

# 1 Samuel 21:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

## Analysis

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**And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?**

The Philistine servants' recognition exposes David's perilous position. Their reference to the victory song (first recorded in 18:7) shows how David's fame had spread even to Israel's enemies. The phrase 'king of the land' (Hebrew 'melek ha'aretz') reveals the Philistines perceived David's true significance before Israel formally acknowledged it. Their knowledge of Hebrew songs and dances indicates significant cultural exchange between the peoples despite ongoing warfare. David's reputation, which should have brought honor, now threatened his life—demonstrating how the same qualities that elevate us can also endanger us in hostile contexts.

## Historical Context

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The Philistines maintained extensive intelligence about Israel's leadership and military heroes. Victory songs celebrating military achievements were common throughout the ancient Near East and would have been known to neighboring peoples through various channels.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How has your reputation or past achievements created unexpected challenges?
2. What does the Philistines' recognition of David teach about how God's work becomes visible even to unbelievers?

## Interlinear Text

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לֵאמֹר	וַעֲבָדֵי י	אֶכִּישׁ	אֶל יוֹ	הָלוֹא	לְזֶה
said	And the servants	of Achish	H413	H3808	one to another of him
H559	H5650	H397			H2088
וְדָוִד	מֶלֶךְ	הָאָרֶץ	הָלַל וְאֶ	לְזֶה	יָעֲנֹו
and David	the king	of the land	H3808	one to another of him	did they not sing
H1732	H4428	H776		H2088	H6030
בַּמַּחֲלוֹת	לֵאמֹר	הָכָה	שָׁאוּל	בְּאַלְפֵי	וְדָוִד
in dances	said	hath slain	Saul	his thousands	and David
H4246	H559	H5221	H7586	H505	H1732
בְּרִבְבֵּיתוֹ:					
his ten thousands					
H7233					

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 29:5** (References David): Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

**1 Samuel 16:1** (Kingdom): And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

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