţôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced *toeᵇv*]	*pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better*	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*]	*completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

1Samuel 20:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĞEᴮ-ved]	*slave, servant*	masculine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: If thus he says: 'Good,' [then there is] peace [and safety] to your servant;... Saul is either going to respond positively or negatively to the news that David is supposedly at a family sacrificial meal in Bethlehem (or, he could have very little by way of response). Saul, as a family man, would be pleased that David is taking time to be with his family; and even better that the celebration involved sacrifices to God. As the busy king, Saul might not even notice that David is gone or not think much one way or the other. So, if Saul had nothing plotted against David; if he was not troubled by a desire to kill David, then he would have a good response or no response to hearing this. Now David knew that Saul would not respond in either of these ways; however, he has to present these alternatives because Jonathan believes that he has already convinced his father that David is an asset to him.

1Samuel 20:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when* (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
chârâh (חָרָה) [pronounced *khaw-RAWH*]	*to burn, to kindle, to become angry, to evoke great emotion*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #2734 BDB #354
chârâh (חָרָה) [pronounced *khaw-RAWH*]	*to burn, to kindle, to become angry, to evoke great emotion*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2734 BDB #354
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...but if he is clearly angry [lit., *in anger, he is angry*] within [lit., *with reference to*] himself,... We have a repetition of the word angry. You have no doubt noticed that we have already had several Qal infinitive absolute's in this chapter, which seems to be characteristic of David's speech (at least at a time like this). Saul is not simply angry, but it is clear that he is angry; he is extremely upset. This thought is completed with the lâmed preposition affixed to the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix, which I am having difficulty rendering into the English so that it makes sense. However, I believe the sense of this is, even if Saul is angry within himself. He may not say anything, but it is clear by observation that he is angry. The doubling of the verb means that he is

clearly and unmistakably angry or that his anger is excessive. Saul will be angry because this would be an opportunity for him to kill David.

1Samuel 20:7c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâda´ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĢ*]	*know; see; perceive, acquire knowledge, become acquainted, know by experience, have a knowledge of something*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced *kaw-LAWH*]	*to complete, to finish; to be past, to go by; to consume, to waste, to destroy; to be completed or finished, to be accomplished or fulfilled; to be consumed [wasted or spent]*	3rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
râ´âh (רָעָה) [pronounced *raw-ĢAW*]	*evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
´îm (עִם) [pronounced *ģeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity (with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix)	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of*.

Translation: [then] know that evil has been accomplished from with him. The idea here, with the perfect tense, is that Saul had planned something against David for that meal. Saul knew that David attended these meals and would have the opportunity to have a plot already devised to take David at that time. David recognizes now that Saul is definitely out to kill him and that he will stop at nothing. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that Saul had something already lined up for this monthly meal.

And you have done grace with your servant for in a covenant of Yᵉhowah you have brought your servant with you. And if there [is] in me iniquity, kill me yourself and as far as your father, to why this bring me?"	1Samuel 20:8	**Furthermore, you have been gracious [lit., *manufactured grace*] to your servant for you have brought your servant into an alliance of Yᵉhowah with you. But if there [is] iniquity in me, [then] kill me yourself. Why thus bring me as far as your father?"**

Furthermore, you have always been gracious to me, even entering into a bond of friendship and loyalty before Jehovah with me. However, if you believe me to be guilty of anything, then execute me here and now. Why bother taking me to your father?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And you have done grace with your servant for in a covenant of Yᵉhowah you have brought your servant with you. And if there [is] in me iniquity, kill me yourself and as far as your father, to why this bring me?"
Septuagint	And you will deal mercifully with your servant; for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you, and if there is iniquity in your servant, kill me yourself. But who do you thus bring me to your father?"

Significant differences	There is a minor difference noted; there are no significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Be kind to me. After all, it was your idea to promise the LORD that we would always be loyal friends. If I've done anything wrong, kill me yourself, but don't hand me over to your father.
NLT	Show me this kindness as my sworn friend—for we made a covenant together before the LORD—or kill me yourself if I have sinned against your father. But please don't betray me to him!"
TEV	Please do me this favor, and keep the sacred promise you made to me. But if I'm guilty, kill me yourself Why take me to your father to be killed?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Now, be kind to me. After all, you forced me into an agreement with the LORD. If I have committed any crime, kill me yourself. Why bother taking me to your father?.
JPS (Tanakh)	Deal faithfully with your servant, since you have taken your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. And if I am guilty, kill me yourself, but don't make me go back to your father."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. But if there is iniquity in me, put me to death yourself; for why then should you bring me to your father?"
NRSV	Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a sacred covenant [Hebrew, *a covenant of the LORD*] with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself; why should you bring me to your father?"
Young's Updated LT	And you have shown kindness, to your servant, for into a covenant of Jehovah you have brought your servant with you; —and if there is in me iniquity, put me to death; and to your father, why is this—you bring me in?"

What is the gist of this verse? David acknowledges that Jonathan has been gracious to him in the past, to the point of entering into a bond in Jehovah with him. Then David adds, "If I am guilty of anything, then you kill me. There is no reason to haul me to your father."

1Samuel 20:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ĝaw-SAWH]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
cheçed (חֶ֫סֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*]	*grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
ʾal (עַל) [pronounced ĝahl]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ʾebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĜEᴮB-ved]	*slave, servant*	masculine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
bᵉ (בְ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
bᵉrîyth (בְּרִית) [pronounced *bᵉreeth*]	*pact, alliance, treaty, alliance, covenant*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1285 BDB #136
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĜEᴮB-ved]	*slave, servant*	masculine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
ʾîm (עִם) [pronounced ĝeem]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix; pausal form	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: Furthermore, you have been gracious [lit., *manufactured grace*] to your servant for you have brought your servant into a covenant of Yᵉhowah with you. David closes by acknowledging the relationship between himself and Jonathan. Jonathan willingly forged a bond or an alliance between them before God. This was not something which he was constrained to do, or something that he did because it might be a good move politically

speaking. Jonathan made a pact with David because he respected, loved and trusted him. At one gym where I worked out, there was an ex-professional football player, so big that he took up most of the space going up and down the stairs, which were designed for two. Heck of a nice guy as well and I believe that he is a believer. If circumstances were such that I should need to ally myself with someone, I'd choose someone like him, as he seemed trustworthy, solid and spiritually mature. Jonathan chose to make such a pact with David for roughly the same reasons. However, Jonathan made this pact from a position of power. Jonathan made this pact when David had nothing to give him. David recognized this as an act of grace. Jonathan, being the son of the king, held the cards. He could choose to whom he would be allied, and he recognized David's character and chose him on the basis of his character rather than on the basis of his assets. Quickly contrast these men: Jonathan is a brave soldier and the son of the king, in line to the throne. David is potentially a fugitive. Early on in their friendship, Jonathan made a pact with David (1Sam. 18:3) and this passage is more of a renewal or an acknowledgment of that pact.

1Samuel 20:8b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when* (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
yêsh (יֵשׁ) [pronounced *yaysh*]	*being, substance, existence;* used as a substitute for *to be* (without reference to number or tense); *to be present, to be ready, to exist;* the verb *to be* may be implied	substantive	Strong's #3426 BDB #441
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿâvôwn (עָוֹן) [pronounced *ğaw-VOHN*]	*iniquity, crime, offense, transgression, depraved action, guilt, punishment from wrongdoing*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5771 BDB #730
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced *aht̄-TAW*]	*you* (often, the verb *to be* is implied)	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: But if there [is] iniquity in me, [then] kill me yourself. The latter half of this verse makes a reasonable argument to have a less than literal Bible translation as a back up. David is offering himself to Jonathan, saying, "Now, if you believe me to be guilty of some crime or offense, then you should kill me." Jonathan, as the king's

son, had this sort of authority. He could determine the innocence of guilt of a man, and execute him on the spot. David is telling Jonathan, "If you believe that there is iniquity in me, then you execute me here and now."

Gill writes: *...this expresses the strong sense [that David]...had of his own integrity, and served to confirm Jonathan in his opinion of it.*[13] David's position, which Jonathan must agree to, is that he is blameless and has acted only with the utmost integrity.

1Samuel 20:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ǧahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
lâmed (ל) (pronounced * lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מָה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered *why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose,* indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*]	*here, this, thus*	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry*	2nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97

Translation: Why thus bring me as far as your father?" The word order of this phrase is a bit mixed up for those of us who speak English. The position that a word takes in an English sentence often determines whether it is the subject of object of a verb; or whether a verb is an imperative or simply an indicative. In the Greek and Hebrew, this is done within the words themselves; one can pick out the subject of a verb and the verb because their morphologies match. Or, one can easily recognize the direct object of a verb, as it is preceded by an untranslated word which tells you that it's a direct object. Here, giving this a word-for-word translation in this particular order would make little sense. However, what David is asking Jonathan is, "Why not execute me yourself, if you believe that I am guilty of a capital offense. Why bother taking me as far as your father?"

Jonathan Makes a Pact with David

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[13] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:8.

To be more precise, the covenant that Jonathan will make with David will be in vv. 12–16, after they have gone out to the field.

And so says Jonathan, "Far be it to you that if knowing I know that completed the evil from with my father to come upon you and not her [i.e., *evil*] I make know to you."

1Samuel 20:9

Jonathan answered, "Far be it to you! If I definitely knew that evil from my father had been completed to come upon you, would I not make it known to you?"

Jonathan answered, "Impossible! If I knew that my father had planned evil to come upon you, then would I not make this known to you?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says Jonathan, "Far be it to you that if knowing I know that completed the evil from with my father to come upon you and not her [i.e., *evil*] I make know to you."
Septuagint	And Jonathan said, "That be far from you, for if I definitely know that evil is determined by my father to come upon you, although it should not be against your cities, I will tell you."
Significant differences	There is a difference of one verb, which does not affect the meaning very much. However, there is one phrase which is difficult to understand in the Hebrew and the Greek—both of those phrases are marked above.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Don't worry," Jonathan said. "If I find out that my father wants to kill you, I'll certainly let you know."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan answered, "That's unthinkable! If I knew for sure that my father had decided to harm you, I would have told you about it."
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan replied, "Don't talk like that! If I learn that my father has resolved to kill you, I will surely tell you about it."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I should indeed learn that evil has been decided by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you about it?"
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan says, "Far be it from you!" for I certainly do not know that the evil has been determined by my father to come upon you, and I do not declare it to you."

What is the gist of this verse? David has told Jonathan that if he is guilty of a capital offense to execute him. Jonathan replies with a strong negative response. Then he asks David, "If I knew that my father had planned to do evil to you, wouldn't I tell you about it?"

1Samuel 20:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
châlîylâh (חָלִילָה) [pronounced *khaw-LEE-law*]	*far be it [from me or you], to profane [something], a profanity!, a blasphemy!*	adverb, substantive, interjection	Strong's #2486 BDB #321
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix, pausal form	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Jonathan answered, "Far be it to you! Jonathan responds to the various points which David makes. First of all, he answers David's suggestion that he simply execute David, if he believes David to be a crminal. His very brief, two word (plus a suffix) answer is, "There is no way that I could possibly do this to you. There is no way that I find you guilty of anything!" Coming up with a brief but reasonable rendering of these two words is difficult. "No way!" sounds too colloquial and trite. The best modern equivalents that I have come across is God's Word™, which renders this, "That's unthinkable!" or the New Jerusalem Bible which renders this "Perish the thought!" The New Living Translation renders this, "Never!" which is also a good rendering. Obviously, none of these translations are very literal, but literal is not always the best way to render a Hebrew colloquialism.

Jonathan is also objecting to the notion that he has knowledge that his father his some evil planned for David (whether because of a real or supposed iniquity in David). He did not meet with David in order to capture him and take him to his father. This will be made clear in the next portion of this verse.

1Samuel 20:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĢ*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #3045 BDB #393

1Samuel 20:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâdáʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG̱*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced *kaw-LAWH*]	*to complete, to finish; to be past, to go by; to consume, to waste, to destroy; to be completed or finished, to be accomplished or fulfilled; to be consumed [wasted or spent]*	3ʳᵈ person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
rấâh (רָעָה) [pronounced *raw-G̱AW*]	*evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced *g̱eem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.*

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *g̱ahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: If I definitely knew that evil from my father had been completed to come upon you,... Jonathan here is answering an unspoken concern, which is not actually David's, but Jonathan's. Jonathan is concerned that his friend does not trust him. Or, he wants to make his loyalty clearly known to David. The *if* in this verse also functions as an interrogative particle, which will be added to in the next portion of this verse with a negative (the two are generally found together for the sense of an emphatic affirmative; however, here they are here separated with the same intention).

Jonathan assures David that, if he definitely knew that his father had engineered evil against him, then would he not tell David? He is reaffirming his allegiance to David. David mentioned their pact before God and Jonathan is telling him that this pact is still in effect; that he would not renege on their bond.

1Samuel 20:9c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
You will recall that in v. 9b, there was an ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], which generally means *if,* but can also function as an interrogative particle. Strong's #518 BDB #49. Sometimes when ʾîm is followed by the negative particle lôʾ (לֹא) [pronounced *low*] (Strong's #3808 BDB #518), together they can function as an emphatic affirmative. Let me offer you an analogy in English: a lawyer is grilling a suspect on the stand, and he says, "Isn't it true that you are the one who stole Charlie Brown's purse?" The lawyer is not asking if something is *not* true; by throwing in the *not* he is expecting or desirous of the affirmative response: "Yes, it is true." In fact, he is looking more for an affirmative answer with that question than with the question, "Is it true that you stole Charlie Brown's purse?" These two together are often a part of the formula of swearing; together they form a strong affirmation and asservation (Job 1:11 2:5 22:20 Isa. 5:9).			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	sign of the direct object with a 3ʳᵈ person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
the 3ʳᵈ person feminine singular suffix refers back to the word *evil* in this verse.			
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*]	*to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...would I not make it known to you?" This is definitely a difficult phrase to render. The 3ʳᵈ person feminine singular suffix affixed to the sign of the direct object refers back to the potential evil that Saul might plot against David and is the object of the verb which follows. Jonathan is stating, "I would make [this] evil known to you!" the evil referring back to any plot that Saul had devised against David for the upcoming meal. However, this is also negated, which may have made Young's literal translation somewhat confusing. However, the negation actually goes with the interrogative ʾîm which began Jonathan's second thought. The two together form what is known as a emphatic negative affirmation. That statement requires a strong affirmative answer, although it is stated as a negative. In the Hebrew exegesis, I have given you a good English parallel. Like many of the Hebrew idioms, you may have your doubts; however, if you are given a very similar English usage, then it makes more sense.

And so David says unto Jonathan, "Who will make know to me or what answers you your father severely?"	1Samuel 20:10	**David then asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me if [lit., *or*] your father answers you harshly?"**

David then asked Jonathan, "How will I know if your father answers you harshly?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text   And so David says unto Jonathan, "Who will make know to me or what answers you
                             your father severely?"
Septuagint   And David said to Jonathan, "Who can tell me if your father should answer roughly?"

Significant differences   None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV   "How will you do that?" David asked.
NLT   Then David asked, "How will I know whether or not your father is angry?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   Then David asked, "Who will tell me whether or not your father gives you a harsh
                             answer?"
JPS (Tanakh)   David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if [meaning of Hebrew uncertain] your
                             father answers you harshly?"

™
Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"
Young's Updated LT   And David says to Jonathan, "Who will declare to me? Of what *if* your father
                             answers you sharply?"

What is the gist of this verse? If Saul has clearly plotted against David (which David is certain of), he asks
Jonathan how will this information be gotten to him.

1Samuel 20:10			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

1Samuel 20:10

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
mîy (מִי) [pronounced *mee*]	*who;* occasionally rendered *how, in what way*	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*]	*to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾô (אוֹ) [pronounced *oh*]	*or, or rather, otherwise, also, and*	conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14

Gesenius and Thenius take this to mean *if perchance* and Keil and Delitzsch do agree that it may be taken that way in some passages (although K & D don't believe that ʾô should be so understood in this passage). Keil and Delitzsch: *This is evidently incorrect; for even though there are certain passages in which אוֹ may be so rendered, it is only where some other case is supposed [apparently within the same sentence], and therefore the meaning **or** still likes at the foundation. These questions of David were suggested by a correct estimate of the circumstances, namely, that Saul's suspicions would leave him to the conclusion that there was some understanding between Jonathan and David, and that he would take steps in consequence to prevent Jonathan from making David acquainted with the result of his conversation with Saul.*[14]

In this context, there is the presentation of two clear alternatives (even though David doubts one of them). However, in the immediate context of this sentence, there are not two alternatives presented.

mâh (מָה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced *ğaw-NAWH*]	*to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
qâsheh (קָשֶׁה) [pronounced *kaw-SHEH*]	*hard, severe, difficult, fierce, intense, vehement, stiff, hash stubborn*	adjective, pausal form	Strong's #7186 BDB #904

I suspect that qâsheh is either an adverb or that it functions as an adverb here.

Translation: David then asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me if [lit., *or*] your father answers you harshly?" David is certain that Saul has plotted evil against him. However, if Saul hid this from Jonathan (which he obviously did),

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[14] Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 504–505.

then that means that Saul would have suspicions about Jonathan, and that he might keep Jonathan under watch for awhile. As I have mentioned on several occasions in the past, Saul is not a stupid man, even if he is a paranoiac, homicidal schizophrenic.

For the reasons behind this translation (and, therefore, interpretation), see the discussion of the exegesis within the Hebrew.

And so says Jonathan unto David, "Come and we will go out [into] the field." And so they go out two of them [into] the field.	1Samuel 20:11	**"Come and we will go out [into] the field," Jonathan said to David. So they both went out [into] the field.**

"Come and let's go out into the field," Jonathan suggested. And they both went out into the field.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Jonathan said to David, "Go and remain in the field." And they both went out into the field.
Septuagint	And so says Jonathan unto David, "Come and we will go out [into] the field." And so they go out two of them [into] the field.

Significant differences	In the MT, Jonathan tells David to go out into the field; in the Greek, he says that they will both go out into the field.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Let's go out to this field, and I'll tell you," Jonathan answered. When they got there,...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan said, "Let's go out into the country." So they went out into the country.
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan said to David, "Let us go into the open"; and they both went out into the open.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And Jonathan said to David, "Come, and let us go out into the field." So both of them went out to the field.
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan says to David, "Come, and we go out into the field;" and they go out both of them into the field.

What is the gist of this verse? While Jonathan formulates in his mind a way to signal David, they walk out to a field (possibly where they met before under similar circumstances).

1Samuel 20:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (ו) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 20:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hâlakᵉ (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHKᵉ]	*go, come, depart, walk; advance*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative with the voluntative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced weh]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâtsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	*to go out, to come out, to come forth*	1st person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	*field, land, open field, open country*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: "Come and we will go out [into] the field," Jonathan said to David. Jonathan is formulating a plan so that he can signal David as to Saul's disposition. Jonathan is a visual person. In order to formulate this plan, he needs to look over where this will potentially take place.

We don't know exactly where Jonathan and David are to begin with. We don't know if David went to Jonathan at the palace (which is possible, seeing as how Saul is indisposed back in Naioth). It is possible that Jonathan lives elsewhere, and David went there. I would think the latter would be the case, because of David's words at the end of v. 8. If they were in the palace, with Saul in Naioth, and Jonathan knew that David was guilty of a crime, he would not take David to his father in Naioth, he would simply incarcerate David there and wait for Saul to come back. This would indicate that they cannot be meeting in the palace, as Gill supposes.[15] Furthermore, meeting at the palace would not have been safe anyway, as several sets of soldiers had already shown willingness to go after David. In either case, Jonathan realizes that, if his father has plotted evil against David, then anyone in the palace could be in on it. As they formulate a plan for Jonathan to signal David, they need to move to a place of complete privacy. Wherever they are at this point is too public to set up a plan.

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[15] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:11.

1Samuel 20:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*]	*to go out, to come out, to come forth*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
sheNayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced *sheNAH-yim*]	*two of, a pair of, a duo of*	masculine plural numeral with a 3rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced *saw-DEH*]	*field, land, open field, open country*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: So they both went out [into] the field. David and Jonathan both go out to the field as Jonathan formulates a plan.

The NIV Study Bible points out an unusual parallel here to Cain and Abel, who also go out to a field together. They are brothers and should, as such, have a natural bond or affinity for one another. However, because of jealousy, Cain kills his brother Abel. Here, Jonathan and David are not biological brothers, but they are spiritual brothers. And they go out to the field to formulate a plan to protect one another. What is lacking in their relationship is jealousy and mental attitude sins toward one another, which sorts of sins motivated Cain to kill his brother. David and Cain will both become refugees; however, David will return to be enthroned over Israel.

Why did I point these parallels out? Critics of Scripture often go to similar passages or parallel incidents and claim that these are actually two accounts of the same incident. Apart from the inspiration of Scripture, this would certainly be a possibility. However, when two incidents are recorded as separate incidents, then we must accept them at face value as similar, but separate, occurrences. In these two stories, a half dozen similarities and as many differences could be cited. However, few would ever suppose that these are two traditions of the same incident. My point is, there are many situations which occur which are similar to incidents which occurred previously. This does not mean that they are the same incident. With regards to our own lives, there are some tests that we may face two or three or more times. Therefore, our lives seem to fall into these parallel situations. The reason for this is that we often fail the first few tests, and, by growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are able to eventually pass the final test. In academics, there are some tests that we must pass in order to move on to the next level. Algebra 1 is required before Algebra 2; therefore, whatever tests and assignments that are associated with Algebra 1 must be completed and passed before a person can move onto Algebra 2. There are no doubt tests in our lives that we must pass in order to move on in our lives. For instance, committing to the daily intake of God's Word; committing to naming one's sins to God.[16] For many people, they cannot move beyond spiritual adolescence until they are able to recognize the absolute necessity of those two activities. So, if you suddenly find yourself in a situation that you have been in before, and you recognize that you are being tested, then, dammit, pass the test this time.

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[16] *Rebound* is the term used by Thieme.

And so says Jonathan unto David, "Yᵉhowah Elohim of Israel that: I search out my father as the time tomorrow [or] the third [day] and behold, good unto David and not then I send unto you and I have disclosed [this to] your ear...

1Samuel 20:12

Then Jonathan said to David, "[By] Yᵉhowah the Elohim of Israel: I will question [lit., *search out***] my father when the time [is] right—tomorrow [or] the third [day]—and listen, [if he replies] 'Good,' and I do not sent to you and disclose [this to] you [lit.,** *your ear***]...**

Then Jonathan said to David, "By Jehovah the God of Israel, I will question my father when the time is right, either tomorrow or the next day, and you can be certain that if he tells me 'Good' that you are with your family in Bethlehem, then I will relay this message to you.

From this verse through v. 16 will be the covenant that Jonathan makes between himself and David. Note that the JPS indicates that the translation of these four verses is difficult, as the Hebrew is uncertain. To further complicate matters, these verses were very poorly divided, so the completion of a thought is often found in a subsequent verse.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says Jonathan unto David, "Yᵉhowah Elohim of Israel that: I search out my father as the time tomorrow [or] the third [day] and behold, good unto David and not then I send unto you and I have disclosed [this to] your ear...
Septuagint	And Jonathan said to David, "The Lord God of Israel knows that I will sound my father as I have an opportunity, three several times, and, behold, [if good] is determined concerning David, and I do not send to you to the field,...
Significant differences	Although the differences are essentially insignificant, I do not follow exactly what is meant by the final line in the LXX.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan said: I swear by the Lᴏʀᴅ God of Israel, that two days from now I'll know what my father is planning. Of course I'll let you know if he's friendly toward you.
TEV	...and Jonathan said to David, "May the Lᴏʀᴅ God if Israel be our witness! At this time tomorrow and on the following day I will question my father. If his attitude toward you is good, I will send you word.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	"As the Lᴏʀᴅ God of Israel ⌊is my witness ⌋," Jonathan continued, "I'll find out in the next two or three days how my father feels about you. If he does feel kindly toward you, then I will send someone to tell you.
JPS (Tanakh)	Then Jonathan said to David, "By the Lᴏʀᴅ, the God of Israel! I will sound out my father at this time tomorrow, [or] on the third day; and if [his response] is favorable for David, I will send a message to you at once and disclose it to you. [The meaning of several parts of vv. 12–16 is uncertain].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible	Then Jonathan said to David—
	<Witness [be] Yahweh God of Israel> that I will sound [more literally, *search*] my father about this time tomorrow or the third day, and listen, <if there be

> good towards David>, will I not |then| send [this information] to you and unveil your ear?

NASB
> Then Jonathan said to David, "The LORD, the God of Israel, *be witness!* When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow, *or* the third day, behold, if there is good *feeling* toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you [lit., *uncover your ear*]?

Young's Updated LT
> And Jonathan said to David, "Jehovah, God of Israel-—when I search my father, about *this* time tomorrow or the third *day,* and lo, good *is* towards David, and I do not then send unto thee, and have uncovered thine ear—...

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan swears to David that he will carefully question his father and let him know if his father indicates that everything is okay.

You have no doubt noticed the numerous brackets and additional words in my translation—that means that this was a difficult verse to translate, even though none of the words are necessarily in question. One of the biggest problems is that the thought of this verse is continued into the next, which only a few Bible translators pick up on. In fact, several translations take the negative from this verse and insert it into the next, so that they can keep the verses separate. However, the division of verses is not a divine implementation.

1Samuel 20:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
The Syriac translation inserts *Witness* at this point, which does convey the general meaning of the oath which is to follow. However, *witness* is not found in the Masoretic text.			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾĕlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*]	*gods* or *God;* transliterated *Elohim*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
Yisᵉrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced *yis-raw-ALE*]	transliterated *Israel*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

1Samuel 20:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers

Keil and Delitzsch: *"Jehovah, God of Israel" ...introduces his oath. We have neither to supply "Jehovah is witness," or "as truly as Jehovah lives," as some have suggested.*[17]

The opinion of Keil and Delitzsch notwithstanding, the addition of these couple words give us a better English sense of what might be understood in the Hebrew.

Translation: Then Jonathan said to David, "[By] Yᵉhowah the Elohim of Israel: I will question [lit., *search out*] my father when the time [is] right—tomorrow [or] the third [day]—... Apparently, simply saying the name of Jehovah, God of Israel, invoked an oath or a guarantee. When it stands on its own, then Jonathan is making an oath by the name of Jehovah God that he will do what he says he will do. I think that Brenton gives the best sense of this phrase which he interprets as saying, "Jehovah God of Israel, [be a witness]..."

Clarke remarks on this oath: *There is, most evidently, something wanting in this verse. The Septuagint has, The Lord God of Israel knows. The Syriac and Arabic, The Lord God of Israel is Witness. Either of these makes a good sense. But two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. supply the word* חַי *chai, "lives;" and the text reads thus, As the Lord God of Israel Lives, when I have sounded my father - if there be good, and I then send not unto you, and show it you, the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan. This makes a still better sense.*[18]

1Samuel 20:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
châqar (חָקַר) [pronounced *khaw-KAHR*]	*to search out, to search for, to investigate, to thoroughly investigate*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2713 BDB #350
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
kaph or kᵉ (כְ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*like, as, according to; about, approximately;* combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning *as, often, when, as soon as*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
´êth (עֵת) [pronounced *ǵayth*]	*time, the right time, the proper time*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6256 BDB #773

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[17] Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 505.

[18] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:12. His text was modernized somewhat.

1Samuel 20:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâchâr (מָחָר) [pronounced *maw-KHAWR*]	literally, *tomorrow;* but figuratively can stand for *in time to come, in the future, later on, down the road* (chronologically speaking)	adverb of time	Strong's #4279 BDB #563
shᵉlishîym (שְׁלִשִׁים) [pronounced *shᵉli-SHEEM*]	*third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]*	masculine/feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026

Translation: ...I will question [lit., *search out*] my father when the time [is] right—tomorrow [or] the third [day]—... When it reads that Jonathan is going to *search out* his father, it does not mean that the banquet will be so large that he anticipates having to look all over the place to find Saul. Jonathan will speak with his father and surreptitiously quiz him about David. He has to make it look as though he is not pumping his father artificially for a response; and it must appear as though he is unaware of his father's intentions toward David. This is why we have the phrase, *when the time is right, either tomorrow or the next day* (which is, more literally, *as the time [is] right, tomorrow [or] the third [day]*). The idea is, either his father will pull him aside and say, "Where the hell is David?" or he will take his father aside and say, "Oh, by the way, David is in Bethlehem with his family for a sacrifice." Then Jonathan will carefully evaluate his father's response.

1Samuel 20:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
ţôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced *toeᵇv*]	*pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better*	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518

1Samuel 20:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾâz (אָז) [pronounced *awz*]	*then, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so*	adverb	Strong's #227 BDB #23
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send for, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth*	1st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gâlâh (גָּלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*]	*to make naked; to disclose, to reveal, to uncover [one's ear to hear something]; to make [a land] naked of inhabitants; to emigrate, to be led into exile*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1540 BDB #162
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾôzen (אֹזֶן) [pronounced *OH-zen*]	*ear*	feminine singular noun with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #241 BDB #23

Translation: ...and listen, [if he replies] 'Good,' I do not sent to you and disclose [this to] you [lit., *your ear*]... In this portion of the verse, we have a negative again used as an emphatic affirmative. The problem here is that we do not have the typical Hebrew notation of a question being asked. There are no particles which indicate that this is a question. However, we know that Jonathan will send a message to David and let him know how Saul responded.

Now, the actual use of this negative is related to Jonathan's oath, *Jehovah, God of Israel*. The implication is that God will do harm to him if he does not tell David what is going on with Saul. The problem with understanding exactly what is being said here is mostly because this verse is cut off. What Jonathan has said so far is an incomplete thought which is completed in the following verse. He continues this oath in v. 13, where Jonathan will say, "God will do so to Jonathan and more also" which is a call for God to do harm to Jonathan (speaking of himself in the third person) if he does not fulfill his promise to David. Several translators convey this (e.g., Young); however let me give you the translation found in the New Jerusalem Bible: Jonathan then said to David, 'By Yahweh, God of Israel! I shall sound my father this time tomorrow; if all is well for David and I do not then send and inform you, may Yahweh bring unnameable ills to Jonathan and worse ones too! If my father intends to do you a mischief, I shall tell you so and let you get away, so that you can be safe. And may Yahweh be with you as he used to be with my father! (1Sam. 20:12–13). Although their translation is not perfect, they do properly connect these two verses, something which can easily be lost on those who have, say, *The Amplified Bible* or the NASB, wherein the verses are all very neatly separated.

...so does Yᵉhowah to Jonathan and so He adds. That it [lit., *he*] is well unto my father the evil upon you and I have uncovered [it to] your ear and I have sent you away and you have gone in peace. And may Yᵉhowah be with you as which He has been with my father.

1Samuel 20:13

...so will Yᵉhowah do to Jonathan and more will He add. If [lit., *that*] it is good to my father [to have plotted] evil against you then I will reveal [that] to you [lit., *your ear*] and I will send you away and you will go in peace—and may Yᵉhowah be with you as He has been with my father.

If I do not do as I promise, then Jehovah will do evil to me and more. And if my father has plotted evil against you, then I will certainly reveal that to you and send you away in peace—and my prayer is that Jehovah will be with you as He has been with my father.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	...so does Yᵉhowah to Jonathan and so He adds. That it [lit., *he*] is well unto my father the evil upon you and I have uncovered [it to] your ear and I have sent you away and you have gone in peace. And may Yᵉhowah be with you as which He has been with my father.
Septuagint	God do so to Jonathan and more also, as I will report the evil to you, and make it known to you, and I will let you go, and you will depart in peace, and the Lord will be with you, as he was with my father.
Significant differences:	My guess is, the translators of the LXX struggled with the second phrase of the Hebrew here, and then tried to give the translation the best sensed meaning they could without straying too far from the original text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	But if he wants to harm you, I promise to tell you and help you escape. And I ask the LORD to punish me severely if I don't keep my promise. I pray that the LORD will bless you, just as he used to bless my father.
NLT	But if he is angry and wants you killed, may the LORD kill me if I don't warn you so you can escape and live. May the LORD be with you as he used to be with my father.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	If my father plans to harm you and I fail to tell you and send you away safely, may the LORD harm me even more. May the LORD be with you as he used to be with my father.
JPS (Tanakh)	But if my father intends to do you harm, may the LORD do thus to Jonathan and more if I do [not] disclose it to you and send you off to escape unharmed. May the LORD be with you, as He used to be with my father.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"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 and send you away, that you may go in safety. And may the LORD be with you as He has been with my father.
Young's Updated LT	thus does Jehovah do to Jonathan, and thus does He add; when the evil concerning you is good to my father, then I have uncovered your ear, and sent you away, and you have gone in peace, and Jehovah is with you, as he was with my father;...

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan in this verse completes the oath from the previous verse, saying that God will do [evil] to him and more if he does not reveal his father's intentions to David. Jonathan adds that if Saul has plotted evil against him, then he will also reveal this to David and see to it that David receives safe passage out of Saul's periphery. He closes by asking that God be with David as He was with Saul.

1Samuel 20:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced *koh*]	*so, thus, here, hence*	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ĝaw-SAWH]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	*transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (ו) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced *koh*]	*so, thus, here, hence*	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
Kôh is repeated, which often gives us a slight change of meaning (*here...there; on this side...on that side; hither...thither;* perhaps, *this...and more*).			
yâçaph (יָסַף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*]	*to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again*	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414

Translation: ...so will Yᵉhowah do to Jonathan and more will He add. This continues the negative of the previous verse. The idea is that, *if Jonathan fails to inform David of Saul's intentions, then may God do evil to him and more*. This actually seems to fit better with what follows, *if* there was a negative included in what follows. The first approach is that, what if Saul is pleased that David is with his family? Then Jonathan will tell this to David. However, if Saul is angry and has plotted evil against David, then Jonathan will reveal this as well. This oath here seems to fit better with the second scenario, and would appear to call for a negative the second time that Jonathan promises to keep David informed. "If my father has plotted evil against you, then may Jehovah to do this same [evil] to me and more, if I do **not** tell you of this." However, the way we find this in the majority text is the negative is found with Jonathan telling David the scenario of Saul being pleased.

Perhaps this suggests a construction where this oath is applied to both clauses, and that the negative should be carried over into the second clause, in order to fit with the oath.

In any case, the gist of the verse is clear. Jonathan takes an oath to keep David completely informed as to Saul's disposition. In other words, this precludes Saul saying anything that would cause Jonathan to return to David in

order to capture or kill him. In some cases with some people, this would be quite a leap of faith. However, with David, Jonathan knows that he can trust his character. Jonathan does not expect to find out some hidden defect in David known only to his father. In fact, he does not expect his father to react negatively when he finds that David is gone. Jonathan actually has these two expectations, both of which depend upon the character of the person. With David, he makes an oath, which precludes anything that anyone might say about David. Jonathan knows David's character and knows that David has not committed any seditious act. However, Jonathan also assumes that his father is no longer looking to take David's life; and he thinks that if Saul were out to do such a thing, that he would know about it. This expectation depends upon the character of Saul. Note that Jonathan's oath only speaks to his first expectation—he can trust David's integrity, and therefore, an oath to David would be right. On the other hand, Jonathan is not certain that he can trust his father and his father's judgment, so he makes no such oath respecting his father (e.g., "I guarantee you by the Lord God that my father Saul is not out to kill you."). He may think that his father is not plotting evil against David, but he is not about to take a vow about that!

1Samuel 20:13b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâṭaᵇv (יָטַב) [pronounced *yaw-TAᴮV*]	*to do well, to cause to do well, to do rightly, to do good, to make merry, to make fit, to adjust*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3190 BDB #405
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
râ´âh (רָעָה) [pronounced *raw-ĢAW*]	*evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ģahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gâlâh (גָּלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*]	*to make naked; to disclose, to reveal, to uncover [one's ear to hear something]; to make [a land] naked of inhabitants; to emigrate, to be led into exile*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1540 BDB #162

1Samuel 20:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾôzen (אֹזֶן) [pronounced *OH-zen*]	*ear*	feminine singular noun with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #241 BDB #23

Translation: If [lit., *that*] it is good to my father [to have plotted] evil against you then I will reveal [that] to you [lit., *your ear*]... Jonathan also suggests the second alternative that Saul has plotted evil against David. In that case, he will reveal Saul's intentions to David. Jonathan does not think that this is the case, but given David's character and adamance, he is not about to rule it out.

1Samuel 20:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]*	1st person singular, Piel perfect with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlakᵉ (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHKᵉ*]	*to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*]	*completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: ...and I will send you away and you will go in peace—... Jonathan assures David that if his father has plotted evil against him, then Jonathan will inform David of that so that David can safely leave Saul's periphery.

	1Samuel 20:13d		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect, apocopated	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced ĝ*eem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
kaph or kᵉ (כְּ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*like, as, according to; about, approximately*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced ĝ*eem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...and may Yᵉhowah be with you as He as been with my father. Jonathan recognizes that his father, despite all of his weaknesses, has been a recipient of God's grace. Gill writes: *in the beginning of his reign, giving him counsel and advice in all things, and victory over his enemies, succeeding and prospering him in whatsoever he engaged in.*[19] God has been with Saul through many difficult situations. Saul failed God, but God never failed Saul. Jonathan asks that David to receive this same grace.

And not if still I [am] alive and you will not do with me grace of Yᵉhowah. And I do not die... 1Samuel 20:14 **And if I am still living, then you will give [lit., *do*] the grace of God to me [lit., *with me*] and I will not die.**

And you will be gracious to me while I am alive; and when I die,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

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[19] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:13.

Masoretic Text	And not if still I [am] alive and you will not do with me grace of Y⁵howah. And I do not die...
Septuagint	And if indeed I continue to live, then you will deal mercifully with me; and if I indeed die,...

Significant differences	There are 3 negatives in the MT which make more sense being eliminated from the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Someday the LORD will wipe out all of your enemies. Then if I'm still alive, please be as kind to me as the LORD has been. But if I'm dead, be kind to my family.
NLT	And may you treat me with the faithful love of the LORD as long as I live. But if I die,...
REB	I know that as long as I live you will show me faithful friendship, as the LORD requires; and if I should die,...
TEV	And if I remain alive, please keep your sacred promise and be loyal to me; but if I die,...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	But as long as I live, ⌊promise me that you will ⌋ show me kindness because of the LORD. And even when I die,.
JPS (Tanakh)	Nor shall you fail to show me the LORD's faithfulness [i.e., the faithfulness pledged in the covenant before the LORD], while I am alive; nor, when I am dead,...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	While I am still alive you shall not only show me the loving-kindness of the Lord that I die not,...
NASB	"And if I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the LORD, that I may not die?
NKJV	"And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die;...
Young's Updated LT	...and not only while I am alive do you do with me the kindness of Jehovah, and I die not,...

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan reminds David that he is also beholden to Jonathan. Jonathan knows that David has been chosen by God to rule over Israel, and he tells David that he will have to fulfill his part of their pact as well.

As with the previous couple verses, this verse was improperly divided. The last few words belong with v. 15 (which is also continued into v. 16). I should warn you that the many negations here are going to be somewhat problematic (you will note that most translations flat out ignore them). I don't know how deeply I am going to delve into this verse. It would be easier for all if I simply state the translation and quickly move on with little or no comment.

1Samuel 20:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 20:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô̓ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
̓îm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49

Recall earlier that I mentioned that ̓îm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], although it generally means *if,* can also function as an interrogative particle. Strong's #518 BDB #49. Sometimes when ̓îm is followed by the negative particle lô̓ (לֹא) [pronounced *low*] (Strong's #3808 BDB #518), together they can function as an emphatic affirmative. Let me offer you an analogy in English: a lawyer is grilling a suspect on the stand, and he says, "Isn't it true that you are the one who stole Charlie Brown's purse?" The lawyer is not asking if something is *not* true; by throwing in the *not* he is expecting or desirous of the affirmative response: "Yes, it is true." In fact, he is looking more for an affirmative answer with that question than with the question, "Is it true that you stole Charlie Brown's purse?" These two together are often a part of the formula of swearing; together they form a strong affirmation and asservation (Job 1:11 2:5 22:20 Isa. 5:9). Here, ̓îm is preceded by lô̓, but the idea seems to be the same.

| ̔ôwd (עוֹד) [pronounced *g̔ohd*] | *still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet* | adverb with the 1st person singular suffix | Strong's #5750 BDB #728 |
| chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*] | *living, alive* | adjective; pausal form | Strong's #2416 BDB #311 |

Translation: And if I am still living,... Please refer to the Hebrew exegesis above. Jonathan is using a negative in such a way as to elicit a strong, affirmative response from David (even if this statement does not call for an actual response from David). "And, of course, you realize that you are obligated as well." might be the sense of what Jonathan is saying. As you can see by the translations given, coming up with an English translation which is true to the Hebrew and makes English sense is difficult if not impossible.

It is also reasonable that this phrase is tied to the next verse. Jonathan is asking for David's grace not only to him while he is alive, but even after he dies. This will be covered in greater detail at the end of v. 15.

1Samuel 20:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô̓ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
̔âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *g̔aw-SAWH*]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

1Samuel 20:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
´îm (עִם) [pronounced ǵeem]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*]	*grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...then you will give [lit., *do*] the grace of God to me [lit., *with me*]... The best sense that we can get from this, and still retain one of the negatives, would be, "And will you not show grace to me while I am still alive?" Jonathan's question at this point is rhetorical. He knows that David is the next king. He also knows that a lot of things could happen which would make David the next king; things which would get ugly for Saul's family. Jonathan does not necessarily believe that David will march into Gibeah, kill of Saul's family, and then say, "I'm the new king in town!" However, if Saul is as homicidal as David suggests (and Jonathan does not dismiss this possibility), then Saul himself could initiate a confrontation which could result in a civil war. Therefore, Jonathan is telling David that this pact works both ways and, once the dust settles, that David remember Jonathan and give grace to him.

Barnes comments: *The general meaning is: Jonathan had a presentiment, doubtless from God, that David would be established upon the throne. By God's mercy he had the comfort, which he well deserved, of knowing that his own posterity would receive kindness at David's hand.*[20]

1Samuel 20:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וִ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô (לוא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mûwth (מות) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to die*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: ...and I will not die? Again, the negative is used as a strong affirmative; something which we have in the English, but this particular portion of v. 14 is difficult to render into English literally and retain its meaning. Some translations simply say that the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain at this point (JPS, NRSV).

Gill gives us a clear understanding of this last phrase: *[Jonathan] had no fear nor dread on his mind, should David come to the throne while he was alive, that he would take away his life; which was usually*

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[20] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther;* F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 50.

done by tyrants and usurpers, when there were any that had a fairer title, and better claim to the throne than they.[21]

To sum up: given what follows, Jonathan is asking that, even if he dies, that David not ever withdraw his graciousness from the house of Jonathan. Also, once we have the context of the following verse, I'll present a summary of the interpretations and translations. At that point in time, you will see several clear translations which preserve the meaning, preserve the negatives, and which can be easily understood.

...and you will not cut off your grace from with my house as far as forever. And not in a cutting off of Yehowah enemies of David a man from with faces of the earth."   1Samuel 20:15   **Furthermore, you will not remove your grace from my house forever, even when [or, *not even when*] Yehowah has not cut off the enemies of David, every man, from the face of the earth."**

...and you will furthermore maintain your grace with my house forever, even if Jehovah has not cut off every enemy of yours from the face of this earth."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	...and you will not cut off your grace from with my house as far as forever. And not in a cutting off of Yehowah enemies of David a man from with faces of the earth."
Septuagint	...you will not withdraw your mercy from my house forever. And if you do not, when the Lord cuts off the enemies of David each from the face of the earth,...
Significant differences	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	[included with v. 14]
NLT	...treat my family with this faithful love, even when the Lᴏʀᴅ destroys all your enemies."
REB	...you will continue loyal to my family for ever. When the Lᴏʀᴅ rids the earth of all David's enemies,...
TEV	...show the same kind of loyalty to my family forever. And when the Lᴏʀᴅ has completely destroyed all your enemies,...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	...never stop being kind to my family. The Lord will wipe each of David's enemies off the face of the earth.
JPS (Tanakh)	...shall you ever discontinue your faithfulness to my house—not even after the Lᴏʀᴅ has wiped out every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	But also you shall not cut off your kindness from my house for ever; no, not when the Lord has cut off every enemy of David from the face of the earth.
NASB	"And you shall not cut off your lovingkindness from my house forever, not even when the Lᴏʀᴅ cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."

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[21] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:14.

NKJV	"But you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the Lᴏʀᴅ has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."
Young's Updated LT	but you do not cut off thy kindness from my house unto the age, nor in Jehovah's cutting off the enemies of David, each one from off the face of the ground."

What is the gist of this verse? This continues the previous verse: "If I die," Jonathan requsts, "then do not ever cut off your grace from my house, even when Jehovah removes all of your enemies from the face of this earth."

Like the previous two verses, this also seems to have fairly easy words, but is still difficult to translate. It was also poorly isolated from the previous and we are uncertain about the following verse. The second phrase in this verse appears to require an ending; however, the next verse does not seem to end it correctly.

1Samuel 20:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced *kaw-RAHTH*]	*to kill, to destroy [men]; to separate, to remove, to withdraw; to cut off, to cut down; to allow to perish*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3772 BDB #503
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*]	*grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness*	masculine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced *ģeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.*

bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]	*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ģahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʿôwlâm (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *ģo-LAWM*]	*long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761

1Samuel 20:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
Together, they mean *and from everlasting to everlasting*, *from eternity past to eternity future* or *from antiquity to everlasting, forever*.			

Translation: ...and you will not remove your grace from my house forever,... You may recall from the previous verse that is was difficult to determine whether Jonathan was securing this agreement with David for his lifetime or after he died, the problem being the many negatives strewn throughout this quotation. We have a situation in the future where David looks for someone from the house of Saul to show grace to, so my thinking is that Jonathan meant for this pact to continue even after his death.

In this verse, we have no problem with this first negative (which is the same as the previous verse). Jonathan is asking David to not remove his grace from being given to the house of Saul forever, even after the death of Jonathan. Jonathan knows that David is the next king; he knows that, although he outranks David now, at some point in time, if he is still alive, he will under David. Jonathan is grace-oriented and has no problem with being outranked by David. That is God's choice and he is willing to live (or die) with God's choice. However, what Jonathan does desire is for David to fully understand that their pact is a two-way street (which is perhaps done more for our benefit than for David's). The idea is, "Even after I have died, you will agree to continue showing grace to my family."

Application: Look at the people who work under you—would you have a problem if they were promoted over you? That requires some grace-orientation. Jonathan is grace-oriented. He anticipates the time that David will be promoted over him and he has no problem with that. Have you ever heard an employee in your company mutter, "Charley Brown started working here 5 years after I did, and he now has a better office and a better salary; that's completely unfair!"? If you are grace oriented, then the advancement of Charley Brown is not a problem for you, whether his promotions have been based upon merit or not. For instance, I have known teachers who began teaching after I did as my equals, so to speak, and they later got their credentials and became principals over me—this should never be a problem for me. When they issue a directive, then, ideally, I should be able to follow that directive, regardless of the fact that they began in a position lower than me several years after I began teaching. That requires grace-orientation and authority orientation.

Application: Let's change this somewhat: you are 50 and, suddenly, you have a boss who is 30 years old and knows a tenth of what you do about your company—what do you do? Well, you have to follow orders; you have to follow their directives. If there is a chance to voice dissent or to offer your opinion, then go for it; however, if there is not, then you have to do what you are told to do. The short explanation here is, who or what your boss is, is not an issue. In a company, those who are over you, regardless of their age or intelligence, get to call the shots and get to order you around.

Application: Just so you are not a complete idiot about this, you don't do what your boss tells you to do if it involves you committing a crime or a sin—regardless of the age of your boss.

One may interpret the two negatives (in v. 14b and v. 15a) as a very strong positive. "And not [i.e., do not do the following] if I die, do not cut off your grace from my house forever." Again, the expectation of the oath is simple: "If I live, then show to me the grace of Jehovah; and if I die, do not ever withdraw your grace from my house." It is something else again to wrench this understanding from the Hebrew words themselves. Extracting a reasonable meaning from the Hebrew in a case like this may be why many would prefer to see the final result in their modern English translation, without seeing the reasoning behind it (the sort of people who love sausage, but would never want to see it made).

1Samuel 20:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô̂ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced *kaw-RAHTH*]	*to kill, to destroy [men]; to separate, to remove, to withdraw; to cut off, to cut down; to allow to perish*	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #3772 BDB #503

The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered *when [such and such happens]*. It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb. The problem is that such a construction demands a continuation of this thought, which we do not have.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾâyaᵇv (אָיַב) [pronounced *aw-YAᴮV*]	*enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility*	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #340 BDB #33
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*]	*man, each, each one, everyone*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced *ģeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEM*	*face, faces*	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

1Samuel 20:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Together, these all mean: *from with you, from before you; from being with you, away from you, far from you, from among you, from your possession, from your custody*.			
ʾădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced *uh-daw-MAWH*]	*ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #127 BDB #9

Translation: ...even when [or, *not even when*] Yᵉhowah has not cut off the enemies of David, every man, from the face of the earth." Here, we again have problems with the negative, as we have had throughout these past several verses. With the negative, Jonathan is asking David to show grace to his family, even if God has not removed all of David's enemies from him. When a king has rivals, say in a particular family or another dynasty, he often solves these problems by exterminating every male (and sometimes female) in the family. Jonathan is asking David not to completely wipe out his family, even after becoming king and even if there are those from Saul's family who also pursue the crown.

Understanding this without the negative means that, even if God has removed all of David's enemies, there are men in power who continue to remove members of opposing families, even if they pose no threat. The idea is, better safe than sorry. Jonathan asks that, "When God has removed all of your enemies, David, then let those who remain live."

Keil and Delitzsch also struggled with this passage:

Keil and Delitzsch Exegete 1Samuel 20:14–15a

The literal rendering of this passage (vv. 14–15a) is [and I have updated this to some degree]: "But if I do it not, show me no mercy, because I live, not even if I die, and do not tear away your compassion forever form my house." *The request that he would show no compassion to him (Jonathan) even if he died, and yet would not withdraw his compassion from his house forever, contains an antithesis which would have been expressed most clearly and unambiguously in the words themselves, if this had been really what Jonathan intended to say. De Wette's rendering gives a still more striking contradiction:* "But let not [Jehovah be with you] if I still live, and you show not the love of Jehovah to me, that I die not, and you withdraw not your love from my house forever."

Keil and Delitzsch, following the leads of Maurer, Thenius and Ewald, as well as the Syriac and the Arabic, change the first two וֹלֹא's into either וְלוֹ or into וְלֹא, (I have no clue as to what the latter word means) which now gives us the rendering: "And may you, if I still live, may you show to me the grace of Jehovah; and not if I die, not withdraw your grace from my house forever, not even when Jehovah cuts off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth!"

This also reveals Jonathan's conviction that Jehovah God would remove David's enemies from this earth.

One similar option, not suggested by Keil and Delitzsch, is that these first two conjunction-negative combinations could be לוּא instead (which, by the way, is almost equivalent to the suggestion of וְלוֹ above), which means *if* or *oh that* or *would that*. This would indicate that Jonathan did not expect to personally survive into David's reign. "And would you, would that I live, show grace to me." This word is used for a case which has not been or is unlikely to occur. Such an interpretation would make a great deal of sense in this passage, although it would reveal a sense of fatalism on the part of Jonathan with respect to his own life. Given Jonathan's acute spiritual sense, such a realization is not out of the question.

All quotations, although were occasionally modernized, came from Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 505–506.

Now, I realize that what Keil and Delitzsch wrote may be a little dense. It often takes me several hours to pour through their comments on this chapter or that. And if I am not careful, I often miss much of what they have to say. However, in the interest of understanding, I am going to summarize the various translations and interpretation of this verse, keep the negatives, which seemed to be so troublesome, and pull this altogether into a cohesive, intelligible pact.

Summary of Translations and Interpretations of 1Samuel 20:14–15		
Source	**Translation**	**Notes**
DeWette	*"But let not [Jehovah be with you] if I still live, and you show not the love of Jehovah to me, that I die not, and you withdraw not your love from my house forever."*	The negation goes back to the previously uttered pact of v. 12. The problem would be that the most recent mention of Jehovah would be for Him to do harm to Jonathan if he is not sincere here.
Keil and Delitzsch	"But if I do it not, show me no mercy, because I live, not even if I die, and do not tear away your compassion forever from my house."	Jonathan continues the thought from the previous verse of not fulfilling his part of the bargain. I am still hard-pressed to explain the latter portion of this sentence.
Kukis	And if I am still living, then you will give [lit., *do*] the grace of God to me [lit., *with me*]. And [if] I die,...	Like many other translators, I essentially ignored the negatives in order to make sense of this.
Kukis	"And not just when I live, will you not show grace to me, but also do not cut off your grace to my house forever once Jehovah cuts off your enemies, everyone of them, from the face of the earth."	Here, I have managed to preserve all of the negatives and yet keep the sense of the Jonathan's words. I did take liberties, however, with other portions of the text. Jonathan here seeks not just an agreement from David while they are both alive, but also wants an agreement from him when Jonathan has died and God has removed all of David's enemies (save for Jonathan's descendants).
NASB	"And if I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the Lᴏʀᴅ, that I may not die?"	The NASB most carefully includes both negatives, with the idea that David's grace toward Jonathan will allow Jonathan to live when David gets in the position of power.
NKJV	"And you shall not only show me the kindness of the Lᴏʀᴅ while I still live, that I may not die; but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the Lᴏʀᴅ has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."	Jonathan asks that David not only continue to show him grace so that he does not die, but he asks that David not cut off his grace from Jonathan's house, even after the other enemies of David have been removed from the earth.

The translation and interpretation of Jonathan's pact with David is complicated by difficult Hebrew and poorly divided verses. Therefore, I have gathered up the complete translation below.

**Jonathan's Complete Pact With David — 1Samuel 20:12–15**	
Translation	**Text**
Kukis, Mostly Literal Translation	Then Jonathan said to David, "[By] Yᵉhowah the Elohim of Israel: I will question [lit., *search out*] my father when the time [is] right—tomorrow [or] the third [day]—and listen, [if he replies] "Good," and I do not sent to you and disclose [this to] you [lit., *your ear*] so will Yᵉhowah do to Jonathan and more will He add. If [lit., *that*] it is good to my father [to have plotted] evil against you then I will reveal [that] to you [lit., *your ear*] and I will send you away and you will go in peace—and may Yᵉhowah be with you as He has been with my father. And if I am still living, then you will give [lit., *do*] the grace of God to me [lit., *with me*]. And [if] I die, and you will not remove your grace from my house forever, even when [or, *not even when*] Yᵉhowah has not cut off the enemies of David, every man, from the face of the earth."
Kukis, a paraphrased interpretation	Then Jonathan said to David, "By Jehovah the God of Israel, I will question my father when the time is right, either tomorrow or the next day, and you can be certain that if he tells me "Good" that you are with your family in Bethlehem, then I will relay this message to you. If I do not do as I promise, then Jehovah will do evil to me and more. And if my father has plotted evil against you, then I will certainly reveal that to you and send you away in peace—and my prayer is that Jehovah will be with you as He has been with my father. And you will be gracious to me while I am alive; and when I die, and you will furthermore maintain your grace with my house forever, even if Jehovah has not cut off every enemy of yours from the face of this earth."
JPS (Tanakh)	Then Jonathan said to David, "By the Lᴏʀᴅ, the God of Israel! I will sound out my father at this time tomorrow, [or] on the third day; and if [his response] is favorable for David, I will send a message to you at once and disclose it to you. But if my father intends to do you harm, may the Lᴏʀᴅ do thus to Jonathan and more if I do [not] disclose it to you and send you off to escape unharmed. May the Lᴏʀᴅ be with you, as He used to be with my father. Nor shall you fail to show me the Lᴏʀᴅ's faithfulness [i.e., the faithfulness pledged in the covenant before the Lᴏʀᴅ], while I am alive; nor, when I am dead, shall you ever discontinue your faithfulness to my house—not even after the Lᴏʀᴅ has wiped out every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth.
The Septuagint	And Jonathan said to David, "The Lord God of Israel knows that I will sound my father as I have an opportunity, three several times, and, behold, [if good] is determined concerning David, and I do not send to you to the field, God do so to Jonathan and more also, as I will report the evil to you, and make it known to you, and I will let you go, and you will depart in peace, and the Lord will be with you, as he was with my father. And if indeed I continue to live, then you will deal mercifully with me; and if I indeed die, you will not withdraw your mercy from my house forever. And if you do not, when the Lord cuts off the enemies of David each from the face of the earth, that the name of Jonathan be discovered by the house of David, then let the Lord seek out the enemies of David." (Vv. 12–16)

Hopefully, this summation of these various translation will help and solidify the slogging through the exegesis which we have done.

A Summation of Vv. 14–15

1. Jonathan is aware that David is the true heir to the throne of Saul.
2. Jonathan is not upset by this nor is he jealous nor does he feel as though he needs to take any steps to change this.
3. Jonathan does not know when David will become king over Israel; nor does he know whether he will even be alive at that time.
4. While he is alive, he expects gracious treatment from David.
5. At this point in time, Jonathan is in power, and he, because of his love toward David, shows David grace.
6. However, he makes certain that David knows that this is reciprocal. Such an emphasis upon reciprocality tells us that Jonathan knows that the balance of power will change.
7. Jonathan knows that while he is alive, David will show him grace, even when the balance of power changes. He knows that he will not die at the hand of David or by David's order.
8. However, Jonathan knows that he will die in time. He does not know if David will be on the throne at that time or if one of David's sons will be on the throne (David presently has no heirs).
9. If David is on the throne, Jonathan asks that David not kill Jonathan's heirs, as was a common practice in the ancient world (see I Kings 15:29 16:11 2Kings 10:7 11:1).
10. Jonathan makes is clear that their pact not only binds them but binds their children as well.
11. What Jonathan is asking for is for David to protect Jonathan's children, even after Jonathan is dead.
12. Jonathan asks that David's sons not persecute his sons. This pact was to survive them and their friendship.
13. Saul himself will make a similar vow in 1Sam. 24:16–22.
14. Once he is king over all Israel, David will actually look for someone in the line of Jonathan to show grace to. 2Sam. 9:1–7 2Sam. 21:7.

And so cuts [a covenant] Jonathan with a house of David and seeks Yᵉhowah from a hand of enemies of David.

1Samuel 20:16

And so Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David while Yᵉhowah sought [deliverance for David] from the hand of the enemies of David [or, *that Yehowah required on account of the hand of the enemies of David*].

And so Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David while Jehovah sought vengeance against the enemies of David.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so cuts [a covenant] Jonathan with a house of David and seeks Yᵉhowah from a hand of enemies of David.
Septuagint	...that the name of Jonathan be discovered by the house of David, then let the Lord seek out the enemies of David."

Significant differences	The first portion of this verse is quite different in the Greek and Hebrew. We have one additional word in the Hebrew in the second part of this verse.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan and David made an agreement that even David's descendants would have to keep. Then Jonathan said, "I pray that the Lᴏʀᴅ will take revenge on your descendants if they break our promise."

| NLT | So Jonathan made a covenant with David, saying, "May the L<small>ORD</small> destroy all your enemies!" |
| REB | ...may the L<small>ORD</small> call him to account if he and his house are no longer my friends.' |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| *God's Word*™ | At that time, if Jonathan's name is cut off from David's family, then may the L<small>ORD</small> punish David's house." |
| JPS (Tanakh) | Thus has Jonathan covenanted with the house of David; and may the L<small>ORD</small> requite the enemies of David!" |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| NASB | So Jonathan made a *covenant* with the house of David, *saying,* "May the L<small>ORD</small> require *it* at the hands of David's enemies." |
| *Young's Updated LT* | And Jonathan covenants with the house of David, and Jehovah has sought it from the hand of the enemies of David;... |

What is the gist of this verse? This is a summation verse, where Jonathan has made a covenant with David, which he concludes with a final statement, which calls for the destruction of those who are enemies of David.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">1Samuel 20:16a</th></tr>
<tr><th>Hebrew/Pronunciation</th><th>Common English Meanings</th><th>Notes/Morphology</th><th>BDB and Strong's Numbers</th></tr>
<tr><td>wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]</td><td>*and so, then*</td><td>wâw consecutive</td><td>No Strong's # BDB #253</td></tr>
<tr><td>kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced *kaw-RAHTH*]</td><td>*to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant*</td><td>3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect</td><td>Strong's #3772 BDB #503</td></tr>
<tr><td>Y^ehôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN*]</td><td>alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*</td><td>masculine proper noun</td><td>Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220</td></tr>
<tr><td>´îm (עִם) [pronounced *ǵeem*]</td><td>*with, at, by, near*</td><td>preposition of nearness and vicinity</td><td>Strong's #5973 BDB #767</td></tr>
<tr><td>bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]</td><td>*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*</td><td>masculine singular construct</td><td>Strong's #1004 BDB #108</td></tr>
<tr><td>Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]</td><td>*beloved* and is transliterated *David*</td><td>masculine proper noun</td><td>Strong's #1732 BDB #187</td></tr>
</table>

Translation: And so Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David... This is the first wâw consecutive that we have had for quite awhile. This would indicate a change of some sort. In this case, it is a summing up of the situation as it stands. Jonathan made a pact with David, which bound their families, insofar as Jonathan and David had control over the situation. This is not, as we find in God's Word™, a continuation of Jonathan's speech to David.

1Samuel 20:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced *baw-KAHSH*]	*to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask, to seek with desire and diligence*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	*transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced *yawd*]	*hand*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
ʾâyaᵇv (אָיֵב) [pronounced *aw-YAᴮV*]	*enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility*	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #340 BDB #33
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: ...while Yᵉhowah sought [deliverance for David] from the hand of the enemies of David [or, *that Yᵉhowah required on account of the hand of the enemies of David*]. You will notice that most of the translations saw this as either another quote from Jonathan or presented this verse as a continuation of what he has been saying since v. 12. This is a rather enigmatic phrase; however, there is no reason to think that it is a quotation from Jonathan, as there is nothing in the text to suggest this. However, the verb is a bit problematic, as we wonder, what exactly does God seek *from the hand of the enemies of David*. Some suggest *vengeance,* but David clearly seeks no vengeance himself, nor will he see his enemies (Saul and his army vanquished any time soon). My thinking is that God seeks deliverance for David from the hands of his enemies.

Another interpretation is that *this covenant* is what God required, on account of the enemies of David, which were the house of Saul. God did not want to completely cut off the line of Saul, which would be something that a new king very well might do (in the ancient world, new kings often executed all potential rivals). Furthermore, although they were not aware of this, Jonathan will be dead when David takes the throne, which, without a covenant, would mean that David owed no loyalty to anyone in Saul's line who remained. Jonathan would like some assurances for those in his line, whether he himself is alive or not.

> John Gill suggests: *[Jonathan is called for God to] take vengeance on Jonathan, or on any of his posterity, should they break this covenant, by showing themselves enemies to David, and his crown; and, on the other hand, also on David, and his posterity, should they not show kindness to Jonathan and his seed, according to the tenor of this covenant.*[22]

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[22] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:16.

Wesley's explanation: *Enemies - If either I or any of my house shall break this covenant, and shall prove enemies to David or to his house, let the Lord, the witness of this covenant, severely punish the violators of it.*[23]

The NIV Study Bible gives an even better explanation here: *Jonathan aligns himself completely with David, calling for destruction of his enemies, even if that should include his father, Saul.*[24]

To be frank with you, I am not entirely comfortable with any of these interpretations. My biggest problem with Gill, Wesley and the NIV is that they assume that Jonathan is still talking, which is not necessarily the case. However, if it is, then their interpretations ring the most true to me.

Let's look at the entire translation, and then interpret it: And so Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David while Yᵉhowah sought [deliverance for David] from the hand of the enemies of David [or, *that Yehowah required on account of the hand of the enemies of David*] (1Sam. 20:16). This is a summation of what has gone before, and adds in what part God would play. Jonathan is not speaking here; Jonathan spoke in the previous several verses. This is almost a summation made from the divine perspective: So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, and, at the same time, God will hold David's enemies accountable for their actions.

And adds Jonathan to swear David in his love [to] him because a love of his soul he loved him.	1Samuel 20:17	**And again Jonathan swore David [to an oath] [or, *extracted an oath from David*] in his love to him for he loved him [as] he loved [lit., *a love of*] his [own] soul.**

And yet again Jonathan swore a mutual allegiance with David, as he loved David as he loved his own soul.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And adds Jonathan to swear David in his love [to] him because a love of his soul he loved him.
Septuagint	And Jonathan swore yet again to David, because he loved the soul of him that loved him.
Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan thought as much of David as he did of himself, so he asked David to promise once more that he would be a loyal friend.
NJB	Jonathan then renewed his oath to David, since he loved him like his very soul.
NLT	And Jonathan made David reaffirm his vow of friendship again, for Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself.
REB	Jonathan pledged himself afresh to David [so Greek; Hebrew, *made David swear*] because of his love for him, for he loved him as himself.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Once again Jonathan swore an oath to David because of his love for David. He loved David as much as ⌊he loved⌋ himself.

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[23] John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:16.

[24] *The NIV Study Bible;* ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 403.

JPS (Tanakh)   Jonathan, out of his love for David, adjured [*Septuagint reads "swore to."*] him again, for he loved him as himself.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible   And again Jonathan swore to David, ‖by his love to him‖, —for ‖as he loved his own soul‖ so he loved him.

NASB   And Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life.

Young's Updated LT   ...and Jonathan adds to cause David to swear, because he loves him, for with the love of his own soul he has loved him.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan again swears his allegiance to David (or, extracts an oath from David to agrees to his part in their alliance). We are also told clearly that Jonathan's motivation is love and not self-interest or self-preservation.

1Samuel 20:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâçaph (יֶסֶף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*]	*to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again*	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâbva´ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced *shawᵇ-VAHG̱*]	*to swear, to cause to swear, to bind by an oath; to adjure, to charge solemnly, to extract an oath (from someone else)*	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
In the Septuagint, this reads that Jonathan swore *to* David. The real question here is, *is Jonathan swearing his allegiance to David or extracting a reciprocal pledge from David?*			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
bᵉ (בּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

1Samuel 20:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾahăbâh (אַהֲבָה) [pronounced *ah-huᵇ-VAW*]	*love*	feminine singular noun often translated like a verb; with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #160 BDB #13
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	sign of the direct object with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: And again Jonathan swore David [to an oath] [or, *extracted an oath from David*] in his love to him... The Hiphil of the verb *to swear* can either mean that Jonathan is extracting an oath from David or that he is swearing himself to an oath to David. Given the end of this verse, that Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul, this would suggest that Jonathan was not extracting an oath from David but giving one. In the previous couple of verses, Jonathan made it clear to David that he had responsibilities in their oath as well; however, the explanation at the end of this verse simply tells us that Jonathan reaffirms his oath with David. Furthermore, we have the verb which means that Jonathan *again* did this. Given that he made a vow to David in the previous verse, this would count as again pledging his allegiance to David.

The only problem with that interpretation is the stem of the verb. The Hiphil stem is the causal stem, which is the stem that Jonathan would use if he were extracting an oath from David. If Jonathan were swearing his allegiance to David, then he would have used the Piel instead. His love given as motivation simply means that Jonathan wanted to make certain that was fully committed to reciprocation.

I have said on several occasions that Jonathan knew that David was probably next in line for the throne and he knew that his father's dynasty would end. Prior to this chapter, this would be determined by inference. We know that Saul knows that God has taken the kingdom from him (1Sam. 15:26, 28), and Jonathan, being a man of great spiritual character, probably realizes this as well. However, this will be clearly stated in 1Sam. 23:17, when David and Jonathan meet up again, and Jonathan tells him, "Do not be afraid because the hand of Saul my father will not find you and you will be king over Israel and I will be next to you; Saul my father knows that as well." Dare I say that Jonathan knew this better than David did (i.e., he had more faith in God placing David as the king of Israel than David did). David was distracted because his life was in constant danger. However, Jonathan had the overall picture. You may wonder, *isn't David the great spiritual giant of his time, which is why God chose him and not Jonathan to rule over Israel?* This was David's station in life; this was a fulfillment of God's plan for David's life. He was great spiritually speaking; but so was Jonathan. One of the areas wherein David showed his great spiritual discernment, is that he was able to listen to the advice and guidance of other believes (1Sam. 23:17 2Sam. 12:1–15).

Application: The last thing a spiritual leader should do is surround himself with *yes-men*. Every meeting should not result in a donnybrook; however, there are times when a spiritual leader has to hear advice that he may not like. Now, this doesn't give you the right to go in and demand to see your pastor so that you can share what's on your mind. And a pastor doesn't have time to listen to everyone's conflicting viewpoints 16 hours a day. However, there should be some trusted men who are close to any spiritual leader who are not going to rubber stamp each and every proclamation that he puts forth. The same would be true of any person in authority.

This may seem odd to you that Jonathan emphasizes and drives home this covenant with David, not depending upon David to look back at their friendship and act accordingly. Remember Jonathan's experience with his own father. Saul originally liked David a great deal, but this eventually turned to a great jealousy, and Jonathan observed how much his father had changed, and how vicious he had become, which will become even more

apparent to Jonathan later in this chapter. Therefore, he carefully asks for assurances from David in the form of a covenant before God.

Application: God tells us to come boldly before the throne of grace. Jonathan recognizes David's inevitable royalty and he is not put off by it, but he makes a clear request of David. God is glorified when we make our requests known to Him. God is glorified when we trust Him to bring these things to pass.

1Samuel 20:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾahăbâh (אַהֲבָה) [pronounced *ah-huᵇ-VAW*]	*love*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #160 BDB #13
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*]	*soul, life, living being, desire*	feminine singular noun with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
ʾâhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced *aw-HAYVᵉ*]	*to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12

Translation: ...for he loved him [as] he loved [lit., *a love of*] his [own] soul. This gives us the reason that Jonathan renewed his oath to David (or made certain that David was willing to reciprocate)—he loved David as much as he loved his own soul. This actually helps us to interpret the previous portion of this verse, but not in the way that you would think. Jonathan could have two different motivations in wanting David to agree to a reciprocal pact (this pact was reciprocal, but Jonathan emphasized that aspect of it). (1) Jonathan could have intelligently resigned himself to the fact that David will become king, thus putting his life and the lives of his family in jeopardy, and this pact protected his family. (2) Jonathan could have made this pact out of love for David and elicited a reciprocal agreement for the same reason. This last phrase tells us that it is the latter reason for Jonathan's covenant with David. Now, you may comment, *that doesn't make sense; why would a reciprocal covenant be required out of love?* Let's go to marriage—in the vows of marriage, there is a covenant that each will love the other whether in sickness or health, etc. etc. Two people marry and take these vows out of love. However, these are vows of reciprocal agreements which protect each person in the marriage.

This is the way that Gill sees this as well, writing: *it was not so much for the good and safety of his offspring that he made this motion, and was so desirous of renewing and enlarging his covenant with David, as it was his strong love and affection for him; being on that account desirous that there might be the strictest friendship imaginable retained between the two families.*[25]

Jonathan's Plan to Signal David

And so says to him Jonathan, "Tomorrow a new moon and you have been missed for is empty your seat.	1Samuel 20:18	**Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow [is] the new moon and you will be missed when your seat is empty [lit., *lacking*].**

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[25] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:17.

Then Jonathan said to him, "Given that tomorrow is the new moon and that you will be missed when it is noticed that your seat is empty,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says to him Jonathan, "Tomorrow a new moon and you have been missed for is empty your seat.
Septuagint	And Jonathan said, "Tomorrow [is] the new moon and you will be asked after because your seat will be observed as vacant."

Significant differences   No significant differences, although there is more verbiage in the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	After this Jonathan said: Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival, and people will wonder where you are, because your place will be empty.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	"Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival," Jonathan told him, "and you will be missed when your seat is empty.
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow will be the new moon; and you will be missed when your seat remains vacant."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible	Then Jonathan said unto him— ‖Tomorrow‖ is the new moon and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty [more literally, *you will be inquired after, for your seat will cause inquiry*];...
NASB	Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed because your seat will be empty.
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan says to him, "Tomorrow is new moon, and you have been looked after, for your seat is looked after;...

What is the gist of this verse? So Jonathan suggests a plan to David. He begins by saying what will occur tomorrow. David apparently has a particular place at the festival and that seat will go missing and it will be noticed.

1Samuel 20:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

1Samuel 20:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
mâchâr (מָחָר) [pronounced *maw-KHAWR*]	literally, *tomorrow;* but figuratively can stand for *in time to come, in the future, later on, down the road* (chronologically speaking)	adverb of time	Strong's #4279 BDB #563
chôdesh (חֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-desh*]	*new moon, month*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2320 BDB #294
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to be sought, missed, to be lacking, visited, to be visited upon, to be appointed*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to be sought, missed, to be lacking, visited, to be visited upon, to be appointed*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
môwshâb (מוֹשָׁב) [pronounced *moh-SHAHBV*]	*a seat, a place for sitting; a sitting down, an assembly; a settlement, a habitation; time of inhabitation; inhabitants*	masculine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4186 BDB #444

Translation: Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow [is] the new moon and you will be missed when your seat is empty [lit., *lacking*]. Apparently, at this festival, there were enough people invited that it was moderately large; however, there were VIP sections and assigned seats in those VIP sections; and that's where David would be. It would be obvious to all that his seat is empty. Had Saul arrested David, then his place at the table would have been removed.

And on the third [day] you will go down greatly and you have come unto the place which you hid yourself there in a day of the deed and you remained beside a the stone Ezel.

1Samuel 20:19

On the third [day], you will quickly [lit., *greatly, exceedingly*] go down until [lit., *and*] you come to the place where [lit., *which...there*] you hid yourself in the day of the business [or, *deed*] and you will remain by the Ezel stone.

On the third day, you will quickly go to the place where you had hidden yourself before, and then remain by the Ezel stone.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And on the third [day] you will go down greatly and you have come unto the place which you hid yourself there in a day of the deed and you remained beside a the stone Ezel.
Septuagint	And you will stay three days [lit., *set three times*], and watch an opportunity, and you will come to your place where you may hide yourself in the day of your business, and you will wait by that ergah [a corruption of the Hebrew word Ezel].
Significant differences	After the phrase *three days,* what we find in the Greek makes more sense than the Hebrew. The final phrase in the Greek is weak, and appears to be a corruption of the Hebrew. Despite the differences, the general meaning is fairly easy to ascertain.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	By the day after tomorrow, everyone will think you've been gone a long time. Then go to the place where you hid before and stay beside Going-Away Rock.
NLT	The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid before, and wait there by the stone pile [Hebrew, *the stone Ezel*].
REB	So the day after tomorrow go down at nightfall to the place where you hid on the day when the affair started; stay by the mound there [probably reading, compare Greek; Hebrew, *by the Azel stone*].
TEV	The day after tomorrow you absence will be noticed even more [Some ancient translations *your absence will be noticed;* Hebrew, *go down*]; so go to the place where you hid yourself the other time, and hide behind the pile of stones [probable text; Hebrew, *the Ezel stone*] there.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The day after tomorrow you will be missed even more. So go to the place where you hid on that other occasion, and stay by the rock.
JPS (Tanakh)	So the day after tomorrow, go down all the way [lit., *very much*] to the place where you hid the other time [lit., *on the day of the incident*], and stay close to the Ezel stone.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	On the third day you will go quickly, and come to the place where you hid yourself when the matter was in hand, and remain by the stone Ezel.
Updated Emphasized Bible	...and <when you have tarried three days> you will come down quickly and enter the place where you hid yourself on the day of the deed [= *the day when the deed was to have been done*], and you will remain by the side of this mound [so it should be, as per the Septuagint; MT: *of the stone Ezel*].
NASB	"When you have stayed for three days, you shall go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself on that eventful day, and you shall remain by the stone Ezel.
Young's Updated LT	...and on the third day, you will certainly come down, and you have come in unto the place where you were hidden in the day of the work, and have remained near the stone Ezel.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan tells David to wait three days, and then go hide where he hid before.

1Samuel 20:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâlash (שָׁלַשׁ) [pronounced *shaw-LASH*]	*to do a third time, to divide into three parts, to do on the third day*	2nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #8027 BDB #1026
Given the location of this verb, I suspect that it is probably an adverb meaning *on the third day*.			
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced *yaw-RAHD*]	*to descend, to go down*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
mᵉʾôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced *mᵉ-ODE*]	*exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very*	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: On the third day, you will quickly [lit., *greatly, exceedingly*] go down... As mentioned, we have two verbs thrown together, which does occur in the Hebrew, but is rare. I think the idea is that the first verb acts more like an adverb (or, it is an adverb) and what David is to do is to occur three days from this visit. From wherever David is, he is to go down quickly.

Since the Hebrew day is calculated from dusk til dusk, the third day would begin on the evening of the second day, by our calculation. This does not mean, necessarily, that David and Jonathan will meet on the evening of the second day (by our notion of days and times), but that simply signifies the beginning of the third day. They will meet the morning of the third day (v. 35).

This verse tells us that David did not spend 2+ days in this field; he was to quickly go there from wherever he is staying on the 3rd day.

1Samuel 20:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced *maw-KOHM*]	*place, situated;* for a soldier, it may mean where he is *stationed;* for people in general, it would be their *place of abode* (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

1Samuel 20:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
çâthar (סָתַר) [pronounced *saw-THAR*	*to be hidden, to lie hid; to be covered over; to hide onself*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #5641 BDB #711
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced *shawm*]	*there, thither, whither*	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *rohm*]	*day, today* (with a definite article)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
maʿăseh (מַעֲשֶׂה) [pronounced *mah-ğa-SEH*	*deed, work, production, that which is done*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4639 BDB #795

Translation: ...until [lit., *and*] you come to the place where [lit., *which...there*] you hid yourself in the day of the business [or, *deed*]... David and Jonathan had a place where David hid before in 1Sam. 19:2–3, and the end result of that visit was forgiveness from Saul and David went out back to war. The most reasonable interpretation is *the day of the business* refers to the previous situation of Jonathan straightening out the problems that Saul had with David. The idea is, this has occurred before, Jonathan solved the problem, and he is going to do it again (assuming that such a problem still exists). David was asked to simply cool his heels in this place before and Jonathan will take care of the matter.

1Samuel 20:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᴮV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
êtsel (אֵצֶל) [pronounced *ʾAY-tsel*]	*a side; near, by, beside*	Preposition/substantive	Strong's #681 BDB #69
ʾeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced *ʾEHᴮ-ven*]	*stone*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #68 BDB #6
ʾezel (אָזֶל) [pronounced *ʾEH-zel*]	*pointed, sharp* and is transliterated *Ezel*	masculine singular proper noun, pausal form	Strong's #237 BDB #23

The translation is a reasonable guess; however, this does differ in the last letter from the words which mean *sharp, pointed*.

1Samuel 20:19c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**

In the Septuagint, some claim that we have the word *mound* or *pile of rocks* right here. In my version, we have the noun ἐργάβ (ergah), which is not listed in my lexicons. Brenton lists it as a bastardization of *Ezel*.

This word could come from a verb which means *to go, to be gone, to be exhausted, to be used up*. It is the same consonants with different vowel points as Strong's #235 BDB #23.

Translation: ...and you will remain by the Ezel stone. Not knowing the meaning of *Ezel,* most translators have simply transliterated this word. It is very likely that this was a proper noun; however, it could mean *sharp, pointed* (although the words are merely close; they are not the same; *Ezel* ends in a lamed and *sharp* ends in a nûwn—two very different letters which are not generally confounded).

In the Greek, we have the word ἐργάβ instead, which is also found in v. 41 (in the Greek; Ezel does not occur again anywhere in the Hebrew). Although some exegetes have this as a milestone which directed travelers, this makes little sense, as Jonathan and David would have met at a place that is remote rather than at a place where there are passers-by. Furthermore, if you were going to target practice, you wouldn't generally choose a place which is trafficked by travelers (unless you were a fervent isolationist). Therefore, we may reasonably assume that whatever or wherever this was, it was a place that was isolated; ideal for target practice and for a private meeting. Obviously, there needs to be a place where David can hide, so behind a large rock that he and Jonathan were familiar with is reasonable.

And I, a trio of arrows [to the] side I will cast to send to me to a target.	1Samuel 20:20	**Then I will shoot three arrows [to] the side [of the stone] (for myself) to send towards a target.**

At that time, I will shoot three of my arrows off to the side of that rock toward a target.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And I, a trio of arrows [to the] side I will cast to send to me to a target.
Septuagint	And I will shoot with three arrows, aiming them at a mark.
Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	I'll shoot three arrows at a target off to the side of the rock,...
NLT	I will come out and shoot three arrows to the side oft eh stone pile as though I were shooting at a target.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	I will shoot three arrows from beside it toward a target.
JPS (Tanakh)	Now I will shoot three arrows to one side of it, as though I were shooting at a mark,...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   "And I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target.
Young's Literal Translation   And I shoot three of the arrows at the side, sending out for myself at a mark;...

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan will go out to the same spot, with the stated intention of getting in a little target practice. He'll shoot three arrows apparently setting up a target of some sort near the stone of the previous verse.

1Samuel 20:20a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced *aw-NEE*]	*I, me;* in answer to a question, it means *I am, it is I*	1ˢᵗ person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
shᵉlôshâh (שְׁלֹשָׁה) [pronounced *shiloh-SHAW*]	*a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome*	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025.
chêts (חֵץ) [pronounced *khayts*]	*arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
tsad (צַד) [pronounced *tzahd*]	*side*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6654 BDB #841
yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*]	*to cast, to shoot; to sprinkle, to water, to send out the hand, to teach, to instruct*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3384 BDB #434

Translation: Then I will shoot three arrows [to] the side [of the stone]... While David has himself hidden in the field near a sharp rock, Jonathan will go out for some target practice. Jonathan would take with him a servant, so as not to cause suspicion. He will shoot three arrows along side the stone mentioned in the previous verse. The idea is that, what he calls out to his servant will be easily heard by David, who is on the other side of the rock from Jonathan's personal servant.

1Samuel 20:20b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]*	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition with a 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

	1Samuel 20:20b		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
maţţârâh (מַטָּרָה) [pronounced *maht-taw-RAW*]	*a guard, ward, prison; a target, a mark*	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4307 BDB #643

Translation: ...(for myself) to send towards a target. The prepositional phrase is somewhat elusive. It is unclear whether Jonathan means that he is shooting arrows which belong to him (the lâmed preposition is misplaced, if that is the case), or whether the shooting will refer to him in particular (assuming that there are possibly others present where Jonathan is target practicing). In the former case, this would be rendered: ...three arrows (belonging to me) to send towards a target. In the latter case, I am at a loss as to how to render this into English. Young was probably the most literal and the most accurate when he simply renders this: And I shoot three of the arrows at the side, sending out for myself to a mark;...

Even though there are some moderate difficulties with rendering this into English, the sense is not particularly difficult. Jonathan is going out target practicing. He might be alone (but watched) and he might be with others. He plans to take along his personal servant, which may in itself allay suspicion. At this point in time, neither he nor David know what will transpire. So the idea is that he will simply shoot three arrows himself, and while doing this, he will vocalize what is going on, so that David knows that he is shooting. The idea is that, even if others shoot, what Jonathan is about to say will be applied to the three arrows that he shoots.

And behold, I send the boy, 'Go, find the arrows.' If a saying I say to the boy, 'Behold the arrows from you and here; take them;' and you may come in for peace to you and nothing of a word, a living of Yᵉhowah.	1Samuel 20:21	**Listen, I will send the servant boy, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I clearly say to the servant, 'Look, the arrows [are] beyond you and here, get them;' then you may come in because [it is] safe for you and [there is] no word [against you], [as] Yᵉhowah lives.**

Listen, I will send the boy, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' Listen carefully now; if I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you as well as over here; get them;' then you may come out, for it is safe and there has been no edict issued against you, as Jehovah lives.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And behold, I send the boy, 'Go, find the arrows.' If a saying I say to the boy, 'Behold the arrows from you and here; take them;' and you may come in for peace to you and nothing of a word, a living of Yᵉhowah.
Septuagint	And behold, I send a lad, saying, 'Go find me the arrow.' If should expressly say to the lad, 'The arrow [is] here, and on this side of you, take it.' come, for it is well with you, and there is no reason, the Lord lives.
Significant differences	Both the Greek and Hebrew are a little difficult to understand in their specifics. However, what Jonathan will say will be understood by David, and that David, upon hearing these words, will know that it is safe for him to come out.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...and send my servant to find the arrows. You'll know if it's safe to come out by what I tell him. If it is safe, I swear by the living LORD that I'll say, "The arrows are on this side of you! Pick them up!"
NAB	I will then send my attendant to go and recover the arrows. If in fact I say to him, 'Look, the arrow is this side of you; pick it up,' come, for you are safe. As the Lᴏʀᴅ lives, there will be nothing to fear.
NLT	Then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back. If you hear me tell him, 'They're on this side,' then you will know, as surely as the Lᴏʀᴅ lives, that all is well, and there is not trouble.
REB	Then I shall send my boy to find the arrows. If I say to him, "Look, the arrows are on this side of you; pick them up," then you can come out of hiding. You will be quite safe, I swear it, for there will be nothing amiss.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| *God's Word™* | Then I will send out a boy and say, 'Go, find the arrows.' Now, if I tell the boy, 'Look, the arrows are next to you; get them,' then come ⌊back with me⌋. You will be safe, and there will be no trouble. I swear it, as the LORD lives. |
| JPS (Tanakh) | ...and I will order the boy to go and find the arrows. If I call to the boy, 'Hey! the arrows are on this side of you,' be reassured and come, for you are safe and there is no danger—as the Lᴏʀᴅ lives! |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	And I will send a lad, saying, Go, find the arrows. If I expressly say to the lad, Look, the arrows are on this side of you, take them; then you are to come, for it is safe for you and there is no danger, as the Lord lives.
NASB	"And behold, I will send the lad, *saying,* 'Go, find the arrows.' If I specifically say to the lad, 'Behold, the arrows are on this side of you, get them,' then come; for there is safety for you and no harm [lit., *there is nothing*], as the Lᴏʀᴅ lives.
Young's Updated LT	and lo, I send the youth: 'Go, find the arrows.' If I at all say to the youth, 'Lo, the arrows are on this side of thee—take them, —then you come, for peace is for you, and there is nothing; Jehovah lives.

What is the gist of this verse? In this verse and the next, Jonathan simply sets up a code that David can overhear it and then act accordingly.

1Samuel 20:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send for, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018

1Samuel 20:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ₙaʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ġahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
There is a verb, *to say,* which will be repeated in the Hebrew below. The Greek takes one of those verbs and places it here (which does make a great deal of sense).			
hâlakᵉ (הָלַ ךֽ) [pronounced *haw-LAHKᵉ*]	*go, come, depart, walk; advance*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
mâtsâʾ (מָצָ א) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*]	*to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chêts (חֵץ) [pronounced *khayts*]	*arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
This is a singular noun in the Septuagint.			

Translation: Listen, I will send the servant boy, 'Go, find the arrows.' Jonathan formulates a plan in his mind and shares it with David. Jonathan will be out target practicing with his personal servant. The son of a king would not venture out alone without someone to take care of the inconsequential details. Had he said he was going out by himself, then there would be suspicion. If Jonathan let his servant in on the matter, then his servant would be placed in a precarious position, if Saul questioned him. So Jonathan will go out with his personal servant, but he will not let him in on anything. Furthermore, there is always the chance that, when Jonathan tells his father that he is going out for some target practice, Saul might say, "Go ahead; and take my servant; he needs to get out for awhile." Or, Saul could send others along with Jonathan. Therefore, Jonathan must be prepared with a code of some sort, just in case he cannot speak directly to David.

Okay, why can David and Jonathan speak together right here alone, but, in a couple days, this will be impossible? During the Feast of the New Moon, things will potentially intensify. Saul will be plotting to kill David, and look for the opportunity to do so at this Feast. His mind is somewhat clouded by his own evil desires, and he expects that David will show up at this festival, despite the fact that he has sent men to David's home to bring him in, and David was not to be found. When Saul sees that David is not there, then his problems with David become more public. Everyone expects to see Saul and David at this feast; and for David not to show is going to begin a flurry of rumors. The close relationship between David and Jonathan is well-known, and for Jonathan to show, but David not to show will also appear to be odd to those who attend this feast. You see, up until this time, Saul's hatred of David and his attempts to kill David is fairly well-hidden. Saul, David and a handful of men actually know what is going on. At this festival, when David does not show, it will become more of a public issue. Now, Jonathan will try to keep this from getting too public, and suggest that David had to suddenly go and see his relatives—but, if Saul's hatred of David becomes clear to all that are there, then Jonathan being able to easily meet David alone is going to be much more difficult than it is now. Saul may even put men on Jonathan's tail in order to see if Jonathan and David meet. In other words, this feast could publically expose Saul's hatred of David and, therefore,

Saul's actions will become more overt from this point in time. David and Jonathan are aware of this, so they must set up a code in order for Jonathan to communicate with David just what Saul's disposition is. David fervently believes that Saul is out to kill him; Jonathan has his reservations about this. Come festival time, this becomes much more of a public matter, something which Jonathan and David can reasonably foresee.

1Samuel 20:21b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	1st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
The repetition of the verb here is for emphasis. Jonathan is *not* saying, "I'm really going to say this to the boy." The idea here is that, this is the important part; listen to this.			
The Greek takes one of these verbs and places it earlier in this verse. It is not clear which is the correct reading. I am not aware of any other time in the Hebrew where the verb *to say* follows what is said (which could be the case here?). Such a construction is common in the English. "Now listen," he said to Charley Brown, "when I shoot these 3 arrows, I mean for you to understand that it is safe." We do not find that sort of construction in the Hebrew.			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
chêts (חֵץ) [pronounced *khayts*]	*arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than*	preposition of separation with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hênnâh (הֵנָּה) [pronounced *HAYN-naw*]	*hither, here*	adverb	Strong's #2008 BDB #244

1Samuel 20:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*]	*to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative with a 3rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: If I clearly say to the servant, 'Look, the arrows [are] beyond you and here, get them;'... Jonathan repeats the verb *to say,* as he wants David to take note of exactly the words he will say. He needs to communicate to David without his personal servant being any the wiser, so it will be his words that tell David what is going on. Jonathan will tell his servant, "Listen, the arrows are beyond you, as well as over here; get them."

It appears as though the servant is standing off to the side, around where Jonathan is shooting, so that he can collect the arrows. However, no matter how we understand this, the essential idea is, what Jonathan says will be code to David and David understands what that code means.

It is also worth noting that this servant will be a hundred yards off or so, searching for the arrows, so that Jonathan will have to yell this to him. That will arouse no suspicion in the servant, as Jonathan will have to yell to make himself heard. However, quite obviously, if Jonathan is yelling, David, hidden off in the woods, will be able to heard what Jonathan says.

1Samuel 20:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative with the voluntative hê	Strong's #935 BDB #97
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*]	*completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêyin (אַיִן) [pronounced *AYH-yin*]	*in the condition of being not = without, nothing, no, not*	negative construct	Strong's #369 BDB #34

1Samuel 20:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
dâᵇvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*]	*living, alive*	adjective construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...then you may come in because [it is] safe for you and [there is] no word [against you], [as] Yᵉhowah lives. If David hears the words that Jonathan suggested, then that simply meant that all was well and that David could come out of hiding.

By the way, under these circumstances, David may or may not come out of hiding just at that instant. That is something that they would play by ear. However, this will indicate to David that it is safe to return home and, if he so chooses, safe to come out into the open.

And if thus I say to the boy, 'Behold the arrows from you and beyond,' go, for has sent you away Yᵉhowah.	1Samuel 20:22	**But if I say this [lit., *thus*] to the boy, "Look, the arrows [are] beyond you and forward,' go, for Yᵉhowah has sent you away.**

But if I tell the boy, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you and further out,' go, for Jehovah has sent you away.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And if thus I say to the boy, 'Behold the arrows from you and beyond,' go, for has sent you away Yᵉhowah.
Septuagint	If I should say thus to the young man, 'The arrow [is] on that side of you, and beyond,' go, for the Lord has sent you away.
Significant differences	There is the additional word *behold* in the Hebrew, which the Greek leaves out.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	But if it isn't safe, I'll say to the boy, "The arrows are farther away!" This will mean that the LORD wants you to leave, and you must go.
NLT	But if I tell him, 'Go farther the arrows are still ahead of you,' then it will mean that you must leave immediately, for the LORD is sending you away.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	But if I tell the boy, 'The arrows are next to you,' then go, because the LORD has sent you away.
JPS (Tanakh)	But if, instead, I call to the lad, 'Hey! The arrows are beyond you,' then leave, for the LORD has sent you away.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   "But if I say [lit., *say that*] to the youth, 'Behold, the arrows are beyond you,' go, for the L ORD has sent you away.

Young's Updated LT   And if thus I say to the young man, Lo, the arrows are beyond you, —go, for Jehovah has sent you away;...

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan offers a slightly different phrase, which will indicate to David that God desires for him to leave town.

1Samuel 20:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אָם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced *koh*]	*so, thus, here, hence*	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ₙaʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
hinnêh (הַנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
chêts (חֵץ) [pronounced *khayts*]	*arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than*	preposition of separation with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlᵉʾâh (הָלְאָה) [pronounced *HAWLᵉ-aw*]	*beyond, back, henceforth, hitherto, forward*	adverb	Strong's #1973 BDB #229

Translation: But if I say this [lit., *thus*] to the boy, "Look, the arrows [are] beyond you and forward,'...   There is really very little difference between what Jonathan plans to say to his personal servant. In the first case, he gives an order to the young man ("Fetch the arrows") and in the second case, he does not, but adds an adverb,

indicating that the arrows have gone beyond the young man. In the first case, the arrows are on this or that side of the young man; in the second case, the arrows are beyond him. In the first case, David is safe and in the second, he must leave. In either case, what Jonathan says will cause no suspicion, even if his own father is right there with him target practicing.

Again, the young man will be a hundred yards or so from Jonathan, so that Jonathan will have to yell to make himself heard. therefore, David would be able to hear him.

Now, why all this cloak and dagger stuff? Jonathan and David are pretty certain that they can trust one another, but Jonathan does not know for certain that his servant will be trustworthy. Who knows who his servant might be for that day—maybe Saul will change servants on him. Or, perhaps Saul will speak to Jonathan's servant and ask that the servant report anything suspicious to Saul (i.e., anything to do with David).

1Samuel 20:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
hâlak^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*]	*go, come, depart, walk; advance*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAKH*]	*to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth* [branches], *to shoot* [an arrow]	3rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^{e}howah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...go, for Y^{e}howah has sent you away. Jonathan and David both have a divine perspective on life. If Saul has planned to do evil against David, then it is God who is sending David away.

Application: One of the most consistent themes of Scripture is God guiding us through the actions and/or persecution of those who hate us or are out to get us. Here, if it turns out that Saul wants David, dead or alive, David will become a fugitive, which is God's plan for his life. When Joseph was persecuted by his brothers and sold into slavery, the end result was God intended these actions to result in good (Gen. 37 39 50:15–21). Paul's own mistakes landed him in jail (God picked Paul as an Apostle to the gentiles). However, Paul was unjustly persecuted for his faith. The end result were the great prison epistles, which are with us to this day. If you are a believer, and a growing believer, then there will be people who conspire against you and people who do unjust things to you; furthermore, these evil people will do things that may cause you to miss out on a promotion, lose your job, cause you to fall into financial ruin, cause you to move to another city, state or even country. But what they force you to do is God's guidance. You may view them with bitterness and ire; but, not to worry—God will take care of them.

Application: I have, in several instances, have had a couple of co-workers work against me. They flat out plotted evil against me. I have worked with people who spent copious amounts of time gossiping about me and about what a terrible person/teacher I was. 10–15 years after this began, the hatred of one of those people actually cost me my job. This was God's guidance. God knew what would happen if I remained where I was; God had things for me to see and experience elsewhere; and God had an end result in mind. For me, I was clueless. I had no

idea this woman would take things so far. I had no idea why this was happening; and the end results were a complete surprise to me. God moves us around; God changes our circumstances; God changes our vocation and our location. There were other things which I could have chosen to do, including filing suit against the school district where I taught and, if lawful, against the people who did this to me. I chose not to. I recognized that, despite the sins involved in the actions of those who were against me (essentially two people who convinced a third person to act), that God had control over the situation. God knew what was going to happen in the next few years, even though I had not even a clue. The end result was great for me; the end result was, apparently, not that great for the school that I was caused to leave (their math scores plummeted an unprecedented 30 points after I left on the state test). I left with some wonderful memories of that time period; and, if it were up to me, I would have continued in that position for many years after. However, that was not God's choice for me. The key is, God will change your vocation and your location; there will be times when He does it using the sinful actions of others. However, do not freak out; when things occur outside of your ability to change them, then you simply go along with it. God is there with you, no matter what happens. God has control of the things which are clearly outside of your control. If God is going to move you, then simply allow yourself to be moved. If God does not allow you to be promoted where you are, don't sweat it. Moving to the highest pinnacle of your organization may not be God's plan for your life. Moving into a position which you deserve may not be God's plan for you life. Understand that your purpose in this life is much greater than the job that you work at (although that is extremely important). God's purpose for your life is much greater than what you think your future should be. Sometimes, what you expect for your future and what God does coincide; sometimes they do not. Always bear in mind that God knows the future and He knows the actions of every person in your future and He knows all of the options and all that can occur whether this or that is changed. My point is, simply go along with the program. Don't panic, don't obsess about injustices. God is in control.

And the word which we spoke I and you—behold, Yᵉhowah between me and between you as far as perpetuity."	1Samuel 20:23	**As for [lit., *and*] the agreement [lit., *word*] which you and I made with one another [lit., *promised*], listen: Yᵉhowah [is] between you and me forever."**

And as for the pact which we made, Jehovah stands between you and me forever."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And the word which we spoke I and you—behold, Yᵉhowah between me and between you as far as perpetuity."
Septuagint	And as for the word which you and I have spoken, behold, the Lord [is] witness between you and me forever."
Significant differences	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	But he will always watch us to make sure that we keep the promise we made to each other.
NLT	And may the Lᴏʀᴅ make us keep our promises to each other, for he has witnessed them."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	We have made a promise to each other, and the Lᴏʀᴅ is ⌊a witness⌋ between you and me forever."
JPS (Tanakh)	As for the promise we made to each other, may the Lᴏʀᴅ be [witness] between you and me forever."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   "As for the agreement [lit., *word*] of which you and I have spoken, behold, the LORD
                                        is between you and me forever."
Young's Updated LT   ...as to the thing which we have spoken, you and I, lo, Jehovah is between me and
                                        you—unto the age."

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan emphasizes that the circumstances that David faces—whether being
welcomed back to the palace or as a fugitive, do not change the agreement between him and Jonathan.

1Samuel 20:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
dâᵇvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
dâᵇvar (דָּבַר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAHR*]	*to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*	1ˢᵗ person plural, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʾânîy (אָנִי) [pronounced *aw-NEE*]	*I, me;* in answer to a question, it means *I am, it is I*	1ˢᵗ person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced *aht-TAW*]	*you* (often, the verb *to be* is implied)	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, personal pronoun; pausal form	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: As for [lit., *and*] the agreement [lit., *word*] which you and I made with one another [lit., *promised*],...
David and Jonathan had a pact or an alliance between one another which Jonathan carefully points out
supercedes any other circumstance in life. Jonathan has pledged his loyalty to David and requires the same of
David. This bond that they have forged is not to be changed by circumstances.

1Samuel 20:23b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
The Greek inserts *[is] a Witness* at this point.			
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among;* when found twice, it means *between*	preposition with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among;* when found twice, it means *between*	preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ġahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʿôwlâm (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *ġo-LAWM*]	*long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761
Together, they mean *and from everlasting to everlasting, from eternity past to eternity future* or *from antiquity to everlasting, forever*.			

Translation: ...listen: Yᵉhowah [is] between you and me forever." In the modern world, when we make a pact or an alliance or any sort of agreement with another person, we often affix our signature to a document and that signing is often witnessed and those who witness the signature often add their signatures. In the ancient world, there were various ways of indicating that a promise stood. In this case, Jonathan and David are both believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, so they trust God to stand in as the witness between them. God has witnessed that Jonathan and David have a mutual pact. This pact, by the way, refers back to vv. 12–15, rather than to the surreptitious way that Jonathan was going to signal David. This concludes all that Jonathan said to David.

And so hides himself David in the field.	1Samuel 20:24a	**David then hid himself in the field.**

David then hid himself in the field.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so hides himself David in the field.
Septuagint	So David hides himself in the field,...

Significant differences   None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV   So David hid there in the field.
NAB   So David hit in the open country.
NLT   So David hid himself in the field,...
TEV   So David hid in the fields.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   So David hid in the countryside.
JPS (Tanakh)   David hid in the field.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   So David hid in the field;...
Young's Updated LT   And David is hidden in the field,...

What is the gist of this verse? As per their agreement, David hid himself in the field.

1Samuel 20:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וֹ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çâthar (סָתַר) [pronounced *saw-THAR*]	*to be hidden, to lie hid; to be covered over; to hide onself*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5641 BDB #711
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b^e (בְּ) [pronounced *b^eh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced *saw-DEH*]	*field, land, open field, open country*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

Translation: David then hid himself in the field. As agreed upon between David and Jonathan, David went and hid himself in the field. Gill and Wesley both suggest that David first went to Bethlehem, and then quickly returned to this field. The reason for this suggestion, again, is that, this solves the problem of David asking Jonathan to lie to his father. It would not have been a lie. Given the nearness of Bethlehem, the success of David (which might mollify his family's dismissive attitude towards him), and the time frame, this suggestion is not out of the question. The problem with that suggestion is: (1) nothing is ever said about David going to Bethlehem, except as a cover story for his absence; and (2) it says here that David his himself in the field. Such a statement would make little sense if he went to Bethlehem for two days instead.

You will notice that I stopped at this point and began anew with the second half of this verse. This is because we go to a different locale in v. 24b.

Jonathan and Saul Confront One Another at the New Moon Feast

And so is the [new] moon and so sits down the king upon the bread to eat.	1Samuel 20:24b	When [lit., *and*] the [new] moon came [lit., *is*], the king sat down before [lit., *by*] the food to eat.

When the new moon came, the king sat down before the meal to eat.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so is the [new] moon and so sits down the king upon the bread to eat.
Septuagint	...and moon [or, *month*] arrives, and the king comes to the table to eat.

Significant differences	The differences found are insignificant.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	During the New Moon Festival, Saul sat down to eat....
NAB	On the day of the new moon, when the king sat at table to dine,...
NLT	...and when the new moon festival began, the king sat down to eat.
TEV	At the New Moon Festival, King Saul came to the meal...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	When the New Moon Festival came, King Saul sat down to eat the festival meal.
JPS (Tanakh)	The new moon came, and the king sat down to partake of the meal.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	...and when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food.
Young's Updated LT	...and it is the new moon, and the king sits down by the food to eat,....

What is the gist of this verse? When the new month began, Saul sat down at the feast.

By the way, I separated these verses, as v. 24b actually begins a new paragraph.

1Samuel 20:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

1Samuel 20:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
chôdesh (חֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-desh*]	*new moon, month*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2320 BDB #294
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᵇV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
melekᵉ (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ğahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced *LEH-khem*]	literally means *bread;* used more generally for *food*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced *aw-KAHL*]	*to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: When [lit., *and*] the [new] moon came [lit., *is*], the king sat down before [lit., *by*] the food to eat. The king, at the new moon festival or new moon meal, sat down to eat.

And so sits the king upon his seat as time in time in a seat of the wall. And so stands Jonathan and so sits Abner from a side of Saul. And so was empty a place of David.	1Samuel 20:25	**The king sat upon his seat—customarily the wall seat [lit., *in the seat of the wall*]; Jonathan stood and Abner sat beside Saul. David's place was empty.**

The king sat in his own seat, which was a seat built into the wall; Jonathan stood to eat, and Abner sat beside Saul. However, David's seat was empty.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so sits the king upon his seat as time in time in a seat of the wall. And so stands Jonathan and so sits Abner from a side of Saul. And so was empty a place of David.
Septuagint	And he sat upon his seat as in former times, even on his seat by the wall, and he went before Jonathan; and Abenner sat on one side of Saul, and the place of David was empty.
Significant differences	We have *the king* in the Hebrew, but not the Greek. It is not completely clear what Jonathan is doing, due to the differences of the texts. In the Greek, Saul goes

before Jonathan (walks in front of him? Sits down first?); in the Hebrew, Jonathan stands. Even though we do not know exactly what is occurring here, the importance of this verse is that Saul notes who is there and who is not. Saul would expect to see Jonathan, Abner and David.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...by the wall, just as he always did. Jonathan sat across from him, and Abner sat next to him. But David's place was empty.
NAB	...taking his usual place against the wall, Jonathan sat facing him, while Abner sat at the king's side, and David's place was vacant.
NKJV	Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose [Vulgate and Septuagint: *he say across from Jonathan*], and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.
NLT	He sat at his usual place against the wall, with Jonathan sitting opposite him and Abner beside him. But David's place was empty.
REB	Saul took his customary seat by the wall, and Abner sat beside him; Jonathan too was present, but David's place was empty.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	He sat in his usual seat by the wall, while Jonathan stood. Abner sat beside Saul, but David's place was empty.
JPS (Tanakh)	When the king took his usual place on the seat by the wall, Jonathan rose [force of Hebrew uncertain; Septuagint "faced him."] and Abner sat down at Saul's side; but David's place remained vacant

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And the king sat on his seat as usual, the seat by the wall; then Jonathan rose up and Abner sat down by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.
Young's Updated LT	...and the king sits on his seat, as time by time, on a seat by the wall, and Jonathan rises, and Abner sits at the side of Saul, and David's place is looked after.

What is the gist of this verse? An informal roll call is given here; Saul, Jonathan and Abner are all present; but David is not.

1Samuel 20:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᵇV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
melekᵉ (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ğahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

1Samuel 20:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Note that these four words in this exact same order and morphology are also found in v. 24b above. Also recall that this previous preposition just did not seem to fit very well into the context (And so the king sat upon the bread is the most literal rendering of that portion of v. 24). A possible explanation is that the latter half of the previous verse should have read: And so the new moon was, and the meal (bread) to eat. Or, the two verses together, could have originally read: And the king sat down to eat at bread, upon his seat, as was customary, in the wall seat. Such an approach would be less repetitive. One of the common errors in the copying of Scripture was repeating a phrase; it is caused by looking down at the wrong verse and copying what one sees. In any case, the overall meaning is not changed.			
môwshâb (מוֹשָׁב) [pronounced *moh-SHAHBV*]	*a seat, a place for sitting; a sitting down, an assembly; a settlement, a habitation; time of inhabitation; inhabitants*	masculine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4186 BDB #444
kaph or kᵉ (כ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*like, as, according to; about, approximately*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
pa'am (פַּעַם) [pronounced *PAH-ğahm*]	*beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time, steps;* the connotation is the passage of time	feminine singular noun	Strong's #6471 BDB #821
bᵉ (בּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
pa'am (פַּעַם) [pronounced *PAH-ğahm*]	*beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time, steps;* the connotation is the passage of time	feminine singular noun	Strong's #6471 BDB #821
This phrase *as time in time* (or *as time against time* or *as time with time*) means *as usual, as formerly, as in times past, as at other times, previously, as in previous times, customarily.*			
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
môwshâb (מוֹשָׁב) [pronounced *moh-SHAHBV*]	*a seat, a place for sitting; a sitting down, an assembly; a settlement, a habitation; time of inhabitation; inhabitants*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4186 BDB #444
qîyr (קִיר) [pronounced *keer*]	*the wall [of a city], a wall; a place fortified with a wall [i.e., a fortress]; a side*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7023 BDB #885

Translation: The king sat upon his seat—customarily the wall seat [lit., *in the seat of the wall*];... What we will have now is a roll call of the VIP's. There was a seat built into the wall of the city, or perhaps just next to the wall; and this was the king's seat. Everyone was visible before him. Saul could look out into the crowd—at least to the VIP chairs and immediately see who is missing. He wanted to take David's life, so he is certainly looking for David.

Keil and Delitzsch explain the nuts and bolts of this seating arrangement as follows: King Saul is seated in the corner, with his back to the wall, in a place of honor. Jonathan is next to him or nearby. Jonathan stands in order to let Abner by to sit down.[26] This is an interesting approach, as they see this more as an active verse than a static one. There are other suggestions, e.g., Jonathan stood up and then sat down again (which is due to a misplaced copula—this is apparently how the Syriac treats this verse). Other interpretations have been given this—that Jonathan sat *opposite* Saul (as per the LXX; which is not the textbook place for the king's son to sit). Furthermore, there is no reason to ever interpret the verb as meaning this. I personally see this as more of a static verse, indicating that Saul, Abner and Jonathan are all in the same general area; and Jonathan is standing (for whatever reason).

1Samuel 20:25b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*]	*to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
The text given is as per the Hebrew and the Syriac. In the Aramaic, Greek and Latin, it reads *he sat across from Jonathan*.			
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יֵשֶׁב) [pronounced *yaw-SHAHᵝV*]	*to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
ʾăbᵉnêr (אֲבְנֵר) [pronounced *uᵇvᵉ-NAYR*]	*my father is Ner* or *my father is a lamp,* and is transliterated *Abner*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
tsad (צַד) [pronounced *tzahd*]	*side*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6654 BDB #841
The phrase *from a side* means *at the side of, to the side of, on the side of, beside.*			
Shâʾûwl[27] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: ...Jonathan stood and Abner sat beside Saul. Jonathan was a man with a great deal of nervous energy. You may recall Jonathan's great victory in 1Sam. 14. He could not sit still. Having his enemy so near

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[26] Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 507. Several of the comments in this paragraph refer back to this page of their commentary.

[27] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

without engaging them in warfare just drove Jonathan a little nuts, and he went on the offensive, which is something still hard to imagine. So he did not sit when he ate. His mind was always working and his body was always in motion.

Abner was Saul's other general, and probably is closest ally. He is either Saul's uncle or cousin. You may recall our examination of him in 1Chron. 8:32. Although, most exegetes see Abner as Saul's cousin, I believe that he is Saul's uncle,[28] although he is probably Saul's age or even younger.[29] This would make him Jonathan's great uncle, although he will be young enough to be Jonathan's uncle. Abner will lead an amazing life, to the point of being the actual ruler behind one of Saul's sons over part of Israel. And despite this, he will remain David's ally and relinquish his throne to David. He sat next to Saul.

What is interesting is, none of Saul's other sons are mentioned, although we would have expected them to be at the VIP table. They are soldiers, although their rank is not known (1Sam. 31:2). None them had the audacity to do what Jonathan did in 1Sam. 14, which may account for why he is ranked higher than his older brothers. Although it is possible that God the Holy Spirit just left them out of the story, as they were not really germane to the narrative; however, if that were the case, Abner's name should have been left out as well. All four names are given (Saul, Abner, Jonathan and David) because these are the VIP's of this feast.

Several exegetes are concerned with who is sitting next to whom, and tell us that Jonathan got up and moved so that Abner could sit next to Saul. However, all we can be certain of is that Abner was sitting next to Saul and that Jonathan was standing at some point (although, several question the Hebrew in this verse). J, B & F tell us that this was a common Oriental custom for a father's son to stand in his father's presence.[30]

1Samuel 20:25c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to be sought, missed, to be lacking, visited, to be visited upon, to be appointed*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced *maw-KOHM*]	*place, situated;* for a soldier, it may mean where he is *stationed;* for people in general, it would be their *place of abode* (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

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[28] See my exegesis of 1Chron. 12:32. The key to either understanding is that there are either two Kish's or two Ner's. Most exegetes propose that Abner is Saul's cousin, which means there would be two Ner's. Since I see Abner as Saul's uncle (and with very good reasons), that means that there would have to be two Kish's.

[29] This is not impossible or even unusual. If two brothers differ in age by 15 or more years and if the older brother has children very early in life, the result can be aunts and uncles who are younger than their nephews and nieces. One of my uncles is only about 3 or 4 years older than I am.

[30] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:25.

Translation: David's place was empty. We are not told exactly where David sat in relation to Saul, Jonathan and Abner; however, from Saul's vantage point, he could clearly see that David was not present. Probably these four men would have been the VIP's at this feast, all at Saul's table and all clearly visible to Saul.

And had not said Saul anything in the day the that, for he had said, "An accident, he; not [ceremonially] clean; for [he is] not [ceremonially] clean."	1Samuel 20:26	**But Saul said nothing that day, for he had thought [lit., *said*], "Something befell him [and he is] not ceremonially clean; [certainly, he is] not ceremonially clean."**

However, on the first day, Saul said nothing concerning David, for he thought to himself, "Something must have happened to make David ceremonially unclean; yes, that's what must have happened."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And had not said Saul anything in the day the that, for he had said, "An accident, he; not [ceremonially] clean; for [he is] not [ceremonially] clean."
Septuagint	And Saul said nothing on that day, for he said, "It seems to have fallen out that he is not clean, because he has not purified himself."
Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul didn't say anything that day, because he was thinking, "Something must have happened to make David unfit to be at the Festival. Yes, something must have happened."
NJB	Saul said nothing that day, thinking, 'It is sheer chance; he is unclean.'
NEB	Saul didn't say anything about it that day, for he said to himself, "Something must have made David ceremonially unclean. Yes, that must be why he's not here."
TEV	...but Saul said nothing that day, because he thought, "Something has happened to him, and he is not ritually pure."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Saul didn't say anything that day, thinking, "Something has happened to him so that he's unclean. He must be unclean."
JPS (Tanakh)	That day, however, Saul said nothing. "It's accidental,' he thought. "He must be unclean and not yet cleansed." [The Hebrew construction of that final phrase is unclear].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Nevertheless Saul did not speak anything that day, for he thought, "It is an accident, he is not clean, surely *he is* not clean."
Young's Updated LT	And Saul has not spoken anything on that day, for he said, "It is an accident; he is not clean—surely not clean."

What is the gist of this verse? Saul obviously assumes that David will attend this monthly celebration. He assumes that David was unclean, for whatever reason, and could not come to the first day of feasting.

1Samuel 20:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô` (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
dâᵇvar (דָּבַר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAHR*]	*to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
Shâ`ûwl[31] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	*which is transliterated Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
mᵉ`ûwmâh (מְאוּמָה) [pronounced *mᵉ-oo-MAW*]	*anything,* and it is usually found in negative sentences; therefore, with the negative, it is often rendered *nothing*	indefinite singular pronoun/adverb	Strong's #3972 BDB #548
bᵉ (בַּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day, today* (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hûw` (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*that*	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: But Saul said nothing that day,... Saul definitely noticed David's absence. He had looked for David and probably had something plotted against him. However, when David's seat was empty, Saul said nothing.

1Samuel 20:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
`âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

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[31] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

	1Samuel 20:26b		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
mîqᵉreh (מִקְרֶה) [pronounced *mikᵉ-REH*]	*an accident, a chance event, fortune, an unforseen incident, a random occurrence, a fortunate or unfortunate incident*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4745 BDB #899
From the verb qârâh (קָרָה) [pronounced *kaw-RAWH*] which means *to encounter, to meet, to befall*.			
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
bilᵉtîy (בִּלְתִּי) [pronounced *billᵉ-TEE*]	*not*	Adverb/particle of negation	Strong's #1115 BDB #116
Bilᵉtîy actually has several applications: ❶ an adverb of negation (*not*); ❷ as a preposition meaning *without, besides except;* ❸ as a conjunction which means *besides that, unless that, unless*.			
ţâhôwr (טָהוֹר) [pronounced *taw-BOHR*]	*clean, ceremonially clean; pure, physically pure* (like pure gold)	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2889 & #2890 BDB #373
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...for he had thought [lit., *said*], "Something befell him [and he is] not ceremonially clean;... Apparently, this feast had some religious significance, even though it was not being held at the Tabernacle. It is certainly possible that Saul attached some religious significance to his new moon ceremonies.   David's uncleanness would have been reason enough for him to not attend this ceremony (Lev. 7:20–21 15:5).

In our own culture, pagan celebrations are united with Christian principals to yield holidays like Christmas and Easter. Saul, not fully recognizing his own mental disease, did not realize that David knew something was up. Or, he may have expected David to show as a portrayal of strength. Saul had made a concerted effort to hide his murderous intentions from Jonathan, after he realized that he could not reveal these sorts of things to his son (see 1Sam. 19:1); and he assumed that this was also hidden, in part, from David (recall that David was not present when Saul's soldiers came into his house; and when they came to Samuel's seminary, they prophesied, they did not attempt to seize David). Now, I realize that does not seem like normal thinking, given the incidents which took place in 1Sam. 19; however, Saul does not always think straight—particularly when his emotions are so cranked up.

A slightly different explanation is offered by Wesley: David's possible uncleanness was not of religious significance to Saul, but if David were unclean, his attendance would make the king unclean by association. Given Saul's ego, this is just as reasonable an explanation for Saul's thinking.[32]

Saul's expectation that David would show up may have been the result of the following reasoning: even though David left his home, threatening his own wife; he will still show at this ceremony, because there are lots of people here, and he will feel as though he can show up with impunity. Saul sees David as a threat to his throne; therefore, he would expect David to flaunt himself at these ceremonies. Furthermore, Saul may see his intention to kill David as something which is more or less hidden from the general public. Also, Saul had made attempts on David's life before, and things went back to normal soon thereafter (1Sam. 18:10–11). Each day to Saul is like

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[32] John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:26.

a new day, and things often, in his own mind, go back to square one. After all, he may know himself that he's a little crazy and so viewed by others, so that his behavior can be seen in that light; and that his attempts against David's life may be seen as behavior that just comes and goes. It is difficult understanding the thinking of someone who is influenced by demons, but whatever Saul thought, he did expect David to be there and he certainly took notice that he was not. Furthermore, Saul does not attribute David's absence to Saul's attempts on his life, but to some incident that may have made David ceremonially unclean. There were a number of things that would make a person unclean, including contact with a dead body; so Saul figured that was the situation.

An interesting question is, how do we get to look into the mind of Saul? Obviously, God the Holy Spirit knows the mind of Saul and this information could have come from Him to the writer of Scripture. However, there is another explanation. When it says that Saul said nothing, this does not mean he sat absolutely mum throughout the entire feast. That would have been pretty psychotic. What this means is that he never addressed Jonathan directly concerning David. David's absence probably was staring him in the face, and he turned to Abner and remarked, "David is not here probably due to some ceremonial uncleanness." Since Saul did not make this comment to Jonathan, and since Saul did not address Jonathan about this matter at all, it was not Jonathan's place to suddenly offer Saul his information. In fact, had Jonathan said, "Hey, Dad, I know where David is;" this would have been taken as an act of disrespect, as Saul did not initiate this topic of discussion with Jonathan. "Do not speak unless you are spoken to" is not necessarily a custom found only in first half of the 20th century.

1Samuel 20:26c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ţâhôwr (טָהוֹר) [pronounced *taw-BOHR*]	*clean, ceremonially clean; pure, physically pure* (like pure gold)	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2889 & #2890 BDB #373

Translation: ...[certainly, he is] not ceremonially clean." This is almost a repeat of the previous thought, but with a different negative. The idea is that, Saul considers this possibility, and decides, "Yeah, that's got to be why David is gone." It is possible that he had a one-sided conversation with Abner at his side. "I guess that David must be ceremonially unclean, and is not here for that reason. Yes, that has to be why he is gone." Discussing David with his son Jonathan is something that Saul would prefer to avoid, as he already knows that Jonathan's sentiments are with David and Saul has been trying to surreptitiously kill David as of late.

We know that Jewish customs became very legalistic. One of the most interesting studies is what a Jew could and could not do on the Sabbath. My favorite is, if you were out walking and mud got splattered onto your outer robe, then you could not clean the robe on the Sabbath. However, you could wait until the mud dried and you were allowed to squeeze it once and let go, and that would not be considered working on the Sabbath. The Scripture does not actually give us any sort of prohibitions for the celebration of the New Moon Feast. As has been mentioned, this was surely a bastardization of the New Moon Feast, which would be properly a function of the priesthood (and, recall, we do not even know where they are or what they do at this point in time). Saul had taken over this feast and apparently held it at the palace. It is also apparent that they decided, in some form or fashion, that one must be clean in order to attend the feast; although, like the Sabbath, being *clean* could have been terrifically distorted. In any case, for Saul to think this means that *cleanness* was an issue. Had David come into contact with a dead body or with his wife's menstruation, these things could have made him unclean. So this occurs to Saul. He does not think to himself, "I have tried to have David killed on several occasions. Maybe he is not coming to the feast for that reason." Obviously, if this thought occurs to him, he does not share it with anyone, as Jonathan is standing right there.

The more that I study this book, it appears to me that it was either put together from the personal chronicles of Jonathan or that Jonathan took over recording this information near the end of Samuel's career. There are many incidents that are recorded that Jonathan would have been a witness to. There are other incidents that are recorded where very little detail is given; and in those incidents, Jonathan is not a witness, although he would have easily had the means of obtaining information concerning these incidents. For instance, when David went to Samuel, and was later followed by Saul's soldiers and then Saul himself; we know very little about this, other than who went and that they prophesied. How would Jonathan know about this? He is right here talking to David and David has maintained that Saul is out to kill him. Although we have no more than this given to us in this passage, David probably told Jonathan, "Look, after he tried to kill me in my own house, he sent soldiers out after me three times at Samuel's seminary. Three times, they all began to prophesy as they entered into the seminary. Finally, your father showed up himself, and began to prophesy when he entered the room with the prophets." We don't have this quotation, as we already know about the incident. Therefore, it does not have to be repeated. I simply mention this to give you reason why Jonathan probably composed a significant portion of the book of Samuel. With the exception of David's anointing in 1Sam. 16, Jonathan either observed all of the incidents found in these chapters of 1Samuel or had access to the background information (and in these cases, Jonathan often provided a briefer account).

And so he is from the morrow of the new moon the second and so is empty a place of David. And so says Saul unto Jonathan his son, "Why has not come a son of Jesse both yesterday and today unto the bread?"	1Samuel 20:27	**And it was on the next day of the new moon—the second [day]—the place of David was empty. Then Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why did not the son of Jesse come either yesterday or today to the meal** [lit., *bread*]**?"**

On the second day of the new moon festival, David's seat was again empty. Saul then asked his son, "Why didn't the son of Jesse come either yesterday or today to the meal?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he is from the morrow of the new moon the second and so is empty a place of David. And so says Saul unto Jonathan his son, "Why has not come a son of Jesse both yesterday and today unto the bread?"
Septuagint	And it came to pass on the morrow, on the second day of the month, that the place of David was empty; and Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse attended both yesterday and today at the table?"
Significant differences	The LXX adds an additional phrase at the beginning of this chapter and, the final three words are different in the Greek and Hebrew (the Greek made a similar substitution earlier).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The day after the New Moon Festival, when David's place was still empty, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't that son of Jesse come to eat with us? He wasn't here yesterday, and he still isn't here today!"
NLT	But when David's place was empty again the next day, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse been here for dinner either yesterday or today?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	But on the second day of the month, David's place was still empty. Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why hasn't Jesse's son come to the meal either yesterday or today?"
JPS (Tanakh)	But on the day after the new moon, the second day, David's place was vacant again. So Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why didn't the son of Jesse come to the meal yesterday or today?"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And it came about the next day, the second *day* of the new moon, that David's place was empty; so Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal, either yesterday or today?"
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass on the second morrow of the new moon, that David's place is looked after, and Saul says unto Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come in, either yesterday or today, unto the food?"

What is the gist of this verse? Saul waits until the second day of the festival to ask Jonathan where David is.

1Samuel 20:27a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than*	preposition of separation with the 1st person singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
mâchŏrâth (מָחֳרָת) [pronounced *moh-chŏ-RAWTH*]	*the morrow* (the day following a past day), *the next day, the following day*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4283 BDB #564
With the min preposition, mâchŏrâth means *on the morrow, on the next day*.			
chôdesh (חֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-desh*]	*new moon, month*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2320 BDB #294
shenîy (שֵׁנִי) [pronounced *sheh-NEE*]	*second, the second;* When only two items are named, it can be rendered *[the] other*	adjective singular numeral singular ordinal with the definite article	Strong's #8145 BDB #1041
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]	*to be sought, missed, to be lacking, visited, to be visited upon, to be appointed*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823

1Samuel 20:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced *maw-KOHM*]	*place, situated;* for a soldier, it may mean where he is *stationed;* for people in general, it would be their *place of abode* (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: And it was on the next day of the new moon—the second [day]—the place of David was empty. Saul waits this out. In his own mind, he does not see anything all that peculiar that David is missing. He has, as we have seen, attributed his absence to a chance event and does not necessarily connect David's absence with his own desire to kill David. In any case, Saul's demeanor and actions do not reveal, so far, any suspicion of David nor do they reveal his intense hatred and jealousy of David.

1Samuel 20:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâʾûwl[33] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
madduʿa (מַדֻּעַ) [pronounced *mah-DOO-ahǧ*]	*why, wherefore, on what account,* and it is probably a contraction of a word which means *what being known*	adverb	Strong's #4069 BDB #396

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[33] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

1Samuel 20:27b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lô` (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bôw` (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yîshay (יִשַׁי) [pronounced *yee-SHAH-ee*]	transliterated *Jesse*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445
gam (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*]	*also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover*	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
tᵉmôwl (תְּמוֹל) [pronounced *tᵉMOHL*]	*yesterday;* and is used figuratively for *recently, formerly*	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
gam (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*]	*both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or* (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day, today* (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
`el (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced *LEH-khem*]	literally means *bread;* used more generally for *food*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3899 BDB #536

Translation: Then Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why did not the son of Jesse come either yesterday or today to the meal [lit., *bread*]?" Saul does recognize the bond between his son and David and did not tell Jonathan of his latest plot to kill David (when he sent his men over to David's home at night). Saul comes up to Jonathan (or summons him over) and asks him why David is missing from this meal. Now it is reasonable for Jonathan to offer an explanation to his father—his father has addressed him directly on this issue. The fact that Jonathan can answer his father now, but did not offer his opinion on the previous day is simply a matter of royal protocol.

And so answers Jonathan Saul, "An asking leave has asked leave David from with me as far as Bethlehem.	1Samuel 20:28	**Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave from being with me as far as Bethlehem.**

Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked my permission to go to Bethlehem.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so answers Jonathan Saul, "An asking leave has asked leave David from with me as far as Bethlehem.
Septuagint	And Jonathan answered Saul, and said to him, "David asked leave of me to go as far as Bethlehem, his city;...

Significant differences	The Greek inserts a couple of words which do not affect the meaning of this verse. Apart from that, there are no real differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT	Jonathan replied, "David earnestly asked me if he could go to Bethlehem.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan answered Saul, "David repeatedly begged me to let him go to Bethlehem.
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan answered Saul, "David begged leave of me to go to Bethlehem.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Jonathan then answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me *to go* to Bethlehem,...
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan answers Saul, "David has earnestly asked of me unto Beth-Lehem.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan tells his father that David requested to go to Bethlehem. This request was made to Jonathan and not to Saul.

1Samuel 20:28				
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿânâh (עָנַה) [pronounced ğ*aw-NAWH*]	*to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתֶן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shâʾûwl[34] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
shâʾal (שָׁאַל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*]	*to ask for oneself, to ask leave*	Niphal infinitive absolute	Strong's #7592 BDB #981

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[34] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

1Samuel 20:28			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
shâʾal (שָׁ אַ ל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*]	*to ask for oneself, to ask leave*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
There is quite a play on words here, where we have essentially the same word repeated three times.			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
́îm (עִ ם) [pronounced *ǵeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of*.			
́ad (עַד) [pronounced *ǵahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
bêyth lechem (לֶ חֶם בֵּ ית) [pronounced *bayth-LEH-khem*]	*house of bread* and is transliterated *Bethlehem*	proper noun, location	Strong's #1035 BDB #111

Translation: Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave from being with me as far as Bethlehem. Jonathan essentially had a day to rehearse his answer to his father Saul, although there is no evidence that he did so. Whereas Saul apparently would spend a great deal of time thinking of how to best express justifications for his actions, Jonathan was quite intelligent and from his meeting with David, he knew exactly what to say to his father if asked (recall that his verbal signal to David was fairly subtle, which is a mark of intelligence. However, what we will observe in the next verse is that Jonathan, like Saul, did ruminate over what he would say in this situation or that, as he will come out with a mouthful.

And so he says, 'Send me [away] please because a slaughter of a family to us in the city. And he mandated to me—my brother. And now if I have found grace in your [two] eyes, I will slip away, please, and see my brothers.' Upon so he has not come unto a table of the king."	1Samuel 20:29	**He said, 'Please send me away because [there is] our family sacrifice in the city. Furthermore, my brother, he commanded me [to come]. Therefore, if I have found grace in your eyes, please, allow me to [lit., *and*] see my brothers." Therefore, he has not come to the feast [lit., *table*] of the king."**

David requested, 'Please sent me away because there is a family sacrifice and feast in the city. Furthermore, my brother specifically commanded me to come. Therefore, if I have found grace in your eyes, please allow me to slip away to see my brothers.' There is why David has not come to the king's feast."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he says, 'Send me [away] please because a slaughter of a family to us in the city. And he mandated to me—my brother. And now if I have found grace in your [two] eyes, I will slip away, please, and see my brothers.' Upon so he has not come unto a table of the king."
Septuagint	...and he said, 'Let me go, I pray you, for we have a family sacrifice in the city, and my brothers have given a request [or, *charge*] for me, and now, if I have found grace in your eyes, I will even go over and see my brothers.' Therefore, he is not present at the table of the king."

Significant differences	In the Hebrew, Jonathan says that David said, his *brother* made a strong request for him to come to this family celebration; in the Greek, this request is made by David's *brothers*. Apart from this, the differences are insignificant.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan answered, "The reason David hasn't come to eat with you is that he begged me to let him go to Bethlehem. He said, 'Please let me go. My family is offering a sacrifice, and my brother told me I have to be there. Do me this favor and let me slip away to see my brothers.' " [The CEV combines vv. 28–29].
NLT	He wanted to take part in a family sacrifice. His brother demanded that he be there, so I told him he could go. That's why he isn't here."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	David said to me 'Please let me go. Our relatives will offer a sacrifice in the city, and my brother ordered me to be there. If you will permit it, please let me go to see my brothers.' This is why he hasn't come to your banquet."
JPS (Tanakh)	He said, 'Please let me go, for we are going to have a family feast in our town and my brother has summoned me to it. Do me a favor, let me slip away to see my kinsmen.' That is why he has not come to the king's table."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	...for he said, 'Please let me go [lit., *send me away*], since our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to attend. And now, if I have found favor in your sight, please let me get away that I may see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the eking's table."
Young's Updated LT	and he says, 'Send me away, I pray you, for a family sacrifice we have in the city, and my brother himself has given command to me, and now, if I have found grace in your eyes, let me go away, I pray you, and see my brothers;' therefore he has not come unto the table of the king."

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan is repeating David's story that his family is meeting in Bethlehem for a family meal and sacrifice. David has been specifically asked to come (so Jonathan says) by his brothers.

1Samuel 20:29a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 20:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-SARH	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]	3rd person masculine singular, Piel imperative with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
nâʾ (נָא) [pronounced naw]	please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
zebach (זֶבַח) [pronounced ZEH^β-vakh]	slaughtered animal [used in a sacrificial offering], slaughter, sacrifice, slaughterings, sacrificial animal	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2077 BDB #257
mishpâchâh (מִשְׁפָּחָה) [pronounced mish-paw-KHAWH]	family, clan, sub-tribe, class (of people), species (of animals), or sort (of things)	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4940 BDB #1046
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *l*^e)	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition with the 1st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
b^e (בּ) [pronounced *b*^{eh}]	in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced ĝeer]	encampment, city, town	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: He said, 'Please send me away because [there is] our family sacrifice in the city. Jonathan actually comes out with quite a mouthful in answer to Saul. As you will recall, Saul has, in previous occasions, given great thought to what he would say when caught doing this or that. Apparently, Jonathan shares this characteristic with Saul. Had Saul asked him at the beginning of the first day, chances are that his explanation would have been shorter and more succinct. However, he has a lot to tell Saul. He first tells his father that David requested permission from him to go to the city of Bethlehem. In fact, the way it is stated, David asked Jonathan to send him there. It was to be less of a request granted and more of a stately command.

Now we have discussed this earlier. Although it is possible that, given the time period, that this is a legitimate excuse, and that David's presence has been requested at a family gathering, we have no Scriptural support for this. The only verse dealing with David's whereabouts was v. 24, which tells us that David hid in a field. Although this does not preclude his going to Bethlehem first; nor does it mean that such a scenario could have been in place, even if David did not go—it is still more likely that David hid for two days in the field and that what Jonathan is saying here is a complete fabrication.

1Samuel 20:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced *tsaw-VAW*]	*to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order*	3rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with the 1st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced *awhk*]	*brother, kinsman* or *close relative*	masculine singular noun with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

This is a plural noun in the Septuagint.

Translation: Furthermore, my brother, he commanded me [to come]. Saul perhaps knew about David's estranged relationship with his brothers, as three of David's brothers were serving in Saul's army when David killed Goliath. I hope that you recall the interaction between David and his brothers from that chapter—it was clear from even a couple of verses that David's brother's viewed him with disdain. Whether Saul ever noticed that is not told to us (I suspect that Saul was too self-involved to notice this). However, Jonathan, since he was close to David, was aware of David's dysfunctional family. Therefore, a request by one of David's brothers to come to a family meal would be extremely important to David. My point is that Jonathan added this information to interject some realism and urgency in David's request, although I suspect that this misinformation was lost on Saul.

As an aside, some of used this verse to indicate that Jesse, David's father, has died. First of all, this is Jonathan's lie (possibly suggested by David). Secondly, we have discussed why an invite from one of David's brothers would have been the most meaningful. Finally, David mentions his mother and father in 1Sam. 22:3. Therefore, there is no reason to assume that Jesse has died.

1Samuel 20:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced *ğaht-TAWH*]	*now, at this time, already*	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773

When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, wᵉ + the adverb ʿattâh mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore*. Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.

1Samuel 20:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*]	*if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)*	primarily an hypothetical particle, but also functions as an interrogative particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
mâtsâʾ (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*]	*to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*	1st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
chên (חֵן) [pronounced *khayn*]	*grace, favor, blessing*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2580 BDB #336
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced *ĢAH-yin*]	*spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring*	feminine dual noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
mâlaṭ (מָלַט) [pronounced *maw-LAHT*]	*to be delivered; to deliver oneself, to escape, to slip away, to slip through [or past]; to go away in haste*	1st person singular [often a reflexive meaning in the] Niphal imperfect with a voluntative hê	Strong's #4422 BDB #572
nâʾ (נָא) [pronounced *naw*]	*please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you*	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râʾâh (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*]	*to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know*	1st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced *awhk*]	*brother, kinsman* or *close relative*	masculine plural noun with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

Translation: Therefore, if I have found grace in your eyes, please, allow me to slip away to [lit., *and*] see my brothers.' David's request to Jonathan, who represented the crown, was to slip away from the palace and palatial duties and responsibilities in order to see his brothers. Again, a nice touch to this lie which was completely lost on Saul.

1Samuel 20:29d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ģahl]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced *kane*]	*so* or *thus*	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, ʿal kên (כֵּן עַל) mean *so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account*.			
lô (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
shûlᵉchân (שֻׁלְחָן) [pronounced *shoolᵉ-KHAWN*]	*a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020
melekᵉ (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: Therefore, he has not come to the feast [lit., *table*] of the king." Jonathan concludes that this is why David did not come to the new moon feast hosted by Saul. Overall, this was a very well-crafted lie, the subtleties of which were probably completely lost on Saul. This also reveals a striking similarity between Saul and Jonathan—when given some time to formulate a lie (or a rationalization), both of them would put a great deal of thought into what they would say.

And so burns a nostril of Saul in Jonathan and so he says to him, "Son of a twisted, rebellious [woman]! Do you not know that are choosing you to a son of Jesse to your shame and to shame of nakedness of your mother?	1Samuel 20:30	Saul's anger burned against Jonathan, and he said to him, "[You] son of a twisted, rebellious [bitch]! Don't you know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness

Saul's anger burned against Jonathan, as he yelled at him, saying, "You stupid son of a bitch! Don't you know that you have chosen the son of Jesse, which shames both you and your mother?

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so burns a nostril of Saul in Jonathan and so he says to him, "Son of a twisted, rebellious [woman]! Do you not know that are choosing you to a son of Jesse to your shame and to shame of nakedness of your mother?
Septuagint	And Saul was extremely angry with Jonathan, and said to him, "You son of a traitorous [deserting] damsel! For do I not know that you are an accomplice with the son of Jesse to your shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?

Significant differences   The Hebrew seems to indicate that Jonathan is choosing David over his family; in the Greek, Jonathan is said to be an accomplice with David.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV   Saul was furious with Jonathan and yelled, "You're no son of mine, you traitor! I know you've chosen to be loyal to that son of Jesse. You should be ashamed of yourself! And your own mother should be ashamed that you were ever born.

NJB   Saul flew into a rage with Jonathan and said, 'Son of a rebellious glut Don't I know that you side with the son of Jesse to your own shame and your mother's dishonour?

NLT   Saul boiled with rage at Jonathan. "You stupid son of a whore!" he swore at him. "Do you think I don't know that you want David to be king in your place, shaming yourself and your mother?

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   Then Saul got angry with Jonathan. "Son of a crooked and rebellious woman!" he called Jonathan. "I know you've sided with Jesse's son. You have no shame. ⌊You act ⌋ as if you are your mother's son but not mine.

JPS (Tanakh)   Saul flew into a rage against Jonathan. "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman!" he shouted. "I know that you side with the son of Jesse—to your shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness!

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible   Then was Saul's anger kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him,
                                 You son of a rebellious perversity [with a slight change of reading: *son of a rebellious girl*]! Do I not know that you are ‖confederate‖ with [as per the Septuagint; MT reads *are choosing*] the son of Jesse to your own confusion, and to the confusion of the shame of your mother?

NASB   Then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?

Young's Updated LT   And the anger of Saul burns against Jonathan, and he says to him, "Son of a perverse rebellious woman! have I not known that you are fixing on the son of Jesse to your shame, and to the shame of the nakedness of your mother?

What is the gist of this verse? Suddenly, Saul's anger appears, startling even Jonathan. Saul verbally excoriates Jonathan. Although the Greek and the Hebrew differ slightly, the idea is, Saul tells Jonathan that he is choosing David over his own family.

1Samuel 20:30a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chârâh (הָרֲח) [pronounced *khaw-RAWH*]	*to burn, to kindle, to become angry, to evoke great emotion*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2734 BDB #354

1Samuel 20:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾaph (אַף) [pronounced *ahf*]	*nose, nostril,* but is also translated *face, brow, anger*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #639 BDB #60
Shâ`ûwl[35] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

Translation: Saul's anger burned against Jonathan,... Suddenly, Jonathan gets an instant education concerning his father. The exchange between them was normal, and civil, and suddenly, Saul's rage, as Jonathan had possibly not seen before, was against him. Given their exchange and what Jonathan has told his father, Saul's response is completely out of proportion to what Jonathan just said. Jonathan merely told his father that David was at a sacrificial meal with his family, and Saul suddenly reveals this incredible anger towards Jonathan. No doubt, this shook Jonathan up a great deal.

> You will recall how much the people of Israel begged God for a king and God did deliver them a king who they could look up to and who was a great warrior (1Sam. 9–12). The end result that Israel was led by a madman for many years. McGee: *Many Christians are way ahead of the Lord, begging Him for this, that, and the other thing. They are not willing to rest quietly and let God work things out in their lives. Many times when He grants our requests, we say, "Isn't it wonderful that He answered my prayer?" Not always. Sometimes we beg Him for something, and after He gives it to us, we realize that it is the worst thing that could have happened to us. A wealthy man in Florida told me how he lost his son. He said, "The biggest mistake I ever made was to give him everything he wanted." Sometimes when we keep after God, He sends us what we are begging for, but the result is leanness to our souls. That was true of the children of Israel who wanted Saul as their king.*[36]

1Samuel 20:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

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[35] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

[36] J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel;* Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; pp. 106–107.

1Samuel 20:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿâvâh (עָוָה) [pronounced *ǵaw-VAW*]	*to be bent, to be twist, to be distorted; to writhe; to be bowed; to be depressed; to be perverted*	feminine singular construct, Niphal participle	Strong's #5753 BDB #730
marᵉdûwth (מַרְדוּת) [pronounced *mahrᵉ-DOOTH*]	*rebellion, rebelliousness; disobedience*	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4780 BDB #597

Although this verb occurs only here, it has ample substantiation for its meaning in its cognates.

According to Rotherham, a slight change of reading here would give us *son of a rebellious girl*.[37]

Translation: ...and he said to him, "[You] son of a twisted, rebellious [bitch]! First, Saul hurls an epithet at Jonathan, which is lost in the translation. Even though we are fairly certain of all the meanings, this simply sounds almost astute and refined when translated into the English. The fact that the final word only occurs here suggests that this could be profanity which meaning is close to *rebelliousness* or *disobedience*. *You twisted son of a bitch* might be one rendering; or, the PG13 version, *you bent asshole!* What we need is an epithet that reveals both vehemence and grave disappointment. Jonathan, being a great son, has probably never been on the receiving end of such a verbal diatribe (recall that Saul has only been demon influenced over the past year or so, and that his insanity was clear to his aides and to David; but this is the first time we see Saul speaking this way to Jonathan).

Now, you might wonder, *Saul's crazy, so why hasn't he laid into his son already?* Simple: Jonathan is not God's heir to Saul's throne. Saul is not threatened by Jonathan and Satan is not threatened by Jonathan. Therefore, the demonic influence that Saul is under is moot with respect to Jonathan. Furthermore, the demon's know what is going on, and they are able to clue Saul into this, at least emotionally. Saul already knows from previous experience that if he issues an public order for David's death in front of Jonathan, Jonathan will try to talk him out of it (1Sam. 19:2–6). Therefore, Saul acted at night against David and apart from Jonathan's knowledge (1Sam. 19:10–17 20:2). So, as far as Saul knows, Jonathan knows nothing about his latest attempts against David. However, what Jonathan said just set Saul off, and certainly in part because of demon influence. The demons know about Jonathan's alliance with and loyalty to David, and Saul no doubts suspects it.

Now, how is this communicated to Saul? I frankly don't know. However, if a wife sees under innocent circumstances her husband and his mistress, she will often know something is wrong. She understands the body language, the facial expressions, and recognizes that things are not right. Saul is looking at his son and listening to his voice, and he recognizes that something is just not right here, and he explodes against Jonathan. Call it intuition, demon contact, or simple blind anger. In my opinion, Saul recognizes that Jonathan has chosen David over his own father, and he reacts without restraint.

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[37] Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 310.

1Samuel 20:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (הֲ) [pronounced *heh*]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb *to be* may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
lô ֹ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĢ*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	1ˢᵗ person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced *baw-KHAHR*]	*to choose*	Qal active participle	Strong's #977 BDB #103.
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced *aht-TAW*]	*you* (often, the verb *to be* is implied)	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, personal pronoun; pausal form	Strong's #859 BDB #61
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

In the Septuagint, this reads *you are confederate with* or *are you have sided with*... The difference in the text could be to simply clear up the Hebrew translation for the Greek reader; i.e., it could be simply a paraphrase in the Greek at this point. Recall that this was the first translation of any major work into another language, so there were no real established rules of translation.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yîshay (יִשַׁי) [pronounced *yee-SHAH-ee*]	transliterated *Jesse*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445

Translation: Don't you know that you are choosing the son of Jesse... Saul doesn't know if Jonathan's story is true or not; he simply recognizes that there is something between Jonathan and David that is even greater than his bond with Jonathan. Saul knows that Jonathan has chosen David over loyalty to his own father. This choice means that Jonathan has chosen David rather than himself as Israel's future king. Saul knows already that a judgment has been laid against him; he has figured out that David is his replacement. However, none of that has come to pass yet, and Saul is going to do everything in his power to keep it from happening. He even believes that he will be able to pass his throne down to Jonathan.

1Samuel 20:30d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôsheth (בֹשֶׁת) [pronounced *BOH-sheth*]	*shame, dishonor; profanation, sacrilege, desecrated and vile; an idol* [which brings shame upon those who worship it]	feminine singular noun with a 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1322 BDB #102
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôsheth (בֹשֶׁת) [pronounced *BOH-sheth*]	*shame, dishonor; profanation, sacrilege, desecrated and vile; an idol* [which brings shame upon those who worship it]	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1322 BDB #102
´erᵉwâh (עֶרְוָה) [pronounced *ğer-VAWH*]	*nakedness; lewdness, indecency*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6172 BDB #788
`êm (אֵם) [pronounced *aim*]	*mother*	feminine singular noun with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #517 BDB #51

Translation: ...to your shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? Here, Saul uses the noun *bôsheth* twice. He has told his son Jonathan that he is a shame and a disgrace. Jonathan is more shameful than his own mother's nakedness. This line right here may give us a clue as to how Jonathan could name his own son *a scattering of shame*. Given what Saul has said to Jonathan right here, putting Saul's cards on the table, calling Jonathan *shameful* and *dishonorable;* for a man like Jonathan, with a great understanding of God's Word and God's plan for his own life, this diatribe against him would be extremely hurtful and affective. If Saul sees his own son as a *shame* and a *disgrace,* then Jonathan's son to would be a *shame* and a *disgrace*. Jonathan named his son *Mephibosheth,* which means *he scatters shame* or *a scattering of shame*. Possibly, Jonathan's thinking was, his father here accused him of being shameful; therefore, when Jonathan had children, he would be *scattering this shame*.[38]

There are several weird interpretations of what Saul is saying. Barnes, who is generally very accurate, asserts that Saul's words tell us that Jonathan was stubborn as far back as his mother's womb.[39] This obviously does not jive with the exegesis. Then Geneva Bible translation notes assert Saul is saying, "You are as contrary to me as your mother is."[40] Again, not a correct understanding of the verse.

One may interpret Saul's reference to the shame of Jonathan's mother as follows: Saul is king and all of his sons are heirs to his throne. David is the only outsider who could possibly assume the throne of Israel. When Jonathan sides with David over his own father, he does so to the shame of his mother. Instead of honoring his mother and her sons with loyalty to the family, Jonathan has shifted his loyalty to the one man who could end the line of Saul. This understanding is in complete agreement with what follows.

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[38] Just a theory as to Jonathan's motives for so naming his son. This does not explain why Saul named his son *Ishbosheth*.

[39] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:30.

[40] Geneva Bible Translation Notes; 1599, courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:30.

For all the days that a son of Jesse [is] alive upon the ground, you will not be established—you and your royalty. And now, send and bring him unto me for a son of death [is] he."

1Samuel 20:31

For all the time [lit., *all the days*] that [this] son of Jesse [is] alive on [this] earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Therefore, send for and bring him to me, for he must die [lit., *a son of death*]!"

Listen, for whatever time that this son of Jesse is alive on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will ever be established. Therefore, send for him and bring him to me, for he must die!"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	For all the days that a son of Jesse [is] alive upon the ground, you will not be established—you and your royalty. And now, send and bring him unto me for a son of death [is] he."
Septuagint	For all the days that the son of Jessæ lives upon the earth, your kingdom will not be established. Now then, send and take the young man, for he will surely die."
Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	You'll never be safe, and your kingdom will be in danger as long as that son of Jesse is alive. Turn him over to me now! He deserves to die!"
NLT	As long as that son of Jesse is alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	As long as Jesse's son lives on earth, neither you nor your right to be king is secure. Now, send some men to bring him to me. He's a dead man!"
JPS (Tanakh)	For as long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your kingship will be secure. Now then, have him brought to me, for he is marked for death."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"For as long as [lit., *all of the days*] the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Therefore now, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die [lit., *he is a son of death*]."
Young's Updated LT	For all the days that the son of Jesse lives on the ground you are not established, you and your kingdom; and now, send and bring him unto me, for he is a son of death."

What is the gist of this verse? Saul's point is that, as long as David is alive, then Jonathan claim to the throne is uncertain.

1Samuel 20:31a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

1Samuel 20:31a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*]	*the whole, all of, the entirety of, all;* can also be rendered *any of* with a plural noun	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced *yaw-MEEM*]	*days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year*	masculine plural noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yîshay (יִשַׁי) [pronounced *yee-SHAH-ee*]	transliterated *Jesse*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445
chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*]	*living, alive*	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ğahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ʾădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced *uh-daw-MAWH*]	*ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #127 BDB #9

Translation: For all the time [lit., *all the days*] that [this] son of Jesse [is] alive on [this] earth,... Saul may appear to us to be a madman, but his actions are not without justification (at least in his own mind). First of all, Jonathan is not next in line for the throne. He has older brothers. However, Saul needs to justify to Jonathan why David must die. Therefore, Saul personalizes this. He begins this explanation with what was probably an idiom of that time, and one that is not unlike an idiom of today. We might say, "As long as he is out there walking around..." This is why Saul uses the word ʾădâmâh, which means *ground* more than it means *earth*. It is what a person walks on.

1Samuel 20:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kûwn (כּוּן) [pronounced *koon*]	*to be firmly established, to be set up, to be established, to be prepared, to be ready; to confirm, to set up, to maintain, to found [a city]*	2nd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #3559 BDB #465

1Samuel 20:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced *aht-TAW*]	*you* (often, the verb *to be* is implied)	2nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; pausal form	Strong's #859 BDB #61
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
malᵉkûwth (מַלְכוּת) [pronounced *mahl-KOOTH*]	*royalty, royal power, reign, kingdom*	feminine singular noun with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4438 BDB #574

Translation: ...neither you nor your kingdom will be established. You will note how the notion of passing the crown down through one's heirs is taken here as a given. This is Saul's point to Jonathan: David's life affects Jonathan. They may think that they are friends, but David threatens the establishment of Jonathan's royal kingdom. Jonathan is not next in line, but, as a king's son, he is in line for the throne. Saul tells Jonathan the truth that he will not be king as long as David is alive. Saul appeals to Jonathan's self-interest. After all, Samuel told Saul, "Jehovah has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and He has given it to your associate who is superior to you." (1Sam. 15:28). No doubt these words burned in the mind of Saul.

Saul's warning to Jonathan is therefore true. Even though Saul is a liar, recognize that the very best lies always have some truth in them. Jonathan has no claim to the throne as long as David is alive, as God has chosen David to reign over Israel. What Saul does not grasp is that Jonathan has no interest in ruling over Israel. If this is not God's plan for him and if this is God's plan for David, then there is no use in being upset or contrary to God's plan. We never even get the impression that Jonathan is resigned to this fact. He does not just accept God's choice of David; he embraces that fact. Jonathan loves David and he trusts David. That God has chosen David to rule instead of Jonathan is not an issue to Jonathan. He is not upset by that; he, in fact, gives it very little thought. So, what Saul has to say, although true, is not an argument which will sway Jonathan.

Gill comments: *He would not, though heir to the crown, be sure of it; it would be precarious to him, he would be in great danger of being deprived of it on the death of his father; and therefore it would be his highest wisdom to deliver David up to be slain, as it was his greatest folly to protect him, and provide for his satiety.*[41]

Saul is no doubt very frustrated with his son at this point. The commentary of the NIV Study Bible: *Saul is...convinced that David will succeed him if David is not killed...and he is incapable of understanding Jonathan's lack of concern for his own succession to the throne.*[42]

1Samuel 20:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

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[41] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:31.

[42] *The NIV Study Bible;* ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 403.

1Samuel 20:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced ĝaht-TAWH]	*now, at this time, already*	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, wᵉ + the adverb ʿattâh mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore*. Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	*to send, to send for, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	*to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	sign of the direct object with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: Therefore, send for [him] and bring him to me,... Saul made enough of a point to where he believes that he can demand from Jonathan David. We find the word *shâlach* used quite frequently in conjunction with other verbs. The idea is that, Jonathan knows exactly where David is. He can assign the duty of grabbing David to some of his own soldiers. That is, Jonathan would not have to do this himself. He can have others do it for him.

1Samuel 20:31d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced MAW-veth]	*death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4194 BDB #560

1Samuel 20:31d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...for he must die [lit., *a son of death*]!" David's death is simply a matter of time. David is a marked man. As long as Saul is in power, David's life will be under attack. He will die! Recall that we have spoken of kings and their rivals in the ancient world. It is the norm for a king to round up all of his rivals and to kill them. This can even be done to his own sons, if they appear to want the throne before their father's natural death. So, the position of the Sauline dynasty is that, "David must die."

And so answers Jonathan Saul, his father, and so he says unto him, "For why is he to be killed? What has he done?"	1Samuel 20:32	**Jonathan then answered his father Saul, saying, "For what reason is he to be executed? What has he done?"**

Jonathan then answered his father Saul, saying, "For what reason should David be executed? Just exactly what has he done?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so answers Jonathan Saul, his father, and so he says unto him, "For why is he to be killed? What has he done?"
Septuagint	And Jonathan answered Saul, "Why does he die? What has he done?"
Significant differences	There is an additional phrase in the Hebrew which really adds nothing to our understanding. It is possible that the Greek translators simply left it out.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Why do you want to kill David?" Jonathan asked. "What has he done?"
NLT	"But what has he done?" Jonathan demanded. "Why should he be put to death?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan asked his father, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"
JPS (Tanakh)	But Jonathan spoke up and said to his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	But Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan answers Saul his father, and says unto him, "Why is he put to death? What has he done?"

What is the gist of this verse? David asks his father for what legal reason can he execute David.

1Samuel 20:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced ǧaw-NAWH]	*to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shâʾûwl[43] (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: Jonathan then answered his father Saul, saying,... That David is a challenge to his throne is not really an issue to Jonathan. He immediately challenges his father.

1Samuel 20:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מֶה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why*	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552

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[43] Surprisingly enough, this is the first occurrence of Saul's name in this chapter.

1Samuel 20:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered *why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose,* indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to be executed, to be killed, to be assassinated*	3rd person masculine singular, Hophal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
The Hophal is the passive of the Hiphil (causative stem) and the rarest of the seven stems. There is never a hint of reflexive in this stem and the agent of the verb is often not given in the immediate context. Zodhiates writes: *The Hophal stem conveys at once both an active and passive sense, active with respect to the action being done, passive with respect to the object being made to do so.*[44] I do not follow that exactly. Most grammar books call it simply the causative passive stem.			

Translation: ... "For what reason is he to be executed? Jonathan asks two short, related questions. The first is, "Why is David to be assassinated?" "On the basis of what should David be executed?" Jonathan understands that David is God's heir to the throne, which is clear in his pact with David. However, in Jonathan's mind, this is not a legitimate reason for David to be executed. Jonathan is asking for his father to provide for him an act of sedition; anything that David has done which is untoward; anything that indicates that David is actively pursuing Saul's death or downfall.[45]

I hope that you recognize the parallel that is set up here. Pilate will later ask the Jewish people, "What evil has He done?" in reference to Jesus. And the people will be adamant in calling for His blood. The difference between Jonathan and Pilate, both advocates for innocent men, is striking. Jonathan will risk his own life to save David; Pilate, fearing a riot, will do that which is expedient and release Jesus to be crucified (see Matt. 27:22–26 Luke 23:20–25).

1Samuel 20:32c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâh (מֶה) [pronounced *maw*]	*what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever*	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
The vowel point is actually a segol here, which is how mâh is spelled when mâh precedes certain letters.			
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ğaw-SAWH]	*to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: What has he done?" The issue to Jonathan is not whether David threatens the throne or not; the issue is, just exactly what has David done to deserve death. Simply being the king does not give Saul the right to execute anyone. Saul has to give Jonathan a reason and it must be some clear, overt act which David has done. Jonathan does not really expect an answer from Saul. He knows his friend David and he knows of his great personal integrity.

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[44] *The Complete Word Study Old Testament;* Dr. S. Zodhiates; p 2276.

[45] Actually, any capital crime will do; however, our focus should be on what one would expect: an act of treason.

You will note how Jonathan carefully questioned David and then he carefully questioned Saul. It was his intention to get all of the facts before acting. Two days ago, he was unaware that this intrigue was occurring. He did not know that his father still intended to kill David, so he obviously did not know why Saul harbored these intentions. So far, Jonathan's questions have only produced the answer, "David is a threat to your throne." So now, Jonathan pressed for hard evidence. He wants to know exactly what David has done to deserve death.

Also note that Jonathan does not even deal with Saul's remarks about him personally. No doubt that Jonathan feels the sting of his father's barbs; no doubt this was hurtful to him. However, Jonathan does not focus on this. He does not defend himself. He does not say, as most of us would, "Now just wait a damn minute here, dad, before you start ragging on me." We would launch into several paragraphs of self-justification. Defending his own person is not as important an issue to Jonathan, so he simply bypasses that detour. Again, this gives us a clue as to Jonathan's tremendous character. A lessor man would have been caught in Saul's trap here, a lessor man would defend himself. Not Jonathan. He does not need to justify himself.

It is important to understand Jonathan's state of mind. When he was with David, he could not believe that his father was still out to kill him. He thought that he had nipped that problem in the bud. However, here, it is clear that Saul is completely focused on killing David. Jonathan has enough of an open mind to ask for a reason for Saul's behavior and position. He believed David, and it turns out that what David said is absolutely true. Now Jonathan questions his father—*is there any legitimate reason for Saul to pursue the life of David?* Had Saul been prepared with even a false statement of David's acts of treason, Jonathan might have been swayed (he would have at least considered what his father had to say). However, his father was too angry at this point to devise any lies about David.

And so casts Saul the spear upon him to strike him. And so knows Jonathan that she [even] she was completed from with his father to kill David.	1Samuel 20:33	**Then Saul cast his javelin beyond him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that it was determined [lit., *finished, completed*] from the mind of his father to kill David.**

Suddenly, Saul threw his javelin at Jonathan; therefore, Jonathan realized that his father was determined to kill David.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so casts Saul the spear upon him to strike him. And so knows Jonathan that she [even] she was completed from with his father to kill David.
Septuagint	And Saul lifted up his spear against Jonathan to slay him; so Jonathan knew that this evil was determined on by his father to kill David.
Significant differences	Jonathan is identified as the person against whom Saul raises the spear. In the Hebrew, the second phrase is a bit more cryptic; the Greek interprets this phrase as much as translates it (assuming that what they had to work with was cryptic).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul threw his spear at Jonathan and tried to kill him. Then Jonathan was sure that his father really did want to kill David.
NAB	At this Saul brandished his spear to strike him, and thus Jonathan learned that his father was resolved to kill David.
NLT	Then Saul hurled his spear at Jonathan, intending to kill him. So at last Jonathan realized that his father was really determined to kill David.
REB	At that, Saul picked up his spear and threatened to kill him; and Jonathan knew that his father was bent on David's death.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   Saul raised his spear to strike him. Then Jonathan knew his father was determined to kill David.

JPS (Tanakh)   At that, Saul threw his spear at him to strike him down; and Jonathan realized that his father was determined to do away with Dvaid.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down; so Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death.

Young's Updated LT   And Saul cast the javelin at him to strike him, and Jonathan knew that it had been determined by his father to put David to death.

What is the gist of this verse? Having no answer to Jonathan's question, Saul throws his spear at him. Jonathan realizes that Saul is determined to kill David.

	1Samuel 20:33a		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ţûwl (טוּל) [pronounced *tool*]	*to hurl, to cast, to throw; to cast out [of a country]; to throw down at length, to prostrate*	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2904 BDB #376
This exact same word with the same morphology is also used in 1Sam. 18:11 when Saul first casts his javelin at David. This same word is used on Jonah being cast into the sea (Jonah 1:5, 12, 15) and of the believer who will not be utterly *cast down* in Psalm 37:24. Therefore, despite the many translations to the contrary, Saul is not simply brandishing his weapon before Jonathan; he has thrown his javelin at Jonathan.			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
cḥănîyth (חֲנִית) [pronounced *khuh-NEETH*]	*spear*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ĝahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâkâh (נָכָה) [pronounced *naw-KAWH*]	*to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat*	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645

Translation: Then Saul cast his javelin beyond him to strike him. Several translations skirt this issue and imply that Saul simply lifted up his spear to throw at Jonathan. However, the text clearly tells us that the javelin was

actually thrown, although it went beyond Jonathan. The intention was to actually strike Jonathan. This was a wake up call for Jonathan. J, B & F comment: *This is a sad proof of the maniacal frenzy into which the unhappy monarch was transported.*[46]

Gill gives us some background information: *So provoked to wrath was he by what he said. It seems by this that Saul always had a javelin or spear in his hand, which is to be accounted for by the custom of those times; in other countries, as well as in this, the kings used to carry spears in their hands instead of sceptres, and which they used as such; so Justin, speaking of the times of Romulus, says, that kings in those times had spears, as an ensign of royalty, which the Greeks call sceptres; and so the Greeks called sceptres spear.*[47]

A reasonable question is, *how did Saul, as a once great warrior, miss Jonathan at such close range?* There are several reasons. Although Saul was a brave warrior at one time, he engaged in direct warfare less frequently as time went on. There was never the question, *why doesn't Saul fight Goliath?* in 1Sam. 17, because he had apparently not been doing any hand-to-hand for awhile. So, Saul had become rusty. Saul's mind was influenced by demons. They did not indwell him, but they certainly influenced him. Therefore, his timing and his royal protocol were both out of wack. This explains how he could fling a javelin at Jonathan in the first place. Finally, and this is the most important reason, it was not Jonathan's time to die. So, even had Saul been in top shape, he still would have missed. As Americans, we have watched hundreds of murders on television and in the movies, and we see how accurate men are when they fire handguns on film. However, in real life, hitting a moving person with a handgun is much more difficult (my experience with a handgun is simple target practice where the target does not move). My lack of accuracy was embarrassing. Therefore, we should not expect perfect accuracy from a demon-influenced, ex-warrior who is in an emotional state.

1Samuel 20:33b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĢ*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced *kaw-LAWH*]	*to complete, to finish; to be past, to go by; to consume, to waste, to destroy; to be completed or finished, to be accomplished or fulfilled; to be consumed [wasted or spent]*	3rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3615 BDB #477

[46] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 20:33.

[47] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:33.

1Samuel 20:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The idea here is that, this is a done deal in Saul's mind. Saul's determination to kill David is completed, finished. There is no persuasive argument that will change his mind. Keil and Delitzsch refer to this as word of *unalterable resolution*.[48]			
hîyʾ (הִיא) [pronounced *hee*]	*she, it*	3rd person feminine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עִ ם) [pronounced *g̃eem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.*			
ʾâᵇv (אָ ב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute*	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: So Jonathan knew that it was determined [lit., *finished, completed*] from the mind of his father to kill David. Jonathan realized with Saul's complete loss of composure (v. 31) and his sudden attack on him that Saul had completely determined to kill David. This was a completed, finished determination and that no argument would sway Saul the other way. What David had told Jonathan earlier (v. 1) is indisputable.

And so stands Jonathan from with the table in a burning of nostril and he had not eaten in a day of the moon the second bread for he was grieved in David, for had disgraced him his father.	1Samuel 20:34	**Then Jonathan stood away from the table with a fierce anger and he did not eat [any] food during the second day of the [new] moon [festival] because he was upset [lit., *grieved*] regarding David [and] because his father had disgraced him.**

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[48] Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 508.

Jonathan then stood away from the table with great anger and he refused to eat any food on that second day of the New Moon Festival because he was upset about David and because his father had disgraced him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so stands Jonathan from with the table in a burning of nostril and he had not eaten in a day of the moon the second bread for he was grieved in David, for had disgraced him his father.
Septuagint	And Jonathan sprang up from the table in great anger and did not eat bread on the second [day] of the month, for he grieved bitterly for David, because his father determined [evil] against him.
Significant differences	Jonathan *stands* in the Hebrew; he *springs up* in the Greek. Saul disgraces Jonathan (David?) in the Hebrew (and in the context of this verse); and Saul determines to do evil against Jonathan (David?) in the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan was angry that his father had insulted David so terribly. He got up, left the table, and didn't eat anything all that day.
NLT	Jonathan left the table in fierce anger and refused to eat all that day, for he was crushed by his father's shameful behavior toward David.
REB	He left the table in a rage and ate nothing on the second ay of the festival; for he was indignant on David's behalf and because his father had humiliated him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan got up from the table very angry and ate nothing that second day of the month. He was worried sick about David because Jonathan had been humiliated by his own father.
JPS (Tanakh)	Jonathan rose from the table in a rage. He ate no food on the second day of the new moon, because he was grieved about David, and because his father had humiliated him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Then Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat food on the second day of the new moon, for he was grieved over David because his father had dishonored him.
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan rises from the table in the heat of anger, and has not eaten food on the second day of the new moon, for he has been grieved for David, for his father put him to shame.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan also becomes extremely angry with his father and refuses to eat anything during that second day of feasting. He is angry because of his father's attitude toward David and because his father shamed him (Jonathan). It is possible that Saul is shaming David here.

	1Samuel 20:34a		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*]	*to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
min (מְן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
ʿîm (עַם) [pronounced *ǵeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
Together, these prepositions mean: *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from among, from the possession of, from the custody of, from the house of, from the vicinity of, out of the power of, from the mind of.*			
shûlᵉchân (שֻׁלְחָן) [pronounced *shoolᵉ-KHAWN*]	*a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020
bᵉ (בַ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
chŏrîy (חֲרִי) [pronounced *khŏ-REE*]	*a burning, heat; fierce; great*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2750 BDB #354
ʾaph (אַף) [pronounced *ahf*]	*nose, nostril,* but is also translated *face, brow, anger*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #639 BDB #60

Translation: Then Jonathan stood away from the table with a fierce anger... Recall that Jonathan was standing up to eat (v. 25), but, of course, his plate would be at the table. The words here mean that Jonathan took a stand away from the table. His father had already chunked a spear at him and Jonathan dodged that (or it missed him). So Jonathan moved away from the table with great anger.

Apparently, even though Saul had thrown a spear at him, and there was no doubt a sudden intense element thrust into this gay festival; Jonathan remains, and it does not appear that Saul did anything but severely disgrace his son. There is nothing said about the retrieval of the javelin, about a second try; and the indication is, apart from this tense moment, Saul does not make another attempt on Jonathan's life. That is, Jonathan does not feel so threatened that he must leave. He remains, in full sight, almost in defiance of his father, despite the shame of his father making an attempt on his life.

We should take note of this. Jonathan's emotions are strong and you will recall that his father also would act out in anger. Jonathan, at least for the next few hours, will not be a man who can calmly calculate what has to be

done because his mind is so clouded with anger. This is perhaps one of the reasons that God did not make Jonathan king.

1Samuel 20:34b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô �'re (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced *aw-KAHL*]	*to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
bᵉ (בְ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day, today* (with a definite article)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
chôdesh (חֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-desh*]	*new moon, month*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2320 BDB #294
shenîy (שֵׁנִי) [pronounced *sheh-NEE*]	*second, the second;* When only two items are named, it can be rendered *[the] other*	adjective singular numeral singular ordinal with the definite article	Strong's #8145 BDB #1041
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced *LEH-khem*]	literally means *bread;* used more generally for *food*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536

Translation: ...and he did not eat [any] food during the second day of the [new] moon [festival]... Jonathan either pouted or he was far too angry to eat. My guess is the latter. Any one of you, when placed in a strong emotional place, has no doubt experienced a lack of hunger. Jonathan, the king's own son, would not participate in this celebration hosted by Saul. However, Jonathan clearly remained there; he did not flinch, he did not run. No doubt that Saul, at least within himself, came to his senses. Whether there was an apology, whether Saul made light of this attempt, or what happened afterwards is not recorded, other than the fact that Jonathan remained there, but he did not eat.

By remaining, Jonathan shows his strength, but also maintains loyalty with Saul. Had he walked away completely, that could have been seen as a break from his father or as a lack of conviction.

1Samuel 20:34c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

1Samuel 20:34c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
´âtsaᵇv (עָצַב) [pronounced *gaw-TSAHᴮV*]	*to be in pain, to be hurt, to be grieved, to be afflicted*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #6087 BDB #780 (see #781)
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: ...because he was upset [lit., *grieved*] regarding David... Two reasons are given for Jonathan's anger and his choosing not to eat—the first is here; he was extremely upset regarding David. Jonathan loved David and trusted him, and the arrangement of his being the king's son and David serving in the king's army allowed them to spend time together. Instead, David is held in low regard by the king. Having had others in power hold me in the same regard, I can only add that it does not matter how hard you work or what sort of a job you do, your co-workers will generally hold you in lower esteem. David, a brave and loyal subject, is held in very low esteem by Saul, thus lessening the great deeds that he had done on behalf of Israel.

Application: If you have authority, then be mindful of the way that you treat those under your authority. Not only can you distort others' perception of them but you can also elicit a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you assume that their contribution is little or nothing, their contribution may become that in response to your perception. Only in the case of someone with great personal integrity like David will a person continue to give his best effort despite your demeaning behavior.

1Samuel 20:34d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
kâlam (כָּלַם) [pronounced *kaw-LAHM*]	*to put someone to shame, to reproach, to treat shamefully, to disgrace; to injure, to hurt some one*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3637 BDB #483
ʾâᵇv (אָב,) [pronounced *awᵇv*]	*father,* both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...[and] because his father had disgraced him. Here, we are not speaking of Saul disgracing David (although he did). Here we are speaking of Saul disgracing his own son. Saul could just as well have picked up Jonathan's plate and flung it from the table. Saul could have spit in Jonathan's face. When Saul threw his spear at Jonathan, he completely and totally disgraced Jonathan and his position. Few things could be more insulting than that.

Jonathan Signals David Surreptitiously While Target Practicing with His Personal Servant

And so he is in the morning and so goes out Jonathan [into] the field to a specific time of David, and a boy, small, [is] with him.	1Samuel 20:35	In the morning [lit., *and it is in the morning*], Jonathan went out to the field for [his] appointment [with] David, and with him [is] a young servant [boy].

In the morning, Jonathan went out into the field to surreptitiously meet David. A young servant boy accompanied him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he is in the morning and so goes out Jonathan [into] the field to a specific time of David, and a boy, small, [is] with him.
Septuagint	And morning came and Jonathan went out to the field, as he appointed for a signal to David, and a little boy [was] with him.

Significant differences	In the Greek, that Jonathan is going to signal David is made clear.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	In the morning, Jonathan went out to the field to meet David. He took a servant boy along...
NJB	Next morning, Jonathan went out into the country at the time agreed with David, taking young servant with him.
NLT	The next morning, as agreed, Jonathan went out into the field and took a young boy with him to gather his arrows.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	In the morning Jonathan went out to the country to the place he and David had agreed on. Jonathan had a young boy with him.
JPS (Tanakh)	In the morning, Jonathan went out into the open for the meeting with David, accompanied by a young boy.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Now it came about in the morning that Jonathan went out into the field for the appointment with David, and a little lad *was* with him.
Young's Literal Translation	And it comes to pass in the morning, that Jonathan goes out into the field for the appointment with David, and a little youth *is* with him.

What is the gist of this verse? On the morning of the third day (after spending two days at the New Moon Festival), Jonathan goes out to a field to shoot some arrows; his servant boy is with him.

1Samuel 20:35a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
bᵉ (בַּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced *BOH-ker*]	*morning*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*]	*to go out, to come out, to come forth*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced *saw-DEH*]	*field, land, open field, open country*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
môwʿêd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced *moh-ĠADE*]	*a specific time, a pre-determined time, an appointed time*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4150 BDB #417
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: In the morning [lit., *and it is in the morning*], Jonathan went out to the field for [his] appointment [with] David,... Three days previous, Jonathan did not believe that his father was going to kill David; however, it was clear by his meal with his father on the previous day that not only did Saul intend to kill David but there was nothing that would dissuade him. Therefore, Jonathan got up and went to the field where David was to be for their pre-arranged meeting.

	1Samuel 20:35b		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ₙaˊar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
qâţôn (קָטֹן) [pronounced *kaw-TOHN*]	*small, insignificant;* a word particularly used for *youth, younger*	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6995 & #6996 BDB #882
ˊîm (עַ ם) [pronounced *ģeem*]	*with, at, by, near*	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with a 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...and with him [is] a young servant [boy]. As royalty, Jonathan did not travel alone. He took with him a young servant boy. Had he gone out to target practice alone, which would involve fetching his own arrows—that would have aroused suspicion. Saul did not choose to send anyone else along with them.

And so he says to his boy, "Run; find please the arrows which I am shooting." The boy ran and he shoots the arrow to cause to pass over him.   1Samuel 20:36   **Then he said to his servant [boy], "Run; please find the arrows that I will shoot." The boy ran and he shot the arrow, causing it to pass over him.**

He then said to his servant boy, "Run and fetch the arrows that I will shoot." The boy ran while he shot the arrow, causing it to pass over him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text   And so he says to his boy, "Run; find please the arrows which I am shooting." The boy ran and he shoots the arrow to cause to pass over him.

Septuagint   And he said to the boy, "Run, find me the arrows which I shoot." And the boy ran and [Jonathan] shot an arrow, and sent it beyond [him].

Significant differences   No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV   and told him, "When I shoot the arrows, you run and find them for me." The boy started running, and Jonathan shot an arrow so that it would go beyond him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   "Run," he told the boy, "please find the arrows I shoot." The boy ran, and Jonathan shot the arrow over him.

JPS (Tanakh)   He said to the boy, "Run ahead and find the arrows that I shoot." And as the boy ran, he shot the arrows past him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB   And he said to his lad, "Run, find now the arrows which I am about to shoot." As the
                        lad was running, he shot an arrow past him.
Young's Updated LT   And he says to his youth, "Run, find, I pray you, the arrows which I am shooting;"
                        the youth is running, and he has shot the arrow, causing it to pass over him.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan sends his servant boy after the arrows that he has shot. He shoots another arrow beyond where the boy is.

1Samuel 20:36a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced *roots*]	*to run*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
mâtsâʾ (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*]	*to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
nâʾ (נָא) [pronounced *naw*]	*please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you*	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chêts (חֵץ) [pronounced *khayts*]	*arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʾânôkîy (אָנֹכִי) [pronounced *awn-oh-KEE*]	*I, me*	1st person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59

1Samuel 20:36a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*]	*to cast, to shoot; to sprinkle, to water, to send out the hand, to teach, to instruct*	Hiphil participle	Strong's #3384 BDB #434

Translation: Then he said to his servant [boy], "Run; please find the arrows that I will shoot." It is interesting how Jonathan treats his servant boy. Although he gives him orders, he also used the particle of entreaty; so he is saying, "Please." He needs to set this young man up so that he can give a signal to David. He first tells his young man to begin running, although he hasn't shot all of his arrows yet (at least, that is what appears to be the case). He needs to shoot the arrows beyond the boy, which will be the warning to David. He can't really say "the arrows are beyond you" if the kid is standing next to him, because that would be like saying, "The ground is below you."

1Samuel 20:36b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Two early printed editions, the Aramaic and the Septuagint begin with the conjunction *and* here.[49]			
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced *roots*]	*to run*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*]	*to throw, to throw out, to throw down, to shoot*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3384 BDB #434
chêtsîy (חֵצִי) [pronounced *khay-TZEE*]	*arrow*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2678 BDB #345
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâbar (עָבַר) [pronounced *ģawᵇ-VAHR*]	*to cause to pass over, to cause to pass through, to transmit, to send over; to pass by sin, to remit, to forgive*	Hiphil infinitive construct with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5674 BDB #716

Translation: The boy ran and he shot the arrow, causing it to pass over him. Once the lad is a distance from him, Jonathan shoots the arrow so that it passes over the young man.

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[49] Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 310.

And so comes the boy as far as a place of the arrow which shot Jonathan and so calls Jonathan after the boy, and so he says, "Is not the arrow from you and beyond

1Samuel 20:37

The boy went as far as the arrow's landing [lit., *place*] which Jonathan shot. Then Jonathan called out to the servant [boy], saying, "Isn't the arrow further out [lit., *out from you and beyond*]?"

As the boy went out as far as where the arrow landed, Jonathan called out to him, "Isn't the arrow further out?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so comes the boy as far as a place of the arrow which shot Jonathan and so calls Jonathan after the boy, and so he says, "Is not the arrow from you and beyond
Septuagint	And the boy came to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan shot; and Jonathan cried out after the lad, and said, "The arrow [is] on that side of you and beyond you."
Significant differences	The MT has a negative in this verse, which demands a positive answer. The Greek does not phrase is as a question, but simply makes a statement.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	When the boy got near the place where the arrow had landed, Jonathan shouted, "Isn't the arrow on past you?"
NLT	"Start running," he told the boy, "so you can find the arrows as I shoot them." So the boy ran, and Jonathan shot an arrow beyond him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	When the boy reached the place where Jonathan's arrow ⌊had landed⌋, Jonathan called after him, "The arrows are next to you!"
JPS (Tanakh)	When the boy came to the place where the arrows shot by Jonathan had fallen, Jonathan called out to the boy, "Hey, the arrows are beyond you!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	When the lad reached the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called out after the lad, and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"
Young's Updated LT	And the youth comes unto the place of the arrow which Jonathan has shot, and Jonathan calls after the youth, and says, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan shot one arrow in particular which would go beyond where the servant boy was, and he calls out to his servant boy, "Isn't the arrow beyond you?" This, of course, is his signal to David that all is not well.

1Samuel 20:37a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 20:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ǵahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ǵahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced *maw-KOHM*]	*place, situated;* for a soldier, it may mean where he is *stationed;* for people in general, it would be their *place of abode* (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
chêtsîy (חֵצִי) [pronounced *khay-TZEE*]	*arrow*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2678 BDB #345
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*]	*to throw, to throw out, to throw down, to shoot*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3384 BDB #434
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

Translation: The servant [boy] went as far as the arrow's landing [lit., *place*] which Jonathan shot. Jonathan shot the arrow beyond where his servant boy was standing and the boy gets to the place where the arrow is. This is going to be some distance out from Jonathan and apparently, he will feign not being able to see where the arrow actually landed (I have the same problem when I play golf).

1Samuel 20:37b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâʾ (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*]	*to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾachar (אַחַר) [pronounced *ah-KHAHR*]	*after, following, behind*	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29

1Samuel 20:37b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ǧahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hă (הֲ) [pronounced *heh*]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb *to be* may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
chêtsîy (חֵצִי) [pronounced *khay-TZEE*]	*arrow*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2678 BDB #345
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of*	preposition of separation with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וִ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlᵉʾâh (הָלְאָה) [pronounced *HAWLᵉ-aw*]	*beyond, back, henceforth, hitherto, forward*	adverb	Strong's #1973 BDB #229

Translation: Then Jonathan called out to the servant [boy], saying, "Isn't the arrow further out [lit., *out from you and beyond*]?" Even though Jonathan may well know that the boy is right there where the arrow is, he calls out to him, asking, "Isn't the arrow further out?" This is the signal to David that things are not okay.

Now, I have approached this as though these clauses are in chronological order, which is not always the case with the Hebrew. It is possible that Jonathan called out to the boy first and then he arrived to where the arrow was. In any case, Jonathan's loud call to the boy was not, of course, for the boy, but a signal for David.

And so calls Jonathan after the boy, "Quickly, rush, do not remain!" And so gathers up the boy of Jonathan the arrows and so he comes unto his lord.	1Samuel 20:38	**Then Jonathan called after the boy, "Quickly, hurry up! Do not linger [lit., *remain*]!" So Jonathan's servant [boy] gathered up the arrows and he came to his lord.**

Jonathan called after the boy, "Do this quickly; don't dawdle!" So his servant boy gathered up the arrows and brought them to Jonathan.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so calls Jonathan after the boy, "Quickly, rush, do not remain!" And so gathers up the boy of Jonathan the arrows and so he comes unto his lord.
Septuagint	And Jonathan cried out after his boy, saying, "Make all speed, and stay not." And Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and brought the arrows to his master.

Significant differences	No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan shouted to him again, "Hurry up! Don't stop!" The boy picked up the arrows and brought them back to Jonathan,...
NJB	Again Jonathan shouted after the servant, 'Quick! Hurry, do not stand around.' Jonathan's servant picked up the arrow and brought it back to his master.
NLT	"Hurry, hurry, don't wait." So the boy quickly gathered up the arrows and ran back to his master.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Jonathan added, "Quick! Hurry up! Don't stand there!" Jonathan's young servant gathered the arrows and came to his master.
JPS (Tanakh)	And Jonathan called after the boy, "Quick, hurry up. Don't stop!" So Jonathan's boy gathered the arrows and came back to his master.—

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible	And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make haste—be quick, do not stay! So Jonathan's lad picked up the arrows and brought [them] unto his master.
NASB	And Jonathan called after the lad, "Hurry, be quick, do not stay!" And Jonathan's lad picked up the arrow and came to his master.
Young's Updated LT	And Jonathan calls after the youth, "Speed, haste, stand not;" and Jonathan's youth gathers the arrows, and comes unto his lord.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan tells his servant boy to quickly fetch the arrows.

1Samuel 20:38a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ ʾ (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*]	*to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾachar (אַחַר) [pronounced *ah-KHAHR*]	*after, following, behind*	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29

1Samuel 20:38a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ₙaʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ğahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
mᵉhêrâh (מְהֵרָה) [pronounced *mᵉ-hay-RAW*]	*quickly, hastily, speedily*	adverb (this is also used as a feminine noun)	Strong's #4120 BDB #555
chûsh (חוּשׁ) [pronounced *khoosh*]	*to rush, to hasten, to come swiftly, to approach swiftly, to make haste, to move swiftly, to act quickly*	2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #2363 BDB #301

Notice that chûsh sounds a little like our verbalized sound effect *whoosh*. It has a secondary meaning of *strong feelings of emotion, internal feelings of urgency*.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lôʾ or lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿâmad (עָמַד) [pronounced *ğaw-MAHD*]	*to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763

Translation: Then Jonathan called after the boy, "Quickly, hurry up! Do not linger [lit., *remain*]!" Now, recognize that in these narratives, some details are left out because they are unimportant. Here, it sounds as though Jonathan shot one arrow and now has decided after all that, to quickly head back home. Jonathan has probably shot several arrows and his servant boy has gone after these arrows several times. However, for this final arrow, Jonathan signals David. Now that David has been signaled, David will want to leave quickly. However, Jonathan would like to speak with David one last time. He does not think that he is being watched, so he first needs to get rid of his own servant.

Now, notice these words that Jonathan uses here. He is not really speaking to the boy. He is really speaking to David. "Quickly, hurry! Don't linger here!" Of course, his servant would not realize this (in fact, many exegetes do not catch this).[50] See, the servant has gotten the arrows, and Jonathan is acting as if he is impatient and does not want the servant to stay out there, but to quickly fetch the arrows and then to go back to the palace (or to Jonathan's living quarters). However, what Jonathan is really doing is signaling David. He is saying to David, "Quickly, hurry! Don't stay around here." David will understand his message.

1Samuel 20:38b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqaṭ (לָקַט) [pronounced *law-BAHT*	*to gather, to gather up, to pick up*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3950 BDB #544

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[50] As a matter of fact, I didn't catch this either; it was Clarke who pointed it out to me. Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:38.

1Samuel 20:38b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ₙaʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced NAH-ǧahr]	boy, youth, young man, personal attendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chêtsîy (חֵצִי) [pronounced khay-TZEE]	arrow	masculine singular noun with the definite article and the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #2678 BDB #345

Although this is written *the arrow of mine,* it is read *the arrows* (that is, in the margin notes, it is plural). The difference between the words is the addition of the mem (ם) on the end. The difference between *the arrow* and *the arrow of mine* is vowel points, which were added long after the original text was written.

According to Rotherham: It is written *arrow* but read *arrows*. However, it is both written and read *arrows* in two early printed editions.[51]

Translation: So Jonathan's servant [boy] gathered up the arrows... You will note that there are some problems with the translation, something that you would never have guessed with the various English translations. Jonathan shot several arrows, but he shot one particular arrow beyond his servant boy so that he could signal David. However, his servant picks up several arrows and brings them back to Jonathan.

1Samuel 20:38c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
According to Rotherham, this should read: *and brought them* (which is per the Septuagint, the Syriac and the Vulgate.[52] The difference in the Hebrew is the stem. Bôwʾ, in the Hiphil, means *to bring*.			
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

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[51] Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 310.

[52] Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 310.

1Samuel 20:38c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ʾâdôwn (אָדוֹן) [pronounced *aw-DOHN*]	*lord, master, owner, superior, sovereign*	masculine singular noun with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 BDB #10

Translation: ...and he came to his lord. Jonathan's servant quickly gathers up the arrows and returns to Jonathan, his lord (this is the same word that we know as *Adonai,* and, when referring to God, we translate is *Lord*).

And the boy had not known anything; only Jonathan and David knew the word.	1Samuel 20:39	**The servant [boy] perceived nothing [out of the ordinary]; only David and Jonathan understood the signal [lit., *knew the word*].**

The servant boy perceived nothing out of the ordinary; only David and Jonathan understood the signal.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And the boy had not known anything; only Jonathan and David knew the word.
Septuagint	And the boy knew nothing, only Jonathan and David [knew].

Significant differences	The Greek leaves out a few words; but the meaning appears to be implied by the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...but he had no idea about what was going on. Only Jonathan and David knew.
NLT	He, of course, didn't understand what Jonathan meant; only Jonathan and David knew.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The boy had no idea what was going on, but Jonathan and David understood.
JPS (Tanakh)	The boy suspected nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.—

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	But the lad was not aware of anything; only Jonathan and David know about the matter.
NRSV	But the boy knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.
Young's Updated LT	And the youth has not known anything, only Jonathan and David knew the word.

What is the gist of this verse? The boy did not know that Jonathan was giving a signal to anyone. David did understand the signal, however.

1Samuel 20:39a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ₙaʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĢ*]	*to see; to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
mᵉʾûwmâh (מְאוּמָה) [pronounced *mᵉ-oo-MAW*]	*anything,* and it is usually found in negative sentences; therefore, with the negative, it is often rendered *nothing*	indefinite singular pronoun/adverb	Strong's #3972 BDB #548

Translation: The servant [boy] perceived nothing [out of the ordinary];... The young personal servant of Jonathan did not realize that there was a signal or that the signal had been given. He had just assumed that he was fetching the arrows that his lord shot.

I should point out at this time that Jonathan did not know the circumstances of his shooting arrows in this field. He didn't know if the servant was secretly watching him, as per orders from Saul. He did not know if he was being watched. And, at the time that he set up the signal to David, he was unsure as to whether or not he would be accompanied by more than his servant when he went to shoot arrows. That is the key here. Although he doubted, for the most part, that his father was out to kill David, he also recognized if that were the case, that his father might not allow him to simply leave the palace to shoot arrows without being accompanied by someone. Saul may have seen to it that Jonathan was accompanied by several people. Therefore, Jonathan needed a signal that he could communicate to David without having to have personal contact with him.   Understanding this will help us to understand what will occur in the verses to follow.

1Samuel 20:39b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾakᵉ (אַךְ) [pronounced *ahkᵉ*]	*surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once*	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception. Also used as an affirmative particle	Strong's #389 BDB #36
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

	1Samuel 20:39b		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
yâdaʿ (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHĞ*]	*to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something*	3ʳᵈ person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâᵇvâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced *dawᵇ-VAWR*]	*word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

Translation: ...only David and Jonathan understood the signal [lit., *knew the word*]. Jonathan's servant had no idea that any sort of signal had been given. However, David, who was hidden in that area, and Jonathan both understood the signal that had been given. The signal was two-fold: first, Jonathan confirmed to David that Saul was out to kill him and secondly, Jonathan tells David to leave quickly (although his servant thought that this was addressed to him).

And so gives Jonathan his manufactured goods unto the boy who [is] to him and so he says to him, "Go, bring [these to] the city."	1Samuel 20:40	**Jonathan gave his weapons to his servant [boy], saying, "Go [and] take [these to] the city."**

Jonathan gave his weapons to the servant boy and said, "Go and take these to the city."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so gives Jonathan his manufactured goods unto the boy who [is] to him and so he says to him, "Go, bring [these to] the city."
Septuagint	
Significant differences	.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and told him, "Take these back into town."
NLT	Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and told him to take them back to the city.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| God's Word™ | Then Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy. He told the boy, "Take them back into town." |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| NASB | Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, "Go, bring *them* to the city." |
| Young's Updated LT | And Jonathan gives his weapons unto the youth whom he has, and says to him, "Go, carry [these] into the city." |

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan dismisses his servant. He does not require him for anything else but to take his weapons back to the city.

1Samuel 20:40a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*]	*to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kᵉlîy (כְּלִי) [pronounced *kᵉlee*]	*manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables*	masculine plural noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ğahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Jonathan gave his weapons to his servant [boy],... The word *kᵉlîy* is a catch-all noun for anything which was manufactured. In this case, it refers to Jonathan's bow and arrows. In another context, it could refer to a chair; in another, to a ceramic container. Its wide application might indicate that the concept of manufactured

goods may be a relatively recent innovation for the Jews. I suspect that the reference is to things which are made en masse; that is, more than one at a time.

In any case, the bow and arrows are handed over to the servant boy and Jonathan sends him back into the city.

1Samuel 20:40b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlakᵉ (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHKᵉ*]	*go, come, depart, walk; advance*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
bôwʾ (בּוא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry*	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced *ģeer*]	*encampment, city, town*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: ...saying, "Go [and] take [these to] the city." Jonathan orders the lad to return these things to the city. You may wonder, *won't this arouse suspicion?* Certainly not; Jonathan's servant was there to gather his arrows for target practice. For all the servant knew, Jonathan was ready for his morning sit-down,[53] so to speak, which does not necessarily require a servant. After a large feast, Jonathan suddenly hurrying the servant and then sending him back to the city without him would suggest that this is what Jonathan was going to do.

Jonathan and David Part Company for the Last Time

The boy went and David stood from a side of the south. And so he falls to his noses ground-ward and so he bows three times and so they kiss a man to his associate and so they weep a man to his associate as far as David had made great [or, *lifted high*].

1Samuel 20:41

[When] the servant [boy] had gone, David stood up from beside some rocks [the Hebrew reads *the south*] and he falls his face forward to the ground and he bows three times. Then they kissed one another [lit., *each one to his fellow*] and they wept [with] one another up to David causing to lift up high [his voice].

After the servant boy had gone, David stood up from behind some rocks and he fell face forward on the ground, bowing three times before Jonathan. They then kissed one another and wept together, David weeping even more than Jonathan.

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53 Or, *dump*.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	The boy went and David stood from a side of the south. And so he falls to his noses ground-ward and so he bows three times and so they kiss a man to his associate and so they weep a man to his associate as far as David had made great [or, *lifted high*].
Septuagint	And when the lad went in, then David arose from the argab, and fell upon his face and did obeisance to him three times, and they kissed each other, and wept for each other, for a great while.

Significant differences   .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	After the boy had gone, David got up from beside the mound and bowed very low three times. Then he and Jonathan kissed each other and cried, but David cried louder.
NJB	As soon as the servant had gone, David stood up beside the mound, threw himself to the ground, prostrating himself three times. They then embraced each other, both weeping copiously.
NLT	As soon as the boy was gone, David came out from where he had been hiding near the stone pile [As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *with Jonathan standing*]. Then David bowed to Jonathan with his face to the ground. Both of them were in tears as they embraced each other and said good-bye, especially David.
TEV	After the boy had left, David got up from behind the pile of stones [probable text *the pile of stones;* Hebrew *the south*], fell on his knees and bowed with his face to the ground three times. Both he and Jonathan were crying as they kissed each other. David's grief was even greater than Jonathan's [Hebrew text unclear].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	When the boy had left, David came out from the south side of the rock and quickly bowed down three times with his face touching the ground. Then they kissed each other and cried together, but David cried the loudest.
JPS (Tanakh)	When the boy go there, David emerged from his concealment [lit., *rose up from beside*] at the Debag. He flung himself face down on the ground and bowed low three times. They kissed each other and wept together; David wept the longer.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	When the lad was gone, David rose from the south side and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed three times. And they kissed each other and wept together, but David more.
NRSV	As soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the tone heap [Greek; Hebrew *from beside the south*] and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He bowed three times, and they kissed each other, and wept with each other; David wept the more [Vulgate; meaning of Hebrew uncertain].
Young's Updated LT	The youth has gone, and David has risen from Ezel, at the south, and falls on his face to the earth, and bows himself three times, and they kiss one another, and they weep one with another, till David exerted himself;...

What is the gist of this verse? David can hear that Jonathan is there alone, so he comes out. They express a strong affection for one another.

1Samuel 20:41a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ₙaˊar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ğahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*]	*to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than*	preposition of separation	*Strong's* #4480 BDB #577
êtsel (אֵצֶל) [pronounced *AY-tsel*]	*a side; near, by, beside*	Preposition/substantive with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #681 BDB #69
Together, min + êtsel mean *from one's side, from beside, from proximity to; contiguous to, beside*.			
negeb (נֶגֶב) [pronounced *ne-GHEᴮV*]	*south, south-country;* often transliterated *Negev* or *Negeb*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5045 BDB #616
In the Greek, the word is argab (ἀργάβ), which meaning is unknown to us. Keil and Delitzsch have no problem with the way this is rendered in the Hebrew, maintaining that this is related to David's fleeing *southward* toward Nob. According to Keil and Delitzsch, Aquila and Jerome followed the original Hebrew, while the Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic translations did not.[54]			

Translation: [When] the servant [boy] had gone, David stood up from beside some rocks [the Hebrew reads *the south*]... We do have the minor problem, *from where did David arise?* In the Hebrew, he arises from the south, which is a possibility. However, compass directions are generally applied to things which are more further away. In the Greek, we are uncertain as to what the word means (see note in exegesis). In v. 19, Jonathan tells David to hide behind the sharp stone. However, in any case, David comes out of hiding.

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[54] Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 508–509.

1Samuel 20:41b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*]	*to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾaph (אַף) [pronounced *ahf*]	*nose, nostril,* but is also translated *face, brow, anger*	masculine plural noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #639 BDB #60

Like the word *pânîym* (*faces*), this has a plural form, referring to the various aspects of the face, but refers simply to one *face*. We have nouns in the English which are plural, but can be used for one item (e.g., *a pair of pants*).

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced *EH-rets*]	*earth (all or a portion thereof), land*	feminine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...and he falls his face forward to the ground... Jonathan is one of the heirs to the throne, and, as the king's son, he is David's superior. David recognizes his authority and also recognizes the personal risk which Jonathan is taking by siding with David over his father, the king. His falling on his face before Jonathan recognizes Jonathan's authority, grace and honor.

1Samuel 20:41c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced *shaw-KHAW*]	*to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to*	3rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
shâlôsh (שָׁלֹש) [pronounced *shaw-LOHSH*]	*a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025.

Owen mistakenly calls this a feminine singular noun. There is no difference in meaning between the masculine and feminine forms of this word. Why this is a masculine here, given the feminine noun that follows, is somewhat confusing to me. However, as they are both nouns, they do not have to agree in gender or number.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
paʿam (פֶעַם) [pronounced *PAH-ğahm*]	*beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time, steps;* the connotation is the passage of time	feminine plural noun	Strong's #6471 BDB #821

Translation: ...and he bows three times.   Again, David behaves according to the customs of his time, doing obeisance to Jonathan, showing him great respect and honor (compare Gen. 33:3 42:6 Ruth 2:10).

	1Samuel 20:41d		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâshaq (נָשַׁק) [pronounced *naw-SHAHK*]	*to kiss, to touch, to have close contact with*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5401 BDB #676
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*]	*man, each, each one, everyone*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rêaʿ (רֵעַ) [pronounced *RAY-ahǵ*]	*associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance*	masculine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

Translation: Then they kissed one another [lit., *each one to his fellow*]...   Barnes tells us: *His affection for Jonathan, coupled with his sense of Saul's injustice and his own injured innocence, fully accounts for his strong emotion.*[55]   Add in the fact that David will leave his life in the palace and he will leave his wife, his friends and his family. One would expect David to express strong emotions.

Again, a cultural thing. In our culture, we rarely fall to our faces before anyone, or bow three times; however, some people try to make something out of what follows the bowing three times—David and Jonathan kiss. European women press their cheeks to one another and kiss the air—or so I am told. Although I have seen moves similar to this in the United States, it is fortunately more rare. These kisses have no sexual connotation, although kissing does have, under the right circumstances, a sexual connotation. What we have to do is separate our thinking and our culture from the culture which is before us. We are witnessing two acts which are clearly of that oriental culture—the falling to the ground and then bowing three times (when was the last time the president landed in Air Force One, and the press waiting for him outside bowed three times?). Therefore, we should not be confused when these two actions are followed by a third act which is also a part of that ancient culture.

What I am trying to say is, David and Jonathan were both young men and they loved one another and they expressed this love in this verse. This does not mean that they were homosexual. David will have many wives, although he will clearly be closest to Bathsheba. Jonathan will also marry (he is perhaps married at this time) and he will sire at least one child, Mephibosheth. Even if the argument is made that homosexual men marry and have children—again, you cannot read modern social actions into ancient social behavior.

Let me give you a modern-day illustration. The son of the head principal where I taught would kiss his father in public—not all of the time, but on occasion, as an expression of love. No one ever thought that this was incestuous and no one thought that this was homosexual behavior on the part of either man. That would have been ridiculous. It was the expression of a son's love for his father. There was no reason to read more into this than that.

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[55] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:41.

Another recorded fact which clearly tells us that David was heterosexual is his affair with Bathsheba. David gives into all the lusts and temptations of a normal heterosexual with respect to Bathsheba. This is not the behavior of a homosexual male. On the other hand, if you were to ask me if it were possible for Jonathan to have been a homosexual, I would allow that could be possible, but even that I doubt.

In fact, now might be a good way to deal with this issue and previous Scriptures. It is alleged by some that David and Jonathan are homosexual because (1) Jonathan removed his clothes before David in 1Sam. 18:4. (2) Their love for one another is mentioned on several occasions (1Sam. 18:3 20:17) and, (3) in our passage, they kiss one another (in fact, the very final phrase of v. 42 implies that David was on the ground during their final meeting).

With respect to (1), Jonathan did not remove all of his clothes, but his outer covering and battle gear. As the son of the king, Jonathan would have had a complete set of military equipment; as a shepherd, David would have nothing. Jonathan was seeing to it that Israel's greatest soldier would get the best equipment. (2) How pathetic is a man's life if he has never had another male friend that he loves? I have had several close friends that I have bonded with and I have loved; yet, the notion of homosexual behavior is repugnant to me. I have family and students that I have felt love for—and this is without having any sexual feelings toward these people. Making the assertion that David and Jonathan are homosexual because they love one another says a great deal about the person who makes such an assertion—are they unable to feel love for another person apart from sexual lust? (3) As mentioned earlier—no one has trouble with recognizing that David falling on his face before Jonathan is appropriate to his era as a sign of respect and obeisance. The kiss between males is also a cultural thing of that era. And, as we will discuss, David is on the ground, as we are told here, and Jonathan stoops to comfort him; this is why David stands up in the next verse.

Let's approach this from another angle: the Bible clearly reveals David's many flaws and shortcomings. If David and Jonathan sinned as homosexuals, there is no reason to think that Scripture would conceal this from us.

1Samuel 20:41e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced *baw-KAW*]	*to weep, to cry, to bewail*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1058 BDB #113
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*]	*man, each, each one, everyone*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rêaʿ (רֵעַ) [pronounced *RAY-ahĝ*]	*associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance*	masculine singular noun with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ĝahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

1Samuel 20:41e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced *gaw-DAHL*]	*to make great, to cause to be lifted high, to magnify, to do great things* (in a good or bad sense)	3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #1431 BDB #152.

Translation: ...and they wept [with] one another up to David causing to lift up high [his voice]. The meaning here is not completely clear. Many translations indicate that David became more emotional than Jonathan (which means they are deferring to the Vulgate at this point, which interpretation may have simply been a guess on the part of Jerome). Given the fact that they are weeping, this last phrase reasonably means that David is weeping loudly (which is how most exegetes have interpreted this verse).

And so says Jonathan to David, "Go for peace which we have sworn, two of us, we, in a name of Yᵉhowah, to say, 'Yᵉhowah is between me and between you and between my seed and your seed as far as perpetuity.' "

And so he arises and so he departs, and Jonathan went into the city.

1Samuel 20:42

Finally, Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace [or, *go to prosper*], which [peace] we have sworn, both of us, [even] we in the name of Yᵉhowah, saying, 'Yᵉhowah will remain [lit., *is*] between you and me and between your descendants and my descendants forever.' "

Then David [lit., *he*] stood up and departed and Jonathan went into the city.

Finally, Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, which peace we have both sworn in the name of Jehovah, saying, 'Jehovah will be between you and me and between you descendants and my descendants forever.' "

Then David stood up and departed while Jonathan returned to the city.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he arises and so he departs, and Jonathan went into the city.
Septuagint	And Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, and as we have both sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord will be witness between you and me, and between my seed and your seed forever.' " And David arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

Significant differences   .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Jonathan said, "Take care of yourself. And remember, we each have asked the Lᴏʀᴅ to watch and make sure that we and our descendants keep our promise forever." David left and Jonathan went back to town.
NLT	At last Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for we have made a pact in the Lᴏʀᴅ's name. We have entrusted each other and each other's children into the Lᴏʀᴅ's hands forever." Then David left, and Jonathan returned to the city.

TEV   Then Jonathan said to David, "God be with you. The Lord will make sure that you and I, and your descendants and mine, will forever keep the sacred promise we have made to each other." Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   "Go in peace!" Jonathan told David. "We have both taken an oath in the Lord's name, saying, 'The Lord will be ⌊a witness ⌋ between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.' " So David left, and Jonathan went into the city.

JPS (Tanakh)   Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace for we two have sworn to each other in the name of the Lord: 'May the Lord be [witness] between you and me, and between your offspring and mine forever!' " David then went his way, and Jonathan returned to the town.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible   Then Jonathan said to David—
   Go in peace [or, *go and prosper*], [remembering] that ‖we‖ have both sworn in the name of Yahweh, saying,
     Yahweh will be between you and me and between your seed and my seed ‖until times age-abiding‖.

NASB   And Jonathan said to David, "Go in safety, inasmuch as we have sworn to each other in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord will be between me and you, and between my descendants [lit., *seed*] and your descendants forever.' " Then he rose and departed, while Jonathan went into the city.

Young's Updated LT   ...and Jonathan says to David, "Go in peace, in that we have sworn—we two—in the name of Jehovah, saying, 'Jehovah is between me and you, and between my seed and your seed—unto the age.' " And he rises and goes; and Jonathan has gone into the city.

What is the gist of this verse? Jonathan and David go their separate ways, with a call to Jehovah God to watch between them in the upcoming years.

1Samuel 20:42a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

1Samuel 20:42a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hâlak^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*]	*go, come, depart, walk; advance*	2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *l^e*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*]	*completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: Finally, Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace [or, *go to prosper*],... Realize that Jonathan is defying the law of the land, which is his father's madness, at this point. As we will see later in the book of Samuel, it routine 7 for a king or a king-to-be to execute all of his rivals. So, even though it would be wrong for Jonathan to kill David or to turn him in, it would not have been out of their cultural norm. Jonathan knows this and David knows this (hence all of David's bowing and scraping in the previous verse). Jonathan will make it clear that there will remain a bond and an agreement between them and between their descendants forever. David must leave this area, as his life is in danger. Jonathan bids him peace in his farewell.

1Samuel 20:42b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*]	*that, which, when, who*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâbva ́ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced *shaw^b-VAHG̱*]	*to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance*	1st person plural, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
sh^{e}nayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced *sh^{e}NAH-yim*]	*two of, a pair of, a duo of*	masculine plural numeral with a 1st person plural suffix	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
ʾănach^{e}nûw (אֲנַחְנוּ) [pronounced *uh-NAH̱KH-noo*]	*we*	1st person plural pronoun	Strong's #587 BDB #59
b^e (בְּ) [pronounced *b^{eh}*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced *shame*]	*name, reputation, character*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

1Samuel 20:42b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...which [peace] we have sworn, both of us, [even] we in the name of Yᵉhowah,...   Jonathan, three times, speaks of a peace which they have sworn to one another. The verb is a 1st person plural; it is followed by the phrase *both of us;* which is followed by the emphatic pronoun *we.* Jonathan is strongly emphasizing that this is a mutual peace which they themselves, even they, have sworn to one another. At this point in time, Jonathan is holding all of the cards. However, he is an intelligent believer and he knows that at some point in the future, David will be king over all Israel. At that point, David will hold all the cards. At that point, the cultural norms of the day would allow David to destroy all of his potential rivals, including Jonathan and all of Jonathan's family. What Jonathan is doing is intelligent and the only reasonable approach. If his father had a tenth of his sense, he would simply hand over the crown to David and place himself at David's mercy. Jonathan is doing the next best thing.

However, don't mistake his motivation. Jonathan is not acting out of self-interest or in the interest of his family; these things will be a natural outgrowth of their agreement. Jonathan has made a bond with David out of love and true friendship. The fact that this bond is reciprocal is emphasized by Jonathan, and that would be Jonathan carefully looking out for his descendants.

1Samuel 20:42c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to*	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-SARH*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between*	preposition with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וּ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between*	preposition with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107

1Samuel 20:42c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּי ן) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between*	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
zeraʿ (זֶ רַע) [pronounced *ZEH-rahģ*]	*a seed, a sowing, an offspring*	masculine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּי ן) [pronounced *bane*]	*in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between*	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
zeraʿ (זֶ רַע) [pronounced *ZEH-rahģ*]	*a seed, a sowing, an offspring*	masculine singular noun with the 2ⁿᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ģahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
ʿôwlâm (עוֹ לָ ם) [pronounced *ģo-LAWM*]	*long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761

Together, they mean *and from everlasting to everlasting*, *from eternity past to eternity future* or *from antiquity to everlasting, forever*.

Translation: ...saying, 'Yᵉhowah will remain [lit., *is*] between you and me and between your descendants and my descendants forever.' "   Again, Jonathan emphasizes that their bond is reciprocal, and that it would remain between their descendants forever. For all they know, at this point in time, they may never see one another again.

At the end of this book, Jonathan and Saul (along with Saul's other sons) will be killed by the Philistines. The safe thing for David to do in that era is to kill all of their male descendants, including any children that Jonathan might have. Jonathan did have a son, Mephibosheth, who was hidden. Most new dynasties would have sought Mephibosheth out and killed him. David sought him out and brought him to his table to eat. He became a part of the palace staff (although it is not clear what duties that he had, if any). In any case, David fed him. Also, Mephibosheth was a cripple. He was helpless, for all intents and purposes. David saw to it that he was taken care of for the rest of his life. David did fulfill his part of this agreement with Jonathan.

> McGee makes the application: *David showed kindness to Mephibosheth for the sake of Jonathan. God has shown kindness to you and me for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not because of who we are or what we have done that He saved us. Our salvation comes because of who Christ is and what He has done for us. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). Because His Son died for us, God extends favor to us for Jesus' sake.*[56]

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[56] J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel;* Thru the Bible Books; ®El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 110.

This last portion of v. 42 is a transitional verse, something which we have seen many times in Hebrew literature. It is a proper ending to this chapter in the lives of David and Jonathan, as well as a proper beginning for the chapter which follows.

This portion of v. 42 is, in the Hebrew Bible, the first verse of the next chapter. Many English translations recognize this to some extent by placing this verse with the next chapter or paragraph, although they do not necessarily number is as 1Sam. 21:1 (NAB, NJB, REB). As we would expect, the Tanakh, the Jewish translation of the Old Testament, does list this as the first verse of the next chapter.

1Samuel 20:42d (21:1 in the Hebrew Bible)

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*]	*to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
In the Greek, we have the proper noun *David* inserted at this point.			
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, then*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlakᵉ (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHKᵉ*]	*to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced *ĝeer*]	*encampment, city, town*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: Then David [Hebrew: *he*] stood up and departed and Jonathan went into the city. Apparently, David had bowed before Jonathan three times and Jonathan got down on his knees and held David. As a teacher, if I found a student on the ground crying, I would stoop down to that student for comfort him or her, which is how Jonathan had responded to David. Therefore, once all of the comforting had been done and they had to part, David stood up (as did Jonathan).

Jonathan returned to Gibeah, to his father and to the palace. This was his lot in life. David had no choice but to become a fugitive. The difference between his understanding now is that he and Jonathan have clearly resigned themselves to this being David's lot in life—at least temporarily. Jonathan knows that David cannot ever return while Saul is in power, and David knows this as well. Jonathan had held out some hope for reconciliation between his father and David, which hope was dashed at the feast. David, although he was quite certain that he would no

longer be a part of the royal family, was willing to wait out Jonathan and to hear Jonathan's opinion. Even Saul expected David to come to the feast, despite what had occurred (but Saul was half-crazy).

Furthermore, David and Jonathan has this great and wonderful friendship. If David is on the run from Jonathan's father, Saul, then they will not ever be able to enjoy the pleasure of one another's company. I personally had a marvelous friend for many years. As teens, we had about a year or so of this wonderful friendship, and after that, we were separated for long periods of time by circumstance, by religion, by ideology, and eventually by death. However, I never lost my love for this friend, and the time that we spent together discussing the issues of the day were some of the great times of my life.

Essentially, we have 2 things occurring here at the same time: Jonathan appears to be aware that David will be made king, and that there would therefore necessarily be tension between their descendants. Although, Jonathan does not state this clearly in this chapter, he will do so in 1Sam. 23:17. So Jonathan is careful to get assurances from David—David's word, which is dependable—that they will never harm one another and the same will be true of their descendants. If there is a change of dynasties, such assurances are extremely important.

The second thing going on is this great friendship, and both of these young men realize that they will be separated by circumstance. King Saul will spend much of the rest of his life pursuing David to kill him. Therefore, things will never be normal again between David and Jonathan, which normalcy would have included their friendship.

Application: Various people have asserted that David and Jonathan are gay. A person who would suggest such a thing is obviously a person who has never had a true and close friendship. Their relationships have been based upon using those whom they call their friends, and attempting to sexually exploit them. Most people are blessed with a close friendship in their lives, and sometimes more than one. A person who has enjoyed a true and lasting friendship understands what is going on here, and the great sadness which is in the souls of David and Jonathan. Most people can understand how 2 souls can be knit together in friendship, and how this is completely unrelated to sexual lust (particularly, homosexual lust).

> Barnes comments: *From which one may infer, what the after history also indicates, that Jonathan's filial duty and patriotism prevented a complete rupture with his father. Jonathan's conduct in this, as in everything, was most admirable.*[57]

What will follow in subsequent chapters is a tremendous adventure of David living on the edge, outside of the palace, away from his family, and as a fugitive.

Application: We will find ourselves, from time to time, in difficult situations—in fact, in some situations which will appear to have no solution. Our faith will be tested and some of us will fail and some of us will succeed. You have to realize, as long as you are alive, God has a plan for your life. This difficulty that you are going through is part of God's plan. He is always there, He knows the end from the beginning, and He knows your end, as well as what you must go through. I have been in situations, even lately, which seemed to have no end, and were a pressure upon me for years. God was aware, God knew the end, and He had every single detail worked out and taken care of. In one of these situations, had I been a little smarter, a little more on the ball, I might have been able to even solve some of the problems and trials myself. However, that was a matter of hindsight. God, knowing that I would only find solutions in hindsight, solved all of my problems; and where I was faithless at times, He was faithful, ever-present, and always in charge.

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[57] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword, 1Sam. 20:42.