

1 Samuel 29:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish.

Analysis

The review of Philistine forces, 'by hundreds, and by thousands,' reveals the magnitude of the army David was expected to fight alongside against Israel. His position 'in the rereward with Achish' (Hebrew: 'ba'acharonah,' in the rear guard) placed him with the king's personal retinue. This prominent position would have made any hesitation or defection highly visible. David's predicament had reached its crisis point: how could he fight against his own people, including Jonathan, without destroying his future kingship?

Historical Context

Ancient armies typically organized in divisions of hundreds and thousands with their respective commanders. The rereward (rear guard) with the king was a position of trust, protecting the command structure from rear attacks and desertion.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. When have circumstances placed you in positions where any action seemed wrong?
2. How do we trust God when no apparent path forward exists?

Interlinear Text

וְסֶרְנֵי י	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	עָבַר ים	לְמֵא וְת	וְלֶאֱלָפִים
And the lords	of the Philistines	passed on	by hundreds	and by thousands
H5633	H6430	H5674	H3967	H505
וְדָוִד	וְאַנְשֵׁי יוֹ	עָבַר ים	בְּאַחֲרָנָה	עִם אַחִישׁ:
but David	H376	passed on	in the rereward	H5973 with Achish
H1732		H5674	H314	H397

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 13:3 (References Lord): From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites: