

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

וַיַּעֲשֵׂה סָאוּל וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּמָת בְּמִדְבָּר זִיפָּה
arose Then Saul and went down in the wilderness of Ziph

H6965 H7586 H3381 H413 H4057 H2128 H854

וְשָׁלַשׁ יְמִין אֶלְף אֲלֵף יְמִין שְׁלַשֶׁת
having three thousand men chosen of Israel with him to seek

H7969 H505 H376 H977 H3478 H1245 H853

וְשָׁלַשׁ יְמִין שְׁלַשֶׁת
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.

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