

1 Samuel 15:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

Analysis

And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

Samuel interprets the torn garment: 'The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.' Three elements constitute this prophetic oracle: the divine actor ('the LORD hath rent'), the timing ('this day'), and the replacement ('a neighbour... better than thou'). The 'neighbour' is David, though unnamed. 'Better than thou' does not mean sinless but indicates a heart orientation toward God that Saul lacks. The kingdom transfer is presented as accomplished fact, though Saul will reign many more years.

Historical Context

The transfer to David would not be complete for approximately 15 years, yet Samuel announces it as accomplished 'this day.' Prophetic perspective often telescopes future events as present realities. David is described as 'better' because of his heart attitude (13:14), not moral perfection.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does God's giving the kingdom to one 'better' teach about the basis of divine favor?
2. How should we understand prophetic 'this day' announcements of events that unfold over years?

Interlinear Text

מֶלֶךְ וְתָאתָה אַתָּה יְהוָה שְׁמֹוֹאֵל אֵלֵינוּ וַיֹּאמֶר
the kingdom and thou art the LORD unto him The LORD said
H4468 H853 H3068 H7167 H8050 And Samuel hath rent said

לְרַעַב וַיִּתְּחַנֵּן וְיִשְׁרָאֵל מִעַל יְהוָה כִּי וּמְלָאֵךְ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁרָאֵל
a neighbour to a given and hath given this day from thee from Israel of

מְלָאֵךְ וְבַתְּהֵר
H4480 H2896 that is better of thine

Additional Cross-References

Acts 13:22 (Kingdom): And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

