

# 1 Samuel 17:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

## Analysis

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**And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.**

Goliath's taunt frames the conflict in political terms - 'servants to Saul' - missing the deeper reality that Israel served Yahweh. His proposal of representative combat offered seemingly reasonable terms, yet accepting would place Israel's fate in human hands rather than divine deliverance. The challenge 'choose you a man' exposed Israel's crisis: they had no one willing or able to face such opposition in human strength.

## Historical Context

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Ancient treaties often imposed vassalage, with the defeated becoming 'servants' ('avadim) to victors. Goliath's terms reflected standard ancient Near Eastern diplomatic practice, where military defeat meant political subjugation and tribute obligations.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How do spiritual enemies attempt to frame conflicts in purely human or political terms?
2. What does Israel's paralysis teach about the inadequacy of human resources against spiritual opposition?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיַּעַמַּד	וַיִּקְרָא	אֶל	מַעֲרֹכַת	לְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיֹּאמֶר	לֵהֱמוֹ
And he stood	and cried	H413	unto the armies	of Israel	and said	H0	
H5975	H7121		H4634	H3478	H559		
לָהֶם	תֵּצֵאוּ	לְ	מַלְחֶמָה	לְ	וְ	וְ	וְ
H4100	unto them Why are ye come out	H3318	in array	to set your battle	H3808		
			H6186	H4421			
אֲנִי	הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי	וְ	אֲנִי	עֲבָד יְ	לְ	וְ	וְ
H595	am not I a Philistine	H6430	H859	and ye servants	to Saul	choose	
			H5650	H7586	H1262		
לְ	אִישׁ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ
H0	you a man	H376	for you and let him come down	H413			
			H3381				

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 8:17** (Parallel theme): He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

