

1 Samuel 24:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

Analysis

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

David's refusal to harm Saul despite opportunity and justification demonstrates respect for God's authority structures even when those in authority act wickedly. His conviction that he cannot 'stretch forth my hand against the LORD's anointed' teaches the principle of leaving vengeance to God rather than taking matters into one's own hands. David's restraint shows mature faith that trusts God to vindicate and promote in His timing. This passage warns against using apparent opportunities to advance personal interests when doing so requires violating godly principles.

Historical Context

The establishment of monarchy around 1050-1010 BCE represented a dramatic political and theological shift for Israel. Unlike surrounding nations where kings were considered divine or semi-divine, Israel's kings were supposed to function under God's ultimate authority as laid out in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. The Benjamite tribe occupied strategic territory between Ephraim and Judah, making Saul's selection a politically astute choice to balance tribal rivalries. Archaeological remains from this period show increased fortification and centralization of settlements, confirming the transition to state-level organization.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen our understanding of God's character, purposes, and ways of working in human history?
2. What specific heart attitudes, thought patterns, or life practices does this passage call you to examine or change?
3. How does this passage connect to the larger biblical narrative of redemption and point toward Christ and the gospel?

Interlinear Text

מִקְלָה בְּחָ וְרָ תְּאַנְשָׁ יְיָ אַלְפָ יְמָ נְשָׁלָשָׁת שָׁא וְלָקָח
took Then Saul three thousand men chosen H3605

פְּנֵי עַל תְּאַנְשָׁ יְיָ אֶת לְבָקָשׁ יְיָ לְהַלְלָה יְשַׁבָּא ל
out of all Israel to seek David men upon H6440

בְּעַלְיָם צוֹעַ
the rocks of the wild goats H3277

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 26:2 (References David): Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

