

1 Samuel 19:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

Analysis

And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

The Spirit's power upon Saul's messengers, causing them to prophesy instead of arrest, demonstrates divine sovereignty over human intentions. Three times Saul sent messengers (vv.20-21); three times God intervened. The phrase 'the Spirit of God was upon the messengers' shows God appropriating even enemies for His purposes. Human plans dissolve before divine power.

Historical Context

Prophetic communities in Israel often experienced ecstatic worship. The Spirit's overpowering of Saul's messengers resembled but surpassed normal prophetic activity. Samuel standing 'as appointed over them' indicates his leadership of the prophetic guild.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. When have you witnessed God turning hostile intentions into occasions for spiritual encounter?
2. What does the messengers' prophesying teach about God's power over those sent against His servants?

Interlinear Text

וְיֵרָא	אֵת	לִקְחַת	מֶלֶךְ	שָׁאוֹל	וְשָׁלַח	וְיֵרָא	אֵת	לִקְחַת	מֶלֶךְ	שָׁאוֹל	וְשָׁלַח
sent	And Saul	messengers	to take	H853	David	and when they saw					
H7971	H7586	H4397	H3947		H1732	H7200					
עִם	דָּבָר	וְשָׁמוֹאֵל	וְיִתְנַבְּאֵת	הַגְּבִרִים	לִבְקָרְתָּא	אֵת	עִם	דָּבָר	וְשָׁמוֹאֵל	וְיִתְנַבְּאֵת	הַגְּבִרִים
H853	the company	of the prophets	and they also prophesied	H5012	and Samuel	standing	H8050	H5975			
	H3862	H5030									
רַוְעֵן	שָׁאוֹל	מֶלֶךְ	עַל	וְתָהָר	וְעַלְיָהָם	נָאָבֶן	רַוְעֵן	שָׁאוֹל	מֶלֶךְ	עַל	וְתָהָר
as appointed	H5921	H1961	H5921	H4397	messengers	And Saul	H7586	H7307			
H5324											
בְּפָנָה	גַּם	וְיִתְנַבְּאֵת	וְיִתְנַבְּאֵת	בְּפָנָה	גַּם						
אֱלֹהִים	וְיִתְנַבְּאֵת			H1571	H1992						
of God	and they also prophesied										
H430	H5012										

Additional Cross-References

John 7:32 (Parallel theme): The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

Joel 2:28 (Spirit): And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

1 Samuel 10:10 (Spirit): And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

1 Samuel 19:14 (References David): And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

1 Samuel 19:11 (References David): Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain.