

1 Samuel 4:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.

Analysis

Philistine fear intensifies: 'Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.' Their alarm reflects awareness that this battle differs from ordinary conflicts. The statement 'God is come into the camp' uses singular for 'God,' acknowledging Yahweh's singular power. Yet their fear, though appropriate, will not prevent victory because Israel's God is fighting against, not for, His own people. The Philistines face the true God but prevail because that God has purposed judgment on corrupted Israel.

Historical Context

The Philistines' experience of Israel to this point had included some defeats, but the Ark had not previously been brought to battle against them. Their fear reflects awareness that this represents escalation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Philistine fear of God contrast with Israel's presumptuous confidence?
2. When might enemies of God's people be more spiritually perceptive than God's people?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּרְאוּ	הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים	כִּי	וַיֹּאמְרוּ	בֹּא	אֱלֹהֵי יָם	אֵל	
were afraid	And the Philistines	H3588	And they said	is come	God	H413	
H3372	H6430		H559	H935	H430		
הַמַּחֲנֶה	וַיֹּאמְרוּ	אֵי	לִנּוֹ	כִּי	לֹא	הָיְתָה	כֵּן
into the camp	And they said	Woe	H0	H3588	H3808	H1961	H2063
H4264	H559	H188					
אֶתְּמוּל				שְׁלֹשָׁם:			
unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore				H8032			
H865							