

1 Samuel 24:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

Analysis

And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

David's oath demonstrates magnanimity that would later shape his treatment of Saul's house. The Hebrew 'vayishava David le-Sha'ul' (David swore to Saul) created binding obligation. Significantly, after this reconciliation scene, they separate—Saul to his 'house' (home/palace), David to the 'hold' (metsudah—stronghold). No actual peace was established; circumstances resumed their prior patterns. The Hebrew distinction between 'house' and 'hold' emphasizes the inequality: Saul returned to royal comfort while David remained in wilderness hiding. David's later kindness to Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9) fulfilled this oath, demonstrating that David kept vows even when the one who extracted them did not keep his implicit commitment to peace.

Historical Context

The separation after reconciliation shows both parties understood the encounter changed nothing permanently. David's oath, however, would be honored—he spared Saul's descendants and showed kindness to Jonathan's son. The 'hold' probably refers to En-gedi's strongholds.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why did reconciliation not produce lasting peace between David and Saul?
2. How does David's faithfulness to this oath model keeping commitments even to unreliable people?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשָּׁבַע ע	וַיִּדָּו	וַיִּשָּׂא וְ	וַיִּלֶּךְ	וַיִּשָּׂא וְ	אֶל	בֵּית ו	וַיִּדָּו
sware	And David	And Saul	H1980	And Saul	H413	home	And David
H7650	H1732	H7586		H7586		H1004	H1732
וַיִּגְבּוּ יו	עַל ו	עַל	הַמְצוּדָה:				
H376	gat them up	H5921	unto the hold				
	H5927		H4686				

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 23:29 (References David): And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi.

John 2:24 (Parallel theme): But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,