

1 Samuel 14:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

Analysis

And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

Saul's inquiry - 'Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?' - receives no answer. Divine silence functions as divine communication. The notation 'he answered him not that day' indicates something is wrong. Saul interprets the silence as indicating sin within the camp rather than examining his own oath as the problem. His instinct to find fault elsewhere rather than within himself proves consistent.

Historical Context

Divine consultation through Urim and Thummim required yes/no answers that could remain unanswered if neither stone showed. This mechanism for divine guidance could register divine displeasure through silence. Saul's lack of answer indicated broken communication with God.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God sometimes communicate through silence?
2. When divine guidance seems blocked, what should we examine first - others or ourselves?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ
asked	And Saul	counsel of God	Shall I go down	after	the Philistines
H7592	H7586	H430	H3381	H310	H6430
וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ
wilt thou deliver	them into the hand	of Israel	H3808	But he answered	
H5414	H3027	H3478		H6030	
וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ	וְשָׂא לֵ
him not that day	H1931				
H3117					

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 28:6 (Parallel theme): And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

1 Kings 22:5 (References Israel): And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.

1 Kings 22:15 (Parallel theme): So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

1 Samuel 23:4 (Parallel theme): Then David enquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

2 Samuel 5:23 (Parallel theme): And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

2 Samuel 5:19 (Parallel theme): And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

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