

1 Samuel 17:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

Analysis

And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

The declaration 'the battle is the LORD's' (ki YHWH hamilchamah) expresses the central theological truth of this narrative. God does not merely help in battle; the battle belongs to Him. 'Not with sword and spear' negates human military confidence while affirming divine sovereignty. This principle echoes throughout Scripture: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD' (Zechariah 4:6).

Historical Context

Ancient near eastern royal inscriptions invariably credited military victories to national deities. Israel's distinctive contribution was absolute attribution of victory to Yahweh alone, with human warriors as mere instruments. David's statement represents this theology's clearest expression.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What battles in your life need to be surrendered to God's ownership rather than fought in your own strength?
2. How does 'the battle is the LORD's' reshape your approach to conflict and opposition?

Interlinear Text

וְיָדְעוּ shall know H3045	כָּל H3605	הַקָּהָל ל And all this assembly H6951	הִזָּה ה H2088	כִּי H3588	לֹא H3808	בְּחַרְבַּ not with sword H2719
וּבְחַנֵּי יָת and spear H2595	יְהוֹשֵׁעַ saveth H3467	לַיהוָה is the LORD'S H3068	כִּי H3588	לַיהוָה is the LORD'S H3068	הַמִּלְחָמָה for the battle H4421	
וְנָתַן and he will give H5414	אֶתְכֶם H853	בְּיָדֵינוּ you into our hands H3027				

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 4:6 (Word): Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Hosea 1:7 (Salvation): But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

1 Samuel 14:6 (Salvation): 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.

2 Chronicles 14:11 (References Lord): And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

Romans 8:37 (Parallel theme): Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Romans 8:31 (Parallel theme): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Isaiah 9:7 (References Lord): Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Psalms 46:11 (References Lord): The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.