

1 Samuel 13:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

Analysis

But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

The practical result of Philistine iron monopoly forced 'all the Israelites' to go 'down to the Philistines' even for basic agricultural tools. This humiliating dependence for 'share, and coulter, and axe, and mattock' meant Israelites could not even maintain their farming equipment without Philistine permission. The descent 'down' to the Philistines symbolizes Israel's subordinate status. Economic dependence preceded military dominance; controlling basic necessities enables control of everything else.

Historical Context

Agricultural implements listed - plowshares, mattocks, axes, and sickles - were essential for food production. Without independent means of producing and maintaining these tools, Israel's economy was completely vulnerable. This economic stranglehold was more effective than military occupation.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does economic dependence on hostile powers affect freedom and faithfulness?
2. What forms of dependency on ungodly systems compromise believers' ability to serve God freely?

Interlinear Text

וָיָרַד וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל לַהֲפֹלְשֵׁת יָם לְלַטּוֹשׁ אֶת יָשׁ
went down H3381 But all the Israelites H3478 to the Philistines H6430 to sharpen H3913 every man H376

אֶת מַחְבֶּרֶת וְאֶת אֶתוֹ וְאֶת קַרְדָּמ וְאֶת
H853 his share H4282 H853 and his coultter H855 H853 and his axe H7134 H853

מַחְבֶּרֶתוֹ:
and his mattock H4281