

1 Samuel 15:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

Analysis

And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

Samuel's devastating question - 'What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?' - lets reality expose self-deception. The spared animals testify against Saul's claim of obedience. Samuel does not argue theology; he simply points to evidence. The Hebrew verbs for animal sounds (qol, 'voice') ironically suggests the livestock 'testifies' against the king. Evidence-based confrontation remains the most effective response to self-deception.

Historical Context

The sounds of livestock would have been unmistakable. Saul could not hide the evidence of his disobedience. Samuel's rhetorical question forces Saul to acknowledge what his claim to obedience attempted to deny.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What 'bleating' in your life testifies against claims of obedience?
2. How does evidence-based confrontation differ from theoretical theological argument?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	שְׁמוּאֵל ל	וְכֵן ה	וְכֵן וְלֹא	הַצֹּאֵן
said	And Samuel	H4100	What meaneth then this bleating	of the sheep
H559	H8050		H6963	H6629
הִזְהִי	בְּאָזְנִי	וְכֵן וְלֹא	הַבֶּקֶר	אֶנְכִּי אֶשֶׁר
H2088	in mine ears	What meaneth then this bleating	of the oxen	H834
	H241	H6963	H1241	H595
שְׁמָעִי:				
which I hear				
H8085				