

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

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

וַיִּשְׁלַח וְ	כָּל יוֹ	אֶת	וַיִּפֹּש׶ׁ טוֹ	רֹאשׁ וְ	אֶת	וַיִּכְרְתוּ
and sent	his armour	H853	and stripped off	his head	H853	And they cut off
H7971	H3627		H6584	H7218		H3772
בֵּית	לְבִישׁ ר	סָבִיב	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	בְּאֶרֶץ		
it in the house	to publish	round about	of the Philistines	into the land		
H1004	H1319	H5439	H6430	H776		
					וְאֵת	הָעָם:
					of their idols	and among the people
					H6091	H5971

Additional Cross-References

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.