

2 Samuel 17:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person.

Analysis

Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Competing Counsel, emphasizing divine providence over human wisdom. The contrast between Ahithophel's shrewd counsel and Hushai's divinely-blessed alternative demonstrates God's providential control over human wisdom. The text explicitly states "the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel" (v. 14), emphasizing divine sovereignty. Ahithophel's suicide demonstrates despair when human wisdom fails. Theological themes include God's sovereignty over human planning, divine protection of His anointed, and the inadequacy of worldly wisdom apart from God.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 17 occurs during David's reign (circa 1010-970 BCE) over Israel's united monarchy. Archaeological discoveries, including the Tel Dan inscription mentioning the 'House of David,' corroborate biblical historicity. Ancient Near Eastern customs regarding divine providence over human wisdom provide crucial background. The geopolitical situation involved regional powers—

Philistines, Ammonites, Arameans, Moabites, Edomites—as David consolidated and expanded Israel's territory. Cultural practices concerning kingship, warfare, covenant relationships, family dynamics, and religious observance differed significantly from modern Western contexts, requiring careful attention to avoid anachronistic interpretation while extracting timeless theological principles applicable across cultures and eras.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of divine providence over human wisdom?
2. What does this verse reveal about God's character, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?
3. In what specific ways can you apply this truth to your current circumstances and relationships this week?

Interlinear Text

ישָׁרַאֵל כֹּל עַל יְהוָה יְאֹסֵר יְאֹסֵר יְאֹסֵר יְאֹסֵר יְאֹסֵר
H3588 Therefore I counsel H3289 be generally H622 be generally H5921 H3605 that all Israel
H3478

עַל אֲשֶׁר פֶּה וְלֹא מִן מִן
unto thee from Dan H1835 H5704 H0 even to Beersheba H884 H2344 as the sand H834 H5921

בְּקָרְבָּן הָלַכְתִּים לְרַב יְהוָה וְגַם יְהוָה
that is by the sea for multitude in thine own person and that thou go to battle
H3220 H7230 H6440 H1980 H7128

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 22:17 (Parallel theme): That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Psalms 9:16 (Parallel theme): The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

Joshua 11:4 (Parallel theme): And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

Judges 20:1 (References Israel): Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD in Mizpeh.

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