

1 Samuel 15:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

Analysis

And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

Samuel rises early to meet Saul but learns the king 'is gone to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place.' The Hebrew yad ('place' or literally 'hand') probably refers to a monument or memorial. While Samuel grieved all night, Saul erected a victory monument to himself. The geographic note that he 'is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal' traces Saul's movements focused on self-commemoration rather than completing divine commands. Saul celebrates victory; Samuel brings judgment.

Historical Context

Victory monuments were common ancient Near Eastern practice - stone markers commemorating military achievements. Carmel (not Mount Carmel but a town in Judah) was near the battle site. Gilgal, where Saul's unlawful sacrifice occurred (chapter 13), ironically becomes the site of his rejection.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does self-commemoration conflict with faithful obedience?
2. What does the contrast between Samuel's night of prayer and Saul's monument-building reveal?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּשְׁבַּת שָׁאֵל לְשָׁמוֹאֵל לְקֹבֵץ אֶת בְּבִרְכָּה וְאֶת שָׁמֶן
rose early And when Samuel to meet Saul in the morning it was told
H7925 H8050 H7125 H7586 H1242 H5046

וְהִנֵּה כִּי כָרְמֵל לְאָמֵר לְאַמְרֵל בָּא שָׁאֵל לְשָׁמוֹאֵל
And when Samuel saying came Saul to Carmel H2009
H8050 H559 H935 H7586 H3760

וְיִשְׁבֶּר מִצְּבָא לְזִהְבָּה וְיִסְּבֶּר מִצְּבָא
and behold he set him up a place and is gone about and passed on
H5324 H0 H3027 H5437 H5674

וְיָמַלְגֵל: כִּילְגָּל: וְיָמַלְגֵל:
and gone down to Gilgal
H3381 H1537

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 15:55 (Parallel theme): Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah,

1 Samuel 25:2 (Parallel theme): And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

2 Samuel 18:18 (Parallel theme): Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org