

1 Samuel 23:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver thee up.

Analysis

Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver thee up.

God's second answer reveals the painful truth: the town David saved would betray him. The Hebrew 'yasgiru' (they will deliver up) confirms that gratitude would not overcome fear of Saul. This divine knowledge of contingent futures—what would happen if David stayed—demonstrates God's comprehensive understanding. The men of Keilah would choose self-preservation over protecting their deliverer. This foreknowledge allowed David to act preemptively, avoiding betrayal through departure. The passage illustrates how divine guidance protects the faithful from misplaced trust, revealing human hearts that circumstances would eventually expose anyway.

Historical Context

God's answer represents 'middle knowledge'—knowing what free agents would do in specific circumstances. Keilah's projected betrayal reflects the political reality that small towns could not resist royal pressure regardless of gratitude.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God reveals that those you helped would betray you?
2. What does Keilah's potential betrayal teach about the limits of human gratitude?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה אַתָּה קְנָעֵל הַבָּעֵל וְאַמְרֵךְ

Then said David They will deliver thee up Will the men of Keilah H853 H853

H559 H1732 H5462

H1167 H7084

וְאַנְשֵׁךְ בְּיַד שָׁאול יְהִי הַיְהֹוָה יָסְגִּירָה

into the hand of Saul Then said And the LORD They will deliver thee up

H376 H3027 H7586 H559 H3068 H5462

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 31:8 (Parallel theme): And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

1 Samuel 23:20 (Parallel theme): Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand.

Psalms 62:1 (Parallel theme): Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.