

1 Samuel 31:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

Analysis

The final verse provides dignified conclusion: proper burial 'under a tree at Jabesh' and seven-day fast. The Hebrew 'eshel' (tamarisk tree) marked the grave site, creating a memorial. The week of fasting demonstrates genuine mourning, not merely formal observance. Despite Saul's failures, these men honored his memory. First Samuel ends not with David's triumph but with honorable men mourning Israel's fallen king. Grace extends even to those who failed.

Historical Context

The seven-day fast was standard mourning practice for significant deaths (Genesis 50:10). Later, David would also mourn Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1), honoring them despite their complicated history. David would eventually move Saul's bones to his ancestral burial site.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you honor the memory of those whose lives were marked by both good and failure?
2. What does genuine mourning for fallen leaders look like in your context?

Interlinear Text

וְקָחוּ אֶת עֲצָמֵי תִּיהָ מִן הָאֲוֶלָה וְקָבְרוּ אֹתָם תַּחַת הָאֲוֶלָה
And they took H3947 **their bones** H853 **and buried** H6106 **them under a tree** H8478 H815

יָמִים: שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיֵּצֵא מִן הַבֵּית שָׁה
at Jabesh H3003 **and fasted** H6684 **seven** H7651 **days** H3117

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 50:10 (Parallel theme): And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

1 Samuel 22:6 (Parallel theme): When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;)