

1 Samuel 23:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

Analysis

And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

Saul mobilizes Israel's military against David rather than against the Philistines David just defeated. The Hebrew 'lehatstsur' (to besiege) indicates intent for a prolonged operation against the walled town. The bitter irony deepens: David protected Keilah from Philistines; Saul now threatens to besiege the town David saved. The king's priorities have completely inverted—pursuing a loyal servant while neglecting national enemies. Calling 'all the people' for a siege against one man's band demonstrates Saul's excessive response and the army's complicity in his paranoia. The rightful king protects; the corrupt king destroys.

Historical Context

Siege warfare was resource-intensive and typically reserved for major military objectives. Saul's willingness to deploy such resources against David indicates the obsessive nature of his pursuit. Keilah's inhabitants would suffer from both the siege and potential reprisals.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do Saul's priorities (pursuing David rather than Philistines) reveal misplaced focus?
2. What warning does this passage offer about leaders who prioritize personal vendettas over public good?

Interlinear Text

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|------------------|-------------------|------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| וַיִּשְׁמָ ע | וְשָׂא וְל | אֶת | כָּל | הָעָם | לְמַלְחָמָה | לָךְ דָּת |
| called | And Saul | | | all the people | to war | to go down |
| H8085 | H7586 | H853 | H3605 | H5971 | H4421 | H3381 |
| קַעִילָה | לְצֹר | אֶל | דָּוִד | וְאֶל | אֲנָשָׁיו: | |
| to Keilah | to besiege | | David | | | |
| H7084 | H6696 | H413 | H1732 | H413 | H376 | |

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