

1 Samuel 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now, for he came to day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to day in the high place:

Analysis

And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now, for he came to day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to day in the high place:

The maidens' response overflows with urgency and detailed information, far exceeding what Saul's simple question required. Their emphatic 'He is; behold, he is before you' confirms Samuel's presence while their exhortation to 'make haste' (maharu) conveys the time-sensitive nature of the opportunity. The mention of sacrifice at the 'high place' (bamah) introduces an important setting. Before Solomon's temple, high places served as legitimate worship sites, distinct from the later corrupted bamoth associated with syncretistic worship. The communal sacrifice indicates a covenant meal where the community would eat together in God's presence. Samuel's arrival 'today' underscores providential timing: had Saul come a day earlier or later, this encounter would have missed its appointed moment. Every detail aligns with precision that can only be attributed to divine orchestration.

Historical Context

High places (bamot) were elevated outdoor worship sites common before the centralization of worship in Jerusalem. While later associated with pagan practices and condemned by prophets, they served legitimate purposes during Samuel's era

when the tabernacle was not functioning as the central sanctuary after Shiloh's destruction. Community sacrifices involved shared meals that strengthened social and religious bonds.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's precise timing in your life demonstrate His sovereign care over circumstances?
2. What opportunities might require urgent response lest we miss God's appointed moment?

Interlinear Text

לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה הִנֵּה אָזְתָּם רְבָה וְתַעֲשֶׂנּוּ יְמָה	behold he is before them and said He is	And they answered
H6440 H2009 H3426	H853 H559	H6030
כִּי לְעֵגֶל בְּאַתָּה מִמֶּה רָא	now for he came to the city	you make haste
H3588 H935 H5892	H6258 H3588 H3117	H4116
בְּבָמָה:	לְעֵד בְּיֹום	for there is a sacrifice to day of the people
H1116	H5971 H3117	H2077

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 31:54 (Sacrifice): Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

1 Samuel 10:5 (Parallel theme): After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy:

1 Samuel 16:2 (Sacrifice): And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.

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