

1 Samuel 19:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.

Analysis

And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.

The discovery of the deception - an image (teraphim) with goats' hair pillow - revealed Michal's ruse and David's escape. The household idol's presence raises theological questions about religious practice in David's home, but the narrative focuses on the escape's success. The messengers' discovery brought Michal under royal suspicion while confirming David had fled. God's purposes advanced despite, or through, morally ambiguous means. The text records events without endorsing every element, showing how divine sovereignty works through flawed human actions.

Historical Context

Teraphim were household religious objects, possibly ancestral images. Their presence in Israelite homes, though prohibited, was apparently common. The goats' hair pillow created visual illusion from a distance, especially in dimly lit rooms.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God accomplish His purposes through imperfect means and flawed instruments?
2. What does the presence of teraphim suggest about the gradual nature of spiritual reformation?

Interlinear Text

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|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------|
| וַיָּבֹא אָוֹ | בְּמֶלֶךְ יְמִינָה | וְהִנֵּה הִ | פָּתַחַת יְמִינָה | אֵל |
| were come in | And when the messengers | H2009 | behold there was an image | H413 |
| H935 | H4397 | | H8655 | |
| מִבְּאַשְׁתִּים: | בְּעֵזֶב יְמִינָה | וְכִבְעָרָה יְמִינָה | מִבְּאַשְׁתִּים: | |
| in the bed | with a pillow | H5795 | of goats | H4763 |
| H4296 | H3523 | | | |

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