

1 Samuel 17:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

Analysis

And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

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

Romans 2:1 – Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

אָמַר	לִבְנֵי	אֲלֵיכֶם	אֶל	שָׁאַל	אֶל	יְהִי	לְבָבֶךָ	לְבָבֶךָ	לְבָבֶךָ
said	And David	H413	to Saul	H408	fail	heart	Let no man's		H5921
H559	H1732		H7586		H5307	H3820		H120	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 16:18 (Parallel theme): Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him.

Psalms 3:6 (Parallel theme): I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

Isaiah 35:4 (Parallel theme): Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

Numbers 14:9 (Parallel theme): Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

Hebrews 12:12 (Parallel theme): Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

1 Samuel 14:6 (Parallel theme): And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.