

1 Samuel 17:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

Analysis

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

Eliab's angry accusation against David reflects the older brother's wounded pride and perhaps guilt over his own inaction. The charges of pride and 'naughtiness of thine heart' ironically describe Eliab better than David. His dismissive reference to 'those few sheep' denigrates David's faithful service. Family members often struggle most to recognize God's calling on the unexpected one among them.

Historical Context

Elder brothers held authority in Israelite family structure. Eliab may have still smarted from rejection when Samuel had passed him by (16:6-7). His presence in the army without action against Goliath made David's bold faith an implicit rebuke.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does family resistance sometimes test genuine calling?
2. What does Eliab's accusation reveal about how defensive pride misreads godly zeal?

Interlinear Text

וּשְׁמָע	וְאֵלִיָּא	אָחִי	הַגָּד	וּבְדַבָּר	אֶל	הָאֲנָשִׁים
heard	And Eliab	brother	his eldest	when he spake		
H8085	H446	H251	H1419	H1696	H413	H376
וְנִסְּתָה	אֵת	וְאֵלִיָּא	בְּדָוִד	וַיֹּאמֶר	לָמָּה	זֶה
was kindled	anger	And Eliab	against David	and he said		
H2734	H639	H446	H1732	H559	H4100	H2088
יָרַדְתָּ:	מִי	וְעַל	נִשְׁתָּ	מָעַט		
Why camest thou down			hither and with whom hast thou left	few		
H3381	H5921	H4310	H5203	H4592		
הַצֹּאֵן	הַנֵּה	בַּמִּדְבָּר	אֲנִי	יָדַעְתִּי	אֶת	זִדְדְּךָ
sheep	those	in the wilderness		I know		thy pride
H6629	H2007	H4057	H589	H3045	H853	H853
וְרָע	לִבְּךָ	כִּי	לֹמַעַן	רָא	וְתִרְאֶה	
and the naughtiness	of thine heart			that thou mightest see		
H7455	H3824	H3588	H4616	H7200		
הַמִּלְחָמָה	יָרַדְתָּ:					
the battle	Why camest thou down					
H4421	H3381					

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 10:36 (Parallel theme): And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

Genesis 37:8 (Parallel theme): And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

Genesis 37:4 (Parallel theme): And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Genesis 37:11 (Parallel theme): And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Proverbs 18:19 (Parallel theme): A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

Mark 3:21 (Parallel theme): And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

Psalms 35:11 (Parallel theme): False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

Proverbs 27:4 (Parallel theme): Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

Ecclesiastes 4:4 (Parallel theme): Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

Matthew 27:18 (Parallel theme): For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.