

17.09 Jonathan's Arrows Warn David (1 Samuel 20:1–42)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (Optional) Two dolls or puppets of male figures
- (Optional) Arch book #1434, *David and Jonathan*

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

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Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 20:1 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said before Jonathan, “What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?” 2 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. And why should my father hide this from me? It is not so.” 3 But David vowed again, saying, “Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he thinks, ‘Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.’ But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death.” 4 Then Jonathan said to David, “Whatever you say, I will do for you.” 5 David said to Jonathan, “Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit at table with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field till the third day at evening. 6 If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the clan.’ 7 If he says, ‘Good!’ it will be well with your servant, but if he is angry, then know that harm is determined by him. 8 Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?” 9 And Jonathan said, “Far be it from you! If I knew that it was determined by my father that harm should come to you, would I not tell you?” 10 Then David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father answers you roughly?” 11 And Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out into the field.” So they both went out into the field.

12 And 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 he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send and disclose it to you? 13 But should it please my father to do you harm, the Lord do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. May the Lord be with you, as he has been with my father. 14 If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the Lord, that I may not die; 15 and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” 16 And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the Lord take vengeance on David’s enemies.” 17 And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

18 Then Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. 19 On the third day go down quickly to the place where you hid yourself when the matter was in hand, and remain beside the stone heap. 20 And I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark. 21 And behold, I will send the boy, saying, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you, take them,’ then you are to come, for, as the Lord lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. 22 But if I say to the youth, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you,’ then go, for the Lord has sent you away. 23 And as for the matter of which you and I have spoken, behold, the Lord is between you and me forever.”

24 So David hid himself in the field. And when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food. 25 The

king sat on his seat, as at other times, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite, and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.

26 Yet Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean." 27 But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has not the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?" 28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem. 29 He said, 'Let me go, for our clan holds a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 32 Then Jonathan answered Saul his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" 33 But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. 34 And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had disgraced him.

35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him a little boy. 36 And he said to his boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37 And when the boy came to the place of the arrow that Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the boy and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" 38 And Jonathan called after the boy, "Hurry! Be quick! Do not stay!" So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master. 39 But the boy knew nothing. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter. 40 And Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city." 41 And as soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times. And they kissed one another and wept with one another, David weeping the most. 42 Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever.'" And he rose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

Introduction/Review:

David escaped Saul's intent to murder him four times: twice when Saul hurled his spear at David; once from his house through a window with the help of his wife, Michal; once from Samuel's school of the prophets with God's help. God made three groups of messengers from Saul to praise His name. When Saul himself came to get David, God caused Saul to prophesy and to be still a whole day and a night.

Story:

David flees to Jonathan

David, meanwhile, ran from Naioth, back to the city of Gibeah and found Jonathan. [Teacher, you might use two male puppets or two students to read the following dialogue.]

David: What have I done? How have I sinned? What is my iniquity before your father that he seeks my life?

Jonathan: Oh, no! You won't die. My father would tell me anything. Why would my father hide this from me? It can't be so.

David: Your father knows that we are friends. He's probably thinking he doesn't want to hurt you. But as certainly as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only one step between me and death.

Jonathan: Whatever you want me to do, I'll do it.

David and Jonathan make a plan

David: Tomorrow is the special feast of the new moon. I'm supposed to be there, but I am not going. If your

father asks why I'm not there, tell him I asked you if I could celebrate the feast in my hometown, Bethlehem. If Saul says, "That's fine," you'll know he doesn't want to slay me. But if he is very angry, then be sure he is determined to do evil. Now, Jonathan, deal kindly with me because of our promise of friendship. If I have done wrong, slay me yourself, for why should you bring me to you father to slay me?

Jonathan: Absolutely not! If I knew my father determined to do evil to you, wouldn't I tell you?

David: How will I find out if your father answers in anger?

Jonathan: Let's go out into the field. [They went.] If I don't let you know how my father feels about you, may the Lord so do to me. I will let you know, and may God be with you as He was with my father. However, I ask for your kindness, that I don't die. Also, don't cut off your kindness to my children and grandchildren forever.

David: I promise that my family will show kindness to your children forever.

Jonathan: Promise again.

David: I promise.

Jonathan: Okay. Tomorrow is the feast. On the third day come hide near the rock Ezel ("peace"). I will shoot three arrows, and a lad will fetch them. If I say, "The arrows are on this side of you; take them," then come in peace. But if I say, "The arrows are beyond you; go on," then the Lord has sent you away. But don't forget your covenant: may the Lord be between you and me forever. [End of dialogue.]

Jonathan defends David

So the two men went their ways: David, ✓perhaps to Bethlehem but back to hide in the field on the third day; Jonathan, to the first day of the feast.

Saul noticed David's place was empty that first day but said nothing about David. However, on the second day, Saul asked, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse come to eat either yesterday or today?"

Jonathan answered, "David asked permission to go observe the feast in Bethlehem."

Saul became very angry and shouted obscenities at Jonathan, also shouting, "You are confused and foolish! Don't you know that as long as David lives, you will have no kingdom. Now get him here, for he must surely die!"

"Why?" asked Jonathan. "What has he done?"

Saul was so angry, he threw his javelin at his own son. Thankfully, he missed. But by now Jonathan was so angry, he left the table and would not eat because he was so sad for David.

Jonathan warns David

The next morning he took a lad and bow and arrows out to the field. As the lad ran, Jonathan shot an arrow far past the boy, saying, "The arrow is past you. Hurry up; don't stop!" What did that mean? [David should run away soon.]

When the boy brought back the arrows, Jonathan gave them and the bow to him and sent him back to the city.

When the boy was gone, David came out of his hiding place, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed before Jonathan three times. Then the two friends hugged each other and cried on each others' shoulders because they expected they would never see each other again. Finally, Jonathan said, "Go in peace, for we have both sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord be between me and you and between your children and my children forever.'"

Jonathan went back to the city. Where did David go? We'll find out next week.

This is a story of friendship, strong friendship, willing to risk one's life for his friend.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Psalm 18:24). That friend is Jesus.

Activities:

- Play dough: bow and arrows; rocks; spear
- Snack: Rice Krispie® treats to remind of the pile of rocks where David hid
- Play with a toy bow and arrow. Allow all students an equal number of attempts to shoot an arrow.
- Review questions: (Game: Pile stones in a transparent glass or cup. A student who answers a question correctly may add a stone to the miniature rock pile.)
 1. Whom did David find when he escaped Saul at Naioth? [Jonathan.]
 2. When David said Saul was trying to slay him, how did Jonathan respond? [He did n't believe it was true.]
 3. Fill in the blank. David said, "If Saul is _____ because I am not at the feast, you will know he intends to slay me." [Angry.]
 4. Saul was not only angry but also did what to Jonathan at the feast? [Threw his spear at Jonathan.]
 5. As was prearranged, Jonathan signaled David by shooting an arrow beyond the young helper. What did this mean? [David was to get away, for Saul did want to slay David.]
 6. Multiple choice: David's and Jonathan's parting was a) cheerful; b) tearful. [b) Tearful.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Handwork:

- Make a quiver out of a Pringles® can. See the finished product at [Hands On Bible Teacher: Search results for jonathan and david](#) about a quarter of the way down the page. Print on paper the can cover found below. Print the arrows on cardstock. Students may color the arrows and cut them out.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN DAVID AND JONATHAN (print 2 copies)

David: What have I done? How have I sinned? What is my iniquity before your father that he seeks my life?

Jonathan: Oh, no! You won't die. My father would tell me anything. Why would my father hide this from me? It can't be so.

David: Your father knows that we are friends. He's probably thinking he doesn't want to hurt you. But as certainly as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only one step between me and death.

Jonathan: Whatever you want me to do, I'll do it.

David: Tomorrow is the special feast of the new moon. I'm supposed to be there, but I am not going. If your father asks why I'm not there, tell him I asked you if I could celebrate the feast in my hometown, Bethlehem. If Saul says, "That's fine," you'll know he doesn't want to slay me. But if he is very angry, then be sure he is determined to do evil. Now, Jonathan, deal kindly with me because of our promise of friendship. If I have done wrong, slay me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father to slay me?

Jonathan: Absolutely not! If I knew my father determined to do evil to you, wouldn't I tell you?

David: How will I find out if your father answers in anger?

Jonathan: Let's go out into the field. [They went.] If I don't let you know how my father feels about you, may the Lord so do to me. I will let you know, and may God be with you as He was with my father. However, I ask for your kindness, that I don't die. Also, don't cut off your kindness to my children and grandchildren forever.

David: I promise that my family will show kindness to your children forever.

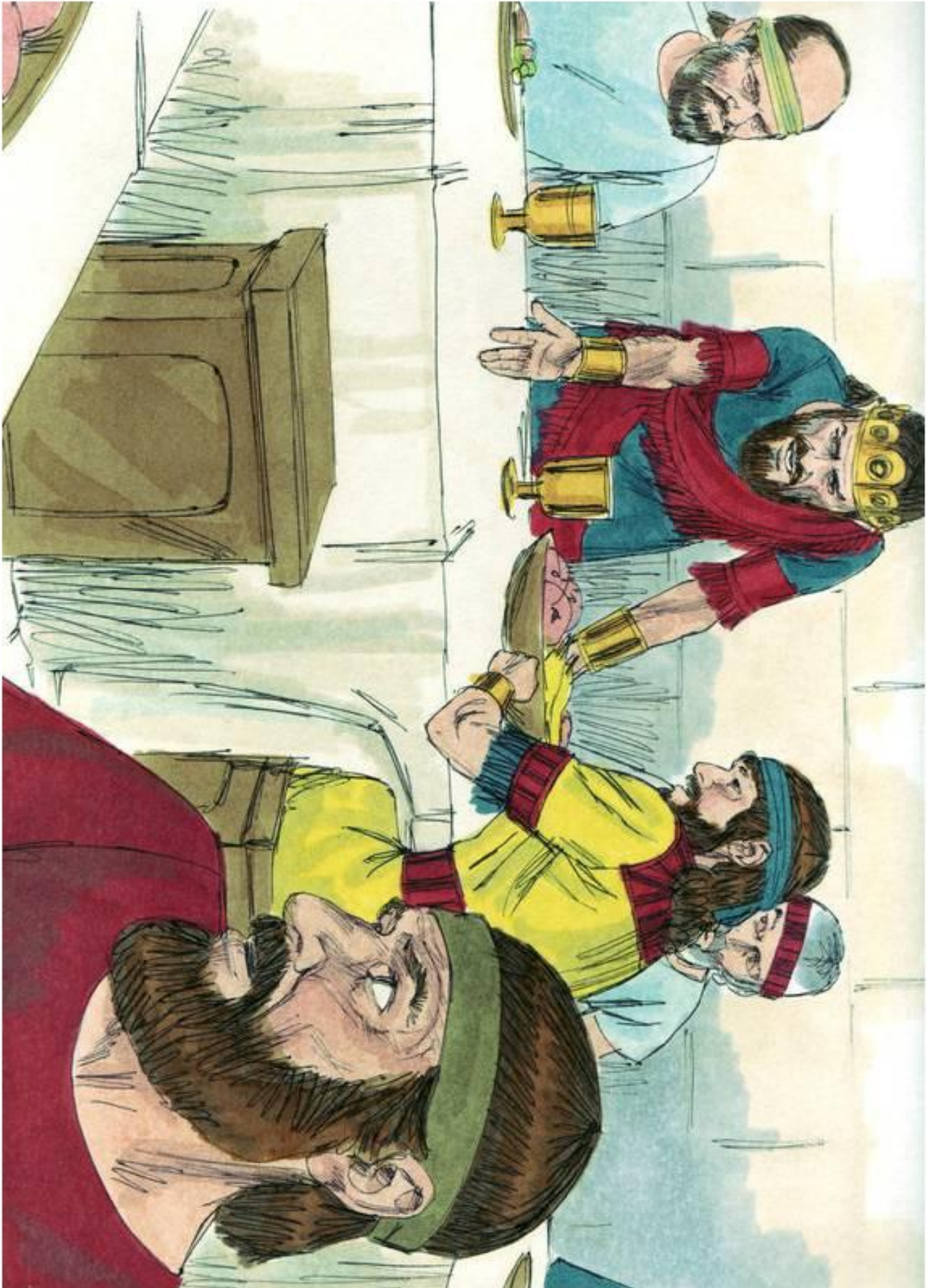
Jonathan: Promise again.

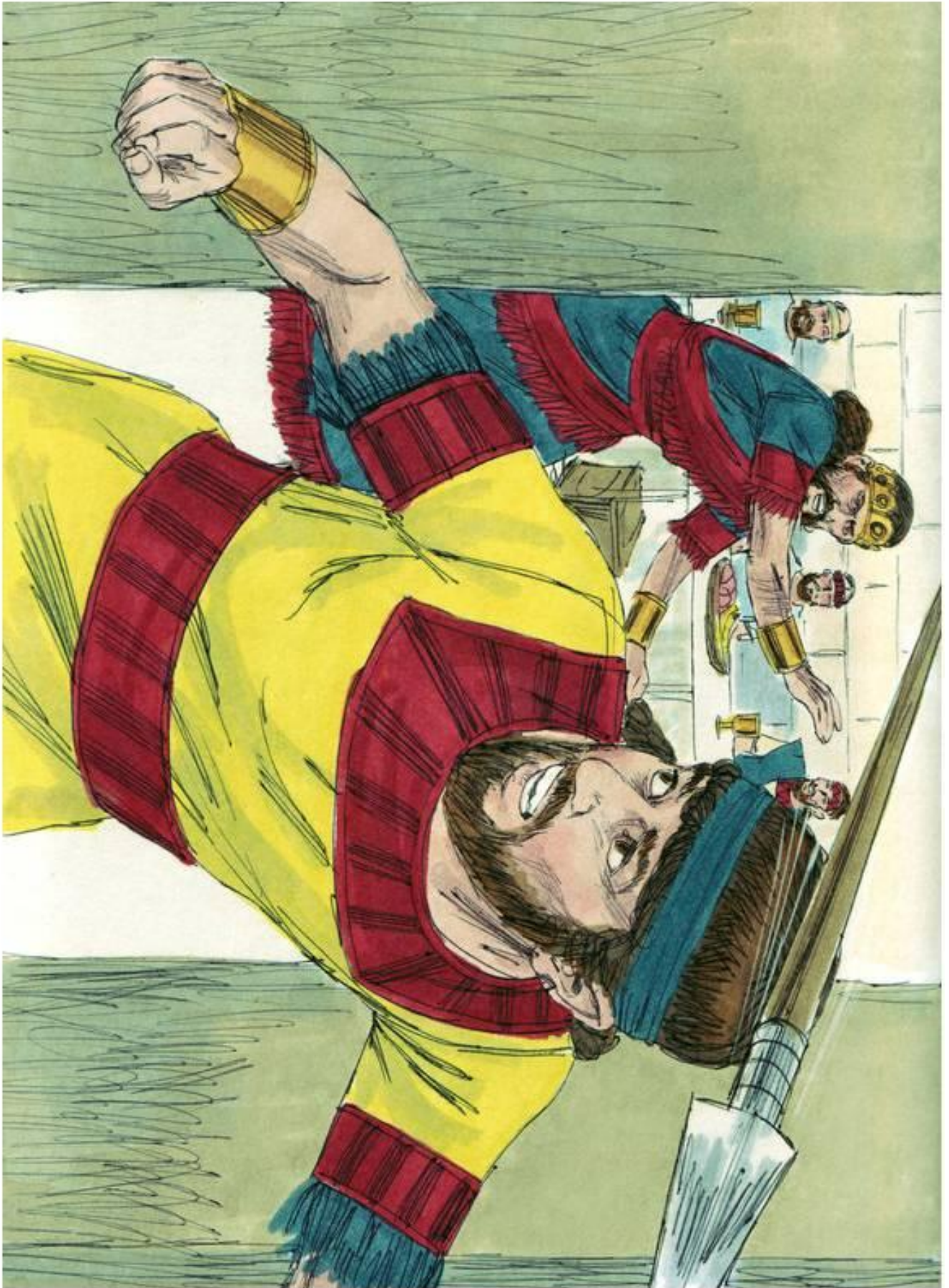
David: I promise.

Jonathan: Okay. Tomorrow is the feast. On the third day come hide near the rock Ezel ("peace"). I will shoot three arrows, and a lad will fetch them. If I say, "The arrows are on this side of you; take them," then come in peace. But if I say, "The arrows are beyond you; go on," then the Lord has sent you away. But don't forget your covenant: may the Lord be between you and me forever.

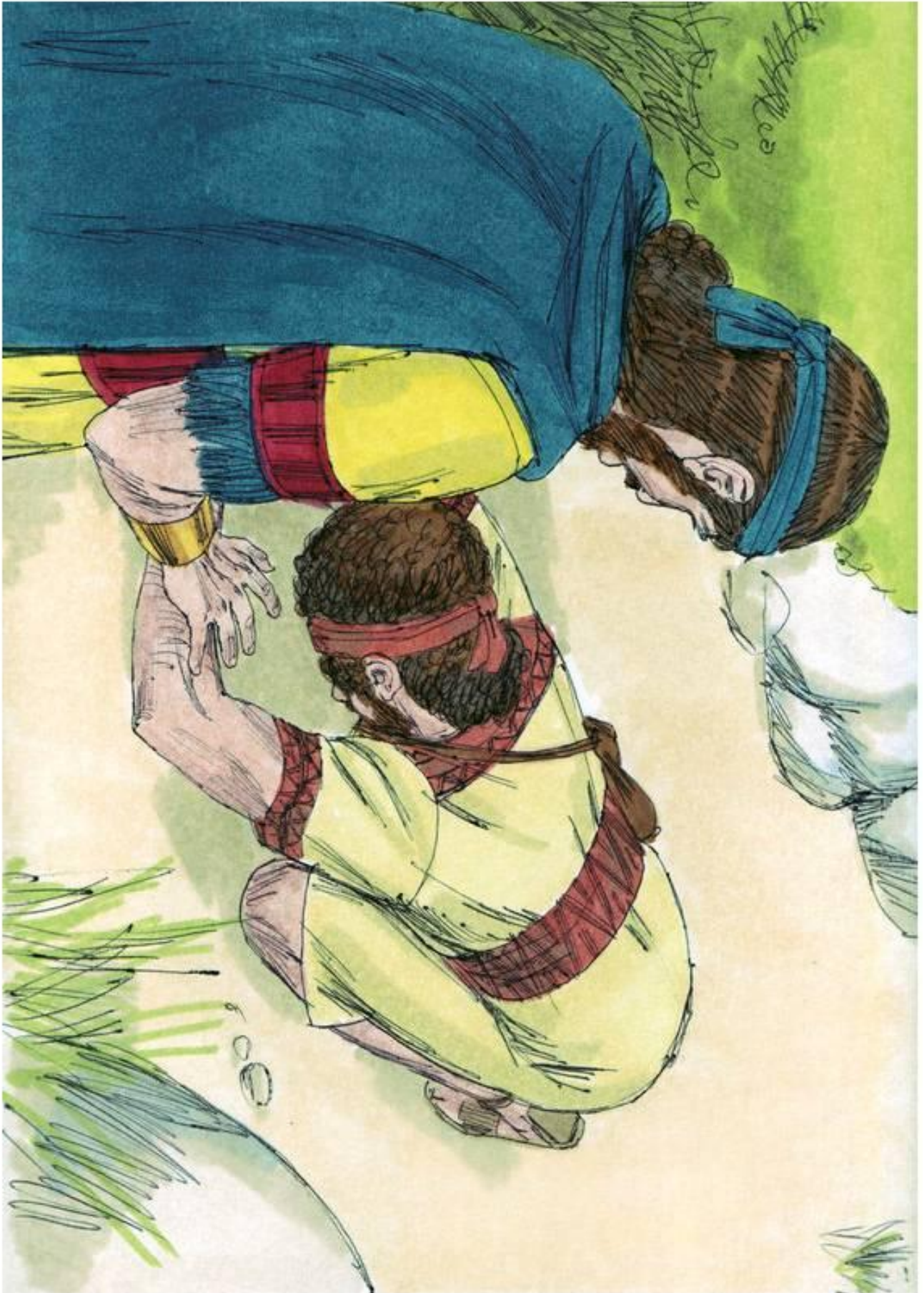
[End of dialogue.]

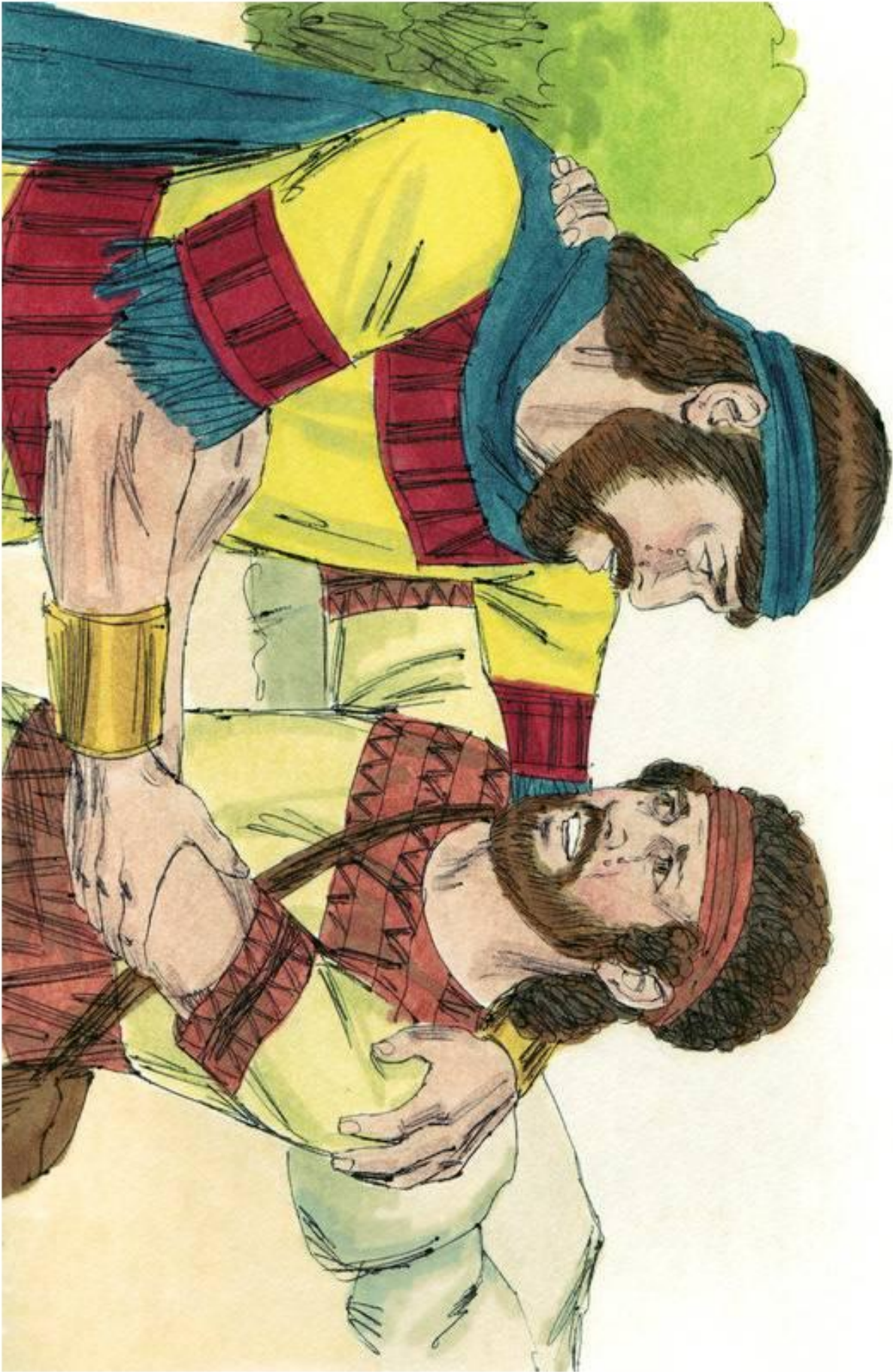






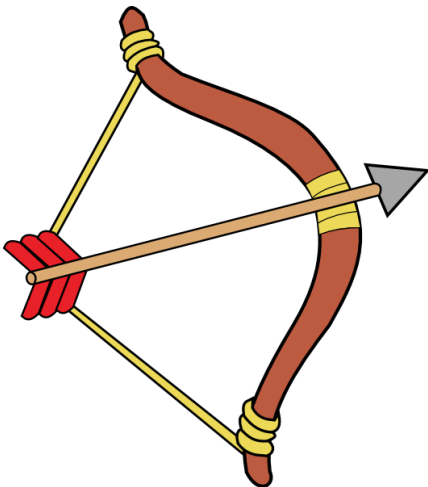






A FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES

(PROVERBS 17:17)





KINDNESS

CARING

HELPLESSNESS