

1 Samuel 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

Analysis

And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

Samuel secures formal witness from 'the LORD' and 'his anointed' that no accusation stands against him. The invocation of divine witness transforms this from mere reputation-clearing to covenant testimony with eternal significance. By including 'his anointed' (Saul), Samuel acknowledges the legitimacy of the monarchy while establishing that prophetic accountability precedes and supersedes royal authority. The people's affirmation 'He is witness' seals this covenant testimony.

Historical Context

Covenant witnesses in the ancient Near East typically included divine beings and human representatives. By naming both Yahweh and the king as witnesses, Samuel establishes a pattern where prophets would hold kings accountable to divine standards - a relationship that would characterize Israel's monarchy.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does divine witness of our integrity change our relationship to human opinion?
2. What role should mutual accountability play in relationships between spiritual and civil leaders?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר And he said H559	אֵלֵיהֶם H413	עֵד: He is witness H5707	יְהוָה unto them The LORD H3068	בָּכֶם H0	עֵד: He is witness H5707
מְשִׁיחוֹ against you and his anointed H4899	הַיּוֹם this day H3117	הַיּוֹם H2088	כִּי H3588	לֹא H3808	מֵצְאֶתְכֶם that ye have not found H4672
בְּיָדִי in my hand H3027	חָאֵץ ought H3972	וַיֹּאמֶר And he said H559	עֵד: He is witness H5707		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 22:4 (Parallel theme): If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

Acts 24:20 (Parallel theme): Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

Acts 23:9 (Parallel theme): And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.

1 Corinthians 4:4 (References Lord): For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

2 Corinthians 1:12 (Witness): For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.