

1 Samuel 14:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son.
And Jonathan was taken.

Analysis

And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

The lot between Saul and Jonathan identifies Jonathan. The spare narrative - 'Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken' - heightens tension. What should have been unthinkable becomes reality: the hero of the battle stands condemned by his father's oath. The lot functions correctly; God identifies the oath-breaker. Yet the oath itself was the problem, not the one who unknowingly violated it. Divine process confirms human folly.

Historical Context

The lot's identification of Jonathan was understood as divine verdict. Ancient Israelites believed God controlled lot outcomes (Proverbs 16:33). Jonathan's 'taking' by the lot was considered divine confirmation of his violation, regardless of his ignorance.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. When proper procedures produce unjust results, what is wrong - the procedure or the underlying situation?
2. How should we evaluate systems that technically function correctly but produce harmful outcomes?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	וְשָׁאֹל	הִפָּיִל	בֵּינִי	וּבֵין	יוֹנָתָן:	בְּנִי	וְלִי
said	And Saul	Cast	H996	H996	And Jonathan	my son	was taken
H559	H7586	H5307			H3129	H1121	H3920

וְיוֹנָתָן:

And Jonathan

H3129