

1 Samuel 17:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man?
And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite.

Analysis

And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite.

David's answer 'I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite' combines humility with clarity. He identifies himself through his father - the customary form of introduction - while using the deferential 'thy servant.' Bethlehem's mention carries prophetic weight: this small town would produce Israel's greatest king and, ultimately, the Messiah (Micah 5:2). David's humble origins from a servant family in an insignificant town became the foundation for God's redemptive purposes. The exchange formally establishes David's identity at the precise moment his public destiny begins - the shepherd boy from Bethlehem now stands before the king whose throne he will inherit.

Historical Context

Identification by father's name and hometown was standard ancient practice, establishing family reputation and tribal affiliation. Bethlehem was a small agricultural town in Judah's territory, far from the centers of power. Jesse's designation as 'thy servant' indicates his lower social status relative to royalty.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does David's humble self-identification model appropriate humility even in moments of great achievement?
2. What significance do you see in Bethlehem's role in producing both David and, later, Jesus?

Interlinear Text

answered	H559	And Saul	I am the son	of thy servant	Jesse	the Bethlehemite
		H413	H7586	H1121	H3448	H1022

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 17:12 (References David): Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul.