

1 Samuel 22:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

Analysis

And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

David's band comprised society's rejects—the Hebrew terms 'matsok' (distress), 'nosheh' (debt), and 'mar nephesh' (bitter of soul/discontented) describe desperate people. Yet from these unlikely recruits, David would forge his 'mighty men' (gibbor). The transformation of outcasts into elite warriors foreshadows Christ gathering disciples from fishermen and tax collectors. David becoming 'sar' (captain/prince) over them established leadership that would eventually extend over all Israel. Four hundred men represented a significant fighting force, requiring organization, provisioning, and purpose—skills David would develop during his fugitive years.

Historical Context

Economic hardship and political instability under Saul's declining reign created many displaced persons. Ancient Near Eastern debt slavery and land loss were

common causes of social dislocation. David's band resembled other outlaw groups known from ancient sources who operated in frontier regions.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God use broken and marginalized people to accomplish His purposes?
2. What does David's leadership of outcasts teach about Christ's gathering of unlikely disciples?

Interlinear Text

gathered	H413	H3605	And every one	that was in distress	H3605	And every one
H6908			H376	H4689		H376
that was in debt	H834	H0	that was in debt	H3605	And every one	that was discontented
H5378			H5378	H376	H4751	H5315
themselves unto him and he became a captain	H1961	H5921	themselves unto him and he became a captain	H8269	H1961	H5973
over them and there were with him about four	H702		over them and there were with him about four	H3967	And every one	
				H376		

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 11:28 (Parallel theme): Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1 Samuel 25:13 (Parallel theme): And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

1 Samuel 30:6 (Parallel theme): And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

1 Samuel 9:16 (Parallel theme): To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

1 Samuel 1:10 (Parallel theme): And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

1 Samuel 23:13 (Parallel theme): Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth.

Judges 11:3 (Parallel theme): Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.