

# 1 Samuel 31:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.

## Analysis

The Philistines' treatment of Saul's body serves both religious and propagandistic purposes. Cutting off his head mirrors David's treatment of Goliath, creating ironic reversal. The armor sent to 'the house of their idols' (Hebrew: 'bet 'atsabbehem') dedicates spoils to Philistine gods. Publishing news 'among the people' proclaims victory throughout Philistia. What began with Goliath's head in David's hand ends with Saul's head in Philistine hands.

## Historical Context

Dedicating enemy armor to temples was common throughout the ancient world, acknowledging divine help in victory. The circulation of news throughout Philistine territory served to unify their people in celebration.

## Related Passages

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Saul's fate mirror his failure to complete God's victory over the Philistines?
2. What does the reversal of David's victory over Goliath suggest about incomplete obedience?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּשְׁלַח וְכֹל אֶת־  
And they cut off his head and stripped off his armour and sent  
H3772 H853 H7218 H6584 H3627 H7971

בָּאָרֶץ יְמִינָה רְבָבָה לְבַשׁ רְפַלְשָׁת יְמִינָה  
into the land of the Philistines round about to publish it in the house  
H776 H6430 H5439 H1319 H1004

וְאֶת־עַצְבֵּיהַ בְּצָמָן  
and among the people  
H853 H5971

of their idols

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Samuel 1:20** (Parallel theme): Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.