

1 Samuel 12:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

Analysis

So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

Samuel's prayer receives immediate, dramatic response: 'the LORD sent thunder and rain that day.' The speed of fulfillment ('that day') demonstrates both Samuel's prophetic authority and God's sovereign control over creation. The people's response - 'greatly feared the LORD and Samuel' - achieves the intended result: recognition of divine authority mediated through prophetic ministry. The Hebrew pairs 'the LORD and Samuel' grammatically, not to equate them but to show that honoring God's prophet honors God.

Historical Context

Thunder was associated with divine theophany in ancient Near Eastern religions, including Israel's own tradition (Exodus 19:16; Psalm 29). The combination of thunder and rain during harvest would have been economically threatening, intensifying the impact of the sign.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How should God's dramatic interventions produce not just awe but genuine reverence and obedience?
2. What is the relationship between fearing God and properly honoring His appointed messengers?

Interlinear Text

וְקָרָא	שְׁמוּאֵל:	אֵל	יְהוָה	וַיִּשְׁלַח	יְהוָה	קוֹל תְּהִלָּה
called	So Samuel	H413	and the LORD	sent	and the LORD	thunder
H7121	H8050		H3068	H5414	H3068	H6963
וַיִּמְטֹר	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	וַיִּירָא	כָּל	הָעָם	מְאֹד
and rain	that day	H1931	feared	H3605	and all the people	greatly
H4306	H3117		H3372		H5971	H853
יְהוָה	וְאֵת	שְׁמוּאֵל:				
and the LORD	H853	So Samuel				
H3068		H8050				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 14:31 (References Lord): And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

Ezra 10:9 (Parallel theme): Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.