

1 Samuel 17:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

Analysis

And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

The Goliath narrative demonstrates that human impossibilities create opportunities for divine glory. David's confidence rests not in weapons or military training but in the character of the God who delivered him from lion and bear. His declaration that 'the battle is the LORD's' establishes the theological principle that spiritual victory comes through faith in God's power rather than confidence in human strength. The contrast between Saul's armor (representing human methods) and simple shepherd's weapons (representing faith) teaches that God uses unexpected means to accomplish His purposes and receive glory.

Historical Context

The establishment of monarchy around 1050-1010 BCE represented a dramatic political and theological shift for Israel. Unlike surrounding nations where kings were considered divine or semi-divine, Israel's kings were supposed to function under God's ultimate authority as laid out in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. The Benjamite tribe occupied strategic territory between Ephraim and Judah, making

Saul's selection a politically astute choice to balance tribal rivalries. Archaeological remains from this period show increased fortification and centralization of settlements, confirming the transition to state-level organization.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen our understanding of God's character, purposes, and ways of working in human history?
2. What specific heart attitudes, thought patterns, or life practices does this passage call you to examine or change?
3. How does this passage connect to the larger biblical narrative of redemption and point toward Christ and the gospel?

Interlinear Text

הַבָּנִים אֲשֶׁר יָדָב רְאֵה וְאָה

H1931

And as he talked

H1696

עַמְּם הַעֲמָדָה

H5973

H2009

אֶלְעָמָד הַמְּלָאֵךְ

the champion

H1143

H376

עַזְלֵה

גָּלִיל

פְּלִשְׁתִּים

שָׁמֶן

מִגְתָּן

with them behold there came up Goliath of the Philistines by name of Gath

H5927

H1555

H6430

H8034

H1661

כִּי לְהָ קָרְבָּן יְמִינֵךְ רְאֵה וְאָהָרְנוֹן תְּמִימָנְךָ מִמְּעָרְנוֹן

H4630

of the Philistines

H6430

עַדְלֵה רְאֵה וְאָהָרְנוֹן

H1696

words

according to the same

H1697

H428

אֶלְעָמָד תָּשִׂמְךָ

heard

and David

H8085

H1732

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