

1 Samuel 11:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

Analysis

And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

Saul's refusal to execute his critics represents his finest moment, demonstrating kingly restraint and theological insight. His reasoning - 'to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel' - correctly attributes victory to God rather than himself. The phrase 'there shall not a man be put to death this day' establishes a precedent of royal mercy that reflects divine grace. Saul recognizes that celebration of God's deliverance should not be marred by internal bloodshed. This grace toward enemies would, ironically, later contribute to his downfall when he spared Agag.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern victory celebrations often included execution of enemies and traitors. Saul's restraint contrasts sharply with standard practice and demonstrates the influence of Yahwistic theology on early Israelite kingship. This moment of grace anticipates David's later refusal to harm Saul despite opportunity.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing God as the source of victory change how we treat those who opposed us?
2. When is mercy the appropriate response to those who doubted or criticized us?

Interlinear Text

לֵאמֹר	וְיֻמַּת	אַיִל	הַיּוֹם
said	And Saul	H3808	be put to death
H559	H7586		H4191
			There shall not a man
			H376
			for to day
			H3117
בְּיִשְׁרָאֵל:	תָּשׁׁׁוּעָה	הָיָה	בְּיִשְׁרָאֵל:
H2088	H3588	for to day	H3117
		hath wrought	H6213
			H3068
		the LORD	
			H8668
		salvation	
			H3478
		in Israel	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 14:13 (Salvation): And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

1 Samuel 19:5 (Salvation): For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

2 Samuel 19:22 (References Israel): And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel?

Exodus 14:30 (Salvation): Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.

