

1 Samuel 26:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

Analysis

David's vivid imagery reduces Saul's grand military expedition to absurdity: the king of Israel hunting 'a flea' and 'a partridge in the mountains.' The Hebrew 'par'osh' (flea) is among the smallest, most insignificant creatures, while the partridge (qore') was known for its exhausting, pointless flight patterns when pursued. This self-deprecating language simultaneously humbles David and exposes the foolishness of Saul's disproportionate response. The appeal 'let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD' invokes divine witness to any injustice.

Historical Context

Partridge hunting in the Judean hills was known for its futility; the birds would run and fly short distances, exhausting the hunter without being caught. This metaphor perfectly captured the years of fruitless pursuit Saul had undertaken.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

- ## Interlinear Text

Additional Cross-References

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