

1 Samuel 17:41

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

Analysis

And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

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

הֵלַךְ	הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי	הֵלַךְ	וְקָרַב	אֶל	דָּוִד	וְהָאִישׁ
on	And the Philistine	on	and drew near	H413	unto David	and the man
H1980	H6430	H1980	H7131		H1732	H376
נָשָׂא	הַצָּנָה	לְפָנָיו:				
that bare	the shield	went before				
H5375	H6793	H6440				

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org