

1 Samuel 28:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

Analysis

Saul's physical collapse ('fell straightway all along on the earth') mirrors his spiritual collapse throughout the chapter. The Hebrew 'nephal male-qomato artsah' (fell the full measure of his height to the ground) emphasizes his complete prostration. The combination of terror at Samuel's words and physical weakness from fasting leaves Saul utterly broken. The mighty warrior who once stood head and shoulders above Israel now lies face-down, defeated before battle begins. Physical strength without spiritual vitality proves worthless.

Historical Context

Saul's fasting may have been preparation for the forbidden ritual or simply the result of anxiety suppressing appetite. His complete physical collapse rendered him temporarily incapable of any action, including returning to his army or preparing for battle.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does spiritual crisis manifest in physical symptoms?
2. What happens when the weight of our choices finally crushes us?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּמָּה רַ	וְשָׂא וּל	וַיִּפֹּל ל	מִלֵּא	קִוְּמָתוֹ	אֶרֶץ הָרָצָה	וַיִּזְאָ
straightway	Then Saul	fell	all	along	on the earth	afraid
H4116	H7586	H5307	H4393	H6967	H776	H3372
מָא ד	מִדְּבָרֵי י	גַּם שְׁמוּאֵל ל	כֹּחַ			
and was sore	because of the words	of Samuel	and there was no strength			
H3966	H1697	H8050	H1571			H3581
לֹא	הָיָה	בּוֹ	כִּי	לֹא	אָכַל	לֶחֶם
H3808	H1961	H0	H3588	H3808	in him for he had eaten	no bread
					H398	H3899
הַיּוֹם	וְכָל	הַלַּיְלָה:				
all the day		nor all the night				
H3117	H3605	H3915				

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