

# 1 Samuel 27:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

## Analysis

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The brutality of David's warfare, leaving 'neither man nor woman alive,' presents modern readers with difficulty but must be understood within its ancient context and specific targets. The Hebrew 'lo yechayeh' (did not keep alive) indicates intentional elimination of witnesses. While morally complex, David's targets were peoples under divine judgment whose survival would expose his deception. The spoils taken (sheep, oxen, asses, camels, apparel) represented the wealth of pastoral peoples and provided resources for David's community.

## Historical Context

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Ancient warfare commonly involved total destruction of enemy populations, particularly in raids. The specific mention of camels suggests David's raids extended into desert-dwelling populations. These activities built David's wealth and reputation as a warrior while eliminating witnesses to his true loyalties.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How do you navigate moral complexity when survival seems to require compromising actions?
2. What aspects of biblical history challenge your understanding of God's purposes?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהָכָה	וְדָוִד	אֶת	הָאֲרֶץ	וְלֹא	יָחִיָּהּ	אֶל יֵשׁ
smote	And David	H853	the land	H3808	alive	and left neither man
H5221	H1732		H776		H2421	H376
וְאִשָּׁה	וְלָקַח	צֹאן	וּבָקָר	וְחֲמֹרִים	וְגַמְלִים	
nor woman	and took away	the sheep	and the oxen	and the asses	and the camels	
H802	H3947	H6629	H1241	H2543	H1581	
וּבְגָדֵי יָם	וַיָּשָׁב	וַיָּבֹא	אֶל	אֶחֱישׁ:		
and the apparel	and returned	and came	H413	to Achish		
H899	H7725	H935		H397		

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 15:3** (Parallel theme): Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.