

1 Samuel 18:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

Analysis

And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

The bride-price of 'an hundred foreskins of the Philistines' was designed as a death sentence. Saul expected David to die attempting to collect such a gruesome dowry. The demand combined ritual humiliation of enemies with maximum danger to David. Yet what Saul intended for death became testimony to God's protection, as David returned with double the requirement (v.27).

Historical Context

Bride-prices were customary in ancient Near Eastern marriages. Extraordinary requirements sometimes tested the groom's devotion or capability. Collecting enemy foreskins proved kills while humiliating uncircumcised opponents.

Related Passages

[Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth](#)

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. When have impossible demands become opportunities for God to demonstrate His power?
2. What does David's excess (200 instead of 100) teach about whole-hearted response to challenges?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	פָּזֶן	אִין	צִדְקוֹ	תִּזְעַד	תִּתְאִמֵּר	כִּי	וְשָׁא	וְלָ	תִּתְאִמֵּר	וְ	
Thus	shall	ye	say	And	Saul	H3541	Thus	shall	ye	say	
H559				H7586			H559			H1732	
תִּזְעַד	אִין	צִדְקוֹ	תִּתְאִמֵּר	וְ	תִּתְאִמֵּר	וְ	כִּי	וְשָׁא	וְלָ	תִּתְאִמֵּר	
desireth											
H369											
פְּלִשְׁתִּים	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	
foreskins				but	an	hundred				of	
H6430				H3967							
פְּלִשְׁתִּים	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	
of	the	Philistines									
H1732											
צִדְקוֹ	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	
to	be	avenged									
H853											
צִדְקוֹ	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	
to	David										
H1732											
בְּנֵי	צִדְקוֹ	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים
by	the	hand									
H3027											
בְּנֵי	צִדְקוֹ	וְ	עָרֵל	וְתָ	בְּמַאֲהָ	כִּי	בְּמַה	הָר	פֶּתֶם	לְרָ	פְּלִשְׁתִּים
of	the	Philistines									
H6430											

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 34:12 (Parallel theme): Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

1 Samuel 18:17 (References David): And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

1 Samuel 14:24 (Parallel theme): And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.

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