

1 Samuel 19:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

Analysis

And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

Michal's lie - 'He is sick' (choleh) - bought precious time for David's escape. The simple declaration deflected immediate action, as entering a sick person's chamber risked both contagion and ceremonial defilement. Michal chose deception over obedience to her father, prioritizing David's life over filial loyalty. While Scripture records her lie without explicit approval, it demonstrates how Saul's violence corrupted family relationships, forcing his daughter into moral complexity. God often preserves His servants through imperfect human instruments.

Historical Context

Illness exempted individuals from many obligations and restricted visitors. Royal messengers would hesitate to force entry to a sick chamber without explicit authorization. Michal's quick thinking exploited social conventions to delay the arrest.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you evaluate actions taken to protect the innocent in morally complex situations?
2. What does Michal's choice reveal about the impact of Saul's violence on his family?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשְׁלַח	וְשָׂא וְל	מִלָּאָכִים	לְקַח חַת	אֶת	דָּוִד	וַתֹּאמֶר
sent	And when Saul	messengers	to take	H853	David	she said
H7971	H7586	H4397	H3947		H1732	H559

הָיָה חֵלֵק	הוא:
He is sick	H1931
H2470	

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 2:5 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.