

1 Samuel 14:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.

Analysis

And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.

Saul's watchmen observe the Philistine army 'melting away' (namog) - dissolving, dissipating like morning mist. The 'multitude' that had seemed overwhelming in chapter 13 now disperses and disintegrates. From Gibeah of Benjamin, Saul's forces watch divine deliverance unfold without their participation. The Hebrew halom ('beating down' or 'striking') suggests the Philistines were attacking each other in their panic. God turns enemy strength into self-destruction.

Historical Context

Confused armies attacking their own allies was documented in ancient Near Eastern warfare. Gideon's victory over Midian (Judges 7:22) and Jehoshaphat's over Moab and Ammon (2 Chronicles 20:22-23) show similar patterns. Darkness, unfamiliar terrain, and supernatural panic contributed to such friendly fire incidents.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God sometimes defeat His enemies through their own confusion?
2. What does Saul's observation from a distance suggest about his spiritual state?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּרְא וְ	הַצִּפֹּיִם	לְשֵׁא וְ	בְּגִבְעַת	בְּנֵימִן	וְהִנֵּה
looked	And the watchmen	of Saul	in Gibeah	of Benjamin	
H7200	H6822	H7586	H1390	H1144	H2009
וְהִנֵּה	וְהִנֵּה	וְהִנֵּה	וְהִנֵּה	וְהִנֵּה	וְהִנֵּה
and behold the multitude	melted away	on beating down			
H1995	H4127	H1986			

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