

1 Samuel 23:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.

Analysis

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The geographical notice creates narrative tension. The Ziphites depart on their reconnaissance mission while David has already moved—he is no longer in Ziph but in Maon's wilderness. The Hebrew 'Arabah' (plain) describes the rift valley region. Jeshimon ('wasteland') marks the desolate area toward the Dead Sea. David's movement, whether by divine prompting or tactical instinct, placed him elsewhere when danger arrived at his previous location. This pattern of narrow escapes characterizes God's preservation—David remained one step ahead through providence that coordinated his movements with enemy arrivals.

Historical Context

The wilderness of Maon was adjacent to the wilderness of Ziph, both in the Judean hill country. David's band continuously relocated, making fixed intelligence quickly obsolete. The Arabah provided additional escape routes toward the Dead Sea region.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How has God's timing protected you in ways you recognized only later?
2. What does David's constant movement teach about flexibility in seasons of danger?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן
וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן	וְאֶתְנָשָׁן
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Additional Cross-References

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

1 Samuel 25:2 (Parallel theme): And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.