

1 Samuel 23:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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Analysis

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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

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