

1 Samuel 9:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

Analysis

To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

God's words to Samuel echo the Exodus pattern, where the LORD 'looked upon' Israel's affliction and heard their cry (Exodus 2:25; 3:7). The title 'captain' (nagid) rather than 'king' (melek) is significant: this term emphasizes military leadership and subordination to the ultimate King, God Himself. The mission is specific: deliverance from Philistine oppression. God acknowledges Israel's suffering while working through their flawed request for a king to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The phrase 'my people' appears three times, emphasizing that despite Israel's rejection of divine kingship, God has not rejected them. The precise timing, 'tomorrow about this time,' underscores prophetic specificity while the verb 'send' (shalach) indicates that even Saul's wandering journey was divinely directed. God condescends to work through imperfect human institutions to accomplish His saving purposes.

Historical Context

Philistine domination during this period included military garrisons in Israelite territory (10:5; 13:3) and economic control through iron monopolies (13:19-22). The Philistines, part of the Sea Peoples who settled along Canaan's coast around 1175 BCE, posed the most serious external threat to Israel during Samuel's era. Their superior military technology and organization demanded united Israelite response.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's response to Israel's cry, even while they were seeking a king to replace Him, display His grace?
2. What does the title 'captain' rather than 'king' suggest about proper human leadership under God's authority?

Interlinear Text

מִן־זֶה	אֲשֶׁר	אֶל־יְהֹוָה	מִתְּרָא	כִּי־תַּעֲשֶׂה	מִן־זֶה	אֲשֶׁר	אֶל־יְהֹוָה	מִתְּרָא	כִּי־תַּעֲשֶׂה
about this time	To morrow	I will send		H413	thee a man	out of the land			
H6256	H4279	H7971			H376				H776
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל	עַמְּךָ	לְנִגְיָד	וְמִשְׁחָתָה	וְבְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל	עַמְּךָ	לְנִגְיָד	וְמִשְׁחָתָה	וְבְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
of Benjamin	and thou shalt anoint	him to be captain		H5057	H5921	my people			my people
H1144	H4886				H5971				H3478
כִּי־יָמִלְשָׁתִים	מִידָּה	עַמְּךָ	אֶת־יְהֹוָה	עַמְּךָ	מִידָּה	עַמְּךָ	אֶת־יְהֹוָה	עַמְּךָ	כִּי־יָמִלְשָׁתִים
that he may save		my people	out of the hand	H3027		of the Philistines			H3588
H3467	H853	H5971			H6430				
אֲלֵיכֶם	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	אֲלֵיכֶם
for I have looked		my people		H3588	H935	is come	because their cry		H413
H7200	H853	H5971			H6818				

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 10:1 (Parallel theme): Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?

Psalms 25:18 (Parallel theme): Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

Psalms 106:44 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

1 Samuel 15:1 (References Israel): 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.

1 Samuel 16:3 (Parallel theme): And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

