

1 Samuel 9:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

Analysis

Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

The narrative now pulls back the curtain to reveal divine activity behind the human drama. The Hebrew phrase galah et-ozen ('uncovered his ear' or 'revealed to his ear') denotes intimate, confidential communication, suggesting God speaking directly into Samuel's consciousness. The timing, 'a day before,' demonstrates that nothing in this story is accidental. Before Saul lost his donkeys, before he began his search, before he considered returning home, God had already prepared Samuel for this encounter. This verse encapsulates the Reformed understanding of divine sovereignty: human choices are real and meaningful, yet they unfold within God's eternal decree. Samuel's prophetic office gave him access to divine foreknowledge that enabled him to recognize and respond to Saul appropriately. The verse functions as theological commentary on the entire narrative, assuring readers that God remains actively involved in Israel's political transition.

Historical Context

The idiom of 'uncovering the ear' appears elsewhere in Scripture (2 Samuel 7:27; Job 33:16; 36:10) and denotes revelation of secrets or divine instruction. Samuel's preparation a full day in advance indicates the deliberate nature of divine planning. The prophetic office involved receiving such advance revelations to guide Israel through critical transitions.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does knowing that God prepares our path before we walk it affect your trust in His guidance?
2. What does the intimacy of God 'revealing to Samuel's ear' suggest about prophetic communion with God?

Interlinear Text

Now the LORD	had told	H853	in his ear	Samuel	day	a	before
H3068	H1540	H241	H8050	H3117	H259		H6440
came	Saul	saying					
H935	H7586	H559					

לֶפֶנִי אֶת־דַי וּמִשְׁמֹאָה לְיִהְיוֹת־הָבֹא
Now the LORD had told in his ear Samuel day a before
came Saul saying

Additional Cross-References

Acts 13:21 (Parallel theme): And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

1 Samuel 15:1 (References Lord): Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

Psalms 25:14 (References Lord): The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Job 33:16 (Parallel theme): Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

Amos 3:7 (References Lord): Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

2 Samuel 7:27 (References Lord): For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

1 Samuel 20:2 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so.

Acts 27:23 (Parallel theme): For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

1 Samuel 9:17 (References Lord): And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people.