

1 Samuel 20:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.

Analysis

If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.

David provided clear interpretive criteria for Saul's response: 'It is well' signals peace; 'very wroth' reveals murderous intent. The Hebrew *charah* (to burn with anger) describes intense rage. David understood that Saul's reaction to his absence would expose his true intentions - acceptance meant safety, while rage confirmed deadly purpose. The test would force Saul to reveal what he had concealed from Jonathan. Sometimes absence serves as better revelation than presence.

Historical Context

Reading royal moods was essential survival skill for ancient courtiers. Saul's volatility made such interpretation both necessary and difficult. The proposed test created forced revelation of concealed intent through emotional reaction to apparent defection.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How can someone's reaction to your absence reveal their true feelings toward you?
2. What does this interpretive framework teach about discerning hidden intentions?

Interlinear Text

אָם H518	כֹּה H3541	יֹאמַר H559	טוֹב H2896	שָׁלֹוֹם H7965	לְעַבְדְּךָ H5650	אָם H518
		If he say	thus It is well	shall have peace	thy servant	
	יִחְרָה H2734	יִחְרָה H2734	לֹא H0	יָדַע H3045	כִּי H3588	כָּלֵה H3615
	but if he be very	but if he be very		then be sure		is determined
הַרְעָה H7451	מַעֲמֹוֹ: H5973					
that evil						

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 25:17 (Evil): Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.

Esther 7:7 (Evil): And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.