

1 Samuel 26:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Saul's mobilization of three thousand elite soldiers to pursue one man reveals the tragic obsession that consumed Israel's first king. The Hebrew term 'bachur' (chosen men) indicates these were Israel's finest warriors, diverted from defending the nation against Philistine threats to hunt David. This misallocation of resources illustrates how jealousy and fear can cause leaders to neglect their primary responsibilities while pursuing personal vendettas. Saul's descent continues as he prioritizes eliminating a perceived rival over shepherding God's people.

Historical Context

Three thousand men represented a significant military force in ancient Israel, likely comprising multiple battalions with their commanders. This force would have been capable of engaging major military threats, yet Saul deployed them for a personal manhunt in the Judean wilderness.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What responsibilities have you neglected while pursuing lesser concerns driven by fear or jealousy?
2. How can obsessive focus on perceived threats blind us to our actual calling?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּקָּם	שָׁא וּל	וַיֵּרָד	אֶל	בְּמִדְבַּר	זִיפָּ:	וְאֵת
arose	Then Saul	and went down	H413	in the wilderness	of Ziph	H854
H6965	H7586	H3381		H4057	H2128	
שְׁלֹשָׁת	אֶלְפֵי יָם	אֲנָשִׁים	בְּחֹרֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל	לְבַקֵּשׁ	אֶת
having three	thousand	men	chosen	of Israel	with him to seek	H853
H7969	H505	H376	H977	H3478	H1245	
דָּוִד	בְּמִדְבַּר	זִיפָּ:				
David	in the wilderness	of Ziph				
H1732	H4057	H2128				

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 24:2 (References David): 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.