

1 Samuel 23:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.

Analysis

And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.

The contrast between Saul's constant pursuit and God's constant protection frames David's wilderness years. The Hebrew 'metsadot' (strongholds) describes natural fortifications—caves and rocky positions offering defensive advantage. The wilderness of Ziph, southeast of Hebron, provided rugged terrain favoring evasion over pursuit. The phrase 'Saul sought him every day' (kol-hayamim) emphasizes the relentless hunt. Yet the theological summary—'God delivered him not into his hand'—attributes David's survival to divine protection rather than human skill. God's sovereignty overshadowed both Saul's determination and David's tactics.

Historical Context

The wilderness of Ziph contained numerous caves and rocky outcrops ideal for hiding. The Judean wilderness, with its deep wadis and barren hills, allowed small bands to survive through mobility and local knowledge. Saul's larger forces were disadvantaged in this terrain.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing God's protection change your perspective on persistent threats?
2. What does 'God delivered him not' teach about divine sovereignty over human pursuit?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| וְשָׁב | בְּמִצְדָּר | בְּמִצְדָּה וְת | בְּמִצְדָּה וְת | וְשָׁב | בְּרִכָּה |
| abode | And David | in the wilderness | in strong holds | abode | in a mountain |
| H3427 | H1732 | H4057 | H4679 | H3427 | H2022 |

בַּידָּוֹ אֱלֹהִים נָתַן וְ
delivered but God him not into his hand
H5414 H430 H3027

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 32:7 (Parallel theme): Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

Joshua 15:24 (Parallel theme): Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth.

Joshua 15:55 (Parallel theme): Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah,

Romans 8:31 (References God): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

2 Timothy 3:11 (Parallel theme): Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

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