

1 Chronicles 21:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.

Analysis

David's response 'Let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man' reveals profound theological insight. When given choice between three judgments, David chooses the one bringing him directly under God's hand rather than human enemies. This demonstrates confidence in divine mercy (rachamim - compassionate love) even in judgment. Reformed theology emphasizes that God's judgments are tempered with mercy for His people, while human judgment is often merciless. This points to Christ who fell under God's judgment in our place, that we might experience mercy rather than wrath.

Historical Context

The three options - seven years famine, three months fleeing enemies, or three days pestilence - represented decreasing duration but increasing intensity. David's choice of the shortest, most direct judgment showed faith that God's discipline, though severe, is redemptive.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Do you trust God's mercy even when facing His discipline for sin?
2. How does Christ's bearing of God's judgment in your place give confidence to approach God's throne of grace?

Interlinear Text

מְאֹד לִי צָר גַּד אֶל יְהִי אָמֶר
I am in a great strait unto Gad said And David

said
H559

And David
H1732

H413

unto Gad

H1410

strait

H0

I am in a great

H3966

אַפְלָל אֶל אֶלְעָד יְהִי הָבֵד וְאֶל
but let me not fall into the hand of the LORD great

but let me not fall

H4994

into the hand

H3027

of the LORD

H3068

H3588

great

H5307

אַפְלָל אֶל אֶלְעָד יְהִי הָבֵד וְאֶל אֶלְעָד
are his mercies I am in a great into the hand of man but let me not fall

H7356

H3966

H3027

H120

H408

H5307

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 10:31 (Parallel theme): It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Isaiah 55:7 (References Lord): Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Psalms 130:7 (References Lord): Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Philippians 1:23 (Parallel theme): For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

John 12:27 (Parallel theme): Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org