

1 Samuel 14:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.

Analysis

And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.

Saul's forces assemble and enter a battle already won: 'every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.' The Hebrew mehumah ('discomfiture' or 'confusion') echoes the divine panic of verse 15. The Israelites arrive to find Philistines destroying each other. Saul claims credit by participation in a victory God accomplished through Jonathan's faith. This pattern - taking credit for divine action - characterizes much of Saul's reign.

Historical Context

The scene of confused combat where enemies attack each other recalls Gideon's victory (Judges 7:22). Such supernatural victories were designed to demonstrate that 'the battle is the LORD's' (17:47). Israel's role was to pursue and complete what God initiated.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do we properly give God credit for victories we participate in but did not create?
2. What does it mean to join what God is already doing rather than initiating our own plans?

Interlinear Text

<p>וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו that were with him assembled H2199</p>	<p>וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְ And Saul H7586</p>	<p>הָעָם and all the people H3605 H5971</p>	<p>אֶת יְהוֹשָׁפָט H834 H854</p>
<p>וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו themselves and they came H935</p>	<p>עַד H5704</p>	<p>הַמִּלְחָמָה הַ to the battle H4421</p>	<p>זֶה הַיּוֹם הַ H2009 H1961</p>
<p>אִישׁ and behold every man's H376</p>	<p>בָּרֵעַ הוּא was against his fellow H7453</p>	<p>מִהוּמָה הַ discomfiture H4103</p>	<p>גְּדוֹלָה הַ great H1419</p>
<p>מְאֹד: and there was a very H3966</p>			

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 20:23 (Parallel theme): For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and

when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

Judges 7:22 (Word): And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.

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