

1 Samuel 31:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

Analysis

The final chapter of 1 Samuel brings the interwoven narratives to their tragic conclusion. While David recovered his families and distributed spoil, the battle at Gilboa decided Israel's immediate future. The Hebrew 'wayyanusu' (fled) and 'wayyippelu chalalim' (fell slain) describe military disaster. The contrast between David's victory and Israel's defeat could not be sharper. As David rises, Saul falls. God's sovereign ordering of events removes the barrier to David's succession while fulfilling Samuel's prophecy.

Historical Context

The Battle of Gilboa (approximately 1010 BCE) marked the end of the first Israelite monarchy and Philistine domination of significant territory. The defeat's magnitude reshaped the political landscape of Canaan.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do simultaneous events sometimes serve connected divine purposes?
2. What does the timing of David's victory and Saul's defeat reveal about God's orchestration?

Interlinear Text

כָּל־שֵׁט יִם	נִלְחַם יִם	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיָּסוּ	אֶנְשֵׁי יִם	יִשְׂרָאֵל
Now the Philistines	fought	against Israel	fled	H376	against Israel
H6430	H3898	H3478	H5127		H3478
מִפְּנֵי יִם	כָּל־שֵׁט יִם	וַיִּפֹּל וַ	חָלַל יִם	בְּהָר	הַגִּלְבֹּעַ:
from before	Now the Philistines	and fell down	slain	in mount	Gilboa
H6440	H6430	H5307	H2491	H2022	H1533

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 28:4 (References Israel): And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

2 Samuel 1:21 (Parallel theme): Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.