

# 1 Samuel 17:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

## Analysis

**And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.**

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 Benjaminite 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

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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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

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אָתָּה כִּי אָנֹכִי בָּכֶם לֹא בְּנֵי דָוִיד אֲלֵיכֶם פְּלִשְׁתִּים  
said And the Philistine H413 David Am I a dog H595 H3588 H859  
H559 H6430 H1732 H3611

בָּאָתָּה כִּי אָנֹכִי בְּמִקְלָל וְתִּקְלַל לִי  
that thou comest H413 to me with staves H4731 cursed And the Philistine H853  
H935 H6430 H7043 H6430

בְּאֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי דָוִיד  
David by his gods H1732 H430

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 24:14** (Parallel theme): After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.

**2 Samuel 3:8** (References David): Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness

this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?

**2 Samuel 9:8** (Parallel theme): And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

**Proverbs 26:2** (Curse): As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

**Genesis 27:29** (Curse): Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

**2 Kings 8:13** (Parallel theme): And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

**2 Samuel 16:9** (Curse): Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.

**Numbers 22:6** (Curse): Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.