

1 Samuel 23:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

Analysis

And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

David's men express understandable fear. The Hebrew 'yere'im' (afraid/fearing) describes their already anxious state as fugitives in Judah. Their reasoning follows logically: if they fear Saul's pursuit in their own territory, how much more should they fear engaging Philistine armies? The question reveals the strategic foolishness of David's proposed action from a human perspective—six hundred outlaws attacking a Philistine force while simultaneously evading Israel's king. Yet their objection also shows how human wisdom conflicts with divine command. God had spoken; the question was whether David would obey despite reasonable fears.

Historical Context

David's band of four to six hundred men was significant but insufficient against organized Philistine forces without divine intervention. Their fear reflected military reality—guerrilla bands survive by avoiding pitched battles with superior forces.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God's direction seems strategically foolish?
2. What role should reasonable fears play in decision-making when God has spoken?

Interlinear Text

פֶּה אָנָּה חָנוּ הַבְּהֵר אֶל יְהוָה אֲנָשִׁים וְאֶת־אָמֵר אָמַר
said H376 And David's H413 H2009 H587 H6311
H559 H1732

מִעַרְכָּה וְתַּחֲנֵן בְּיְהוָה הַנְּלָמָד יְמִינָה
here in Judah H3372 H637 H3588 H1980 to Keilah H413 against the armies H4634
H3063

פָּלָשָׁתִים:
of the Philistines
H6430

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