

1 Samuel 22:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

Analysis

Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

Saul's appeal to tribal loyalty reveals his political strategy and insecurity. The Hebrew 'shimu-na' (hear now) demands attention for his accusation. By addressing his servants as 'Benjamites,' he invokes tribal solidarity against the Judahite David. His rhetorical question about 'fields and vineyards' appeals to economic self-interest—David, from small-town Bethlehem, could not match the patronage Saul provided. The military ranks mentioned ('captains of thousands and hundreds') represented the rewards Saul had distributed to his fellow Benjamites. This speech exposes a king who maintained loyalty through bribes rather than justice, and who viewed the throne as tribal property rather than divine trust.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kingship involved extensive patronage networks. Saul's appeal to Benjamite tribalism reflects the ongoing tribal tensions within early Israel. Land grants and military appointments were primary means of securing loyalty in pre-monarchic and early monarchic Israel.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 – Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How do leaders manipulate group identity and economic interests to maintain power?
2. What does Saul's tribalism teach about the dangers of factional loyalty over principled leadership?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמַעוּ	עַל־יְהוָה	הַפְּנַאיִם	לְעַבְדֵּי	שָׁאָל	וַיֹּאמֶר
said	Then Saul	unto his servants	that stood	H5921	about him Hear now
H559	H7586	H5650	H5324		H8085

וְאֵת	בְּנֵי	יְמִינֵי	גָּם	לְכָלְכָלָם	וְאֵת	בְּנֵי	יְשִׁי
H4994	will the son	ye Benjamites	H1571	H3605	give	will the son	of Jesse

וְשָׂרֵךְ	וְשָׂרֵם	לְכַלְכֵל	וְכַרְמֵם	שָׂדֵם	וְתָתֵּם
every one of you fields	and vineyards	H3605	and make	and captains	

מֵאוֹת:	וְשָׁרִים	אֶלָּפֶת	יָם
of hundreds	and captains	of thousands	

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 12:16 (Parallel theme): So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org