

# 1 SAMUEL 17

## 1Samuel 17:1–58

## David Answers Goliath's Challenge

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Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	
The Three Socoh's	Doctrine of the Anakim	Textual Criticism of the Old Testament	City of Gath
			Circumcision

**Introduction:** 1Sam. 17 is a big change of pace and scenery from the previous chapter. In 1Sam. 16, we have the anointing of David as the future king of Israel. In v. 17, we have yet another war between Israel and Philistia, which is different from any other war, as this huge man stands before Israel issuing a challenge to fight any Israelites in leu of an out and out war. This is the chapter which brings to the forefront David's preparation and

training for adulthood. Although the notes of the NLT place the events of this chapter several years after the previous one, I know of no reason why this could not have occurred a week or a month after 1Sam. 16.

To break this chapter down: (1) The Philistines move into Israeli territory in an intentionally provocative action. Saul gathers his army to stand in opposition to the Philistines (vv. 1–3). (2) Goliath steps forward, a huge man, well-armed, and he issues a challenge to all of Israel: “Send out one man to face me—if he prevails, then we are your servants; if I prevail, then you will be our servants.” This challenge unnerves all of Saul’s army (vv. 4–11). (3) Then we switch scenes, and examine a little about David’s background, and come to find that three of his brothers are in Saul’s army, listening to Goliath’s challenge (vv. 12–15). (4) Goliath issues this challenge, morning and evening, for 40 days; no one from the Israeli army steps forward to meet his challenge (v. 16). (5) Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Jesse gathers supplies for David to bring to his brothers (vv. 17–20). (6) When David arrives at the Israelite camp, he overhears the challenge of Goliath and what Saul would do for the man who defeats Goliath. Once he arrives at his brothers’ station, he inquires further about what he has overheard, and it is confirmed that Saul would make this man wealthy, give him the king’s daughter in marriage, and exempt his family from taxes and public service (vv. 21–27). (7) His eldest brother, Eliab, overhears David’s questions, and berates him for his impertinence and audacity (v. 28). David responds to his brother, and then asks for further confirmation of what he has overheard (vv. 29–30). (8) Saul hears about David’s questions, and calls for him, apparently not recalling who David was and not recognizing David once he reported to Saul. Saul questions David, asking him how on earth would he, as an untrained youth, face Goliath, a veteran soldier. David recalls two similar incidents, when his flock was threatened by a bear and by a lion. In both instances, David chased after the intruder and killed it (vv. 31–37). (9) Saul agrees to let David face Goliath (recall that no one else has stepped forward), but dresses him up in his personal armor and gives him his own weapons. David had not learned how to maneuver in the armor, nor was he able to handle the weapons given him by Saul, and chose to go without them, choosing, instead, his own weapons, a staff, a sling, 5 stones which he picks up, and his shepherd’s bag. Although it is not mentioned, I would have expected him to carry a knife in his belt (vv. 38–40). (10) Then David steps out before Goliath and Goliath harangues David, in an obvious attempt at psychological warfare. Furthermore, Goliath was probably a bully from his youth up, and he took this opportunity to try to bully David, whom he saw as smaller and weaker. David’s gives Goliath an eloquent and doctrinal reply, and propels a stone into Goliath’s forehead. It is not completely clear whether this kills Goliath or not, but David runs up and uses Goliath’s own sword to behead him, which certainly completes their contest (vv. 41–51). (11) The Israeli army responds with great cheering and they suddenly charge the Philistines, who are caught off guard and who flee toward their cities of Ekron and Gath. Many of them are killed in this retreat (vv. 52–53). David, meanwhile, collects his own souvenirs—Goliath’s head and his weapons (v. 54). (12) Finally, Saul inquires about David’s father, as part of his promise is to exempt the family of David’s father from taxes and public service. Since his commanding officer, Abner, does not know, he is sent to find out. Abner finds David and brings him to Saul. David comes into Saul’s presence with the head of Goliath in his hand, and tells Saul whose family he belongs to (vv. 55–58).

Keil and Delitzsch do an outstanding job providing even a briefer summary this chapter: *A war between the Philistines and the Israelites furnished David with the opportunity of displaying before Saul and all Israel, and greatly to the terror of the enemies of his people, that heroic power which was firmly based upon his bold and pious trust in the omnipotence of the faithful covenant God (vv. 1–3). A powerful giant named Goliath, came forward from the ranks of the Philistines, and scornfully challenged the Israelites to produce a man who would decide the war by a single combat with him (vv. 4–11). David, who had returned home for a time from the court of Saul, and had just been sent into the camp by his father with provisions for his elder brothers, who were serving in the army, as soon as he heard the challenge and the scornful words of the Philistine, offered to fight with him (vv. 15–37), and killed the giant with a stone from a sling; whereupon the Philistines took to flight, and were pursued by the Israelites to Gath and Ekron (vv. 38–54).*<sup>1</sup>

In order to recognize the importance of textual criticism, one source which I employ is Brenton’s Septuagint, which has the Greek translation of the Old Testament, as well as Brenton’s English rendering of same (which I modernize somewhat). There are quite a large number of varying Greek manuscripts, which we studied in **Textual Criticism**

<sup>1</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 480.

**of the Old Testament** back in 1Sam. 14:18. Brenton has transcribed what is apparently LXX β; LXX α is the Alexandrian Septuagint. There are several verses in this chapter which are found in the Hebrew text but are not found in LXX β; however, these verses are found in LXX α. Therefore, I will substitute from LXX α these verses missing from LXX β. Brenton includes an English translation of said verses in his Old Testament index (prior to the Apocrypha), but not the Greek for them. Since it will be difficult to keep track of, I will, at the end of this chapter, provide the **English translation** of this chapter where one can see it with and without the material found in the Alexandrian Septuagint.

Behind the scenes, there is a lot of debate and discussion about this chapter—whether we should accept the short version (that found in LXX β) or the long version (that found in LXX α and Masoretic Text). Apart from this exegesis, many of you would have no idea that there is a dispute about what is inspired and what is not in this chapter. You see, most translations, where there is missing text, generally will follow the Masoretic text, which refers to the vowel-pointed Hebrew manuscripts from the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. A few English translations (Brenton's Septuagint and the NAB are the only two which come to mind) bracket the disputed text. Most do not even mention this. However, when you read anyone's exegesis of this chapter, then there is a great deal of discussion about what belongs and what does not. There are times that I provide two viewpoints (or more) on an issue, and do not take a side. However, this issue can be determined logically; you'll hear the arguments on both sides, fairly presented, and then I will accurately conclude what belongs and what does not.

Generally speaking, the more liberal the exegete, the more likely they are to treat these as two separate accounts which were woven together (and often it is suggested that one or both accounts are dubious). Conservative scholarship tends to go along with the Masoretic text. However, the lack of a third of this chapter in the LXX should bear some commentary in any translation with footnotes.

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## The Armies of Israel and Philistia Face Off

Slavishly literal:

**And so gather Philistines their camps to war and so they are gathered [at] Socoh which [is] to Judah. And so they camp between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim.**

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17:1

Moderately literal:

**The Philistines gathered their armies [It., camps] for war. They were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah. [Specifically], they set up camp between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim.**

**The Philistines gathered their armies to the Socoh area, which belongs to Judah. They set up a base of operations between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text

And so gather Philistines their camps to war and so they are gathered [at] Socoh which [is] to Judah. And so they camp between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-Septuagint

And the Philistines gather their armies to battle, and gather themselves to Socchoth of Judæa, and encamp between Socchoth and Azeca Ephermen [Alexandrian, *Aphedommin*].

Significant differences: None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

- CEV The Philistines got ready for war and brought their troops together to attack the town of Socoh in Judah. They set up camp at Ephes-Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.
- NAB The Philistines rallied their forces for battle at Socoh in Judah and camped between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes-dammim.
- NJB The Philistines mustered their troops for war; they assembled at Socoh in Judah and pitched camp between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-Dammim.
- NLT The Philistines now mustered their army for battle and camped between Socoh in Judah and Azekah at Ephes-dammim.
- REB The Philistines mustered their forces for war; they massed at Socoh in Judah and encamped between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes-dammim.
- TEV The Philistines gathered for battle in Socoh, a town in Judah; they camped at a place called Ephes-Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- God's Word™ The Philistines assembled their armies for war. They assembled at Socoh, which is in Judah, and camped between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes Dammim.
- JPS (Tanakh) The Philistines assembled their forces for battle; they massed at Socoh of Judah, and encamped at Ephes-dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- NASB Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.
- Young's Updated LT And the Philistines gather their camps to battle, and are gathered to Shochoh, which is to Judah, and encamp between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-Dammim;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** You will recall that the Philistines absolutely hated the Jews and they attacked them whenever possible. They had built up their forces again; they hated the Jews, so they went into Judah and gathered for an attacked against Israel.

<b>1Samuel 17:1a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`âçaph (אָפָה) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i> ]	<i>relocate, transfer, transport, gather, to gather and remove, to remove</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
`êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

## 1Samuel 17:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH]	camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>o</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khâw-MAW]	battle, war	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** The Philistines gathered their armies [lit., camps] for war. The Philistines and the Israelites were mortal enemies. There were a number of times that the Philistines were soundly defeated. They continued to face off Israel. You will recall that God told Israel that all of the indigenous peoples of the Land of Promise needed to be completely wiped out. This is the reason. These Philistines could not simply be defeated and let it go at that. Every time that their strength was back up to a point where an army could be supported, they would then attack Israel. If you recognize the present-day hatred of Israel, then what we find here is easy to understand.

Edersheim<sup>2</sup> makes the suggestion that the Philistines also knew of Saul's mental state (mentioned back in 1Sam. 16:14–15), and determined that it would be opportune to attack Israel while their leader was disturbed. We do not have any evidence of this information leaking from the castle of Saul to the cities of Philistia, and, although it is a reasonable theory, I would think that the simple building up of the Philistine army was reason enough for the Philistines to attack. Furthermore, there is no evidence that Saul's mental illness (which came and went) negatively affected his ability to lead Israel in war. It was his spiritual weakness which was his downfall.

## 1Samuel 17:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâçaph (אָצַף) [pronounced aw-SAHF]	to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62
sôkôh (סֹכֹה) [pronounced soh-KOH]	branch, brushwood and is transliterated Socoh	proper noun location	Strong's #7755 BDB #962
ʿâsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>o</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 468.

## 1Samuel 17:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Y <sup>e</sup> hûwdâh (יהודה) [pronounced y <sup>e</sup> hoo- DAW]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397

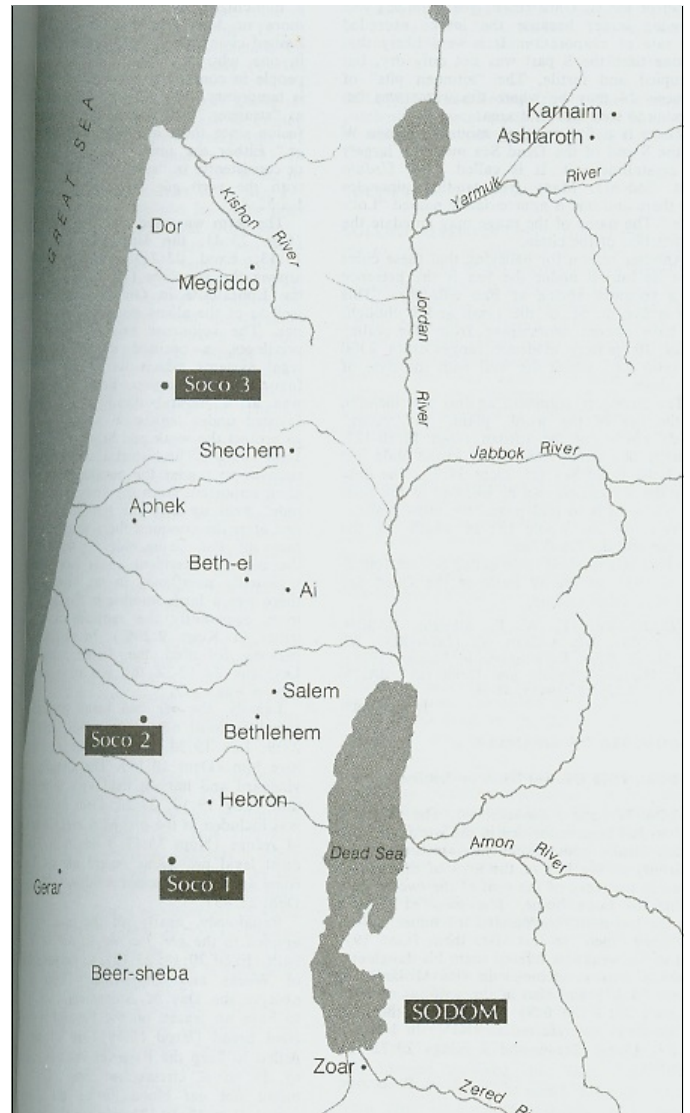
**Translation:** They were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah. Socoh is a city which lay on the Israeli-Philistine border. Now might be a good time to examine **The Three Socoh's** found in Scripture. This particular Socoh is located southwest of Jerusalem, about a 3½ hour walk away.<sup>3</sup> The NIV Study Bible places it 15 miles west of Bethlehem.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 480.

<sup>4</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 397. Perhaps they meant *southwest*?

### Summarizing the Doctrine of the Three Socoh's

1. In the Hebrew, Socoh (Soco) probably means *branch, brushwood*.
2. Given the name and its meaning, that there is more than one Socoh is not difficult to believe. given that there are two Socoh's named in Joshua 15 gives this position even more credence. There are three, possibly four different cities with this name, which we will cover below. However, given that a picture is worth a thousand words, let me give you what ZPEB has:
3. The southernmost Socoh is mentioned only in Joshua 15:48. This is the southernmost hill country of Judah, also called the Eshtemoh, about 10 miles southwest of Hebron.
4. The second Socoh is the one found in our passage, 1Sam. 17:1. It is mentioned in Joshua 15:35 and is found in the Shephelah near Azekah, between Bethlehem and the Mediterranean Sea.
5. The third Socoh is the most northern of the three, found in the Sharon Plain, and mentioned in 1Kings 4:10. ISBE does not present a third Socoh, but identifies this one with the Socoh of 1Sam. 17:1.
6. The final mention of Socoh is in 1Chron. 4:18, where Heber is said to be the founder of Socoh (see my exegesis of this passage). We do not know which Socoh, or whether this is a fourth location. However, one can be considered a founder even if he resettles a city which was formerly deserted or destroyed.



Scanned from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 467.

### 1Samuel 17:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chânah (חָנָה) [pronounced khaw-NAW]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2583 BDB #333
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107



## 1Samuel 17:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sôkôh (סֹכֹחַ) [pronounced <i>soh-KOH</i> ]	<i>branch, brushwood</i> and is transliterated <i>Socoh</i>	proper noun location	Strong's #7755 BDB #962
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among</i> ; when found twice, it means <i>between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
ʿăzêqâh (אֶזְקָח) [pronounced <i>guh-zay-KAW</i> ]	<i>to dig about, to dig a cistern</i> and is transliterated <i>Azekah</i>	proper noun location	Strong's #5825 BDB #740
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿepheç dammîym (עֶפְרַת דַּמִּיִּם) [pronounced <i>EH-fes dah-MEEM</i> ]	<i>edge [or brink] of water</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Ephes-dammim</i>	proper noun location	Strong's #658 BDB #67

**Translation:** [Specifically], they set up camp between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. Socoh belonged to Judah, and therefore was controlled by the Israelites. We first hear about Azekah in Joshua 10:10–11 when the five king coalition attacked the Gibeonites, who were allied with Israel. Israel chased their armies as far as Azekah, where God killed many of them with hailstones.

Although Azekah was one of the cities given by God to Judah (Joshua 15:35), it is apparent that the Philistines had control of this city throughout much of the Philistine-Israeli conflict. Azekah was a Palestinian city which dates back to at least 1300 B.C. and remained until Byzantine times. A ZPEB map places it just 3 miles northwest of Socoh, 9 miles north of Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis) and 15 miles northwest of Hebron in the Shephelah.<sup>5</sup> The NIV Study Bible suggests that it is a little over a mile northwest of Socoh.<sup>6</sup> Since the Israelites did not camp in Socoh, but in Ephes-dammim instead (which was between Socoh and Azekah), we would expect Socoh and Azekah to be further than a mile apart (otherwise, Israel would have simply camped on the outskirts of Socoh). ZPEB suggests that the Byzantine incarnation of Azekah is possibly Khirbet el ʿAlami, which is just east of the tell where the Philistine version probably was.

Israel eventually took Azekah back, and 2Chron. 11:7–9 tells us that Rehoboam rebuilt and fortified both Soco and Azekah (Rehoboam was the first king after Solomon). This fortification was probably prompted by the invasion of Shishak, circa 918 B.C.<sup>7</sup> When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded and defeated Judah in 587 B.C., two of the last cities to fall were Lachish and Azekah (Jer. 34:7). That Azekah was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar is implied in the Lachish Letters.<sup>8</sup> Azekah was re-occupied by Israel after the exile (Neh. 11:30).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 427.

<sup>6</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 397.

<sup>7</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 428.

<sup>8</sup> *The New Bible Dictionary*; ed. J. D. Douglas; ©Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962; ©by W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; p. 114.

<sup>9</sup> Interestingly enough, in the previous three Scriptural references, Azekah and Lachish are mentioned together.



ZPEB gives us the topological description: Tel Zaḳarēyeh,<sup>10</sup> the site of ancient Azekah, is a triangular mound about 1000 ft. by 500 ft., rising about 350 ft. above the Valley of Elah, the modern Wadi es Sunṭ. On a plateau at the top of the tell there is still a wall and towers from ancient fortifications.<sup>11</sup> Archeological explorations tell us that the rock underneath the city had been carefully excavated into a series of underground chambers which could be used as places of refuge during a war.<sup>12</sup> ISBE also tells us that there is a long-used north-south high route coming from the area of Ajalon, which fits nicely with the narrative found in Joshua 10. It was a fortified city, as one would expect, being right at the Philistine-Israeli border.

Finally, Ephes-dammim is probably equivalent to Pasdammim, mentioned in 1Chron. 11:13. This particular site is only mentioned these two times in Scripture, and appears to simply refer to this general area where Israel and Philistia faced each other. According to the Oxford Genesis, this is located 16 miles southwest of Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup>

<p><b>And Saul and a man of Israel were gathered and so they encamp in a valley of the Elah. And so they set in array a war to meet Philistines.</b></p>	<p>1Samuel 17:2</p>	<p><b>Saul and the men of Israel were also gathered; setting up [their] camp in the valley of Elah. They organized [themselves for] battle to meet the Philistines.</b></p>
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**Saul countered by stationing the army of Israel near the valley of Elah, prepared to go to war.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

<p>Masoretic Text</p>	<p>And Saul and a man of Israel were gathered and so they encamp in a valley of the Elah. And so they set in array a war to meet Philistines.</p>
<p>Septuagint</p>	<p>And Saul and the men of Israel gather together, and they encamp in the valley, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.</p>

Significant differences: None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

<p>NAB</p>	<p>Saul and the Israelites also gathered and camped in the Vale of the Terebinth, drawing up their battle line to meet the Philistines.</p>
<p>NJB</p>	<p>Saul and the Israelites also mustered, pitching camp in the Valley of the Terebinth, and drew up their battle-line opposite the Philistines.</p>
<p>NLT</p>	<p>Saul countered by gathering his troops near the valley of Elah.</p>
<p>REB</p>	<p>Saul and the Israelites also mustered, and they encamped in the valley of Elah. They drew up their lines of battle facing the Philistines,...</p>
<p>TEV</p>	<p>Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in Leah Valley, where they got ready to fight the Philistines.</p>

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<p><i>God's Word™</i></p>	<p>So Saul and the army of Israel assembled and camped in the Elah Valley. They formed a battle line to fight the Philistines.</p>
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<sup>10</sup> Which name possibly preserves the ancient name of Azekah.

<sup>11</sup> Slightly paraphrased from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 427.

<sup>12</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; Vol. I; p. 344. The physical description of the site is similar to the one given in ZPEB.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 305.

JPS (Tanakh) Saul and the men of Israel massed and encamped in the valley of Elah. They drew up their line of battle against the Philistines,...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and camped in the valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array to encounter the Philistines.

NRSV Saul and the Israelites gathered and encamped in the valley of Elah, and formed ranks against the Philistines.

Young's Updated LT ...and Saul and the men of Israel have been gathered, and encamp by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array to meet the Philistines.

**What is the gist of this verse?** When Israel hears of the Philistines who have gathered in Judah, Saul also gathers his troops in Elah, and organizes them for battle.

1Samuel 17:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shâ'ûwl (לָוַל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Even though this is a masculine singular construct in the Hebrew, we would properly understand it as a plural.			
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʾâçaph (אָפַח) [pronounced <i>aw-SAHF</i> ]	<i>to be assembled, to be gathered, to assemble, to gather</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Niphal perfect	Strong's #622 BDB #62

**Translation:** *Saul and the men of Israel were also gathered;...* No matter what you say negative about Saul, he was an incredibly brave man. He did not back down in war. The Philistines were the toughest opponents that Israel faced. When intelligence informed Saul that their army had gathered en masse in Judah, Saul gathered the men of Israel to respond.

1Samuel 17:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chânah (חָנָה) [pronounced <i>khaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2583 BDB #333
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
‘emeq (עֵמֶק) [pronounced <i>ĠEH-mek</i> ]	<i>valley, vale, lowland, deepening, depth</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6010 BDB #770
‘êlâh (אֵילָה) [pronounced <i>ā-LAW</i> ]	<i>terebinth, oak and is transliterated Elah</i>	proper noun/location	Strong's #424 BDB #18

**Translation:** ...[setting up \[their\] camp in the valley of Elah](#). Saul chose a place near to where the Philistines were. An army must be organized prior to going to war.

*Elah* refers specifically to a terebinth, a 35 foot, long-lived tree, although it apparently can be applied to any large tree. What we have here is a valley named for the most common tree of that valley (it may not even be a proper name, as there is no difference between the proper noun and the word translated *terebinth*). The Valley of Elah is thought to be equivalent to the Wadi es-Sant (or, *Valley of the Acacia*), which is 14 miles southwest of Jerusalem.<sup>14</sup> Keil and Delitzsch tell us that *terebinth valley* is a plain by the Wady Musur.<sup>15</sup> Since wadi's are rivers only during the rainy season, what would remain at this time is a bed of rocks.<sup>16</sup>

## 1Samuel 17:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘ârak <sup>e</sup> (אַרָּב) [pronounced <i>ġaw-RAK</i> ]	<i>to prepare, to organize, to set in order, to arrange in order, to set in a row</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6186 BDB #789
mil <sup>o</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

<sup>14</sup> Douglas says 11 miles southwest of Jerusalem; *The New Bible Dictionary*; ed. J. D. Douglas; ©Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962; ©by W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; p. 355. According to Barnes, this is the Wadi es-Sunt—Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 43.

<sup>15</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 480.

<sup>16</sup> The valley of Shittim is also identified with Wadi es-Sant. All this information on the valley of Elam came from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 2, p. 262.

1Samuel 17:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>h</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** They organized [themselves for] battle to meet the Philistines. What this means is that they are simply organizing their troops to meet the Philistines in battle. What we will have day after day is that the Philistines and the Israelites will line up in preparation for battle across the valley from one another.

**And Philistines are standing toward the mountain from this one and Israel is standing toward the mountain from this one and the valley [is] between them.** 1Samuel 17:3 **The Philistines stood toward the mountain on one side [lit., *this*] while the Israelites stood toward the mountain on the other [lit., *that*] with a valley between them.**

**The Philistines stood on the mountain on one side of a valley, while the Israelites took their stand on the opposite mountain.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And Philistines are standing toward the mountain from this one and Israel is standing toward the mountain from this one and the valley [is] between them.  
 Septuagint                              And the Philistines stand on the mountain on one side, and Israel stands on the mountain on the other side, and the valley was between them.

Significant differences:              None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

NJB    The Philistines occupied the high ground on one side and the Israelites occupied the high ground on the other side, with the valley between them.  
 NLT    So the Philistines and Israelites faced each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.  
 REB    ...the Philistines occupying a position on one hill and the Israelites on another, with a valley between them.  
 TEV    The Philistines lined up on one hill and the Israelites on another, with a valley between them.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)                              ...with the Philistines stationed on one hill and Israel stationed on the opposite hill; the ravine was between them.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	And the Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them.
Young's Updated LT	And the Philistines are standing on the mountain on this side, and the Israelites are standing on the mountain on that side, and the valley <i>is</i> between them.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Once the armies had gathered, Israel took their stand along the side of one mountain and the Philistines stationed their troops on an opposite mountain. There was a valley which was between them.

1Samuel 17:3			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>im</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿâmad (עָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i> ]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
har (הַר) [pronounced <i>har</i> ]	<i>hill, mountain, hill-country</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2042 (and #2022) BDB #249
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yis <sup>ra</sup> ʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʿâmad (עָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i> ]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5975 BDB #763

## 1Samuel 17:3

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
har (הַר) [pronounced har]	<i>hill, mountain, hill-country</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2042 (and #2022) BDB #249
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gay <sup>e</sup> (גַּי) [pronounced gah <sup>e</sup> ee], which	<i>valley</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1516 BDB #161
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107

**Translation:** The Philistines stood toward the mountain on one side [lit., *this*] while the Israelites stood toward the mountain on the other [lit., *that*] with a valley between them. As is today, there are varying tactics which an army takes. Here, both armies stationed themselves on opposite mountains (probably near the foot of each mountain) with a valley between them. Barnes suggests that in the middle of this valley is another valley, the dried river bed of the Wadi which ran through there during the rainy season.

Edersheim paints the picture for us: *About ten miles southwest of [Bethlehem]...lay...Shochoh, the modern Shuweikeh. Here a broad wady, or valley, marking a water-course, runs north for about an hour's distance. This is the modern Wady-es-Sumt, the valley of the acacias, the ancient valley of Elah, or of the terebinth. At the modern village of Sakarieh, the ancient Shaarim, the wady divides, turning westwards towards Gath, and northwards by the Wady Surar towards Ekron. Shochoh and Ephes-Dammim,...[which lies] about three miles north-east of Shochoh, between which two points the Philistine camp was pitched, lay on the southern slope of the wady, while the host of Israel was camped on the northern slope, the two being separated by the deep part of the wady. But no longer did the former God-inspired courage fire Israel. The Spirit of God had departed from their leader, and his followers seemed to share in the depression which this consciousness brought. In such a warfare, especially among Easterns, all depended on decision and boldness. But unbelief makes cowards; and Saul and his army were content with a merely defensive position, without venturing to attack their enemies. Day by day the two armies gathered on the opposite slopes, only to witness what was for Israel more than humiliation, even an open defiance of their ability to resist the power of Philistia—by implication, a defiance of the covenant-people as such, and of Jehovah, the covenant-God, and a challenge to a fight between might in the flesh and power in the Spirit. And truly Israel, under the leadership of a Saul, was ill prepared for such a contest.*<sup>17</sup>

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## Goliath Issues a Challenge to the Any Man in of Israel

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 468. I had pictured Israel on an eastern slope and the Philistine army on a western slope.

And so comes out a man of the between [or, *midst, valley, betweeness*] from a camp of Philistines. Goliath [is] his name from Gath; his height four [MT reads *six*] cubits and a span.

1Samuel  
17:4

A man of the midst came out from the camp of the Philistines. His name [is] Goliath from Gath [and] his height is nearly 7 feet tall [lit., *four (MT reads *six*) cubits and a span*].

A man came out of the midst of the camp of Philistines named Goliath. He was from Gath and he stood roughly seven feet tall.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so comes out a man of the between [or, *midst, valley, betweeness*] from a camp of Philistines. Goliath [is] his name from Gath; his height six cubits and a span.

Septuagint                              And there went forth a mighty man out of the army of the Philistines, Goliath by name, out of Gath. His height [was] four cubits and a span.

Significant differences:              The primary difference between the texts is Goliath's height, to be discussed in great detail in the exegesis. The Latin, Syriac and Hebrew are in agreement (as usual).

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                        The Philistine army had a hero named Goliath who was from the town of Gath and was over nine feet tall.

NAB                                        A champion named Goliath of Gath came out from the Philistine camp; he was six and a half feet tall.

TEV                                        A man named Goliath, from the city of Gath, came out from the Philistine camp to challenge the Israelites. He was over nine feet tall. *Hebrew* nine feet; *one ancient Hebrew manuscript and one ancient translation* seven feet.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word™*                              The Philistine army's champion came out of their camp. His name was Goliath from Gath. He was ten feet tall. [Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek "seven feet tall."]

JPS (Tanakh)                              A champion [lit., *the man of the space between, i.e., between the armies*] of the Philistine forces stepped forward; his name was Goliath of Gath, and he was six cubits and a span tall.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                        Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

NRSV                                        And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. *Six cubits* as per the MT; the Qumran manuscripts (Dead Sea Scrolls) and the Greek have *four cubits*.

*Young's Updated LT*                      And there goes out a man of the duelists from the camps of the Philistines, Goliath is his name, from Gath. His height is six cubits and a span,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** A man from the Philistine side stepped out into the valley between the two armies. His name was Goliath from Gath and he was about 7 feet tall.



## 1Samuel 17:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
bênayim (בֵּינָיִם) [pronounced <i>bay-NAH-yim</i> ]	<i>the betweens, the gap, the midst, two intermediates, the space between two armies</i>	dual of the preposition between (Strong's #996 BDB #114); with the definite article	Strong's #996 & #1143 BDB #108
The word <i>bênayim</i> is found only here and in v. 23. The <i>man of the gap</i> or <i>the man of the midst</i> is roughly equivalent to our more modern <i>the one standing in the gap</i> .			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh-NEH</i> ]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** A man of the midst came out from the camp of the Philistines. It is difficult to understand the actual meaning of *bênayim*, except that he was a man who stood in the gap for the Philistines. He was their hero of the valley. As you have no doubt noticed, most translators made no attempt to give a literal rendering here and opted for such renderings as *champion*. Barnes indicates that the literal rendering of *champion* (as have I) is “a man between the two camps;” i.e., one who did not fight in the ranks like an ordinary soldier, but came forth into the space between the hostile camps to challenge the mightiest man of his enemies to come and fight him.<sup>18</sup>

The NIV Study Bible also comments on the word *champion* here: *The ancient Greeks, to whom the Philistines were apparently related, sometimes decided issues of war through chosen champions who met in combat between the armies. Through this economy of warriors the judgment of the gods on the matter at stake was determined (trial by battle ordeal). Israel too may have known this practice (see 2Sa 2:14–16).*<sup>19</sup> For those who already know about David and Goliath, or who have read ahead, know that this is the basis of Goliath's challenge to Israel.

We have the two camps of opposing armies with a valley between them. A man steps out to the midst of the valley and stares down the opposing army of Israelites.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 42.

<sup>19</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 397.

## 1Samuel 17:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Gâl'yath (גִּלְיָת) [pronounced <i>gohl-YAHTH</i> ]	<i>conspicuous</i> and is transliterated <i>Goliath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1555 BDB #163
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Gath (גַּת) [pronounced <i>gath</i> ]	<i>wine-press</i> and is transliterated <i>Gath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1661 BDB #387
gô'vâh (גֹּבַהּ) [pronounced <i>GOH'-VAH</i> ]	<i>height</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1363 BDB #147
shêsh (שֵׁשׁ) [pronounced <i>shaysh</i> ]	<i>six</i>	masculine form of numeral	Strong's #8337 BDB #995
In the Greek and in the Dead Sea Scrolls, this reads <i>four</i> , which is probably the accurate reading. Some Greek manuscripts read <i>five cubits</i> ; the Latin, Syriac and Hebrew read <i>six cubits</i> .			
'ammâh (אַמָּה) [pronounced <i>ahm-MAW</i> ]	<i>cubit</i> (18 inches)	feminine plural noun	Strong's #520 BDB #52
A <i>cubit</i> is the distance between the elbow and the end of the outstretched middle finger; roughly 18 inches.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zehreth (זֶרֶת) [pronounced <i>ZEH-reth</i> ]	<i>span</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2239 BDB #284.
If you spread out your fingers, the distance between the tips of the thumb and the little finger is a span, which is about six inches (maybe slightly larger).			

**Translation:** His name [is] Goliath from Gath [and] his height is nearly 7 feet tall [lit., *four* (MT reads *six*) *cubits* and a *span*]. As is the case with many historic incidents, there is possibly some exaggeration associated with David and Goliath. The only exaggeration which is recorded here is that Goliath was nearly 10 feet tall (as per the MT), or, more conservatively, 9'2" tall.<sup>20</sup> As has been mentioned, the LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls tell us that Goliath is *four* cubits and a span, which makes him more like 7 ft. tall. Now, even though it may be possible that Goliath is somewhere between 9 and 10 ft. tall,<sup>21</sup> my guess is that Goliath is more likely around 7 feet tall. Since the

<sup>20</sup> This is according to the calculation made by Thenius. Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 480.

<sup>21</sup> There are several references to very tall people in the Old Testament and, according to Keil and Delitzsch, Pliny also mentions a giant and giantess who were 10'3" tall (Pusio and Secundilla) and that Josephus makes reference (in *Ant.* xviii. 4; 5) to a Jew

Israelites were historically a short people—probably none of them were over 6' and most were about 5'6" or shorter, Goliath at 7 feet would appear to be quite large. I'm a pretty big guy at 6'3" and I have seen some *professional* wrestlers who, at 6'5", make me feel puny. Also, given the material that the human body is constructed from, when someone is larger than normal, this does not mean that they are proportionately stronger. Most of the famous body builders are significantly shorter than 6' tall, as muscle builds more readily on a shorter frame. A person of significant height is just as likely to be generally weaker than many shorter men. There is also the question as to just how tall a person can be. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the tallest man is Robert Wadlow at 8'11" tall (he died in 1940 at the young age of 22 from an infected foot blister).<sup>22</sup> Another of the tallest men (apparently he made the Guinness Book of World Records as the tallest living man was Mohammad Alam Channa, who died from kidney failure in the United States at the age of 42. He was a paltry 7'7" tall and apparently suffered from numerous maladies throughout his life.<sup>23</sup> My point here is that the materials out of which the body is made can ideally support a person within a certain height and weight range and when that is considerably exceeded, the various organs, nerves, muscles, bones, etc. cannot fully support normal bodily functions. Our skeletal structure, for instance, is ideal when supporting a frame which has specific boundaries. It is questionable as to how well it could support a man who is 10 ft. tall.

Now, don't misunderstand me—I am not back-peddling on the inspiration of Scripture here. I present this information primarily *because* there is uncertainty as to the correct rendering of this passage. Furthermore, that the Dead Sea Scrolls are in agreement with the Septuagint is further support that Goliath is a 7 ft. giant.

On the other hand, there is the possibility, however, than one copyist thought, "No way is this guy 10' tall!" and subsequently changed Goliath's height to the more reasonable 7' height. I should also point out that the bed of Og king of Bashan was 9 cubits by 4 cubits (Deut. 3:11). That would suggest that Og may have been 6 or 6½ cubits tall (over 9 feet tall).<sup>24</sup> There will also be an Egyptian mentioned later, who was considered very tall at 5 cubits (7½' tall—1Chron. 11:23). Still, my money is on Goliath being 7' (4 cubits) tall. Given this height, he could still be reasonable strong and healthy. In any case, now would be a good time to examine the **Doctrine of the Anakim**.

This can be inserted whenever this doctrine is called for...

### A Summary of the Doctrine of the Anakim

1. The word *anak* is tied to the word *neck*, the implication being that a tall person has a long neck.
2. The first mention of the Anakim are in Num. 13. The 12 spies check out the Land of Promise and come back with reports that the men of the land are Nephilim, which simply means *giants*. The spies say that these Nephilim in the land are sons of Anak, the first mention of this particular group. It is important to recognize that 10 of the spies were intentionally giving a *bad* report. That is, they did not want to invade the land, and they claimed that the Israelites were like grasshoppers before these Nephilim. This in no way means that there are 9–12 foot giants in the land. The Israelites were a relatively short people (by today's standards) and if a significant number of men were over 6' tall, then a person who intended on slanting the report would call them giants.
3. It is unclear as to how many of these giants were in the land. Since there is one passage where Joshua forces them out of the land, my thinking is that there were not that many of them.
4. *Anakim* is not a name of a particular people but more of a descriptive term which could be given to various groups of people (or, even applied to individuals). This is because we do not find the Anakim on any of our genealogical lists. This particular point is disputed with excellent scholars on both sides of the issue.

is who between 9½ and 10 ft. tall. Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 480. Or see the first footnote on p. 469 of Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc..

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.roadsideamerica.com/attract/ILALTwadlow.html>. See also <http://hazardkentucky.com/wadlow.htm> for pictures.

<sup>23</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/125593.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/125593.stm).

<sup>24</sup> The beds from even the 1900's here in the United States were often 5 or 5½ ft. by 3 ft., so if the bed of an Israelite were that size, then we are certainly dealing with a fairly short people by today's standards.

## A Summary of the Doctrine of the Anakim

5. There was an actual person named *Anak*, who is mentioned in Joshua 15:14, where Caleb drives out the three sons (probably tribes) of Anak from his territory in Judah. More than likely, these men were unusually tall (by ancient world standards), and were both *anakim* and *Anakim*. That is, they were *giants* in general and their name came from their father *Anak*, whose name means *giant*. My point is, by my theory, that the name came from its meaning. In other words, there was not some major, ancient ancestor named *Anak*, from whom all of the giants of the land were born. There were giants in the land, and one of them was given the name *giant*.
6. Joshua forced the Anakim out of Judah, and they retreated to Gaza, Gath and Ashdod (Joshua 11:21–22).
7. The Philistines were probably Egyptians at one time who left Egypt by ship and lived for a long time in Crete and eventually took up residence on the west coast of the Land of Promise. They do not appear to have invaded and destroyed the people along the west coast, but they appear to have conquered and then assimilated the various Canaanites groups in with their own culture.
8. So what we have are these Anakim and Philistines, both coming from different directions, and all settling along the southwestern coast of Israel. Our passage, 1Sam. 17, tells us that they apparently commingled sometime after the time of Joshua, and by the time of David, were one group of people, some of whom were giants (by comparison).
9. Interestingly enough, we have no mention of *giants* among the Philistines until this point in time (Joshua 17).
10. ISBE suggests that the Anakim came from the Aegean Sea area like the Philistines, and even suggests that they may have been related. As we have seen, being related is not a guarantee that two peoples will get along (illustration: the Arabs and the Jews). ZPEB places them originally at Arba (Joshua 15:13) or Hebron (Num. 13:22). The latter is most certainly true, although we do not know where they came from prior to Hebron.
11. The last that we will hear from these giants is 2Sam. 21:16–22 (parallel passage, 1Chron. 20:4–8), where David and his men will kill 4 giants who were related to Goliath. The fact that we have so little mention of these giants would tend to confirm that there were not many of them to begin with and that their propagation among the Philistines was not significant.
12. We have no definite mention of them outside the Bible. This would again confirm their small numbers.
13. The only possible extra-Biblical source which mentions them is in the Execration texts discovered in Egypt where they are known as the *ly-°anaq*. Three of their princes have Semitic names.

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I want you to recall that Saul is very tall and a mighty warrior himself. He is a head taller than the general population of Israel (1Sam. 9:2 10:23). I am about 5' at my shoulders, so my guess is that Saul is about 6'6" or slightly taller himself. However, as I have mentioned, I've seen wrestlers at 6'5" that seem huge to me. So if Saul is looking at a man a half a foot taller than he is, he is not likely to step forward either with the idea of going one-on-one with Goliath. This is unfortunate, as Saul would be the man who should have stepped forward in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This information was written after the fact; at the time that Goliath came out, no one on the Israelite side knew who he was. Since Goliath will come out before Israel 80 times, he probably related some of his personal information to them (we would not expect him to simply repeat the exact same words time after time). This may have included information about his 4 sons and relatives, who were also giants. Obviously, the Israelite soldiers were all deathly afraid of him.

Interesting fact: Almost everyone has heard the names *David and Goliath* together. However, the name *Goliath* only occurs twice in this chapter and perhaps a half-dozen times elsewhere (and many of those instances refer to *Goliath Jr.*). This is the only chapter which describes in detail the fight that occurred. However, throughout most of this chapter, Goliath will be called *the Philistine*.

We covered the **City of Gath** back in 1Sam. 5:8. It is one of the five primary cities of the Philistines. It is also a city where some of the Anakim went (Joshua 11:22).

**And a helmet of bronze upon his head and body armor of scales he was clothed [with] and a weight of the body armor: five of a thousand shekels bronze;...**

1Samuel  
17:5

**He was wearing a helmet of bronze on his head and scaled body armor; the weight of the body armor [was] 125 lbs. [lit., 5000 shekels] [and it was] bronze;...**

**Goliath was wearing a helmet of bronze and scaled body armor. The weight of the bronze body armor was 125 lbs.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And a helmet of bronze upon his head and body armor of scales he was clothed [with] and a weight of the body armor: five of a thousand shekels bronze;...

Septuagint

And [there was] a helmet upon his head, and he wore a breastplate of chain armor; and the weight of his breastplate [was] five thousand shekels of brass and iron.

Significant differences:

That his helmet is bronze is mentioned in the MT, but not in the Greek. That is the only significant difference between the texts.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

He wore a bronze helmet and had bronze armor to protect his chest and legs. The chest armor alone weighted about one hundred twenty-five pounds.

NLT

He wore a bronze helmet and a coat of mail that weighed 125 pounds.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he wore a bronze coat of armor scales weighing 125 pounds.

JPS (Tanakh)

He had a bronze helmet on his head, and wore a breastplate of scale armor, a bronze breastplate weighing five thousand shekels.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

And *he had* a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze.

Young's Updated LT

...and a helmet of brass *is* on his head, and *with* a scaled coat of mail he *is* clothed, and the weight of the coat of mail *is* five thousand shekels of brass,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath is decked out in heavy armor.

### 1Samuel 17:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôw <sup>b</sup> va <sup>c</sup> (כּוֹבֵּעַ) [pronounced koh <sup>b</sup> -VAHÇ] <sup>c</sup>	helmet	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3553 BDB #464
n <sup>e</sup> chôsheth (נְחֹשֶׁת) [pronounced n <sup>e</sup> -KHÔH-sheth]	copper, bronze, brass; that which is made of brass or copper, money, fetter, bonds, leg irons	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5178 BDB #638
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
rô <sup>h</sup> sh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced rohsh]	head, top, chief, front, choicest	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shir <sup>e</sup> yôwn (שִׁירְיוֹן) [pronounced shir <sup>e</sup> -YOHN]	body armor	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8302 BDB #1056
qas <sup>e</sup> qeseth (קַשְׁתֵּי קַשׁ) [pronounced kas <sup>e</sup> -KEH-seth]	scale of a fish; scale armor	feminine plural noun	Strong's #7193 BDB #903
hûw <sup>h</sup> (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	he, it	masculine personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
lâbash (לְבַשׁ) [pronounced law-BAHSH]	to put on, to clothe, to be clothed, to wear	Qal passive participle	Strong's #3847 BDB #527

Interestingly enough, we find some of these same terms (*to clothe, body armor, helmet*) found in Isa. 59:17.

**Translation:** He was wearing a helmet of bronze on his head and scaled body armor;... Apparently, the Israelites, in general, fought without armor and this was a new thing. We have already seen that earlier, the Israelites did not have access to iron for weapons of war (1Sam. 13:19). By this time, they do have armor (see v. 38), but it is still a fairly new thing. What Goliath is wearing is impressive enough for the writer to note.

Young's translation suggests that Goliath's armor is a coat of mail, which is armor made of rings and hooked together. This would give a warrior protection from a sword being swept from the side, although one could sustain some damage if the point of a sword was used (however, I don't know if this was a common method of usage for swords at that time). A coat of mail would allow for maximum mobility and a reasonable amount of protection in battle. Freeman tells us that Goliath's armor was made of *metallic scales rounded at the bottom and squared at the top, and sewn to linen or felt*.<sup>25</sup>

We have the armor of Rameses III in the British Museum, and the breastplate is essentially a shirt made of scales of armor (as opposed to the armor being fashioned out of one or two pieces). The word *qas<sup>e</sup>qeseth* bears out this

<sup>25</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 134.



understanding of Goliath’s armor (compare its use in Lev. 11:9–10 Deut. 14:9–10). My guess is that this either made the manufacturing of the armor easier and it gave more mobility to the wearer of the breastplate.

<b>1Samuel 17:5b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong’s Numbers</b>
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
mish <sup>e</sup> qâl (מִשְׁקָל) [pronounced <i>mish<sup>e</sup>-KAWL</i> ]	<i>weight</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong’s #4948 BDB #1054
shir <sup>e</sup> yôwn (שִׁירְיוֹן) [pronounced <i>shir<sup>e</sup>-YOHN</i> ]	<i>body armor</i>	feminine singular noun with the def art	Strong’s #8302 BDB #1056
chämishshâh (חַמִּישָׁה) [pronounced <i>khuh-mish-SHAW</i> ]	<i>five</i>	numeral, feminine construct	Strong’s #2568 BDB #331
‘eleph (אֶלֶף) [pronounced <i>EH-lef</i> ]	<i>thousand, families, (500?); military units</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #505 (and #504) BDB #48
sheqel (שֶׁקֶל) [pronounced <i>SHEH-keh</i> ]	<i>0.4 ounces or 11 grams and is transliterated shekel</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong’s #8255 BDB #1053
n <sup>e</sup> chôsheth (נְחֹשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>n<sup>e</sup>-KHÖH-sheth</i> ]	<i>copper, bronze, brass; that which is made of brass or copper, money, fetter, bonds, leg irons</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong’s #5178 BDB #638

**Translation:** ...the weight of the body armor [was] 125 lbs. [lit., 5000 shekels] [and it was] bronze;... This was the most impressive aspect to the writer is that Goliath’s armor alone weighed 125 lbs,<sup>26</sup> which is not far from the weight of some of Israel’s smaller soldiers. You may wonder how did the author of the book of Samuel weigh this—at the end of this chapter, David will keep Goliath’s armor and weapons as souvenirs (v. 54), which means that these items probably were weighed at a later date. This is an incredible amount of weight for someone to carry around; it would suggest to me that Goliath weighed perhaps 300 lbs. (or more) himself, that weight being mostly muscle.

...and greaves [shin guards] of bronze upon his [two] feet and a javelin of bronze [or, possibly a shield] between his shoulders. 1Samuel 17:6 ...and [he had] bronze shin guards above his feet and a bronze javelin [was slung] between his shoulders.

He also wore bronze leg guards and had a bronze javelin slung over his back.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

**Masoretic Text**

...and greaves [shin guards] of bronze upon his [two] feet and a javelin of bronze [or, possibly a shield] between his shoulders.

<sup>26</sup> Barnes suggests 157 lbs: Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 42.



eptuagint                      And greaves of brass [were] upon his legs, and a brazen target [was] between his shoulders.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV                              He carried a bronze sword strapped on his back,... [The CEV combined vv. 5–6]  
 NAB                              ...and bronze greaves, and had a bronze scimitar slung from a baldric. A *scimitar*, by the way, is a curved oriental sword and a *baldric* is a belt for same which runs between the waist and the shoulder.<sup>27</sup>  
 REB                              On his legs were bronze greaves, and one of his weapons was a bronze dagger.  
 TEV                              His legs were also protected by bronze armor, and he carried a bronze javelin slung over his shoulder.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™                      On his legs he had bronze shin guards and on his back a bronze javelin.  
 JPS (Tanakh)                      He had bronze greaves on his legs, and a bronze javelin [slung] from his shoulders.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

The Emphasized Bible              ...and ||greaves of bronze|| on his feet,— and ||a javelin of bronze|| between his shoulders;...  
 NASB                              He also had bronze greaves [or, *shin guards*] on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders.  
 Young's Updated LT                      ...and a frontlet of brass *is* on his feet, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The writer goes on to describe what Goliath was wearing. He had a spear or javelin (or, possibly a hand shield) slung over his back, between his shoulders, and he had on leg guards.

1Samuel 17:6			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mitz <sup>e</sup> châh (מִצְחָה) [pronounced <i>mitzé-KHAW</i> ]	<i>greave, greaves, shin guards, leg guards</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4697 BDB #595
This word is in the plural in the Aramaic, Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate. <sup>28</sup>			
n <sup>e</sup> chôsheth (נְחֹשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>n<sup>e</sup>-KHÔH-sheth</i> ]	<i>copper, bronze, brass; that which is made of brass or copper, money, fetter, bonds, leg irons</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5178 BDB #638
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

<sup>27</sup> Webster's *New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*; Barnes & Noble, Inc., ©1994, pp. 113, 1279.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 305.

## 1Samuel 17:6

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced REH-gehl]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine dual noun (with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix)	Strong's #7272 BDB #919
Although many translations have this armor <i>on the legs</i> , I don't know that regel can be used that way. It is found numerable times in the Old Testament and rendered almost each and every time <i>feet</i> . I think that what we have is armor <i>above the feet</i> , which is the same as having armor on the legs or shins.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kîydôwn (כִּיַדוֹן) [pronounced kee-DOWN]	<i>spear, lance, javelin; and possibly shield</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3591 BDB #475
n <sup>e</sup> chôsheth (נְחֹשֶׁת) [pronounced n <sup>e</sup> -KHOSH-sheth]	<i>copper, bronze, brass; that which is made of brass or copper, money, fetter, bonds, leg irons</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5178 BDB #638
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
kâthêph (קַתְפֵּי) [pronounced kaw-THAFE]	<i>side, shoulder, shoulder-blade</i>	feminine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3802 BDB #509

**Translation:** ...and [he had] bronze shin guards above his feet and a bronze javelin [or, possibly a shield] [was slung] between his shoulders. Not only was Goliath huge, and not only did he have a breastplate of armor, but he had armor over his legs, and he wore a javelin slung over his back, between his shoulders. There was almost no way he could be hurt and he carried weapons to kill.

*Greaves* or *shin-guards* could be made out of leather or wood, but, in Goliath's case, they were made of brass. They were bound together by thongs around the calves and above the ankles, which provide protection and yet allowed mobility.<sup>29</sup>

Because of the confusion of the word *kîydôwn*, Goliath either had two shields—a huge one carried by shield bearer who walked in front of him), and a smaller one, for hand-to-hand combat, which he carried on his back—or he had two spear-type weapons—one which he carried and the other which was slung over his back. The shield bearer and the spear he bore will be covered in the next verse.

The idea that this is a shield comes from the Latin, which is also the way that Luther understood it.<sup>30</sup> However, in hand-to-hand combat, Goliath is wearing armor, which considerably lessens the need for a hand-held shield. The best argument in favor of this being an offensive weapon (e.g., a javelin) is its use in v. 45, where it is both seen by David and apparently identified by him as an offensive weapon. If this were a smaller hand or arm-held shield, then David would not have even seen it, as it would have been slung over Goliath's back. However, if this were a 6 ft. javelin, for instance, then part of it could be seen from David's view. Obviously, there would have been a strap

<sup>29</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 134.

<sup>30</sup> Keil and Delitzsch go into more detail in Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 481. It is their arguments which swayed me away from this being a second, smaller shield.

or some sort of holster to hold this weapon where Goliath could easily reach it, but where it would be out of his way for most instances of combat. This is also Freeman's take on this item, offering the various interpretations that I did, but stating his view that it was a light javelin which would be hurled at an enemy.<sup>31</sup>

<p><b>And a shaft of his spear like a beam of weavers and a spear-head of his spear six hundreds shekels—iron. And a bearer of the shield is walking to his faces.</b></p>	<p>1Samuel 17:7</p>	<p><b>The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam and the head of his spear [was] 15 lbs. [lit., 600 shekels] of iron. And his shield bearer walked before him.</b></p>
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**The shaft of his spear was as large as a weavers' shaft and his spear head weighed 15 lbs. The man who carried his shield walked ahead of him.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

<p>Masoretic Text</p>	<p>And a shaft of his spear like a beam of weavers and a spear-head of his spear six hundreds shekels—iron. And a bearer of the shield is walking to his faces.</p>
<p>Septuagint</p>	<p>And the staff of his spear [was] like a weavers' beam, and the spear's head [lit., <i>the spear</i>] was [formed] of six hundred shekels of iron; and his armor-bearer went before him.</p>

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<p>CEV</p>	<p>...and his spear was so big that the iron spearhead alone weighed more than fifteen pounds. A soldier always walked in front of Goliath to carry his shield.</p>
<p>NLT</p>	<p>The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a weaver's beam, tipped with an iron spearhead that weighed fifteen pounds. An armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying a huge shield.</p>
<p>TEV</p>	<p>His spear was as thick as the bar on a weaver's loom, and its iron head weighted about fifteen pounds. A soldier walked in front of him carrying his shield.</p>

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<p><i>God's Word</i><sup>TM</sup></p>	<p>The shaft of his spear was like the beam used by weavers. The head of his spear was made of 15 pounds of iron. The man who carried his shield walked ahead of him.</p>
<p>JPS (Tanakh)</p>	<p>The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's bar, and the iron head of his spear weighted six hundred shekels; and the shield-bearer marched in front of him.</p>

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<p>NASB</p>	<p>And the shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear <i>weighed</i> six hundred shekels of iron; his shield-carrier also walked before him.</p>
<p><i>Young's Updated LT</i></p>	<p>...and the wood of his spear <i>is</i> like a beam of weavers, and the flame of his spear <i>is</i> six hundred shekels of iron, and the bearer of the buckler is going before him.</p>

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath's spear shaft was the size of a weavers' beam and his spear head alone weighed fifteen pounds. His shield was carried by a shield bearer—a man who walked in front of him.

<sup>31</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 134.

## 1Samuel 17:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chêts (חֵטָ) [pronounced <i>khayts</i> ]	<i>arrow; a wound [inflicted by an arrow]; a spear shaft</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2671 BDB #346
chănîyth (חֲנִיִּית) [pronounced <i>khuh-NEETH</i> ]	<i>spear</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כֹּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
mânôwr (מְנוֹרָ) [pronounced <i>maw-NOHR</i> ]	<i>beam, probably round</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4500 BDB #644
ârag (אָרַג) [pronounced <i>aw-RAHG</i> ]	<i>to weave, to braid</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #707 BDB #70
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lehâ <sup>b</sup> vâh (לְהַבֵּה) [pronounced <i>leh-haw-VAW</i> ]	<i>flame; lightning; point or head of spear, blade</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #3852 BDB #529
chănîyth (חֲנִיִּית) [pronounced <i>khuh-NEETH</i> ]	<i>spear</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
shêsh (שֵׁשׁ) [pronounced <i>shaysh</i> ]	<i>six</i>	masculine form of numeral	Strong's #8337 BDB #995
mê <sup>l</sup> âh (מֵאָה) [pronounced <i>may-AW</i> ]	<i>one hundred</i>	feminine plural numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
sheqel (שֶׁקֶל) [pronounced <i>SHĒH-keh</i> ]	<i>0.4 ounces or 11 grams and is transliterated shekel</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #8255 BDB #1053
bar <sup>e</sup> zel (בַּרְזֶל) [pronounced <i>bar<sup>e</sup>-ZELL</i> ]	<i>iron</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1270 BDB #137

**Translation:** The shaft of his spear was like a weavers' beam and the head of his spear [was] 600 shekels [or, 15 lbs] of iron. Here we complete the telling of Goliath's weaponry. The shaft of his spear of large in itself; like a weavers' beam (we will assume that is larger than a typical spear shaft). The head of the spear weighed 15 lbs. alone and was made of iron, as opposed to Goliath's armor, which was brass. Lahmi, Goliath's brother, will be similarly armed in his last battle (2Sam. 21:19 1Chron. 20:5).

## 1Samuel 17:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâsâ' (נָשָׂא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i> ]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
tsinnâh (תִּשְׁנֶה) [pronounced <i>tzin-NAW</i> ]	<i>large shield</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6793 BDB #857
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*.

**Translation:** *And his shield bearer walked before him.* It took one man simply to carry Goliath's shield (which he would hold with one arm during battle). This shield carrier walked in front of him (also mentioned in v. 41). This is the largest kind of a shield—a full-bodied shield which was designed to protect the entire body. The Egyptian shield was about five feet tall, square at the bottom, and came to a pointed arch at the top. The Assyrian shield was taller and some of them curved backward at the very top. Although I visualized metal shields, according to Freeman, they were *generally made of wicker work or of light wood covered with hides. They were grasped by a handle of wood or of leather.*<sup>32</sup> Although Freeman tells us first that this was a full-bodied shield, he also says to the shields of the Philistines appear to have been circular, which seems somewhat contradictory to me.

Interestingly enough, Goliath's sword is not mentioned in this description (by the way, no other exegete that I refer to other than Gordon mentions this). He certainly did have a sword probably fastened to his waist (compare v. 39a), as David will mention his sword in v. 45 and he will make use of the sword in v. 51. The only guess I can offer here is that it was a standard issue sword, which was carried by almost all Philistine soldiers, and so did not require comment. I didn't catch this until my third sweep through this material; therefore, the author may have taken the sword for granted, as I did. Also recall that most of the comments were about the weapons and armor of Goliath and how much it weighed.

**And so he stands and so he calls unto ranks of Israel and so he says to them, "For why are you coming out to prepare a battle? Not I the Philistine and you [all] servants of Saul? Separate for yourselves a man and he will come down unto me.**

1Samuel  
17:8

**He stood and called out to the army of Israel, saying, "Why have you [all] come forth to prepare a battle? [Am] I not the Philistine and you [all are] servants of Saul? Choose for yourselves [one] man and he will come down to me.**

<sup>32</sup> All of the information on shields came from *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 135.

**He stood and called out to the army of Israel, saying, “Why did you all come out here in preparation for a war? Am I not a single Philistine and you are all the servants of Saul? Just select one man and he will come out to me.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so he stands and so he calls unto ranks of Israel and so he says to them, “For why are you coming out to prepare a battle? Not I the Philistine and you [all] servants of Saul? Separate for yourselves a man and he will come down unto me.

Septuagint                              And he stood and cried to the army of Israel, and said to them, “Why are you come out to set yourselves in battle array against us? Am I not a Philistine, and you [are] Hebrews of Saul? Choose for yourselves a man, and let him come down to me.

Significant differences:              The men of Israel are called *servants of Saul* in the Hebrew, Latin and Syriac; and *Hebrews of Saul* in the Greek (very little of this chapter is readable in the Greek).

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV    Goliath went out and shouted to the army of Israel:  
    Why are you lining up for battle? I'm the best soldier in our army, and all of you are in Saul's army. Choose your best soldier to come out and fight me!

NJB    Taking position in front of the Israelite lines, he shouted, ‘Why have you come out to range yourselves for battle? Am I not a Philistine and are you not Saul's lackeys? Choose a man and let him come down to me.

NLT    Goliath stood and shouted across to the Israelites, “Do you need a whole army to settle this? Choose someone to fight for you, and I will represent the Philistines. We will settle this dispute in single combat!

TEV    Goliath stood and shouted at the Israelites, “What are you doing there, lined up for battle? I am a Philistine, you slaves of Saul! Choose one of your men to fight me.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word™*                              Goliath stood and called to the Israelites, “Why do you form a battle line? Am I not a Philistine, and aren't you Saul's servants? Choose a man, and let him come down to [fight] me.

JPS (Tanakh)                              He stopped and called out to the ranks of Israel and he said to them, “Why should you come out to engage in battle? I am the Philistine [champion], and you are Saul's servants. Choose one of your men and let him come down against me.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    And he stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, and said to them, “Why do you come out to draw up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and you servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me.

*Young's Updated LT*                      And he stands and calls unto the ranks of Israel, and says to them, “Why have you come out to set in array the battle? Am I not the Philistine, and you servants to Saul? Choose for you a man, and let him come down unto me;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath stands out in the valley between the armies and first grabs the attention of every Israelite by asking, “Why are you all preparing for a war? Am I not just one Philistine?” He says this to get the attention of each and every soldier. Then he tells them to select one man from their army.

### 1Samuel 17:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâmad (אָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i> ]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâʾ (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
maʿârekeh (מַעְרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>mâh-guh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
yâtsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422



## 1Samuel 17:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿârak <sup>e</sup> (עָרַךְ) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAK</i> ]	<i>to prepare, to organize, to set in order, to arrange in order, to set in a row</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6186 BDB #789
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מַלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** He stood and called out to the army of Israel, saying, “Why have you [all] come forth to prepare a battle? Israel has observed that the Philistines had gathered for war, so they did the same on an opposite hill. Goliath steps out between the two armies and calls out to them, “Why are you all preparing for war?” At first, this seems to be a silly question. The Philistines are there ready to do battle, so certain the Israelites had to follow suit. However, the question was designed to be intriguing. Goliath wanted to get their attention.

## 1Samuel 17:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i> ]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
lô <sup>ʾ</sup> (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʾânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
P <sup>l</sup> ish <sup>et</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾattem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced <i>ahT-TEM</i> ]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

This reads *Hebrews of Saul* in the Greek.

## 1Samuel 17:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** [Am] I not the Philistine and you [all are] servants of Saul? Goliath is just one Philistine. When he says, literally, “Not I the Philistine...?”, he is saying, “Am I not just one Philistine?” It is as though Goliath is taunting them—I am just one Philistine and you are all preparing to fight a war? Again, his words are chosen to be provocative—he wants their attention. He wants the attention of each and every Israelite. This is psychological warfare. If all the Israelites are listening, then what he will say will be a lot more intimidating.

So, Israel is preparing to go to war on one hill. Goliath, one Philistine, is standing in the valley below them, calling out, “Why did all of you come out to do battle? Am I not just one Philistine and you are all the servants of Saul?” His question here is actually somewhat humorous. “You all showed up just to fight me, one Philistine?” Now, every man of Israel is quiet and listening. This is what Goliath wants.

Goliath refers to the Israelites as *servants (or, slaves) of Saul*. First of all, it was common for the people of a country to be spoken of as servants of the king. In Samuel's warning to the people of Israel, he tells them that they will become the servants of the king they desire (1Sam. 8:17). When David is asked who his father is at the end of this chapter, he will refer to his father as a servant of Saul's (v. 58). So, this was not an insult, but simply a way to address all of the army of Israel. The implication is, *you are all Saul's servants; therefore, one of you needs to step forward to fight me*.

As has happened many times in the past, the verses are not separated as well as they could be. The next portion of v. 8 is better placed along with v. 9.

## 1Samuel 17:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bârar (בָּרַר) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHR</i> ]	<i>separate, sever, choose, select, separate and remove [i.e., cleanse]; explore, search out, prove</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1305 BDB #140
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
w <sup>o</sup> (or v <sup>o</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD</i> ]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432

### 1Samuel 17:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
עַל (על) [pronounced eel]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** Choose for yourselves [one] man and he will come down to me. Now Goliath starts dictating how they will do battle. This is the position that every army wants to be in—they want to dictate the time, the place and the particulars of each battle; that way, they have the advantage, as they have planned for that time, place and particulars. An army has a certain strategy and they have planned specific tactics; this is dependent upon the environment of the battle itself—and if they control the specifics of the battle, it is more likely that their strategy and tactics will give them the war.

Keil and Delitzsch have a slightly different take on what Goliath says; their understanding is that Goliath is calling out, “Why would you engage in battle with us? I am the man who represents the strength of the Philistines, and you all are only servants of Saul. If you have any true heroes, choose one out, that we may decide the matter by a one-on-one fight.”<sup>33</sup>

**If he is able to fight with me and he has struck me and we have been to you for servants; and if I [even] I am able to him and I have struck him and you have been to us for servants and you have served us.”**

1Samuel  
17:9

**If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, then we will be your servants; but if I am able with respect to him to strike him down, then you will be our servants and you will serve us.”**

**If he is able to fight with me and if he defeats me, then we will be your slaves; however, if I am able to defeat him, then you will be our slaves and you will serve us.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	If he is able to fight with me and he has struck me and we have been to you for servants; and if I [even] I am able to him and I have struck him and you have been to us for servants and you have served us.”
Septuagint	And if he is able to fight against me, and strikes me down, then we will be your servants; but if I should prevail and strike him down, you all will be our servants, and you will serve us.”

Significant differences: There is a minor difference with a verb in the middle of this verse.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	If he can kill me, our people will be your slaves. But if I kill him, your people will be our slaves.
NAB	If he beats me in combat and kills me, we will be your vassals; but if I beat him and kill him, you shall be our vassals and serve us.”

<sup>33</sup> I have taken some liberties with their quotation, found in Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 481–482.

REB	If he defeats and kills me in fair fight, we shall become your slaves; but if I vanquish and kill him, you will be our slaves and serve us.
TEV	If he wins and kills me, we will be your slaves; but if I win and kill him, you will be our slaves.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	If he can fight me and kill me, then we will be your slaves. But if I overpower him and kill him, then you will be our slaves and serve us."
JPS (Tanakh)	If he bests me in combat and kills me, we will become your slaves; but if I best him and kill him, you shall be our slaves and serve us."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	"If he is able to fight with me and kill [lit., <i>smite</i> ] me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill [lit., <i>smite</i> ] him, then you shall become our servants and serve us."
Young's Updated LT	...if he is able to fight with me, and has struck me down, then we have been to you for servants; and if I am able for him, and have struck him down, then you [all] have been to us for servants, and have served us."

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath sets up two scenarios; if the man chosen by Israel defeats him, then the Philistines will serve Israel; if he defeats any man chosen by Israel, then Israel is to agree to serve the Philistines.

### 1Samuel 17:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
yākôl (יָכֹל) [pronounced yaw-COAL]	<i>to be able, can, to have the ability, to have the power to; to be able to bear; to be able to bring oneself [to do anything]; to be lawful, to be permitted; to be powerful, to prevail</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3201 BDB #407
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced law-KHAHM]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
wê (or vê) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced ʿE <sup>b</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** *If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, then we will be your servants;...* Here Goliath actually proposes that which he wants all of the Israelite soldiers to hear. He suggests that whoever they choose come out and fight him, and if this man defeats him, then the Philistines will be Israel's servants.

## 1Samuel 17:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿîm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced aw-NEE]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
yâkôl (יָכֹל) [pronounced yaw-COAL]	<i>to be able, can, to have the ability, to have the power to; to be able to bear; to be able to bring oneself [to do anything]; to be lawful, to be permitted; to be powerful, to prevail</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3201 BDB #407
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
wê (or vê) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ÊE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced ġaw <sup>B</sup> -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

**Translation:** ...but if I am able with respect to him to strike him down, then you will be our servants and you will serve us.” The flip side to Goliath’s proposal is that if he defeats any many that Israel sends out against him, then Israel must agree to serve the Philistines. The key here is psychological warfare. Goliath is probably the biggest, meanest, most experienced warrior in the middle east; he could probably kill just about anyone in a one-on-one fight. Therefore, he wants all Israel to see the Philistines as being represented by him alone, a man too big and too vicious for any Israelite to stand up against. If this is the vision the Israelites get of the entire Philistine army, then they are defeated before they shoot their first arrow. The idea is to either get the Israelites to surrender or to demoralize them to a point where defeating them will be easy. As we will see at the end of this chapter, this is not a true offer made by Goliath. Its intent was psychological; however, the actual offer itself was bogus. That such a suggestion was not completely out of the ordinary is testified to in 2Sam. 2:12–16.

**And so says the Philistine, “I [even] I defy ranks of Israel the day the this! Give to me a man and we may fight together.”**

1Samuel  
17:10

**Then the Philistine said, “I defy [or, scorn, discredit, shame] the army of Israel this day! Give me a man and we will fight together.”**

**The Philistine waited for a time and then called out again, “I defy and shame the entire army of Israel on this day! Send out one man that we may fight.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                   And so says the Philistine, “I [even] I defy ranks of Israel the day the this! Give to me a man and we may fight together.”

Septuagint                        And the Philistine says, “Behold, I have defied the armies of Israel this very day; give me a man and we will both us fight in single combat.”

Significant differences:        The Greek has the additional word *behold*; and there is some question about the final word in this verse—what we find in the Greek may simply be their interpretation of the verb.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                 Here and now I challenge Israel’s whole army! Choose someone to fight me!

NLT                                 I defy the armies of Israel! Send me a man who will fight with me!”

REB                                 Here and now I challenge the ranks of Israel. Get me a man, and we will fight it out.’

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™                    The Philistine added, “I challenge the Israelite battle line today. Send out a man so that we can fight each other.”

JPS (Tanakh)                    And the Philistine ended, “I herewith defy the ranks of Israel. Get me a man and let’s fight it out?”

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                Again the Philistine said, “I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.”

Young’s Updated LT            And the Philistine says, “I have reproached the ranks of Israel this day; give to me a man and we fight together.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** A little time passages and Goliath calls out to the Israelites once again. He again asks for someone from them to come out and fight.

### 1Samuel 17:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> iy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong’s #6430 BDB #814
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, personal pronoun	Strong’s #589 BDB #58



## 1Samuel 17:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châraph (חָרַף) [pronounced <i>khah-RAHF</i> ]	<i>to defy, to reproach, to scorn, to reproach, to scornfully defy; to discredit, to shame, to rebuke</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2778 BDB #357 & #358
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
maʿārekeh (מַעֲרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-ġuh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
Yisʿrāʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** Then the Philistine said, “I defy [or, scorn, discredit, shame] the army of Israel this day! The impression that I get is that Goliath waited for a time; say five minutes. He gave Israel a time to think about what he said. Now he calls out, “I defy [or, scorn, discredit, shame] your entire army!” This phrase will be repeated in by David vv. 26, 36 and 45. How embarrassing that Goliath calls for just one man to come out to challenge him, and not a single Israelites steps forward.

## 1Samuel 17:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nāthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lāmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lācham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i> ]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Niphal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #3898 BDB #535

## 1Samuel 17:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yachad (יָחַד) [pronounced YAH-khahd]	together, alike, all together	adverb	Strong's #3162 BDB #403

**Translation:** Give me a man and we will fight together.” Goliath renews his challenge: “Just send out one man and we will fight.” The idea is, is there not even one man in all of Israel who is willing to face me?

This idea of two champion warriors battling each other in the middle of the battle line to determine the ultimate victory instead of an out and out war between the two armies is a theme also found in Homer's *Iliad*, Virgil's *Aeneid* and in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*.<sup>34</sup> So, this is not unheard of. All of these authors, by the way, wrote these books centuries after this narrative.

And so hears Saul and all Israel words of the Philistine the these and so they were dismayed and so they were afraid greatly.

1Samuel  
17:11

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they became dismayed and very afraid.

When Saul and all of Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they became dismayed, discouraged and very afraid.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so hears Saul and all Israel words of the Philistine the these and so they were dismayed and so they were afraid greatly.

##### Septuagint

And Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, and they were dismayed and greatly terrified.

Significant differences: None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Saul and his men heard what Goliath said, but they were so frightened of Goliath that they couldn't do a thing.

NAB Saul and all the men of Israel, when they heard this challenge of the Philistine, were dismayed and terror-stricken.

NLT When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.

REB When Saul and the Israelites heard what the Philistine said, they were all shaken and deeply afraid.

TEV When Saul and his men heard this, they were terrified.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

##### God's Word™

When Saul and all the Israelites heard what this Philistine said, they were gripped with fear.

<sup>34</sup> Paraphrased from Charles A. Clough, *Dawn of the Kingdom*, ©1974, p. 108.

JPS (Tanakh)

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and terror-stricken.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Young's Updated LT

And Saul hears—and all Israel—these words of the Philistine, and they are broken down and greatly afraid.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Both Saul and his entire army are terribly unnerved by Goliath's challenge.

1Samuel 17:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma' (שמע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i> ]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis'ra'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
P <sup>h</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

## 1Samuel 17:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾelleh (הֵלֵךְ) [pronounced EEHL-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41

**Translation:** *When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine,...* Goliath got the attention of all the Israelite soldiers and Saul heard him as well. What he said was designed to grab their attention.

## 1Samuel 17:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châthath (תַּתַּח) [pronounced khaw-THAHTH]	<i>dismay, discourage</i> and, on occasion, <i>broken in pieces</i> and even <i>to be afraid</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #2865 BDB #369
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârê' (יָרַע) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
m <sup>e</sup> ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m <sup>e</sup> -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** *...they became dismayed and very afraid.* Saul finds himself in a hopeless situation. Most of the Israelites recognize that they are there with him. There is no one in the Israeli army which can stand up against Goliath. They face certain death or certain slavery. Even though Saul is probably 6'6" tall, Goliath obviously towers over him and he is not willing to step forward. Therefore, all Israel is dismayed and extremely afraid. This is at Goliath's initial challenge. We will see in v. 24, their fear did not lessen even as Goliath issued this same challenge twice a day for 40 days.

This shows a dearth of spirituality in Saul and in his soldiers. Israel's strength as an army is not dependent upon men but upon God. One of the first things which Moses taught that evil generation of wandering was that God delivered Israel (Ex. 14:13–14). He actually didn't teach them anything; he simply said, "Watch this." and God delivered the children of Abraham from the forces of pharaoh. Later, after the land had been spied out, Israel had become afraid of the inhabitants of the Land of Promise and Moses told them, "**Only do not rebel against Y<sup>h</sup>owah; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and Y<sup>h</sup>owah is with us; do not fear them!**" (Num. 14:9). In fulfilling a vow that Joshua made to the Gibeonites, he was about to pit his army against the combined forces of five kings, but God said to Joshua, "**Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them will stand before you.**" (Joshua 10:8b). Do you know what the key is? Scripture. Saul did not know the Scriptures, nor did the people in his army, whom he led. Therefore, all they can have is human viewpoint.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Other pertinent Scripture: 2Sam. 10:12 2Chron. 20:17).

Let me further explain the reason for this lack of divine viewpoint in Israel. Saul did nothing to spread God's Word in Israel. David will bring the Ark to Jerusalem and he will write Scripture. Solomon will construct the Temple of God and he will write Scripture. But it is doubtful that Saul even had a copy of God's Word made for him to read and study (Deut. 17:18–20). We have already seen Saul try to placate God as if He were some kind of a heathen god in 1Sam. 13:9ff. So, again the key difference between Saul and David is not that Saul sinned a lot and David sinned very little, but the key was the doctrine in their souls and the amount of time that they logged in filled with the Spirit of God.

**Application:** You will sin, and there are times when you sin willingly. Furthermore, these sins will negatively impact your life. However, when it comes to your service to God, there are three important factors (after salvation, of course): are you filled with God the Holy Spirit,<sup>36</sup> do you know God's Word; and do you believe God's Word? More than anything else, these three factors distinguish David from Saul.

To continue the context of this verse, go directly to v. 16. If v. 16 is placed after v. 11, the previous narrative is properly closed out, and the following narrative feels less interrupted. I have said a lot about the text missing from LXX β, and I will say a lot more. However, to head you off at the pass, v. 16 is one of the disputed verses; however, it fits in well following v. 11 (an undisputed verse). Removing v. 16 (along with all the other questionable verses) leaves us with a serious gap. After we cover a few more verses, then I will give you a [translation with v. 16 moved](#).

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## Background on David and His Brothers

At this point, we have a radical change of scenery; we leave the battlefield, and suddenly find ourselves with David at home with his father.

**And David a son of a man an Ephrathite the this from Bethlehem, Judah and his name [is] Jesse and to him eight sons and the man in days of Saul old he had come in men.**

1Samuel  
17:12

**Now David was the son of a man—this Ephrathite—from Bethlehem [in] Judah [whose] name [was] Jesse and he had [lit., to him] eight sons. Furthermore, his father [lit., the man] had come [to be] old among men [or, in years] in the days of Saul.**

**Now David was the son of Jesse, this Ephrathite from Bethlehem in Judah, who had eight sons. Furthermore, this man had become old during the time of Saul.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

#### Masoretic Text

And David a son of a man an Ephrathite the this from Bethlehem, Judah and his name [is] Jesse and to him eight sons and the man in days of Saul old he had come in men.

#### Alexandrian Septuagint

And David son of an Ephrathite said, this was of Bethleem Juda and his name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And the man passed for an old man among men in the days of Saul. This comes from the Alexandrian LXX, as well all of vv. 12–31; these few missing passages are found in Brenton's appendix.

#### Significant differences:

No significant differences; although the second sentence is difficult to understand in either language.

<sup>36</sup> And *not* in some holy roller way.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

- CEV David’s father Jesse was an old man, who belonged to the Ephrathah clan and lived in Bethlehem in Judah. Jess had eight sons:...
- REB David was the son of an Ephrathite called Jesse, who had eight sons, and who by Saul’s time had become old, well advanced in years. Note that the REB leaves out that Jesse is from Bethlehem in Judah, saying that this is the probable reading and indicates *Heb. adds* Is this the man from Bethlehem in Judah?<sup>37</sup> However, they give nothing more to substantiate this position.
- TEV David was the son of Jesse, who was an Ephrathite from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and at the time Saul was king, he was already a very old man. *Some ancient translations* a very old man; *Hebrew unclear*.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- JPS (Tanakh) David was the son of a certain Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah whose name was Jesse. He had eight sons, and in the days of Saul the man was already old, advanced in years.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- The Emphasized Bible* Now ||David|| was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-judah, whose |name| was Jesse, and |who| had eight sons, —and ||the man|| in the days of Saul was old, advanced in years.
- NASB Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced *in years* among men.
- NRSV Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years. The NRSV footnotes that *in years* corresponds to the Greek and the Syriac, whereas *among men* is the Hebrew reading. Obviously (see below), this does not correspond with the Alexandrian LXX, and this verse is missing from LXX β.
- Young’s Updated LT* And David *is* son of this Ephrathite of Bethlehem, Judah, whose name *is* Jesse, and he has eight sons, and the man in the days of Saul has become aged among men.

At this point, we have several verses whose inclusion with Holy Writ is debated. In fact, there are several sections of this chapter where there are long passages whose inspiration is doubted. At this point, I will present them as Scripture, and then, at the **end of this chapter**, I will discuss more clearly what is found and what is missing from LXX β.

**What is the gist of this verse?** We find out again that Jesse, an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, is the father of David and that he has 8 sons. We also find out that Jesse is an old man by this time.

1Samuel 17:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>ə</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>veh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

<sup>37</sup> *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 606.

## 1Samuel 17:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʿeph <sup>er</sup> râthîy (עִפְרַתִּי) [pronounced ef-raw-THEE]	<i>to bear fruit, to be fruitful</i> and is transliterated Ephrathite	gentilic adjective	Strong's #673 BDB #68
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bêyth lechem (בֵּית לֶחֶם) [pronounced bayth-LEH-khem]	<i>house of bread</i> and is transliterated <i>Bethlehem</i>	proper noun, location	Strong's #1035 BDB #111
Y <sup>e</sup> hûwdâh (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced y <sup>e</sup> hoo-DAW]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Yîshay (יִשַׁי) [pronounced yee-SHAH-ee]	transliterated <i>Jesse</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445

**Translation:** Now David was the son of a man—this Ephrathite—from Bethlehem [in] Judah [whose] name [was] Jesse... Saul was introduced thrice in this book—and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time which David is introduced. The author is careful to note that this is the same David as found in the previous chapter, by naming his father.

Saul and David are introduced thrice in this book:



The Three Introductions to Saul and to David	
Saul	David
We first find Saul wandering around looking for some lost donkeys in 1Sam. 9, where he finds that he is the guest of honor at a banquet put on by the prophet Samuel. He seems to be less surprised by these events than we would expect him to be.	In the first half of 1Sam. 16, Samuel goes out to anoint the new king, who turns out to be this unknown man named David.
Saul is later publically declared king at Mizpah by Samuel in 1Sam. 10. There were several in attendance who doubted Saul's ability to lead Israel.	Later, in this same chapter, Saul begins to suffer from various psychoses, and David is called in to soothe him by music-therapy.
Saul actually steps into Israel's history as a man to be noticed when he defeats the Ammonites in 1Sam. 11. At this point, God gave the Holy Spirit to Saul and he was recognized by Israel as their king (see 1Sam. 12).	Here, David will come to bring his brothers supplies when he hears Goliath's bellowing and he steps up to the challenge.
Unlike Saul, who is first introduced as king as an unknown and later popularly accepted as king, once he proves himself; David will have proven himself great in Israel long before he assumes the throne of Israel.	

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You might find this sudden change of scenery disconcerting. There's no need for that. David is going to find himself on the battleground, and this tells portion us how he came to be there. If this is left out, then there is a great gap in the explanation as to how or why David's 3 oldest brothers are gathered with Saul's army and how David is there as well, although the many brothers in between are not there. Furthermore, it helps to explain why David was there, despite the fact that he appears to be (and probably is) very young (1Sam. 17:33). What we have here is simply a coterminous event where David will go from point A to point B, the original scene of the action in this chapter.

I don't know if you will recall, but we first heard Jesse's name at the end of the book of Ruth. Ruth is this short and engaging love story between a Moabite woman and a successful Jewish man. This sort of story has been done many times in the movies; however, the difference between Ruth and the women in the Hollywood version, is that Ruth is a woman of great character. She may be at the bottom of society in Jewish culture, but she is not there because of her own lack of personal integrity. She was the daughter-in-law of a Jewish woman who was living outside of the land and she chose, in loyalty to her mother-in-law, to stay with her and to help provide for her when all their loved ones died. There are some women whose allegiance to one's husband might last until his death. In fact, in today's society, if a man or woman sticks by his or her mate through a difficult death, we are often impressed by their great dedication. However, Ruth did not just stay with her husband through his death, but she then remained with her mother-in-law after his death. How many women would do that?

As a Moabites, Ruth was an outsider brought into the land by a Jewess. In the book of Ruth, she is redeemed by a Christ figure named Boaz, a very successful relative of Ruth's mother-in-law, who falls in love with her. This is analogous to Christ bringing in the Church from outside the Jewish economy. Ruth and Boaz married and had a son Obed; to Obed was born Jesse; and to Jess was born David (Ruth 4:17, 21-22). We also examined David's line in 1Chron. 3. David was the great king of Israel, and his bloodline was preserved in Scripture. He is also in the line that leads from Adam to Noah to Abraham to David to Josiah and eventually to Jesus. In fact, David is past the half-way between the first and the last Adam. It's the most important genealogy, one which we come across again and again in Scripture.

Ephrath and Bethlehem are different names for the same place (or Ephrath is the general area which contains the small city of Bethlehem).<sup>38</sup> We find this in the gloss of Gen. 35:19 where Rachel, the wife of Jacob, **dies and is buried on the road to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)** (see also Gen. 48:7 Ruth 4:11). This will also be the birthplace of our Lord, as later prophesied in Micah 5:2: **“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah; from you, One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His appearances [or, advents] are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”**

LXX β leaves this passage out—and I suspect that some scribe read 1Sam. 16:11,22 and 17:55–56, 58 and sensed there to be a contradiction. In the first instance, it appears that Saul knows who David’s father is; and in the second, he appears not to know who David’s father is. Therefore, this is incorrectly perceived as a contradiction, and my guess is that some scribe just deleted certain portions of the narrative in this and the next chapter in order for the accounts not to be contradictory in content.<sup>39</sup> However, these passages are not contradictory in content (this will be covered later in great detail), and the removal of these few passages actually introduces more problems than it solves (which problems are alluded to in the previous paragraph).

1Samuel 17:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong’s # BDB #510
sh <sup>e</sup> mônâh (שֹׁמֹנָה) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>moh-NAW</i> ]	<i>eight</i>	feminine singular numeral	Strong’s #8083 BDB #1032
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong’s #1121 BDB #119

**Translation:** **...and he had** [lit., *to him*] **eight sons**. You will recall that we settled the issue of the number of Jesse’s sons in 1Sam. 16:11 (which is eight in all, with David being the youngest of the eight).<sup>40</sup> Jesse paraded seven of his sons before Samuel, and none were identified by Samuel as the next king. Then Jesse brought in his eighth son, David.

1Samuel 17:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

<sup>38</sup> Interestingly enough, Naomi, Ruth’s mother-in-law, is originally from Bethlehem (Ruth 1:2).

<sup>39</sup> Barnes concurs with me in Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 42. However, I should point out that this is not normally what a scribe would do.

<sup>40</sup> The problem is 1Chron. 2:13–16 where only seven sons are named and David is called the 7<sup>th</sup> son. However, this is possibly solved by the Peshitta (the Syriac targum) which gives us the name of the 7<sup>th</sup> son, and then lists David as the 8<sup>th</sup>. A more likely explanation is that David had an older brother who died as a child. These explanations were discussed in detail in our study of 1Sam. 16:10–11.

## 1Samuel 17:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יּוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>days</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
zâkên (זָקֵן) [pronounced zaw-KANE]	<i>old, elderly</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
bôw' (בָּוֵא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35

In the Septuagint and Syriac, we have *years* instead of *men*.<sup>41</sup> So Jesse has become *old among men [or, in years] in the days of Saul*.

**Translation:** Furthermore, his father [lit., *the man*] had come [to be] old among men [or, in years] in the days of Saul. Jesse was roughly the age of Samuel, who was old and kept thinking that he was going to retire from service to God. Very likely, David was born to him at a fairly advanced age so that Jesse did not put the kind of time into him as he did his other sons. In fact, Jesse put David out in the fields with the flocks.

Keil and Delitzsch point out an important fact—vv. 12–13 appear to be superfluous, given 1Sam. 16:1, 8–11. Other than the fact that Jesse is an old man during the reign of Saul, there is really no new information there. Actually, there is nothing which demands that information not be repeated—in fact, there are times when within the same passage, we have repeated information. Furthermore, this carefully ties the David of this chapter to the David of the previous chapter. That is, there should be no confusion as to this being one and the same person. Thirdly, the first half of 1Sam. 16 appears to be written from Samuel's viewpoint; what follows in the second half of chapter 16 and 17 seems to be written from David's viewpoint. Therefore, when David wrote this, it was not necessarily repetition. Having more than one author is not a problem for the concept of inspiration. We have noted that there was at least one chapter in Deuteronomy which was not written by Moses; there was most of a chapter in the book of Joshua not written by Joshua; and that the book of Genesis probably had more than a half-dozen authors. Given the span of the book of Samuel, we should expect there to be different authors. 1Sam. 16:13 would mark a reasonable final point for the information which Samuel recorded; and v. 14 appears to be where David picked up writing. It is not necessary that David took Samuel's manuscript and added to it. It is also not a problem if David

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 305.

wrote some, Samuel wrote some, and that these writings were strung together chronologically. Furthermore, recall Jonathan's great victory of 1Sam. 14—this would be information which would not have been recorded by Samuel or by David (unless David based it upon what Jonathan had told him). In other words, even though these verses that we are studying now seem superfluous when looking back to the previous chapter, that does not mean that they are not part of God's Word.

**And so goes a trio of sons of Jesse; the greatest ones have gone after Saul to the battle and a name of his trio of sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab the firstborn, and his second Abinadab, and the third, Shammah.**

1Samuel  
17:13

**So three of Jesse's sons went—the [3] oldest [lit., *greatest*] ones have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab, the firstborn, Abinadab his second [born], and Shammah the third [born].**

**So Saul's three eldest boys followed after Saul to this battle. Their names are Eliab, the firstborn, Abinadab the second, and Shammah the third.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so goes a trio of sons of Jesse; the greatest ones have gone after Saul to the battle and a name of his trio of sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab the firstborn, and his second Abinadab, and the third, Shammah.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And the three elder sons of Jessæ went and followed Saul to the war, and the name of his sons that went to the war were: Eliab his firstborn, and his second Aminadab, and his third Samma.

Significant differences: None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT	Jesse's three oldest sons—Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah—had already joined Saul's army to fight the Philistines.
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#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	The three oldest sons of Jesse had left and gone with Saul to the war. The names of his three sons who had gone to the war were Eliab the first-born, the next Abinadab, and the third Shammah;..
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#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And the three older sons of Jesse had gone [lit., <i>gone, they went</i> ] after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the first-born, and the second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	...and the three eldest sons of Jesse go, they have gone after Saul to battle; and the name of his three sons who have gone into battle <i>are</i> Eliab the first-born, and his second Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Jesse's oldest (and greatest) sons follow Saul to this battle against the Philistines. They are named again in this verse—Eliab, Abinadab and Shammah (from eldest to third eldest).

## 1Samuel 17:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
shêlôshâh (שְׁלֹשָׁה) [pronounced <i>shiloh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025.
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yîshay (יֵשַׁי) [pronounced <i>yee-SHAH-ee</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jesse</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i> ]	<i>great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine plural adjective with a definite article (it functions as a substantive here)	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʿachar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29
Shâʿûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** So three of Jesse's sons went—the [3] oldest [lit., *greatest*] ones have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul to the battle. Three of Jesse's sons went into battle with Saul. It is interesting—the Hebrew does not call them the eldest sons, but the greatest sons. This should give you some idea as to God the Holy Spirit's take on war and fighting for one's country.

## 1Samuel 17:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
sh <sup>e</sup> lôshâh (שְׁלוֹשָׁה) [pronounced <i>Shiloh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025.
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
ʿĕlîyʾăv (אֱלִיָּאָב) [pronounced <i>el-ee-AW<sup>ev</sup></i> ]	<i>God is father; transliterated Eliab</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #446 BDB #45
b <sup>e</sup> kôwr (בְּכוֹר) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>KOHR</i> ]	<i>firstborn</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mish <sup>e</sup> neh (מִשְׁנֵה) [pronounced <i>mish<sup>e</sup>-NEH</i> ]	<i>double, copy, second</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4932 BDB #1041
ʿăbîynâdâb (אֲבִינָדָב) [pronounced <i>u<sup>b</sup>-vee-naw-DAWB</i> ]	<i>my father is noble and is transliterated Abinadab</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #41 BDB #4
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sh <sup>e</sup> lishîym (שְׁלִישִׁים) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> li-SHEEM]	<i>third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]</i>	Masculine/feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026
shammâh (שַׁמָּה) [pronounced shahm-MAW]	<i>waste, devastation, appalment and is transliterated Shammah</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #8048 BDB #1031

**Translation:** The names of his three sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab, the firstborn, Abinadab, his second [born], and Shammah, the third [born]. These sons are also named in 1Sam. 16:6, 8–9 and 1Chron. 2:13. Even though David was chosen to be king over these three brothers, this does not mean that these are inferior human beings. They had character and bravery and were willing to go to war with Saul against the Philistines.

We have already covered David's line, including his brothers, in 1Chron. 3, which chapter contains the genealogy of Judah. However, the author of 1Sam. 16 is also probably the author of this chapter, as the same three sons of Jesse are named in both chapters (in this chapter, we would expect that; in the previous chapter, we would have expected to hear the names of every brother who was paraded before Samuel).

Now and again, I think that it is important that you read some of the source material that I wade through. For instance, Keil and Delitzsch remark concerning the grammatical correctness of this verse: "*The three great (i.e., eldest) sons of Jesse had gone behind Saul into the war.*" שְׁלִישִׁים, which appears superfluous after the foregoing וַיֵּלְכוּ, has been defended by Böttcher, as necessary to express the pluperfect, which the thought requires, since the imperfect consec. וַיֵּלְכוּ, when attached to a substantive and participial clause, merely expresses the force of the aorist. Properly, therefore, it reads thus: "*And then (in Jesse's old age) the three eldest sons followed, had followed, Saul;*" a very ponderous construction indeed,<sup>42</sup> but quite correct, and even necessary, with the great deficiency of forms, to express the pluperfect.<sup>43</sup>

**And David he [is] the younger and three the greatest ones have gone after Saul.** 1Samuel 17:14 **David [was] the youngest and the three older [lit., greater] [sons] have followed [lit., gone] after Saul.**

**David was the youngest of Jesse's sons. The three eldest sons followed Saul into battle.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And David he [is] the younger and three the greatest ones have gone after Saul.

Alexandrian Septuagint And David himself is the younger and the three elder followed Saul.

Significant differences: None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<sup>42</sup> Look who's talking.

<sup>43</sup> All of this following the colon is a quotation from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 484.



NLT	David was the youngest of Jesse's sons. Since David's three oldest brothers were in the army, they stayed with Saul's forces all the time.
REB	...David was the youngest. When the three eldest followed Saul,...
TEV	David was the youngest son, and while the three oldest brothers stayed with Saul,...

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) ...and David was the youngest. The three oldest had followed Saul,...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul,...

Young's Updated LT And David is the youngest, and the three eldest have gone after Saul,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** The author makes it clear that David is the youngest of Jesse's sons. I don't exactly follow why he again tells us that the 3 oldest sons went after Saul.

### 1Samuel 17:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hûw' (הוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	masculine personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
qâṭôn (קָטָן) [pronounced <i>kaw-TOHN</i> ]	<i>small, insignificant</i> ; a word particularly used for <i>youth, younger</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #6995 & #6996 BDB #882

**Translation:** David [was] the youngest... There is an additional personal pronoun which is emphatic and emphasizes that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, which has already been told to us in 1Sam. 16:11. This particular author seems to be very careful about getting all of the names right, with whatever introductory material he believes is necessary to weave these characters into the historical narrative.

### 1Samuel 17:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh <sup>l</sup> ôshâh (שָׁלוֹשׁ) [pronounced <i>Shiloh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	feminine numeral	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025.

## 1Samuel 17:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i> ]	<i>great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine plural adjective with a definite article (it functions as a substantive here)	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʿachar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29
Shâʿûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...and the three older [lit., *greater*] [sons] have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul. The writer of this book tells us once again that Jesse's three eldest sons followed after Saul. I don't really get why he tells us this three times (twice in the previous verse and once here).

**And David is going and returning from with Saul to feed sheep of his father [in] Bethlehem.**

1Samuel  
17:15

**However, David [periodically] departed and returned from [serving] Saul to feed his father's sheep [in] Bethlehem.**

**However, David continued to return periodically to feed his father's sheep in Bethlehem.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And David is going and returning from with Saul to feed sheep of his father [in] Bethlehem.

Alexandrian Septuagint              And David departed and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep in Bethlehem.

Significant differences:              None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                      He took care of his father's sheep, and he went back and forth between Bethlehem and Saul's camp.

NLT                                      But David went back and forth between working for Saul and helping his father with the sheep in Bethlehem.

REB                                      ...David used to go from attending Saul to minding his father's flocks at Bethlehem.

TEV                                      ...David would go back to Bethlehem from time to time, to take care of his father's sheep.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)                      ...and David would go back and forth from attending on Saul to shepherd his father's flock at Bethlehem.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** ...but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s flock at Bethlehem.  
*Young’s Updated LT* ...and David is going and returning from Saul, to feed the flock of his father at Bethlehem.

Before we begin an exegesis of this verse, it is important to realize that there are two ways that it may be understood. Many believe that David is with Saul and the army as Saul’s armor bearer and that he wanders back and forth from the battle to his sheep.<sup>44</sup> This is not what is occurring. First of all, David is not necessarily by Saul’s side as an armor bearer at this time, and secondly, do you really think that Saul would allow David to leave him to take care of a few sheep and visit with his dad at home? David will be made Saul’s armor bearer when it appears to Saul that David can handle that responsibility. In other words, this verse does not necessarily follows 1Sam. 16:21b in time. That verse fits with the context but could refer to something which occurred later. We will discuss that later on in this chapter. Another major problem is, *why did David wait until the 40<sup>th</sup> day before offering his services to Saul?* If David went with Saul as his armor bearer to the Valley of Elah, then he would have heard Goliath’s challenge on several occasions before asking Saul’s permission to leave and go take care of his sheep.

What is most likely is that David is employed as palace guitarist to soothe Saul’s soul. Since Saul is off to war, there is no reason for David to hang out at the palace, so he leaves for awhile to check up on his flock and his family. Edersheim also tells us that, at the outbreak of war, David returned home.<sup>45</sup> David’s three older brothers, meanwhile, have gone to war as Israeli soldiers; and David’s father will send David to the front to take them supplies.

Let me give you another reason why David has not been with Saul for these 40 days—if he was there and if his 3 oldest brothers are there, what about those brothers who are in between? It would make little sense for Saul to have the 3 eldest and the youngest from the same family, and yet skip the brothers in between. The deal is, the other brothers of David are also probably too young to go to battle.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Although David had an assignment with Saul, he also had responsibilities from whence he came, and he continued to fulfill those responsibilities..

1Samuel 17:15			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #1732 BDB #187
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal active participle	Strong’s #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

<sup>44</sup> For instance, see the footnote in *to the Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 388. I must admit that this possibility never occurred to me even during the exegesis of this passage. Only when I read this in the Open Bible did I realize that this is how some others understood this passage to read.

<sup>45</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 469.

## 1Samuel 17:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The use of the participle above and below seems to indicate that David did this several times. He did not simply just leave the service of Saul and go back home. He departed from being with Saul and returned home on several occasions. Therefore, I inserted the word <i>periodically</i> in my moderately literal translation.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
Together, they mean <i>from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to</i>			
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAWH</i> ]	<i>to shepherd, to pasture, to tend to graze, to feed</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
tsôn (צֹן) [pronounced <i>tzohn</i> ]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective construct	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
ʾâv (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>v</sup></i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household or clan</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
bêyth lechem (בֵּית לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>bayth-LEH-khem</i> ]	<i>house of bread</i> and is transliterated <i>Bethlehem</i>	proper noun, location; pausal form	Strong's #1035 BDB #111

**Translation:** However, David [periodically] departed and returned from [serving] Saul to feed his father's sheep [in] Bethlehem. It is not entirely clear as to what happened with these sheep. It does not appear that Jesse assigned

someone else to take care of them; or, even more likely, the person assigned to take care of the sheep really didn't do a proper job. Or, even more simply put, this was originally David's responsibility, and he continued with it, even though someone else was certainly involved with the sheep already. No doubt, he was *home-sick* for that particular responsibility. Without naming any names here, David continued to return to his sheep and to make certain that they were properly taken care of.

What we have in this verse and the previous verse is a contrast: David, Jesse's youngest son, was serving Saul, but returned on at least this occasion to see to his flock. With Saul out of the palace and on the battlefield, there is really no reason for David to stay in the palace. A lazy man might have; however, he had other responsibilities, so he attended to those. Now, while David returned home, Jesse's three oldest sons left home to serve Saul and their country as soldiers. This will set up another contrast on the battlefield. These same three brothers will not accept Goliath's challenge, whereas David, who is not in the army, will. What we have here is clear support for Samuel's selection of David over his brothers as Israel's next king.

**Application:** What is the difference between David and his brothers? Is it that his brothers all have character flaws and David does not? I should say not! As we will find, David has some serious character flaws which will lead to serious sinning. Therefore, the key will not be the expression of his oldest brother's jealousy (a clear mental attitude sin), but the key is doctrine and faith. David knows his doctrine; he will express it prior to facing off with Goliath. He has faith because he believes in God's revealed truth. He believes that God would deliver Israel from Goliath. The two keys are faith and doctrine.<sup>46</sup> You need them both.

There is one minor issue which I should attend to. Isn't David the armorbearer for Saul (1Sam. 16:21)? Not yet. 1Sam. 16:21 sums up the early relationship between Saul and David. David began as one who played music, probably in the background, in the palace of Saul, to provide Saul with comfort and solace. In this chapter, David will prove himself on the battlefield, and Saul will then make him his armorbearer. Again, this is typical of Hebrew narrative—we have a summation of subsequent events followed by the playing out of those events. Sometimes, using a little logic, we must put some of the details in their reasonable chronological order.

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## Goliath Issues His Challenge for 40 Days

**And so comes near the Philistine a rising early and a becoming dark; and so he takes a stand forties a day.**

1Samuel  
17:16

**The Philistine came near morning and evening; and he set himself [there] [for] forty days.**

**And for forty days and forty nights, the Philistine continued to come near and set himself before Israel to make his challenge.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so comes near the Philistine a rising early and a becoming dark; and so he takes a stand forties a day.

Alexandrian Septuagint

And the Philistine advanced morning and evening, and stood up forty days.

Significant differences:

None.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<sup>46</sup> I would hope that regeneration goes without saying.

- CEV Goliath came out and gave his challenge every morning and every evening for forty days.
- NLT For forty days, twice a day, morning and evening, the Philistine giant strutted in front of the Israelite army.
- REB Morning and evening for forty days the Philistine came forward and took up his stance.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- JPS (Tanakh) The Philistine stepped forward morning and evening and took his stand for forty days.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- NASB And the Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days, and took his stand.
- Young's Updated LT And the Philistine draws near, morning and evening, and stations himself forty days.

**What is the gist of this verse?** I like the way the NLT and CEV phrase this verse: for forty days, Goliath continues to come out before Israel to issue a challenge to them.

In this verse, we have our *meantime, back at the ranch* passage. When we left the valley between the armies, Goliath had just walked out between the two armies and challenged any Israeli to a one-on-one battle. We freeze on the last frame, where Saul and all of his army are afraid of this one man, and we go to David. In this verse, we go back to the two camps to see that this Philistine giant has stood before Israel 80 times. So, we have David leaving the palace to tend to his sheep, because Saul and his troops are no longer there, but down in the valley of Elah near Socoh. While David is tending the sheep, Goliath is standing before Israel, day after day, twice a day, goading them and psychologically devastating them. After this verse we will immediately go back to David and his father Jesse.

<b>1Samuel 17:16a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i> ]	<i>to come near, to draw near, to approach, to come hither</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
P <sup>l</sup> ish <sup>tîy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>o</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
shâkam (שָׁכַם) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHM</i> ]	<i>to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start; morning (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
w <sup>o</sup> (or v <sup>o</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âra <sup>b</sup> v (אָרַב) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAH<sup>b</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to become evening, to grow dark; evening (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #6150 BDB #788

**Translation:** [The Philistine came near morning and evening;](#)... What we have is a poetic contrast, if you will, between David and Goliath. David would continue to return to his sheep to care for them and Goliath would continue to stand before Israel and challenge them to send any one man to fight him. Goliath would do this twice each day.

<b>1Samuel 17:16b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsab (יָצַב) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAHB</i> <sup>V</sup> ]	<i>to set oneself [in a place], to take a stand</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #3320 BDB #426
ʿar̥bâʿîym (אַרְבַּעִים) [pronounced <i>ar<sup>e</sup>-BAW-GEEM</i> ]	<i>forty</i>	undeclined plural noun	Strong's #705 BDB #917
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** [...and he set himself \[there\] \[for\] forty days.](#) It is interesting that the Philistine army did nothing during this time. Goliath simply went out before Israel for forty days, twice each day, and issued a challenge to them. The idea was that they would become more and more debilitated by fear.

It may appear as though this verse jumps out of nowhere. However, this is one of those *meanwhile, back at the ranch* verses. In v. 15, David returns to his father's sheep from Saul's palace (as Saul is not there) and, at the same time, Goliath is walking out before the troops of Israel issuing his challenge. The author is simply making reference to two simultaneous events. A film editor often takes action occurring simultaneously in two different places, and plays a 5 second clip of one, and then a 5 second clip of the other, and alternates back and forth. Oft times, these two simultaneous actions come together, such as Lois Lane in dire straights, and Superman racing to save her. Here we have the literary origin of these cinematic cuts between simultaneous actions. In the next verse, we will cut back to David in Bethlehem.

If you do not like cinematic cuts, then place v. 16 immediately after v. 11, and you will see that both narratives are actually smoothed out somewhat. Or, v. 16 could be placed parenthetically between vv. 23–24 (although it fits less well there). Recall that, unlike our Gentile minds, the early Oriental writers did not place as much of an emphasis upon chronology. This particular placement of v. 16 indicates that we have simultaneous events in an almost awkward way (however, in the Hebrew—and even in the English—it jumps out at you and grabs you). When a verse of Scripture does that from a strictly literary standpoint, then there is a reason that it was placed where it was.

For your benefit, I am going to rearrange these verses, and insert v. 16 after v. 11.

### A Re-Ordering of 1Sam. 17:11–19

[When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they became dismayed and very afraid. And the Philistine came near morning and evening; he set himself \[there\] \[for\] forty days.](#)

[Now David was the son of a man—this Ephrathite—from Bethlehem \[in\] Judah \[whose\] name \[was\] Jesse and he had \[lit., to him\] eight sons. Furthermore, his father \[lit., the man\] had come \[to be\] old among men \[or, in years\] in the days of Saul. So three of Jesse's sons went—the \[3\] oldest \[lit., greatest\] ones have followed \[lit.,](#)



## A Re-Ordering of 1Sam. 17:11–19

*gone*] after Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab, the firstborn, Abinadab his second [born], and Shammah the third [born]. David [was] the youngest and the three older [lit., *greater*] [sons] have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul. However, David [periodically] departed and returned from [serving] Saul to feed his father's sheep [in] Bethlehem.

Then Jesse said to David his son, "Please take to your brothers 2 cups [lit., *an ephah*] of roasted corn and these ten [loaves] of bread and take [them] quickly to the camp to your brothers. Also, you will take these ten cuttings of cheese to their chief commander [lit., *to the captain of the thousand*]. And make personal contact [with] your brothers concerning [their] welfare and bring [back] a message from them [lit., *their pledge, their exchange*]. Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in the Valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines."

I did move one *and* so that the translation would read more smoothly (it is actually in accordance with the original text).

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### David Brings Supplies to His Brothers

And so says Jesse to David his son, "Take, please, to your brothers an ephah [roughly 2 cups] of the roasted corn and ten [loaves of] bread these and bring quickly [to] the camp to your brothers.

1Samuel  
17:17

Then Jesse said to David his son, "Please take to your brothers 2 cups [lit., *an ephah*] of roasted corn and these ten [loaves] of bread and take [them] quickly to the camp to your brothers.

Then Jesse said to his son David, Please take these 2 cups of roasted corn and these ten loaves of bread to their camp.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so says Jesse to David his son, "Take, please, to your brothers an ephah [roughly 2 cups] of the roasted corn and ten [loaves of] bread these and bring quickly [to] the camp to your brothers.

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

And Jessæ said to David, "Take now to your brothers an ephah of this and these ten loaves, and run to the camp and give them to your brothers.

#### Significant differences:

The differences are noted, but rather insignificant. We know in the MT that it is roasted corn that David was taking; and there are two verbs in the LXX in the last phrase which take the place of one verb in the MT.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

##### TEV

One day Jesse said to David, "Take a half-bushel of this roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and hurry with them to your brothers in the camp.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

##### JPS (Tanakh)

Jesse said to his son David, "Take an ephah of this parched corn and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers, and carry them quickly to your brothers in camp.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

Then Jesse said to David his son, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to your brothers.

Young's Updated LT

And Jesse says to David his son, "Take, I pray you, to your brothers, an ephah of this roasted *corn* and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to your brothers;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** During one of his trips back, David's father sent him with supplies to his brothers. He took back with him a half a quart of roasted corn and 10 loaves of bread.

**1Samuel 17:17a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yîshay (ישׂי) [pronounced <i>yee-SHAH-ee</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jesse</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
lâqach (לקח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
nâ' (נא) [pronounced <i>naw</i> ]	<i>please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâch (אח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i> ]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
ʾêphâh (אפה) [pronounced <i>ay-FAW</i> ]	transliterated <i>ephah</i> and it is equivalent to approximately ½ a quart or 2 cups	feminine singular construct	Strong's #374 BDB #35
qâlîy (קלי) [pronounced <i>kaw-LEE</i> ]	<i>roasted corn, roasted grain</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7039 BDB #885

## 1Samuel 17:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zeh (ה ז) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿasârâh (עשרה) [pronounced gah-saw-RAW]	<i>ten</i>	feminine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
lechem (לחם) [pronounced LEH-khem]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536

**Translation:** Then Jesse said to David his son, "Please take to your brothers 2 cups [lit., *an ephah*] of roasted corn and these ten [loaves] of bread... You will note that v. 15 has some narrative meaning which we would have missed had it been left out. That verse tells us that David went back and forth from Saul to his father's fields. Therefore, it would not be unusual for his father to give him supplies to take to his older brothers. However, leave out v. 15 (which legitimately could be done) and you will note that there would appear to be a contradiction—David is playing music for Saul, but it appears that he simultaneously is taking orders from his father in a nearby town. My point is that not every writer of Scripture was necessarily this thorough; therefore, there are times when it appears that there is a contradiction, but the only problem is that some specific logistic has been left out.

This verse is making me rethink the equivalent amount for an ephah of anything. Even though it is strictly for 3 brothers, my thinking is that the amount should be perhaps double this. Part of the problem is not fully knowing what this is, although roasted grain or popped corn is probably the idea here (it would be something akin to popcorn or an unsweetened breakfast cereal). The ten loaves of bread gives us the impression that the diet of the Israeli soldier was not too varied.

## 1Samuel 17:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced roots]	<i>to cause to run; to hastily lead up, to cause to hasten; to bring quickly</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
machăneh (מחנה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## 1Samuel 17:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26

**Translation:** ...and take [them] quickly to the camp to your brothers. Jesse again emphasizes that this food goes to the three brothers who are serving in the military. This repetition here (*to your brothers*) seems to indicate that he personally does not have a lot of confidence in David and his ability to properly take orders. This would go along with the fact that Jesse had to be prodded to bring David out to meet Samuel (1Sam. 16:8–11). Essentially, this means that Jesse does not know his own son. He is not aware of David's great character and potential.

Now, all of this is interesting, because we don't know how long it has been since Jesse received news about his sons. I suspect with Goliath's challenges, possibly some news has come around to Israel, but, more likely, the soldiers are so embarrassed, that those at home (which is fairly close by, by today's standards) do not know how the war effort is going. Jesse only knows that his sons must need supplies by now and he, like any other parent, took part in supplying his part of the troops. Our armed service today often serves to cut the apron strings, to provide in some cases, complete independence from one's parents. In Saul's day, you didn't run away to the army to get away from your parents. If you did, you might starve. Probably all of their weapons, bedding and camping supplies, and much of their food for the foot soldiers came from home. These were not mom's brownies sent as a special treat; the food sent from home was necessary to the soldiers. It was their k-rations.

**And ten cuttings of milk [or, cheese] the these you take to a captain the thousand. And your brothers you [personally] visit to welfare and their pledge you take.**

1Samuel  
17:18

**Also, you will take these ten cuttings of cheese to their chief commander [lit., the captain of the thousand]. And make personal contact [with] your brothers concerning [their] welfare and bring [back] a message from them [lit., their pledge, their exchange].**

**Also, take these ten cuts of cheese to the captain of their military unit. Also, make certain to visit with your brothers concerning their welfare and needs and bring back to me any word from them.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And ten cuttings of milk [or, cheese] the these you take to a captain the thousand. And your brothers you [personally] visit to welfare and their pledge you take.

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

And you will carry to the captain of the thousand the ten cheeses of this milk, and you will see how your brothers fare, and learn what they want."

#### Significant differences:

The differences appear to be a matter of translation. The Greek translators seem to be more specific about the food; and the final two verbs are similar enough to suggest it is a matter how of they chose to translate them, rather than any sort of real difference in manuscript.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

- CEV And here are ten large chunks of cheese to take to their commanding officer. Find out how your brothers are doing and bring back something that shows that they're all right.
- NAB Also take these ten cheeses for the field officer. Greet your brothers and bring home some token from them.
- NLT And give these ten cuts of cheese to their captain. See how your brothers are getting along, and bring me back a letter from them [Hebrew *and take their pledge*]."
- TEV And take these ten cheeses to the commanded officer. Find out how your brothers are getting along and bring back something to show that you saw them and that they are well.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- God's Word™ And take these ten cheese to the captain of the regiment. See how your brothers are doing, and bring back some news about them.
- JPS (Tanakh) Take these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand. Find out how your brothers are and bring some token from them."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- NASB "Bring also these ten cuts of cheese to the commander of their thousand, and look into the welfare of your brothers, and bring back news [lit., *pledge*] of them.
- Young's Updated LT ...and these ten cuttings of the cheese you do take in to the head of the thousand, and your brothers then do inspect for welfare, and their pledge do receive."

**What is the gist of this verse?** David was also to take some cheese to his brothers' C.O., and find out how they are doing.

<b>1Samuel 17:18a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (תּא) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿasârâh (עשרה) [pronounced <i>gah-saw-RAW</i> ]	<i>ten</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
chârîyts (יִרְצִי) [pronounced <i>khaw-REETZ</i> ]	<i>a thing cut, a cut, a sharp instrument</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2757 BDB #358
châlâb (בֶּלֶב) [pronounced <i>khaw-LAW<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>milk; cheese</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2461 BDB #316
ʿêleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>EEHL-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41

## 1Samuel 17:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
ʿelep (אֶלֶף) [pronounced EH-lef]	<i>thousand, families, (500?); military units</i>	masculine singular noun, pausal form	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

**Translation:** Also, you will take these ten cuttings of cheese to their chief commander [lit., the captain of the thousand]. Since you cannot have a cutting of milk or sour cream, it is obvious that this word also refers to cheese or cream cheese. Edersheim renders this as *ten cuts of curdled milk*.<sup>47</sup> Freeman tells us that the cheese of the East was quite inferior to English or Dutch cheese; that it was heavily salted, and that it began by being soft, but it quickly dried out and became hard.<sup>48</sup> You will note that the very best that Jesse sends goes to the captain of his sons' unit. The people of Israel fully understood military duty and were very appreciative of the work that their army accomplished.

This was customary behavior in the ancient world. Only in the last chapter, you will recall, David was called by Saul to provide in-house music for the palace, and Jesse sent him with bread, a jug of wine and a young goat, all for Saul (1Sam. 16:19–20).

## 1Samuel 17:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿâch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced paw-KAHD]	<i>to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823

<sup>47</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 469.

<sup>48</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 136.

## 1Samuel 17:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlôwm (שׁלום) or shâlôm (שׁלם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i> ]	<i>completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

**Translation:** *And make personal contact [with] your brothers concerning [their] welfare...* *Pâqad* means to make some sort of personal contact. So David is to do more than simply deliver these items and split; he is to spend time talking to his brothers concerning their welfare. We have a parallel situation in Gen. 37:13–14, where Jacob sends his son Joseph to check on his brothers (apparently their email server was down). This means that he is to inquire as to their needs (do they need more clothing, food, or equipment), as well as to their health and well-being. Instead of the supply trucks and helicopters of today, supplies were brought to an army via their families. When a war was being fought, the spoil of the war was their payment and sometimes their sustenance.

Again, with most, one would take it for granted that David would inquire as to the needs of his brothers. However, Jesse, still not knowing his son, instructs him along these lines. What this also indicates, on the part of Jesse (as I do not want to take from his parenting skills), he emphasizes what needs to be done and he emphasizes what is proper and honorable to do (bring supplies to David's brothers; ask after their welfare, and also bring gifts to their commanding officer). One could just as easily say that what Jesse said to David was that which he would have said to any of his sons—by rote, he has taught all of his sons that which is proper and honorable to do. We will come to find that David understood these things, while his brothers did not.

## 1Samuel 17:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿārubbâh (אֲרֻבָּה) [pronounced <i>guh-roob-BAW</i> ]	<i>thing exchanged, pledge, token</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6161 BDB #786
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

**Translation:** *...and bring [back] a message from them [lit., their pledge, their exchange].* The noun *ʿārubbâh* may seem out of place here, but it simply means an exchange. David will take his brothers these supplies and, in



exchange, he gets a list of their needs and information on their general welfare. The emphasis is not upon the meaning *token*, per se, but upon its extended meaning, *that which is exchanged*.

Only *Today's English Version* puts this in such a way to suggest that Jesse wanted proof that David went to his brothers. Although this is an intriguing concept (and one that I would not completely rule out), I think the key is *exchange*—an *exchange* of the boys' needs for the grain which David brings them. If the implication of the TEV is accurate, that would mean that Jesse did not trust that David would complete this task. I do not think that this is the case for two reasons: (1) Jesse has 3 or 4<sup>49</sup> other sons that he could send on this errand; and (2) there is no indication elsewhere that Jesse feels that David is untrustworthy. However, it is implied, when Samuel comes to anoint one of Jesse's sons king, that David is viewed as too young and unimportant for Samuel to consider. If this is the case, Jesse simply does not recognize David's character; an unfortunate thing for a father.

You will note that some verses ended Jesse's quote with v. 18. Others carry it into the next verse. Even though there is no personalization found in this verse (i.e., no 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular anything), there is this important lesson which Jesse relays to his son—*every man of Israel* is in the Valley of Elah fighting against the Philistines.

**And Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in a Valley of Elah fighting with Philistines.”** 1Samuel 17:19 **Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in the Valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines.”**

**Furthermore, Saul and your brothers and every man of Israel are in the Valley of Elah fighting against the Philistines.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in a Valley of Elah fighting with Philistines.”
Alexandrian Septuagint	And Saul himself and all the men of Israel were in the valley of the Oak, warring with the Philistines. Not a part of Jesse's quotation.
Significant differences:	No significant differences. I interpreted a noun as being proper; the Greeks translated it.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	They're with Saul's army, fighting the Philistines in Elah Valley.”
NJB	...they are with Saul and all Israel are in the Valley of the Terebinth, fighting the Philistines.’
NLT	David's brothers were with Saul and the Israelite army at the valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines. Not a part of Jesse's quotation.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	They, along with Saul and all the soldiers of Israel, are in the Elah Valley fighting the Philistines.”
JPS (Tanakh)	Saul and the brothers [Heb. <i>they</i> ] and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah, in the war against the Philistines. Not a part of the Jesse's quotation.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<sup>49</sup> This is discussed in greater detail in 1Chron. 2:14–15.

NASB

“For Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.”

Young's Updated LT

And Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. Not a part of Jesse's quotation.

It is clear that some translations include this verse as part of what Jesse said to David. Others, noted above, do not.

**What is the gist of this verse?** In what appears to be a continuation of Jesse's requests, Jesse also tells David where to find Saul and his brothers.

1Samuel 17:19			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hêmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced <i>haym-mawh</i> ]	<i>they, these</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
Because of this simple word, the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular personal pronoun, I would include this verse as a continuation of Jesse's quote. This refers right back to David's brothers. If this were not a part of his quotation, <i>and they</i> would not be a part of Scripture, or we would find <i>and the brothers of David</i> instead.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿemeq (עֵמֶק) [pronounced <i>GEH-mek</i> ]	<i>valley, vale, lowland, deepening, depth</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6010 BDB #770
ʿêlâh (אֵלָה) [pronounced <i>ā-LAW</i> ]	<i>terebinth, oak</i> and is transliterated <i>Elah</i>	proper noun/location	Strong's #424 BDB #18

### 1Samuel 17:19

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâcham (לחם) [pronounced law-KHAHM]	engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle	masculine plural Niphal participle	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	with, at, by, near	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
P <sup>o</sup> lish <sup>tiy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>o</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** *Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in the Valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines.* This is a continuation of Jesse’s conversation with David. He is making a point. Every man of Israel is in the Valley of Elah fighting against the Philistines. Now, note for just a moment that this is not exactly true—after all, Jesse and five of his sons, including David, are not there. So it is not true that *every man of Israel* is in the Valley of Elah. However, the point is military service is a given; all the real men of Israel—those who are old enough, all those who are patriotic and believe in their country and believe in their God—they are there in the Valley of Elah, at war with the Philistines. It is important that David grasp that there is a duty to be fulfilled here—if not now, then in the future. Jesse, almost automatically, teaches David with every word that he says.

This verse is not simply narrative, but a continuation of Jesse speaking to David. We already know where Saul and David’s brothers are (vv. 2, 13). It is Jesse telling David exactly where the army of Saul is.

**And so rises early David in the morning and so he leaves the sheep upon a keeper and so he carries and so he goes as which commissioned him Jesse. He comes the wagon rampart-ward and the army—the one going out—unto the battle line-ward and they are caused to shout in the war.**

1Samuel  
17:20

**David then arose early in the morning and he left the sheep together with a keeper. He carried [the supplies] and went just as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the fortification [of wagons] and the army was going out toward the battle line, having made a battle cry [lit., *having shouted in the war*].**

**David then arose early the next morning, left his sheep in the charge of another, and he went, carrying that which Jesse had asked him to take. Just as he had arrived at the temporary fortification, the army was advancing toward the battle line, shouting war cries.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text

And so rises early David in the morning and so he leaves the sheep upon a keeper and so he carries and so he goes as which commissioned him Jesse. He comes the wagon rampart-ward and the army—the one going out—unto the battle line-ward and they are caused to shout in the war.

Alexandrian Septuagint

And David rose early in the morning, and left the sheep to a keeper, and took and went as Jessæ commanded him, and he came to the trench and to the army as it was going out to fight, and they shouted for the battle.

Significant differences:

No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

- CEV David obeyed his father. He got up early the next morning and left someone else in charge of the sheep; then he loaded the supplies and started off. He reached the army camp just as the soldiers were taking their places and shouting the battle cry.
- NAB Early the next morning, having left the flock with a shepherd, David set out on his errand, as Jesse had commanded him. He reached the barricade of the camp just as the army, on their way to the battleground, were shouting their battle cry.
- NJB David got up early in the morning and, leaving the sheep with someone to guard them, took up his load and went off as Jesse had ordered; he reached the encampment just as the troops were leaving to take up battle stations and shouting the war cry.
- NLT So David left the sheep with another shepherd and set out early the next morning with the gifts. He arrived at the outskirts of the cap just as the Israelite army was leaving for the battlefield with shouts and battle cries.
- TEV David got up early the next morning, left someone else in charge of the sheep, took the food, and went as Jesse had told him to. He arrived at the camp just as the Israelites were going out to their battle line, shouting the war cry.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- God’s Word™ David got up early in the morning and had someone else watch [the sheep]. He took [the food] and went, as Jesse ordered him. He went to the camp as the army was going out to the battle line shouting their war cry.
- JPS (Tanakh) Early next morning, David left someone in charge of the flock, took [the provisions], and set out, as his father Jesse had instructed him. He reached the barricade as the army was going out to the battle lines shouting the war cry.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- NASB So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took *the supplies* and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry.
- Young’s Updated LT And David rises early in the morning, and leaves the flock to a keeper, and lifts up and goes, as Jesse commanded him, and he comes in to the path, and to the force which is going out unto the rank, and they have shouted for battle;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** David gets up early in the morning; leaves his own flock with a keeper, and leaves with the supplies which his father gave him to take to his brothers and their commander. He comes to the Israeli soldiers, just as they are going out to battle.

<b>1Samuel 17:20a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
shâkam (שָׁקַם) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHM</i> ]	<i>to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong’s #7925 BDB #1014

## 1Samuel 17:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced BOH-ker]	<i>morning</i>	masculine singular noun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâṭash (נָטַשׁ) [pronounced naw-TASH]	<i>to allow to; to leave [forsake], to let go of, to let alone in the sense of to disperse, to be spread out, to let run wild</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5203 BDB #643
For some words, I have to, in part, scrap what I find in BDB and in Gesenius, and begin from scratch. There were so many meanings for this word (8 sets of Qal meanings alone) that I went back, looked at all of the passages where this word is found, and then tried to find a smaller set of meanings which would work. The original use of this verb seems to be <i>to allow to</i> (Gen. 31:28), but it appears to have taken on a similar but different set of meanings in later literature.			
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
tsôn (צֹן) [pronounced tzohn]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>a keeper, a guard, a watcher, a preserver</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036

**Translation:** David then arose early in the morning and he left the sheep together with a keeper. Typical of those who traveled in the ancient world; they would rise up early in the morning to go wherever they had planned. Here, David fills in one of the blanks that we had wondered about. Who deals with the sheep when he is gone? Apparently David took on the responsibility of finding a keeper for them. Jesse does not assign this job to another

of his sons nor is Jesse the one to find a keeper for his own sheep. David has taken on this responsibility completely. This is one of the many things which give us a key as to David's character. He is responsible. Surely you've known someone who had become frustrated with their job and quit in the middle of a shift or just didn't show up again? This is the antithesis of David. He took this responsibility very seriously and he does not abandon this responsibility without seeing that his sheep are taken care of.

**Application:** I don't care how much you hate your job or how much you hate your supervisor, you do not get to just up and quit one day. You put in a full day's work; you give a proper 2 weeks notice; and you offer to train your replacement, even if it requires you to come in one or two days on your own time to make certain that he does the job correctly. No matter what the conditions, you do your job as unto the Lord.

In the final 4 years of my teaching at one school, I had the absolute worst supervisor whose only primary aim was to run me off. I could have decided to quit mid-year; I could have come in and done the minimum amount of work, seeing the writing on the wall. However, I continued to tutor my students every day after school and most days before; and I continued to hold my students to high standards. I continued to put in 10+ hour days each and every day, despite the fact that she went out of her way to make the working environment hostile to me. I did not work for her; I did not work for the principal or for the superintendent; I worked as though I were working for Jesus Christ. He gave me the job and I worked as though He were in charge.

### 1Samuel 17:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâsâ' (נָשָׂא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i> ]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kaʾăsher (כִּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>kah-uh-SHER</i> ] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as according to what manner; because</i> .			
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i> ]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
Yîshay (יִשָּׂי) [pronounced <i>yee-SHAH-ee</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jesse</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445

**Translation:** He carried [the supplies] and went just as Jesse had commanded him. In vv. 17–18, Jesse put together supplies for his three sons and additional supplies for their commanding officer. David carried these supplies, just as his father Jesse commanded him, and left at the time Jesse agreed to. David has several responsibilities that he is juggling. He has the sheep, which he has seen to; he is responsible to Saul, to soothe him with music; and he is now taking supplies to the army of Israel.

Note what David does not do—he does not complain to his father and say, “I’ve just got too much on my plate. You need to let one of the servants assist me here. You need to get one of my brothers out there to take care of the sheep in my absence—Saul the king did call me into personal service.” David accepts all additional responsibilities and he does just as Jesse commands.

### 1Samuel 17:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ma <sup>re</sup> gâlâh (מַעְגָּלָה) [pronounced mahg-gaw-LAW]	<i>a wagon rampart; a fortification [constructed of wagons]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article and the directional hê	Strong's #4570 BDB #722

The masculine form of this word means *entrenchment, track, rut [wherein a wheel revolves]; a way; a course of action*. It is not clear that the masculine and feminine forms have different meanings. The masculine is found in 1Sam. 26:5, 7 Psalm 23:3 65:11 140:5 Prov. 2:9 4:11, 26 Isa. 26:7. The feminine form is found in 1Sam. 17:20 Psalm 17:5 Prov. 2:15, 18 5:6, 21 Isa. 59:8. Strong treats them as the same word; Wigram (*The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*) treats them as different words. Seeing as how the same authors (essentially) use both forms of the word, that would indicate to me that these words are cognates, but not necessarily synonyms.

**Translation:** He came to the fortification [of wagons]... Because we are not certain as to the exact meaning of this word, it is possible that David arrived where he began to see the ruts made by the wagon wheels. However, the use of the same word in 1Sam. 26:5, 7 seems to indicate that we are dealing with the *circle* or *fortification of wagons*.<sup>50</sup> In either case, he arrives where the army of Saul is.

What I think is the actual scenario, is the David arrives where there is evidence of Saul's army, where the wagons have been drawn together in a circle, but that the bulk of Saul's army (save at least one person left behind) is already gathering in ranks and moving out toward the battle line. David can hear them from where he is (which helps to explain the next portion of this verse).

### 1Samuel 17:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

<sup>50</sup> Which Barnes agrees with—Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 43.



## 1Samuel 17:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chayil (חַיִל) [pronounced CHAH-yil]	<i>army, strength, valor, power, might; efficiency; and that which is gotten through strength—wealth, substance</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2428 BDB #298
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
'el (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ma'ärekeh (מַעְרֵכָה) [pronounced mah-guh-reh-KEH]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article and the directional hê (or is that the simple feminine form?)	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rûwa' (רוּעַ) [pronounced roo-AHG]	<i>to shout, to raise a shout, to cry out, to give a blast, are caused to shout</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7321 BDB #929
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** ...and the army was going out toward the battle line, having made a battle cry [lit., having shouted in the war]. Now, this is interesting; each day, the Israeli army prepares itself for war and goes out to the battle line. What they will find at the battle line each day is one man—Goliath—goading them to send one man to fight him.

Now, do you recall when the men of Israel deserted Saul in droves in 1Sam. 13? They are no longer doing that. Despite the fact that Goliath intimidates them, despite the fact that Saul has offered them no one to oppose Goliath, these men still go out each day to stand and wait to go to war against the Philistines. Certainly, these men have shortcomings and none of them have the faith and doctrine of David—however, they know enough to remain with Saul. They know that they are the army of the Living God. Beyond that, their doctrine and faith are a bit shaky, but we are dealing with a group that has a little more faith and doctrine than before.

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## David Inquires about What Saul Would Do for the Man Who Defeats Goliath

**And so prepares Israel and Philistines—rank to encounter rank.** 1Samuel 17:21 **Israel and the Philistines had set [themselves] up in [battle] array, army to meet army.**

**The Israeli and Philistine armies faced each other in battle array.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so prepares Israel and Philistines—rank to encounter rank.  
Alexandrian Septuagint            And Israel and the Philistines formed their lines one opposite the other.

Significant differences:            The differences in this verse appear to be a matter of translation.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV                                      The army of Israel and the Philistine army stood there facing each other.  
NAB                                      The Israelites and the Philistines drew up opposite each other in battle array.  
NLT                                      Soon the Israelite and the Philistine forces stood facing each other, army against army.  
TEV                                      The Philistine and the Israelite armies took positions for battle, facing each other.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™                         Israel and the Philistines formed their battle lines facing each other.  
JPS (Tanakh)                         Israel and the Philistines drew up their battle lines opposite each other.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB                                      And Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army.  
Young's Literal Translation        ...and Israel and the Philistines set in array rank to meet rank.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David arrived after the soldiers left camp to face the Philistine soldiers. They stand in opposition to one another, in battle formation, both on opposite sides of a valley.

## 1Samuel 17:21

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿârak <sup>e</sup> (אַרַךְ) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAK'</i> ]	<i>to prepare, to organize, to set in order, to arrange in order, to set in a row</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6186 BDB #789
Yis <sup>o</sup> râ <sup>h</sup> êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:21

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
P <sup>h</sup> lish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>h</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ma <sup>h</sup> ärekeh (מַעַרְכָּה) [pronounced mah-guh-reh-KEH]	<i>row, rank, battle line</i> ; this is also translated <i>armies</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>h</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ <sup>h</sup> (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
Owen suggests qârâ <sup>h</sup> 's homonym instead, which means <i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to assemble, to summon</i> . I think that was a slip of the pen on his part.			
ma <sup>h</sup> ärekeh (מַעַרְכָּה) [pronounced mah-guh-reh-KEH]	<i>row, rank, battle line</i> ; this is also translated <i>armies</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4634 BDB #790

**Translation:** Israel and the Philistines had set [themselves] up in [battle] array, army to meet army. It was never clear to the Israeli army what was to happen. Saul had called them there, as the Philistines had encroached on Israel's territory with their army. However, Saul was not ordering them to battle yet. They apparently were prepared to go to war; and, to their credit, there is no mention of mass desertion as we had in 1Sam. 13:6. However, as each day came, they stood in battle array, Saul gave no orders to attack, and each day, twice a day, Goliath stepped forward into the valley between them, and he called for any one of their men to face him personally.

Now we already know all of this stuff; however, we are getting this pretty much from David's perspective. He arrives at the camp, and the Israelites are not there, but in battle array. Essentially we are following David's footsteps in vv. 20–58.

**And so leaves David the things from upon him upon a hand of a keeper of the things. And so he runs [to] the row and so he goes and so he asks to his brothers to peace.**

1Samuel  
17:22

**David left his supplies in the care of the camp commander [lit., the supplies from attachment to him to a hand of one keeping the supplies] and he ran to the battle line and inquired [lit., he went and he inquired] about his brothers' welfare.**

**David left the supplies with the quartermaster and then went to the battle line to inquire as to the welfare of his brothers.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so leaves David the things from upon him upon a hand of a keeper of the things.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And so he runs [to] the row and so he goes and so he asks to his brothers to peace. And David deposited his burden in the hand of a keeper, and ran to the line, and went and asked his brothers how they were.

Significant differences: The minor differences appear to be translational ones.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David left his things with the man in charge of supplies and ran up to the battle line to ask his brothers if they were well.
NAB	David entrusted what he had brought to the keeper of the baggage and hastened to the battle line where he greeted his brothers.
NJB	David left his bundle in charge of the baggage guard and, running to the battle-line, went and asked his brothers how they were.
TEV	David left the food with the officer in charge of the supplies, ran to the battle line, went to his brothers, and asked how they were getting along.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	David left the supplies behind in the hands of the quartermaster, ran to the battle line, and greeted his brothers.
JPS (Tanakh)	David left his baggage with the man in charge of the baggage and ran toward the battle line and went to greet his brothers.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Then David left his baggage in the care [lit., <i>hand</i> ] of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers.
Young's Updated LT	And David lets down the goods from off him on the hand of a keeper of the goods, and runs into the rank, and comes and asks of his brothers of welfare.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David leaves the things which he brought in the hands of someone who takes care of these things (or watches over them), and goes to the battle line to see how his brothers are doing.

### 1Samuel 17:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
נָתַשׁ (נָתַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-TASH</i> ]	<i>to allow to; to leave [forsake], to let go of, to let alone in the sense of to disperse, to be spread out, to let run wild</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5203 BDB #643

For some words, I have to, in part, scrap what I find in BDB and in Gesenius, and begin from scratch. There were so many meanings for this word (8 sets of Qal meanings alone) that I went back, looked at all of the passages where this word is found, and then tried to find a smaller set of meanings which would work. The original use of this verb seems to be *to allow to* (Gen. 31:28), but it appears to have taken on a similar but different set of meanings in later literature.

## 1Samuel 17:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כֵּלִי) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> lee]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
K <sup>e</sup> lîy has a wide variety of uses; however, we find it used here pretty much the same way that it is used back in Judges 18:21 and Isa. 10:28. The NASB renders it <i>baggage</i> in those two of these instances and <i>valuables</i> in another.			
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
Together, they mean <i>from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to</i>			
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>a keeper, a guard, a watcher, a preserver</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כֵּלִי) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> lee]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3627 BDB #479

**Translation:** [David left his supplies in the care of the camp commander](#) [lit., *the supplies from attachment to him to a hand of one keeping the supplies*]... David does not just dump the supplies that he brought anywhere. He has no idea where his brothers actually reside when they are not standing in the battle line; however, there is a man in charge of supplies (essentially, he watches over the camp while the men are in formation for battle), and David leaves these things with him. Again, it is this minor detail which helps to define for us the sort of man that David is.

The methods by which these men are supplied are much different than we are used to. Our army is supplied by a huge organization, an army in its own right. There are those whose duty is centered on bringing supplies to the men and women of our army. However, in the ancient world, it appears as though the families of those in uniform supported their own sons.

### 1Samuel 17:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i> ]	<i>to run</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
ma'ărekeh (מַעֲרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-ġuh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בוא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâ'al (שאל) [pronounced <i>shaw-AHL</i> ]	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire, to question, to interrogate</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âch (אח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i> ]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlôwm (שלום) or shâlôm (שלם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i> ]	<i>completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

**Translation:** ...and he ran to the battle line and inquired [lit., and he went and he inquired] about his brothers' welfare. Do you know that there are some people who will tell you that they are going to do something, but they never do. It is not that they forget or something extremely important comes up; they simply tell you what they think you want to here ("Sure, I'll do that") and then they don't do it because it would require some effort which will not be met with a proportional amount of immediate reward. However, David told his father that he would inquire as to the welfare of his brothers, and, after bringing the supplies, that is the first thing on his agenda. We will find out that David does not have the best of relationships with his brothers, and that contact with them could often be uncomfortable, even demeaning. However, that is on his list of things to do, and David does it.

And he was talking with them and behold, a man of the between was coming up—Goliath the Philistine his name, from Gath, from ranks of Philistines—and so he spoke as the words the these and so hears David.

1Samuel  
17:23

And [while] he was speaking with them, the man of the midst was coming up—Goliath the Philistine [is] his name, from Gath, from the ranks of the Philistines—and he issued the same challenge as before [lit., he spoke like these (same) words]; but [this time] David heard [him].

And while David was speaking to his brothers, Goliath, the champion of the Philistines stepped up to the midst of the battlefield, and he reissued his challenge to Israel; however, this time, David heard him.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And he was talking with them and behold, a man of the between was coming up—Goliath the Philistine his name, from Gath, from ranks of Philistines—and so he spoke as the words the these and so hears David.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And while he was speaking with them, behold the Amessæan advanced, Goliath by name, the Philistine of Geth, of the armies of the Philistines, and he spoke as before, and David heard.

Significant differences: No significant differences, apart from the transliteration of one word.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	While David was talking with them, Goliath came out from the line of Philistines, and started boasting as usual. David heard him.
NJB	While he was talking to the, the champion (Goliath, the Philistine from Gath) came up from the Philistine ranks and made his usual speech, which David heard.
NLT	As he was talking with them, he saw Goliath, the champion from Gath, come out from the Philistine ranks, shouting his challenge to the army of Israel.
REB	While he was talking with them the Philistine champion, Goliath from Gath, came out from the Philistine ranks and issued his challenge in the same words as before; and David heard him.
TEV	As he was talking with them, Goliath came forward and challenged the Israelites as he had done before And David heard him.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	While he was talking to them, the Philistine champion, Goliath from Gath, came from the battle lines of the Philistines. He repeated his words, and David heard them.
JPS (Tanakh)	While he was talking to them, the champion, whose name was Goliath, the Philistine of Gath, stepped forward from the Philistine ranks and spoke the same words as before; and David heard him.



**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard *them*.

**Young's Updated LT** And he is speaking with them, and lo, a man of the duellists is coming up, Goliath the Philistine *is* his name, of Gath, out of the ranks of the Philistines, and he speaks according to those words, and David hears;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** All of the Israelite and Philistine troops have lined up opposite each other on their own hills. David has found his brothers and is visiting with them. Suddenly, Goliath steps forward and issues his twice daily challenge. This is the first time that David hears his challenge.

**1Samuel 17:23a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	masculine personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
dâ <sup>b</sup> var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound</i>	Piel participle	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
ʿîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
bênayim (בֵּינַיִם) [pronounced <i>bay-NAH-yim</i> ]	<i>the betweens, the gap, the midst, two intermediates, the space between two armies</i>	dual of the preposition <i>between</i> (Strong's #996 BDB #114); with the definite article	Strong's #996 & #1143 BDB #108
The word <i>bênayim</i> is found only here in this chapter. The <i>man of the gap</i> or <i>the man of the midst</i> is roughly equivalent to our more modern <i>the one standing in the gap</i> . The LXX transliterates this word.			
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i> ]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to rise, to climb</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

## 1Samuel 17:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Gâl'yath (גִּלְיָת) [pronounced <i>gohl-YAHTH</i> ]	<i>conspicuous</i> and is transliterated <i>Goliath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1555 BDB #163
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Gath (גַּת) [pronounced <i>gath</i> ]	<i>wine-press</i> and is transliterated <i>Gath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1661 BDB #387
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ma'ārekeh (מַעְרָכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-guh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line</i> ; this is also translated <i>armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
<p>This is actually written ma'ār<sup>o</sup>wth (מַעְרוֹת) [pronounced <i>mah-guhr-OATH</i>] in the MT, which is Strong's #4630 BDB #790, whose meaning is disputed. The word is read aloud as <i>ranks</i> (which is the word I have above). In one early printed edition, it is both written and read <i>ranks</i> (and it is found as <i>ranks</i> in the Aramaic, Septuagint and Syriac).<sup>51</sup> The difference between these two words is a vowel point and <i>ranks</i> has the additional kaph in it. What probably occurred is that a very early copyist left out the kaph, as Strong's #4630 is found nowhere else in Scripture. Rotherham, Gesenius and Keil and Delitzsch all report this as being a mistake; and most translations (as far as I know, <i>all</i> English translation) render this as <i>ranks, armies</i> (Strong's #4634) without even a footnote.</p>			
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** And [while] he was speaking with them, the man of the midst was coming up—Goliath the Philistine [is] his name, from Gath, from the ranks of the Philistines—... David immediately located his brothers. Even though they were poised to go into battle (as they had been 78 or 79 times before),<sup>52</sup> David was allowed to join them. He was old enough to go to war, and he may have found himself in a battle, despite his original mission.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 306.

<sup>52</sup> Recall that Goliath issued this challenge in the morning and in the evening and had done so either 39 or 40 days previous.

Goliath again is called *the man of the midst* or *the man who stood in the gap*. I suspect that this was both a saying of that time, as well as a play on words. We know what it means to call a man today, *a man who stands in the gap*. This is a man who steps up when no one else will. This is a man who fills in the holes, so to speak; this is a man of the people who is a champion (hence, the several translators who chose this rendering). However, Goliath is also literally a man who stood in the gap. He stood in the valley between the two armies, both lined up, ready to do battle.

Again, understand the perspective of the latter half of this chapter. This is from David's perspective. We, as readers and exegetes, already know about Goliath. He was described for us in vv. 4–7. We heard his challenge in vv. 8–10, and his repeated appearance is repeated for us in v. 16. However, this is mentioned again because the difference between now and the previous 79 times is that this time, David hears the challenge. That very slight modification is significant and bears repetition of Goliath's action.

So, here is the picture painted for us by the writer: David locates his brothers, who are standing in a battle line, ready to advance at the order of General Saul. He is speaking animatedly with them (the Piel of *to speak*), given that he is happy to see them and given the circumstances. Opposite them, on the other side of the valley, the Philistines have lined up for battle. Then, out of the midst of the Philistines steps Goliath, for the 79<sup>th</sup> time and he delivers the same challenge as he had 78 times before: “*Send one man out for me to fight. If he wins, then we will become your slaves; if I win, then you will become out slaves.*” (1Sam. 17:9 paraphrased). This is told to us in the next portion of this verse.

### 1Samuel 17:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
dâ <sup>b</sup> var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דַּבָּרִים) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʿêlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>EEHL-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41

The phrase *the words the these* can either refer to what will immediately follow this phrase (see Gen. 2:4 6:9 11:10), or it refers back to what has come before (see Gen. 9:19 10:20, 29, 31). Obviously, since a quotation does not follow, then this refers back to what precedes this. Given the addition of the kaph preposition, Goliath is making the same announcement as he has made before.

**Translation:** ...and he issued the same challenge as before [lit., *he spoke like these (same) words*]... Goliath has stepped forward and this verse reads, literally, *and so he speaks as the words the these*... Since this is looking

back, and since we have the addition of the kaph preposition, the idea is that Goliath is making the same announcement as before; however, there is one key difference; that is v. 23c:

<b>1Samuel 17:23c</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i> ]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** ...but [this time] David heard [him]. Here is what is different from what has occurred before. 78 or 79 times before (or 80),<sup>53</sup> Goliath has stood up before the army of Israel and has issued this same challenge: “Send out just one soldier to fight me personally” and Israel has stood her ground each time, but has not sent anyone forward. This is because David has never been there before. This is the defining difference between this time and all previous occasions.

**And so every man of Israel in their seeing the man, and so they fled from his faces and so they were afraid, greatly.**

1Samuel  
17:24

**When they saw the man, each man of Israel fled from him because [lit., and] they were greatly afraid.**

**When they faced Goliath, each man of Israel fled, being greatly afraid of him.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And so every man of Israel in their seeing the man, and so they fled from his faces and so they were afraid, greatly.

Alexandrian Septuagint            And all the men of Israel when they saw the man fled from before him, and they were greatly terrified.

Significant differences:            None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV                                      When the Israelite soldiers saw Goliath, they were scared and ran off.

NJB                                      As soon as the Israelites saw this man, they all ran away from him and were terrified.

NLT                                      As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run away in fright.

REB                                      When the Israelites saw the man they fell back before him in fear.

<sup>53</sup> Recall that Goliath issued this challenge twice a day.

TEV When the Israelites saw Goliath, they ran away in terror.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™ When all the men of Israel saw Goliath, they fled from him because they were terrified.

JPS (Tanakh) When the men of Israel saw the man, they fled in terror.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB Young's Literal Translation When all the men of Israel saw the man, the fled from him and were greatly afraid. ...and all the men of Israel when they see the man, flee from his presence, and are greatly afraid.

**What is the gist of this verse?** As Goliath issues his challenge, the various Israelites move backward from him in fear.

### 1Samuel 17:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
When verbs in the infinitive construct are preceded by the bêyth preposition, b <sup>e</sup> acts as a temporal conjunction; that is, <i>in their being created</i> = <i>when they were created</i> (Gen. 2:4); <i>in their being in the field</i> = <i>when they were in the field</i> (Gen. 4:8). <sup>54</sup>			
râʾâh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

<sup>54</sup> The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon; Hendrickson, ©1979, pp. 90–91.

## 1Samuel 17:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** *When they saw the man, each man of Israel...* This verse gives us a much better picture of what occurred, and that is often lost in the English translations. Goliath did not go out to the same place each day and call to the men of Israel. There wasn't this position that he took up, where one could trace his tracks and see where he stood. Each day, he stood a little closer; he became a little more intimidating. At some point, he came right up to the line of Israel and began to pick men out of the crowd. "How about you, you tiny Israelite—are you ready to fight me? Are you going to be the hope of Israel? Will you save Israel?"

## 1Samuel 17:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Although the wâw consecutive generally continues the action, here it tells us what happened when each man of Israel came face to face with Goliath.

nûwç (וּנַח) [pronounced noose]	<i>to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, mipânîym mean *from before your face, out from before your face, from one's presence*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of, because that*.

**Translation:** *...fled from him...* We find out here that each man of Israel, as Goliath came closer, and pointed to one man in Israel's line, that man would flee from Goliath because of Goliath. He was too intimidating. They were willing to stand up as an army, but when Goliath singled them out of the crowd, they ran, individually, from him. This is how they indicated that they were not to be the ones who would stand up to him.

## 1Samuel 17:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
m <sup>e</sup> ôd (מְּוֹד) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-ODE</i> ]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

**Translation:** ...because [lit., and] they were greatly afraid. The wâw consecutive again tells us what happened when Goliath came up to each man—they fled because they were tremendously afraid of him. The fact that Goliath had challenged them 39 previous days, morning and evening, made him more intimidating. No man of all Israel's warriors stepped forward to accept the challenge. And if Goliath approached any particular man, that man would break ranks and flee from Goliath.

And so say a man of Israel “Have you [all] seen the man the one coming up the this? For a defying of Israel [he] is coming up. And he has been the man who strikes him, enrich him the king—riches great. And his daughter he gives to him. And a house of his father he makes free in Israel.”

1Samuel  
17:25

And the Israelites conversed [lit., one of Israel would say]: “Have you [all] seen this man coming up?” “[The one] coming up to defy [and shame] Israel?” “[So] it is, the man who defeats him, the king will enrich [with] great riches and he will give to him his daughter.” “And also, he will make his father’s house free [from taxes and public service] in Israel.”

Several men of Israel spoke to David: “Have you seen this man who comes up?” “You mean the one who defies Israel?” “Whoever kills him will receive great riches from the king.” “And also, the king will give him his daughter in marriage.” “And the king will let his family live tax free.”

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so say a man of Israel “Have you [all] seen the man the one coming up the this? For a defying of Israel [he] is coming up. And he has been the man who strikes him, enrich him the king—riches great. And his daughter he gives to him. And a house of his father he makes free in Israel.”

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

And the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man that comes up? For he has reproached Israel [and] has come up; and it will be that the man who strikes him, the king will enrich him with great wealth, and will give him his daughter, and will make his father’s house free in Israel.”

##### Significant differences:

The difference between the plural and singular of *man* is simply one of common language usage. Apart from that, there are no significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:



ESV	They said to each other, “Look how he keeps coming out to insult us. The king is offering a big reward to the man who kills Goliath. That man will even get to marry the king’s daughter, and no one in his family will every have to pay taxes again.”
NAB	The Israelites had been saying: “Do you see this man coming up? He comes up to insult Israel. If anyone should kill him, the king would give him great wealth, and his daughter as well, and would grant exemption to his father’s family in Israel.”
NJB	The Israelites said, ‘You saw that man who just came up? He comes to challenge Israel. The king will lavish riches on the man who kills him, he will give him his daughter in marriage and exempt his father’s family from all taxes in Israel.’
NLT	“Have you seen the giant?” the men were asking. “He comes out each day to challenge Israel. And have you heard about the huge reward the king has offered to anyone who kills him? They king will give him one of his daughters for a wife, and his whole family will be exempted from paying taxes!”
TEV	“Look at him!” they said to each other. “Listen to his challenge! King Saul has promised to give a big reward to the man who kills him; the king will also give him his daughter to marry and will not require his father’s family to pay taxes.”

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God’s Word™</i>	The men of Israel said, “Did you see the man coming [from the Philistine lines]? He keeps coming to challenge Israel. The king will make the man who kills this Philistine very rich. He will give his daughter to that man to marry and elevate the social status of his family.” [Hebrew meaning of “elevate the social status of his family” uncertain]
JPS (Tanakh)	And the men of Israel were saying [among themselves], “Do you see that man coming out? He comes out to defy Israel! The man who kills him will be rewarded by the king with great riches; he will also give him his daughter in marriage and grant exemption [i.e., <i>freedom from royal levies</i> ] to his father’s house in Israel.”

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the eking will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father’s house free in Israel.”
<i>Young’s Updated LT</i>	And the men of Israel say, “Have you seen this man who is coming up? For to reproach Israel he is coming up, and it has been—the man who strikes him [down], the king does enrich him with great riches, and his daughter he does give to him, and his father’s house does make free in Israel.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Once Goliath steps forward and challenges the individual men of Israel, David and his brothers stop speaking, and David listens (this is actually v. 23c). Although this is often offered as what David overhears, it is possible that various Israelites spoke to David directly, letting him know what was up with this Goliath fellow. If an Israelite did defeat Goliath, then he would be made rich, Saul would give him his daughter in marriage, and Saul would free his father’s house (probably from taxes and public service).

## 1Samuel 17:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
hă (הֵ) [pronounced heh]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
râʾâh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʿâlâh (אָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to rise, to climb</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

Kîy, like many of the small words in Hebrew, has a large number of uses: ❶ It is used as a relative conjunction, particularly after the verbs *seeing, hearing, speaking, knowing, believing remembering, forgetting* and in such cases means *that*. ❷ Although kîy is used for consecution and effect and rendered *to that, that*; it sometimes has an intensifying force and is rendered *so that, so even, even*. This is how it is used in this context. ❸ The connective can be used of time and be rendered *at that time, which, what time, when*. ❹ Kîy can be used of time, but in such a way that it passes over to a demonstrative power where it begins an apodosis (*then, so*). ❺ It can be used as a relative causal particle: *because, since, while, on account that*. When we find it several times in a sentence, it can mean *because...and* or *for...and*. ❻ It can also have a continuous disjunctive use here and be rendered *for...or...or* (when the second two kîy's are preceded by conjunctions). ❼ After a negative, it can mean *but* (the former must not be done because the latter is to be done).

châraph (חָרַף) [pronounced khah-RAHF]	<i>to defy, to reproach, to scorn, to reproach, to scornfully defy; to discredit, to shame, to rebuke</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #2778 BDB #357 & #358
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

### 1Samuel 17:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis <sup>ra</sup> ʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʿâlâh (אָלַח) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i> ]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to rise, to climb</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

Both the Greek and the Hebrew have this repetition of this verb.

**Translation:** *And the Israelites conversed* [lit., *one of Israel would say*]: “*Have you [all] seen this man coming up? [The one] coming up to defy [and shame] Israel?*” David, once he reaches his brothers, or while on the way to find his brothers, hears about Goliath and what Saul would do for the man who defeats Goliath. We will get into the various promises of Saul as we go further along in this verse, but first let’s determine how David heard these things.

Since there are four possible interpretations of this verse, I will list them separately below:

#### How David Hears About Saul’s Reward to the Man who Defeats Goliath

Number	Interpretation
1	Some take this to be a distillation of several conversations which David overhears as he looks for his brothers. As he walks through the troops to get to his brothers, he hears this snippets here and there. What he puts together is several comments and several promises which are made to the one who kills Goliath, although he does not know at first who this Goliath is. Have you ever heard bits a pieces of a conversation that stuck in your head, and did not make complete sense until later, when a detail was filled in that gave context to the conversation. That is probably what happened. David hears these conversations, does not make sense of them until he sees Goliath, and then it all comes together.
2	A second interpretation is that David walks by one man speaking to a group, and this man is telling what the king would do for the man who kills Goliath. This might even be a man sent by Saul to speak to groups of soldiers. In any case, David gets the gist of the conversation. As above, David puts everything together when Goliath steps out of the crowd and defies Israel.
3	The third interpretation is that David has found his brothers, they visit, Goliath steps forward, and a couple of the nearby soldiers fill David in as to what is going on. David’s own brothers do not tell him this, as they do not see him as an important person—they see David as one who can tend the sheep and bring them supplies.
4	A fourth interpretation is that these soldiers are talking amongst themselves while David stops visiting with his brothers to listen to what Goliath has to say. Since Saul forgot to bring his laptop and portable printer, this announcement was made verbally, and it was passed through the crowd verbally. David, after hearing Goliath’s challenge, overhears what would be done for the man who vanquishes him. This particular author seems to take care as to the time frame of these things happening.

Given the way this is all put together in the Hebrew, I would opt for the third scenario and possibly the first. Again, the key to this half of 1Sam. 17 (actually, the latter two-thirds of 1Sam. 17) is that this is from David's perspective. He's overheard conversations as he looks for his brothers. David is an observant person, and what he hears finds a place in his consciousness, and is fully explained at the appearance of Goliath.

In determining exactly how David obtains this information, you will have to bear in mind that the Hebrews think topically instead of chronologically. So, in the next verse, we have David actually asking what would be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and in v. 27, he is given the answer (which essentially refers back up to this verse).

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We first have one man asking David, “[Have you all see this man who comes up?](#)” This, of course refers to Goliath. Then he clarifies which man he is speaking of: “[The one coming up defying and shaming Israel?](#)” Or another man adds that as a clarification for David. However, since Goliath has stepped forward and issued his twice daily challenge, and since David is new to the camp, he is immediately filled in by some soldiers standing nearby. We would expect that Goliath became the topic of quiet conversation whenever he stood before Israel.

Now, Goliath has done this over the past 40 days, so why do we have this information spreading through the camp at this point? Under the 3<sup>rd</sup> interpretation, David, being new to the camp, and listening to Goliath, asks some of the soldiers around him, and they fill him in on the details about Goliath and what Saul would do for the man who defeats him. If there are soldiers from Saul going through the crowd telling the men what Saul would do, then maybe Saul is, periodically, upping the ante—that is, he promises more and more for the man brave enough to face Goliath. What we have in this verse is the latest offer made by Saul (this would explain why this information would be circulating through the army of Israel under the first, second and fourth scenarios).

### 1Samuel 17:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿâshar (עָשָׂר) [pronounced <i>gaw-SHAHR</i> ]	<i>to make rich, to cause one to be rich</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6238 BDB #799
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

## 1Samuel 17:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿōsher (עֹשֶׁר) [pronounced GOH-sheer]	<i>riches</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6239 BDB #799
gādôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

**Translation:** “[So] it is, the man who defeats him, the king will enrich [with] great riches... Then we have a list of 3 things that the king will do for the man who defeats Goliath. The first thing on this list is that the king will make the man rich—and this is greatly emphasized, as the king will make him rich *with great riches*. The king was able to tax, and therefore had the money of the entire country to give. Remember Samuel’s warning concerning a future king? “He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves, and give them to his servants.” (1Sam. 8:14; see also 22:7).

## 1Samuel 17:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bath (בַּת) [pronounced bahth]	<i>daughters or villages</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** *...and he will give to him his daughter.*” The second thing that the king will do is give his daughter to this man in marriage. There are several advantages to this. This first is that this man will become royalty. He will be a part of the royal family. No matter what he does, or what position he is placed in, he will never again lack for money or for work. Secondly, Saul’s daughter is going to be afforded education and she will have access to whatever women had in those days to enhance their beauty. Even if she were just an average looking woman, as Saul’s daughter, she would have the option of looking gorgeous by comparison to the other women of Israel. She would look good, her clothes would be fine, and she would smell good. As any woman can tell you, presentation is at least half the package.

Finally, there was a status which is associated with her—there are some men and women who, as movie stars or rock stars, garner a great deal of attention from the opposite sex because of their status. This would be Saul's daughter. Let me give you another example, which will certainly become dated. One of the royal families in Hollywood and New York are the Paltrows; if they offered their daughter Gwyneth in marriage to the man who defeats Goliath, and to give them a large chunk of their fortune, this would be the modern-day equivalent of what Saul is offering. Being that there was little in Israel by way of celebrities, the king's daughter would be the closest equivalent to a modern-day celebrity.<sup>55</sup> So, the man who kills Goliath would receive financial security, a beautiful woman who is a celebrity and instant celebrity status (sans the paparazzi). This is quite an enticing offer so far.

I should add an additional comment here. I want you to recall that Saul is tall and handsome. He looks like a leader; he looks like a king; he looks like the sort of man who should be in charge. Although we really know nothing about Saul's wife (who appears to have come on the scene after he became king), we can reasonably theorize that she was a very attractive woman. The king is not going to marry an unattractive person. Therefore, Saul's daughters are going to also be very attractive. Genetically, they are so disposed to be. Therefore, the Gwyneth Paltrow analogy is very apt.

Finally, this was not that unusual of an offer. Caleb offered his daughter to whoever took Kiriath-sepher (Joshua 15:16). Now, what happened with this portion of Saul's offer will be discussed in 1Sam. 18:17–26.

### 1Samuel 17:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (ת ך) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bayith (ת י ב) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i> ]	<i>house, household, habitation</i> as well as <i>inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʾâb (א ב) [pronounced <i>awb</i> ]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
ʿāsâh (ע ש ע) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
chof-SHEE (ש פ ח) [pronounced <i>khof-SHEE</i> ]	<i>free</i>	adjective	Strong's #2670 BDB #344
This adjective is used everywhere else for the freeing of slaves (see Ex. 21:2, 5 26:27 Deut. 15:12–13 Jer. 34:9–11, 14, 16). However, that does not mean that this is the only way that this word may be interpreted.			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

<sup>55</sup> The example of Gwyneth Paltrow is a 2003 example; I have no idea when you are reading this.

## 1Samuel 17:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis <sup>6</sup> râ <sup>7</sup> êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** “And he will make his father’s house free [from taxes and public service] in Israel.” The word *free* here generally refers to manumission (see Scriptural references given above). However, that is not necessarily its only use. One can be free of many things. Being a slave could certainly be understood in the traditional sense of working without compensation for someone else; however, there are several instances in the book of Judges where some country is said to enslave Israel (or Israel is said to *serve* some other country), but what appears to be the end result is that Israel would pay that country tribute.<sup>56</sup> So, the opposite of being free could be easily understood to pay tribute, which could be seen as the ancient equivalent of protection money. Here’s what I am getting at: Israelites were not generally in slavery to other Israelites (although a few of them could be). However, since Saul became king, they all had to pay him tribute, as one cannot run a kingdom without money. Therefore, what we are speaking of here is freeing a family from paying taxes to Saul. Saul had the authority to collect taxes and therefore, he had the authority to excuse certain men from paying taxes, which is what was promised to the family of the man who defeated Goliath.

There was also the situation of calling one into public service. If Saul decided that you were going to do scut work for him, that was pretty much the deciding factor. Samuel warned Israel about these sorts of actions that a king could take in 1Sam. 8:10–17. The freedom spoken of here could include freedom from imposed public service (or, freedom from military service) and freedom from those things spoken of in 1Sam. 8. The only thing which would make me doubt this meaning, is that David continued playing music for Saul even after this event (1Sam. 18:10). On the other hand, Saul did not honor his own word concerning his daughter either.

This information is something that we were not aware of until now. Saul certainly made it known previously what he would do for the man who would stand before Goliath. However, no one would take him up on his offer. I should imagine that the first time Saul made this offer, there was a price tag given. Then a few days later, Saul ups the value. Then, several days later, Saul offers his daughter as a part of the package. Then, a few days later, Saul offers freedom from taxation and public service for the family of the man who defeats Goliath.

**Application:** Now, properly, it should be Saul himself who stands up to Goliath. When you take a position of authority, that involves responsibility. The greater the authority, the greater the responsibility. Let me give you an illustration. I knew a young man who began a roofing business. He worked for a short time for someone else, but decided that he would rather run his own company. Roofing is extremely hard work, and he saw himself as going out on job sites and making bids, and then going back to the office, putting his feet up on the desk, and telling his underlings to take care of the job. However, he never took responsibility for his position. The result was that he left several jobs partially finished, and he did not take on the responsibility to finish them himself. When you run a company, and you make bids and promises, then you, as the head of the company, are responsible to see that these are fulfilled, even if you have to leave the office yourself and go do them yourself. You have to deliver what you promise to deliver. That is the great responsibility which is a part of your great authority. If you ignore your responsibilities, then your company will go nowhere.

**Application:** I have seen many informercials on television where someone goes out and purchases a lot of real estate, puts tenants into those properties, and then goes and sits on a beach and waits for the money to roll in. That’s not the way it works. If it is the middle of summer, and your tenant calls and the air conditioning has gone

<sup>56</sup> An example of this would be Eglon the king of Moab. In order to free Israel from Moab, the deliverer Ehud did not overthrow some established regime which resided in Israel, but he went to Moab to bring the king tribute and killed the king in Moab. Judges 3:12–30.



out, you don't say, "I should be back from my beach vacation in two weeks and I'll take care of it then." You don't say, "I just spent all that money on a vacation and I won't have enough put together until the beginning of the coming month." In some southern areas, air conditioning is a necessity. It needs to be done as quickly as humanly possible, even if you incur great debt. A landlord has to take responsibility for his tenants. He has to be willing to sacrifice in order to make his tenants reasonably comfortable. He has a *responsibility* toward his tenants.

**Application:** What a teenager wants is freedom. They want adult freedom with child responsibilities. The young man who says, "I don't want to ever grow up" really means, I want to do whatever I want; I just don't want to take responsibility for what I do. When you assume authority, you take on responsibility. When you are granted a freedom, then you assume responsibility. A teen might be allowed to go out until 1 or 2 am on the weekend, but if he ingests drugs, if he drinks, if he drives while under the influence, if he is having sex with various partners, then he has not taken on any responsibility. You don't get one without the other.

**Application:** It is the good parent who teaches that responsibility goes hand-in-hand with freedom. The parent who is a multi-millionaire should not simply give his child every material thing. In my youth, I worked for my allowance and worked for additional money. I may have spent my money frivolously, but it was money which I had earned. My parents taught me that work equals money, and that without working, you don't get money. My brothers were brought up the same way, and my immediate family has enjoyed tremendous financial prosperity because of learning this work ethic (and I recall that I resisted learning this with all my might). A child has to learn that responsibility is as much a part of growing up as is freedom; and it doesn't hurt to teach them that with authority comes responsibility as well.

To summarize, Saul is promising 3 things: money, marriage into the royal family, and exemption from taxes and possibly even from public service to the family of the man who defeats Goliath.

And so says David unto the men the ones standing by him, to say, "What is made for the man who strikes the Philistine the this and has removed [the] shame from upon Israel? For who [is] the Philistine the foreskinned one the this that he defies ranks of Elohim living ones?"

1Samuel  
17:26

Then David said to the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who strikes down this Philistine and [thus] removes [this] shame [and disgrace] from Israel? For who [is] this uncircumcised Philistine who [lit., *that*] defies the armies of the Living God?"

Then David asked the men standing near him, "Exactly what will be done for the person who defeats this Philistine and thus removes this disgrace against Israel? And just who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he thinks he can defy the armies of the Living God?"

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text

And so says David unto the men the ones standing by him, to say, "What is made for the man who strikes the Philistine the this and has removed [the] shame from upon Israel? For who [is] the Philistine the foreskinned one the this that he defies ranks of Elohim living ones?"

Alexandrian Septuagint

And David spoke to the men who stood with him, saying, "Shall it be done to the man who strikes that Philistine, and take away reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he has defied the army of the living God?"

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

- CEV David asked some soldiers standing nearby, “What will a man get for killing this Philistine and stopping him from insulting our people? Who does that worthless Philistine think he is? He’s making fun of the army of the living God!”
- NLT David talked to some others standing there to verify the report. “What will a man get for killing this Philistine and putting an end to his abuse of Israel?” he asked them. “Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?”
- TEV David asked the men who were near him, “What will the man get who kills this Philistine and frees Israel from this disgrace? After all, who is this heathen Philistine to defy the army of the living God?”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- JPS (Tanakh) David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills that Philistine and removes the disgrace from Israel? Who is that uncircumcised Philistine that he dares defy the ranks of the living God?”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- NASB Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?”
- Young's Updated LT And David speaks unto the men who are standing by him, saying, “What is done to the man who strikes this Philistine, and has turned aside reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he has reproached the ranks of the living God?”

**What is the gist of this verse?** David asks a question in order to confirm what he was told with some other soldiers standing nearby (or, possibly, to get the information for the first time). He also asks the question, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine who defies the ranks of the Living God?” David clearly sees this from the divine perspective, something which is sorely lacking in Saul’s camp. Human viewpoint is that Goliath is this huge Philistine who could have almost any Israelite for breakfast. Divine viewpoint is that Goliath is simply some uncircumcised Philistine who is defying the armies of the Living God. God will not allow that.

<b>1Samuel 17:26a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong’s Numbers</b>
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #1732 BDB #187
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong’s #413 BDB #39
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong’s #376 BDB #35

## 1Samuel 17:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāmad (אָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i> ]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

**Translation:** [Then David said to the men standing near him...](#) One set of soldiers told David who Goliath was and what Saul's offer was.<sup>57</sup> The idea is that he is not asking those who first spoke to him, but he is confirming what they said by speaking to another group of men. The soldiers to the one side of his brothers tell him who Goliath is and what Saul's offer is. David then confirms this with the soldiers on the other side of his brothers.

David's motivation will become clear. First of all, there is a job to be done and there is compensation for that job. There is nothing in the world wrong with getting the details as to what this job is and how one would be compensated. This is simply free enterprise in action. However, it will be clear that David has another agenda besides having an interest in what Saul is offering.

## 1Samuel 17:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>was made, was constructed, was fashioned, to be formed, to be prepared</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

<sup>57</sup> Another interpretation is that David has walked through various crowds of men who are talking about Saul's offer. What he has picked up is distilled into v. 25. When he comes close to his brothers (or, even perhaps after he has greeted his brothers), he turns to the group of soldiers in that area and poses this question.

## 1Samuel 17:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
hallâz (זֶה) [pronounced <i>hahl-LAWZ</i> ]	<i>this, who, which</i>	demonstrative pronoun	Strong's #1975 BDB #229
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çûwr (וָרָח) [pronounced <i>soor</i> ]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
Note that the first verb is in the imperfect tense. The idea is that Goliath is still living, so he therefore has not been killed yet. The imperfect tense is used for incomplete action. The perfect tense is used for completed action, but this action is not necessarily past tense. So, once Goliath is defeated (which is a process in the future, and therefore imperfect action), the removal of the shame and disgrace will follow logically and immediately.			
cher <sup>pâh</sup> (חֶרֶפָה) [pronounced <i>kher-PAW</i> ]	<i>a reproach, a taunt, scorn, shame, disgrace</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2781 BDB #357
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
Together, they mean <i>from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to</i>			
Yis <sup>râ</sup> ʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** "What will be done for the man who strikes down this Philistine and [thus] removes [this] shame from Israel? One should not overlook what David is asking, nor should one judge him for it. There is a job to be done, and David simply asks what sort of remuneration will be given to the man who completes this job. That job, of

course, is defeating Goliath; and David wishes to confirm what he had been told by one group of soldiers. How much would one be paid for killing the giant? This simply tells us that David is enterprising; he's a self-starter.

In the second part of this question, David indicates that he has an agenda—Goliath, in calling for just one man to stand up to him and in doing this for 40 days, twice a day, has shamed Israel. Israel belongs to God and this man has shamed Israel with his taunts, and thus has shamed the army of God and defies God Himself. So, certainly David is interested in the remuneration; however, there is a moral and religious result which is to come out of this as well, and that is the removal of this disgrace which Goliath has heaped upon Israel. David herein reveals himself to be a great patriot as well as a man who could see the true issues before him.

### 1Samuel 17:26c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i> ]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿârêl (עָרֵל) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>having foreskins, foreskinned ones; generally rendered uncircumcised</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #6189 BDB #790
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

Kîy is used for consecution and effect and rendered *to that, that*; however, it sometimes has an intensifying force and is rendered *so that, so even, even*. This is how it is used in this context.

châraph (חָרַף) [pronounced <i>khah-RAHF</i> ]	<i>to defy, to reproach, to scorn, to reproach, to scornfully defy; to discredit, to shame, to rebuke</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2778 BDB #357 & #358
ma'ärekeh (מַעְרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>mäh-guh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
ʿêlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohîm</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i> ]	<i>living, alive</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

**Translation:** *For who [is] this uncircumcised Philistine who [lit., that] defies the armies of the Living God?* Here David clearly reveals his understanding of the situation. This is probably a rhetorical question. David is not looking

for someone to answer him here. The idea is, “**Just who does this uncircumcised Philistine think he is, to defy the army of the Living God?**” He recognizes that this Philistine is not a believer; he stands in defiance of the army of Israel, and therefore, in defiance of the Living God of Israel. Just who the hell does he think he is?

We have covered the **Doctrine of Circumcision** back in Gen. 17:11, and made mention of it again in Joshua 5:2 Judges 14:3. The short version here is that this Philistine has no relationship to God. Jeremiah will make it clear that circumcision was symbolic in its meaning in Jer. 9:25–26. In this case, circumcision simply is a way of separating Goliath spiritually from Israel; it was David’s way of saying that Goliath did not believe in Jesus Christ, the God of Israel.

One should not too quickly move along past the phrase *the Living God*. The gods of the surrounding nations and the groups within the Land of Promise were gods made of wood and precious stones and made by the hand of man. These gods were not alive; they had no effect on the lives of the people over whom they presided, because they were not alive. The difference between the God of Israel and the gods of the heathen nations is that the God of Israel is alive (see Deut. 5:26 Joshua 3:10 2Kings 18:35 19:4 Psalms 42:2 84:2 Jer. 10:10 1Thess. 1:9).

In saying this, David is clearly differentiated himself from Saul. David sees this as a spiritual issue—the armies of the Living God are defied by this uncircumcised Philistine; a man whose god is not alive and has never been alive. Israel had possession of the greatest weapon known to man, so there was no reason to fear any army. They only needed to be spiritually right.

**And so say to him the people as the word the this, to say, “Thus is done to the man who strikes him.”**

1Samuel  
17:27

**And the people answered the same thing [lit., *this word*], saying “So [it] will be done for the man who defeats him.”**

**And the people told him the same thing, concluding with, “And that is what will be done for the man who kills Goliath.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so say to him the people as the word the this, to say, “Thus is done to the man who strikes him.”
Alexandrian Septuagint	And the people spoke to him according to this word, saying, “Thus it will be done to the man who strikes him.”

Significant differences: None.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	The soldiers told David what the king would give the man who killed Goliath.
NLT	And David received the same reply as before: “What you have been hearing is true. That is the reward for killing the giant.”
TEV	They told him what would be done for the man who killed Goliath.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word™</i>	The soldiers repeated [to David] how the man who kills Goliath would be treated.
JPS (Tanakh)	The troops told him in the same words what would be done for the man who killed him.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**



NASB

And the people answered [lit., *said to*] him in accord with this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who kills him."

Young's Updated LT

And the people speak to him according to this word, saying, "Thus it is done to the man who strikes him."

**What is the gist of this verse?** What David overheard about Saul's reward to the man who kills Goliath is confirmed.

### 1Samuel 17:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כִּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** *And the people answered the same thing* [lit., *this word*],... What David is looking for is confirmation. He does not simply want to pursue something which is simply a rumor. Now, he will speak to Saul directly, but he does not want to even initiate anything until what he heard originally is confirmed. You don't go up to the general of the Israeli army and start negotiating some deal that the general has never initiated.

### 1Samuel 17:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55



## 1Samuel 17:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	<i>so, thus, here, hence</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>was made, was constructed, was fashioned, to be formed, to be prepared</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645

**Translation:** ...saying “So [it] will be done for the man who defeats him.” Essentially, what we have here is the conclusion of what these men said. “So it will be done for the man who kills Goliath.” They have already confirmed the other items which David had asked about.

Here is the probably scenario: as David searched for his brothers, he overheard snippets of conversation which stuck with him, although what he heard initially did not make a lot of sense. Then Goliath came forward and began to taunt Israel, and then David put it all together. So he asks, “What will be done for the man who kills Goliath?” and he is answered with the same words as he had overheard.

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## David's Oldest Brother Harangues Him for His Impertinence/David Confirms Answers

And so hears Eliab his brother the greater in his speaking unto the men and so was kindled a nostril of Eliab in David and so he says, “For why this have you come down and upon whom have you left a few of the flock the those in the wilderness? I [even] I have known your presumption and evil of your mind that to the intent of seeing the battle you have come down.”

1Samuel  
17:28

His older brother Eliab heard him speaking to the men and his anger burned against David; therefore, he said, “Why did you [really] come down and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert-wilderness? I know your presumptuousness and the evil of your mind—you came down with the intent of seeing the battle.”

**When his older brother Eliab heard David speaking to the men, he became angry and said, “What was the real reason that caused you to come down here and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert-wilderness? I know your presumptuousness and I know the evil way that you think—you simply came down intending to watch this battle.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so hears Eliab his brother the greater in his speaking unto the men and so was kindled a nostril of Eliab in David and so he says, “For why this have you come down and upon whom have you left a few of the flock the those in the wilderness? I [even] I have known your presumption and evil of your mind that to the intent of seeing the battle you have come down.”
Alexandrian Septuagint	And Eliab his elder brother heard as he spoke to the men, and Eliab was very angry with David and said, “Why have you thus come down, and with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the haughtiness of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	David’s oldest brother Eliab heard him talking with the soldiers. Eliab was angry at him and said, “What are you doing here, anyway? Who’s taking care of that little flock of sheep out in the desert? You spoiled brat! You came here just to watch the fighting, didn’t you?”
NJB	His eldest brother Eliab heard David talking to the men and grew angry with him. ‘Why have you come down here?’ he said. ‘Whom have you left in charge of those few sheep in the desert? I know how impudent and artful you are; you have come to watch the battle!’
NLT	But when David’s oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. “What are you doing around here anyway?” he demanded. “What about those few sheep you’re supposed to be taking care of? I know about your pride and dishonesty. You just want to see the battle!”
TEV	Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard David talking to the men. He became angry with David and said, “What are you doing here? Who is taking care of those sheep of yours out there in the wilderness? You smart aleck, you! You just came to watch the fighting!”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word™</i>	Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard David talking to the men. Then Eliab became angry with David. “Why did you come here,” he asked him, “and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how over confident and headstrong you are. You came here just to see the battle.”
JPS (Tanakh)	When Eliab, his oldest brother, heard him speaking to the men, Eliab became angry with David and said, “Why did you come down here, and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your impudence and your impertinence [lit., <i>badness of heart</i> ]: you came down to watch the fighting!”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle."

Young's Updated LT

And Eliab, his eldest brother, hears when he speaks unto the men, and the anger of Eliab burns against David, and he says, "Why is this—you have come down! And to whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I have known your pride, and the evil of your heart—for, to see the battle you have come down."

**What is the gist of this verse?** The oldest of Jesse's sons, Eliab, overhears David's conversation and berates him, first of all asking him why did he really come down to the war, and then asking, "And with whom did you leave those few sheep?" Then Eliab answers his own question because he knows David's impertinence as well as his self-serving motivation (i.e., *the evil in his heart*): "You have simply come down to watch the battle." is Eliab's observance.

1Samuel 17:28a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
ʿēlîy'âv (אֱלִיָּאָב) [pronounced el-ee-AW <sup>AV</sup> ]	<i>God is father; transliterated Eliab</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #446 BDB #45
ʿâch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

When verbs in the infinitive construct are preceded by the bêyth preposition, b<sup>e</sup> acts as a temporal conjunction; that is, *in their being created* = *when they were created* (Gen. 2:4); *in their being in the field* = *when they were in the field* (Gen. 4:8).<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon; Hendrickson, ©1979, pp. 90–91.

## 1Samuel 17:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâ <sup>b</sup> var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	Piel infinitive construct with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʿiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** His older brother Eliab heard him speaking to the men... David had talked to various soldiers on both sides of his brothers and had found out what would be done for the man who defeats Goliath. He confirms with another set of soldiers, which is where Eliab steps in. There is obviously a riff between David and his brothers, although David does not appear to harbor any ill will himself. However, he also knows how his brothers would react if he asked them the question. Let me give you an example—I had a department head that, whenever I asked a simple question about where or when something was occurring, I received a reprimand for not knowing and was admonished to look on this or that bulletin to find the answer to my question. This generally took about a minutes and was the sort of answer that I would receive in leu of “3:00 this afternoon.” I learned that if I needed any sort of information like that, not to ask her, but to ask some other person in the office for that information. Now, it was not an issue to me whether she overheard my asking this other person or not; I simply learned that she was not a person to direct a simple question to, if, in her mind, I was supposed to already know the answer. David knows that if he questions any of his brothers about this thing, they are going to throw their fit first (as Eliab’s little diatribe confirms). If David asked Eliab the same question, he would have to first wade through 5 minutes of conversation before being told the information which he originally asked about. It was much simpler to lean in toward the soldiers standing next to them and ask them instead. However, David did not do this surreptitiously; he did not quietly go behind the backs of his brothers and whisper his question to a nearby soldier. Knowing his brothers reaction to him, this had become second nature to David, to turn and ask somebody—anybody—else. David was simply a quick study of human nature, and simply acted accordingly.

## 1Samuel 17:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chârâh (חָרָה) [pronounced khaw-RAWH]	<i>to burn, to kindle, to become angry, to evoke great emotion</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2734 BDB #354
ʿaph (אֶפֶס) [pronounced ahf]	<i>nose, nostril, but is also translated face, brow, anger</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #639 BDB #60

## 1Samuel 17:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿēlîyʾâḇv (עֲלִיָּאֵב) [pronounced <i>el-ee-AW<sup>EV</sup></i> ]	<i>God is father</i> ; transliterated <i>Eliab</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #446 BDB #45
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** ...and his anger burned against David;... This is precisely the reason that David did not ask any of his brothers about Saul's reward. He already knows the sort of reaction that he will get. However, he got the information that he needed, and he realizes that he will now have to endure a diatribe from his oldest brother. However, since he now has the information that he wanted, he can be thinking about that while his brother berates him and his motivation. If you have ever raised a teenager, then you know what I am talking about. When you attempt to teach the child something he does not want to know, he will turn his mind elsewhere. Now, he might be looking at you, and, if he is particularly good at this, he might nod his head a few times; however, his mind is somewhere else. He is going to wait until you are done speaking, and he will then excuse himself from the conversation. Now, this is David, except for the fact that Eliab has nothing useful for him to know.

Problems between siblings is not a new topic. Joseph suffered because of the hatred of his older brothers. In his case, part of the problem was that his father favored him over his other brothers, and they hated him for it (Gen. 37:4, 8–36). Whatever else Joseph did or said simply gave them an excuse to berate him. Although I am lucky to have the brothers that I have, I endured this sort of thing for many years where I worked. It did not matter what I did or said, each action and word was always greeted by strong negativity from two individuals and almost always from a third. The way that their minds worked was, "Okay, now what's wrong with what he said?" and they would brainstorm that thought.

With David, his relationship with his father is just the opposite of Joseph's. David's father, while not being overtly hostile to David, seems to forget that he even has this eighth son (see 1Sam. 16:11). The youngest son would tend to get picked on, but my impression is that his father never stepped in to quell that behavior. As has been mentioned, Jesse continued to train David, and David took to that training, but it is possible that, by the time that David came along, Jesse was tired of raising children. What developed was a habit where David's older brothers picked at him, and David learned to ignore it (as we see here). As the proverbs tell us, **A brother offended is more difficult to win than a strong city; and contentions are like the bars of a castle** (Prov. 18:19). One of the greatest things in the world is sibling friendship, and one of the most difficult things in this life is sibling contention. There are family members that go for years—decades even—without speaking because of this riff or that.

I want you to think about 1Sam. 16—Samuel is sent to Jesse to anoint the crown prince, and who does Jesse parade out first but Eliab. And what does Samuel instantly think? **"Surely, this is Jehovah's anointed."** Eliab looked like the king-elect. This is because Samuel looks at him from the outside; this is because Jesse cannot see the obvious flaws in his own son. Now, what do you think about Eliab? He would not even consider standing up to Goliath; and yet he picks away at his youngest brother simply for asking this question. God looks on the inside; God could see Eliab for what he was; and God could see David for what he was.

As I have spoken about in the past, it is very likely that David wrote and sang some of his psalms back in the hills of Judæa while watching over his flock of sheep. Creative people cannot simply sit; they have to create. Satan would certainly be aware of this and we can reasonably expect that, given David's great spiritual growth, that Satan was a part of the inspiration of David's family to shun him (see this passage and 1Sam. 16:6–11, where Jesse seems to forget he even has a youngest son). It would be reasonable to suppose that, whenever David began to reveal positive volition at God-consciousness, Satan did what he could to disrupt his spiritual advance. Jesus will speak of family division because of Him; this is a perfect example of that.

### 1Samuel 17:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD</i> ]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i> ]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
nâṭash (נָטַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-TASH</i> ]	<i>to allow to; to leave [forsake], to let go of, to let alone in the sense of to disperse, to be spread out, to let run wild</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5203 BDB #643
This verse may help you to grasp the difference between imperfect and perfect action. Here, Eliab focuses upon the fact that David is there in camp and that he left his sheep elsewhere. Even though this was a process to David, to Eliab, he is looking at these as completed actions and his focus is not upon David's trip there but upon the fact that David is there. Therefore, David's <i>coming down</i> and <i>forsaking</i> are seen as completed actions.			
m <sup>e</sup> câṭ (מְעַט) [pronounced <i>m<sup>e</sup>-GAHT</i> ]	<i>a little, fewness, few</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4592 BDB #589

## 1Samuel 17:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsôn (צֹן) [pronounced tzohn]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
hênnâh (הֵנָּה) [pronounced hayn-nawh]	<i>they, these</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2007 BDB #241
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mid <sup>e</sup> bâr (מִדְּבָר) [pronounced mid <sup>e</sup> -BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness</i>	masculine singular noun (with the definite article)	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

**Translation:** ...therefore, he said, “Why did you [really] come down and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert-wilderness? David has already connected with his brothers; he has given them the supplies (or, more correctly, he has told them about the supplies which he brought) and he has asked about their welfare. So, David’s reason for coming down to this battle is known to his brothers. He was sent by his father to bring these supplies and to ask after them, and he did both of those things. This is not really Eliab’s question. Eliab is asking, “What is your true motivation for coming down here?” Eliab knows, like anyone else, that we can have more than one compelling reason for doing this or that. Now, Eliab is simply venting his own anger at this point. Whenever David does this or that, Eliab always suspects the worst. What he is asking here is not a question in order to get information; these are rhetorical questions. He first asks David, “Why did you really come down here?”, which he will then answer aloud himself.

Then Eliab implies that David has acted irresponsibly. His responsibility is toward the few sheep that his father has assigned him. The implication is vicious. “Our father knows that you cannot handle much responsibility, so he only gave you a few sheep to watch. Are you unable to do even that?” Does Eliab know that David has been called to the king to play his harp (or stringed instrument)? Probably. Is he aware that David has made provision for these *few sheep in the wilderness*? Probably. Recognize that anger does not have to be rational. Eliab does not have to think about the things which he actually knows, nor does he have to put 2 and 2 together. He simply wants to vent his anger so that the men with whom David spoke overhear what he has to say. He is essentially belittling David in front of these men, so that they will realize not to place any thought in David’s obvious interest in the topic of defeating Goliath. “You only had a few sheep to watch; are you unable to handle even those?” For all those within earshot, this lets them know that David is a person who likes to talk, but that he cannot handle the simplest of responsibilities.

There is obviously some deep-seated anger and resentment on the part of David’s older brother Eliab. Part of this probably surfaced again when Samuel came to their family, met all of the sons of Jesse, and then anointed David as king over Israel. This was a private ceremony, but Eliab is still pissed about it. He doesn’t know that anything will come of it; obviously, Saul is king and David is not; however, simply to witness himself being passed over for anything, and then to have his youngest brother chosen, who has no respect from any of his brothers—it was quite frankly irritating, and I would not be surprised if Eliab was still stewing about this. However, I think that Eliab’s attitude is one that was developed over many years. A child can be brought up to be responsible for and protective



of his younger brother, which is proper. However, if the mental attitude sins of one brother towards another are tolerated, the sibling rivalry may never be resolved.

Keil and Delitzsch understand this passage in a different way. They see Jesse has having very few sheep and that the loss of even one would be serious; therefore, they honestly question David's character with regards to his responsibilities.<sup>59</sup> I think that there is too much here which indicates that Eliab is belittling David: the fact that David does not ask him or his brothers about Saul's reward; David's snappish reply in the next verse; and the fact that Eliab will speak of the evil of David's heart in the latter portion of this verse. Context is key. However, Keil and Delitzsch do recognize that Eliab is being presumptuous and is probably projecting (i.e., the characteristics that Eliab ascribes to David—presumption and an evil heart (depraved motivation)—are really his own personal shortcomings).

Now let me explain this passage accurately. God the Holy Spirit tells us that Eliab's anger burned toward David. He had mental attitude sins towards his youngest brother. As you can see in what he said to David, he was petty, demeaning, condescending and he totally misread the situation and complete misunderstood David, a young man that Eliab had known all of his life.

**Application:** If you harbor mental attitude sins toward another person, then you will never understand or appreciate who that person is, because everything you perceive about that person will be colored by your mental attitude sins. I'm sure you have just thought of someone that you cannot stand and you're thinking, "So what if I don't like him; he's a jerk anyway." Eliab knew the greatest man in Israel at that time, and he thought the same thing.

**Application:** I have been on the receiving end of mental attitude sins by three people that I worked with and this had somewhat of a negative impact on almost every child I came in contact with (approximately 130 each year). So their mental attitude sins not only affected me but they affected those I came in contact with.

**Application:** Now I know that for some of you, you still harbor mental attitude sins towards another person, and you're thinking, "Doesn't matter; he's still a jerk." Mental attitude sins affect you and everyone that you come into contact with. Furthermore, when you harbor these mental attitude sins toward another, you are out of fellowship and subject to God's discipline.

**Application:** This does not mean that you have to develop this phoney niceness toward everyone you know; this does not mean that you need to associate with every person that you do not like. Some people are too nice, too abrupt, too touchy-feely, too standoffish—whatever; there is just something in their personality that you just don't care for. That's not a problem. You don't have to hang out with everyone you know. It is normal to prefer Charlie Brown over Lucy (or vice versa). But what you don't do is allow mental attitude sins to fester and you don't bad-mouth them behind their backs or to their faces.

**Application:** This does not mean that you do not properly discipline a person who is in your charge nor does it mean you color the rating of an underling whom you must evaluate. However, I knew a principal who tended to look for the good in those who worked under him, and tended to be sympathetic and supportive, and he probably got as much or more out of his staff than a principal who was hypercritical. He was the same sort of person as a teacher, and he probably got more out of his students than a teacher who was hypercritical of his students. If you are in a position of authority, then certainly there are times when you have to play the heavy, when you have to discipline and when you have to dress someone down. However, if this comes out of your mental attitude sinning, then you are out of fellowship and you are doing no one any good. At best, you can expect to be disciplined. If you are a person who is in authority, then it is imperative that you remain objective, even though those in your charge may not be *your kind of people*. You cannot afford mental attitude sins; nor can the company that you work for afford your pettiness and vindictiveness. If you are in a position of authority, and you give in to your mental attitude sins when dealing with those over whom you have authority, God will discipline you and/or pass you over when it comes to promotion (which can be a part of the discipline).

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<sup>59</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 485.

David is easily the greatest king that Israel ever had, and he is arguably the greatest ruler this world has ever seen. Yet, Eliab belittles David because he is annoyed with David. David will be promoted over Eliab. David knew Eliab and knew what he would say if asked about Saul's promises, so, David simply asked others about Saul's promises. This was not a result of mental attitude sins; this was simply good judgment. However, his older brother then viciously attacks David verbally. David chose to freely associate and to speak to whom he pleased; Eliab chose to let his mental attitude sins control his tongue. David will not be the loser; Eliab will be.

### 1Samuel 17:28d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾānîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced aw-NEE]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
yâdaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHG]	<i>to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
zâdôwn (זָדוֹן) [pronounced zaw-DOHN]	<i>insolence, presumptuousness</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2087 BDB #268
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
raʿ (רָעַ) [pronounced rahg]	<i>evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; disagreeable, displeasing; unhappy, unfortunate; sad</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7451 BDB #948
lê <sup>b</sup> va <sup>b</sup> v (לֵבַב) [pronounced lay <sup>b</sup> -V <sup>B</sup> AHV]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
l <sup>e</sup> maʿan (לְמַעַן) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> -MAH-ghahn]	<i>for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, to the intent that, to the purpose that, in order that, in view of, to the end that</i>	compound preposition and substantive which acts like a preposition	Strong's #4616 BDB #775
râʾâh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

## 1Samuel 17:28d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD</i> ]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect, pausal form	Strong's #3381 BDB #432

**Translation:** I know your presumptuousness and the evil of your mind—you came down with the intent of seeing the battle.” Eliab does not wait for an answer to either of his questions because they were rhetorical. He answers the first question here—he knows David's presumptuous and insolent behavior; he knows how David thinks and reasons; he understands David's motivation. Therefore, Eliab says that David was motivated by the same interest as a person who drives slowly by a car wreck in the other lane; he is not being careful, he is simply looking for blood and for body parts. His interest is macabre and prurient. David had not reason to be there except to see these men go to war. He wanted to see a battlefield and a battle. He wanted to be a bystander who could see the gore and horror of war without having to participate. Is this David's motivation? Obviously not. However, Eliab's diatribe here makes it clear to us why David did not ask any questions about Goliath to his brothers.

Now, here is why I think that the problems between David and his brothers predate Samuel's visit to Jesse's household: David does not turn to his brothers and ask for confirmation about Saul's offer. David asks soldiers on either side of his brothers, but he does not ask any of his brothers directly. When Eliab starts off with this little diatribe, David endures it, quickly deals with it, and then turns to someone else again with his questions. This is behavior which has been learned over a long period of time. Certainly, Eliab may have been testy because David showed a willingness to face Goliath, something that he, Eliab, did not have the nerve to do. This jealousy was probably the spark, but the fiery diatribe that emerged was from long-standing mental attitude sins.

**Application:** From Gen. 37, it is clear that a parent should not favor one child over another. Here, it is clear that Jesse, who was a good father (we see it in his speaking to David in this chapter), should have cultivated a feeling of responsibility and protectiveness among his older sons for his youngest. It is obvious because of David and Eliab's behavior that David's older siblings had picked on him for a long time, and that this was tolerated. David will do what my youngest brother did—he will become the most successful out of all his brothers. Now, if these applications don't ring true to you, and you are thinking, “Well, David and Joseph turned out fine.” Bear in mind, that was God's overriding grace. God took the evil that Joseph's brothers did to him and turned it into good. All that David will achieve will also be apart from his brothers.

Now let's approach this from a different angle. Let's say that David allowed what his brother said affect him. Let's say that he believed what his brother said. David is about to deliver Israel from slavery. Had his confidence in God been shaken, there would have been an entirely different outcome. Eliab potentially could have cut his own throat here. David was a man whose greatness few approach; however, let's say David's character was similar to Gideon's or Eli's—then what Eliab said here could have affected him negatively. Eliab could have potentially nailed his own coffin shut with the remarks that he made to David—only that fact that David was much greater than Eliab was petty saved Israel that day (preview of coming attractions).

**And so says David, “What have I done now? [Was] not a word it?”** 1Samuel 17:29 **David responded, “What have I done now? [Was] it not [just] a word?”**

**Then David responded with, “And just exactly what did I do now? Was I not simply asking a question?”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	And David said, "What have I done? is there not cause to speak?"
Masoretic Text	And so says David, "What have I done now? [Was] not a word it?"
Peshitta	And David said, "What have I done now? Behold, I was just talking."
Alexandrian Septuagint	And David said, "What have I done now? Have I no business [here]?"

Significant differences: What David says is a colloquialism, which is reflected in the differences in the ancient text. Each language tries to put this into their own, which is then translated into English.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	"Now what have I done?" David answered. "Can't I even ask a question?"
NJB	David retorted, 'What have I done? May I not even speak?'

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	"What have I done now?" David snapped at him. "Didn't I [merely] as a question?"
JPS (Tanakh)	But David replied, "What have I done now? I was only asking!"

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	But David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a question [lit., word]?"
NRSV	David said, "What have I done now? It was only a question."
Young's Updated LT	And David says, "What have I done now? Is it not a word?"

**What is the gist of this verse?** David asks his brother, "What have I done now which is so wrong?" The context in general indicates that there is some friction between them.

**1Samuel 17:29**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
mâh (מָה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gah-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time, pausal form	Strong's #6258 BDB #773

**Translation:** *David responded, “What have I done now?”* David was not the sort of younger brother to be bullied. His brothers could not pick on him without there being some consequences. David was able to speak up for himself, which no doubt made his brothers even more angry. The idea here, is David is asking a rhetorical question of his own: *“Just what did I do wrong now?”* Or, even more colloquially, “Just what is your problem this time, brother Eliab?” It is a good question, as his brothers had no reason to get on his case here. He simply asked for some information and some confirmation, and has done nothing wrong. His brothers, aside from their anger, should be able to see that.

Recall when I said that the problems between David and his older brothers go way back? This first question confirms that. “Just what the hell did I do wrong *this* time?” would colloquially express David’s thoughts. However, notice the brevity of what David said here: “What I have done now?” Three short Hebrew words. Then he will add another four words to his brief visit with Eliab, and three of these words are one syllable! You might miss this in the English, but David wastes very few words and very little time speaking to Eliab. You see, David is not going to win his brother over; he is not going to be able to argue him into understanding this or that; he is not going to clear up some simple misunderstanding. David knew, from the instant that he spoke to the nearby soldiers, that his brother was going to go off on him, and David quickly shuts this down with as few words as possible.

1Samuel 17:29b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i> ]		interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.	Strong’s #none BDB #209
lô’ (לֹא or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #1697 BDB #182
hûw’ (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	masculine personal pronoun	Strong’s #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** *[Was] it not [just] a word?*

This is obviously a colloquialism, for which we can get the gist, if not the exact meaning. The second reading found under *The Emphasized Bible* is the footnoted alternate translation. To the right is a chart with several renderings:

Notice how David stands up for himself. He does not berate Eliab in any way. He stands up for himself without rancor or any verbal sins. David simply asks, rhetorically, what has he done wrong, and then he indicates that all he did was ask a question. What David said was intentionally curt, with the purpose of

Various Interpretations of 1Samuel 17:29b	
Translation Version	Their Translation
Literal Hebrew	Not a word it?
Less than Literal Hebrew	[Was] it not [just] a word?
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Was it not a harmless question?
Brenton	Is there not a word?
CEV, TEV	Can’t I even ask a question?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Was there no   a cause  ? Or, Was it   no matter  ?

quickly terminating his *conversation* with Eliab.

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I only have Brenton’s translation of the Alexandrian Septuagint—I do not have the original Greek of the Alexandrian Septuagint for this verse (although it appears to be almost identical to the Hebrew).

<b>God’s Word™</b>	Didn’t I [merely] ask a question?
<b>JPS Tanakh</b>	I was only asking!
<b>NAB</b>	I was only talking.
<b>NIV</b>	Can’t I even speak!
<b>NJB</b>	May I not even speak?
<b>NKJV</b>	<i>Is there not a cause?</i> [Lit., <i>Is it not a word or matter?</i> ]
<b>NLT</b>	I was only asking a question!
<b>NRSV</b>	It was only a question.
<b>REB</b>	I only asked a question.

David’s question is rhetorical. “What have I done now?” is not something that he wants an answer to. And David quickly adds, before Eliab can comment, four very short words, saying, “Wasn’t it just a word?” David intentionally asks two curt rhetorical questions, and then quickly turns away from Eliab. David is not going to have *this* conversation with Eliab. David’s thinking is this: there is nothing to be gained by talking to Eliab. No discussion or argument is going to change anything, so there is no reason to say more than a handful of words, simply to acknowledge Eliab’s presence and the fact that Eliab addressed him directly.<sup>60</sup>

**And so he turns [himself] from beside him unto opposite another and so he says as the word the same and so return him the people a word as the word the first.**

1Samuel  
17:30

**Then he [David] turned [himself] from proximity to Eliab [lit., *him*] toward another and he asked the same thing and the people returned [to] him the same answer [lit., *a word as the former word*].**

**Then David turned from his brother toward another group of soldiers and asked them the same thing; they confirmed the original answer.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	And he turned a little aside from him to another: and said the same word. And the people answered him as before.
Masoretic Text	And so he turns [himself] from beside him unto opposite another and so he says as the word the same and so return him the people a word as the word the first.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And he turned from him toward another, and he spoke after the same manner; and the people answered him after the former manner.

Significant differences: The Greek appears to simplify the Hebrew, and yet convey the same meaning. The same thing appears to be true of the Latin.

<sup>60</sup> Barnes incorrectly interprets this verse as, *is not Saul’s promise, and the insolence of Goliath, a sufficient cause for what I am about to do?* He bases his interpretation on the King James rendering, *Is there not a cause?* Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 44. The cause for what David is about to do is Saul’s promise and the insolence of Goliath; however logical that sounds, it is not what David said. Again, he was simply looking to end his conversation with Eliab as quickly as possible, as it would be completely unprofitable.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	Then he turned and asked another soldier the same thing he had asked the others, and he got the same answer.
NJB	And he turned away from him to someone else and asked the same question, to which the people replied as before.
NLT	He walked over to some others and asked them the same thing and received the same answer.
TEV	He turned to another man and asked him the same question, and every time he asked, he got the same answer.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	He turned to face another man and asked the same question, and the other soldiers gave him the same answer.
JPS (Tanakh)	And he turned away from him toward someone else; he asked the same questions, and the troops gave him the same answer as before.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

The Amplified Bible	And David turned away from Eliab to another, whom he asked the same question, and again the men gave him the same answer.
NASB	Then he turned away from him [lit., <i>from beside him</i> ] to another and said the same thing; and the people answered the same thing as before [lit., <i>the former word</i> ].
Young's Updated LT	And he turns around from him unto another and says according to this word, and the people return him word as the first word.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David turns to another soldier, poses the same question concerning Saul's offer, and receives the same answer.

**1Samuel 17:30a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çâbab (בּוּב) [pronounced <i>saw<sup>b</sup>-VAH<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to turn oneself, to be caused to go around, to be turned around</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
êtsel (עַל) [pronounced <i>AY-tsef</i> ]	<i>a side; near, by, beside</i>	Preposition/substantive with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #681 BDB #69

Together, min + êtsel mean *from one's side, from beside, from proximity to; contiguous to, beside*.



## 1Samuel 17:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (אל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mûwl (מול) [pronounced <i>mool</i> ]	<i>in front of, opposite</i>	preposition	Strong's #4136 BDB #557
ʿel combined with mûwl mean <i>towards, to the front of, in the face of, in front of, towards the front of</i> .			
ʿachêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i> ]	<i>another, following, other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29

**Translation:** Then he [David] turned [himself] from proximity to Eliab [lit., *him*] towards another... The Hebrew here is quite fascinating. We have several words that we have not found in the book of Samuel before, all thrown together here. It is not complex by any means, but it is not as simple as the Hebrew first found in this book. What is being said is quite simple: David simply walked away from Eliab, not really waiting for an answer to his question, as his question was rhetorical and designed to be a conversation terminator. David has learned how to handle his older brothers. He lets them have their say, he responds with as few words as possible, and then returns to whatever he is doing. He's not being impertinent, he is simply handling the situation in a quick, non-confrontation way. David immediately goes up to another group of soldiers, different from the first group that he spoke to. Continuing his conversation with Eliab is simply a dead end. Therefore, David does not ask any of his three brothers this question.

## 1Samuel 17:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דבר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** ...and he asked the same thing... David is interested in this offer made by Saul. He does work in the palace; he knows Saul's daughter (or, more likely, he has seen Saul's daughter). He is a normal young male, and she probably seemed very glamorous and beautiful to him. He is also making probably a pittance playing music for Saul. But, most importantly, David lacks credibility with his family. His father has placed him out with the sheep; his brother even comments that it is only a *few sheep*, thus trivializing his responsibilities even more. David does

not feel as though he has really contributed to his family in any truly significant way (which has been reinforced by his father and his oldest brother). Doing that which would exempt his family from taxes would be quite a save on David's part. Although given no opportunity prior to this time to do anything important for his family, this might give him a situation whereby he could redeem himself, as well as do something great for his family.

However, David has more than his family and his place in it on his mind. It is also important that you recognize how David views what is happening. Israel belongs to God; this army is the army of the Living God. When Goliath stands before them berating them, he is berating Jehovah God. David knows, from the faith residing in his soul, that God will not allow anyone to berate Him or His people. That God will support, guide and make victorious the one who opposes Goliath is a clearly understood fact to David.

<b>1Samuel 17:30c</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, or to be caused to return</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular (Owen has this as a plural, but I believe he is mistaken), Hiphil imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כִּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
rîshôwn (רִשׁוֹן) [pronounced <i>ree-SHOWN</i> ]	<i>first, chief, former, beginning</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #7223 BDB #911

**Translation:** ...and the people returned [to] him the same answer [lit., a word as the former word]. David has had Saul's offer stated by at least 3 sets of people (when he first heard it, it was probably in pieces from several groups of soldiers, as he walked toward his brothers' area).

The first time that David overhears the things that Saul is promising, he stores these things in his mind, not completely understanding what he was hearing (he had a few pieces of the puzzle). When Goliath stepped out between the armies, that was the piece of the puzzle that put everything together for David. So he asks one group of soldiers, "Did I hear right; did Saul promise...?" And those soldiers confirmed what David had heard. Then

David's oldest brother gets a little pissy with him, which David deals with, and then, David asks another group to make certain that he understood all of this correctly, and they confirm that to him.

Let me draw you an analogy—you bought a lottery ticket (which I never have), you hear your numbers announced on channel 2, and you look at the screen, then you look at your ticket, and then you look at the screen again. You double-check—“Did I really win the lottery?” This is what David is doing. He already knows that he can defeat Goliath. That is the easy part. Goliath is a godless, uncircumcised Philistine who has chosen to taunt the armies of the Living God, not the sort of move a person interested in long life should make. David isn't really checking his lottery ticket numbers; he already knows that he's won—he's checking the amount. He's asking, “So, how much did I win?”

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## Saul Interviews David Concerning Goliath's Challenge

And so are heard the words which spoke David and so they make known to faces of Saul and so he takes him.

1 Samuel  
17:31

The words which David spoke were heard [by many, who] made [them] known to [lit., *before*] Saul, so he [Saul] seized him [David].

What David said was heard by many, and several went to Saul and repeated David's questions and interest in this matter; therefore, Saul immediately sent for David.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so are heard the words which spoke David and so they make known to faces of Saul and so he takes him.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And the words which David spoke were heard, and were reported to [lit., <i>behind</i> ] Saul. And he took him to himself. This is the last verse from the Alexandrian Septuagint, which is missing from Brenton's <i>beta</i> manuscript; with v. 32, we return to Brenton's Septuagint.

Significant differences: Essentially the same meaning.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Some soldiers overheard David talking, so they told Saul what David had said. Saul sent for David, and David came.
NJB	David's words were noted, however, and reported to Saul, who sent for him.
NLT	Then David's question was reported to King Saul, and the king sent for him.
TEV	Some men heard what David had said, and they told Saul, who sent for him.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, who then sent for him.
JPS (Tanakh)	The things David said were overheard and were reported to Saul, who had him brought over.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When David's words were heard, they were repeated to Saul, and he sent for him.
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NASB

When the words which David spoke were heard, they told *them* to [lit., before] Saul, and he sent for him.

Young's Updated LT

And the words which David had spoken are heard, and they declare [them] before Saul, and he receives him;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** The fact that David asked at least twice what would be done for the man who kills Goliath indicates more than passing curiosity. Interestingly enough, several soldiers noted David's questions and took this information to Saul. Saul then sends for David.

<b>1Samuel 17:31a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma <sup>ʿ</sup> (שָׁמָעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i> ]	<i>to be heard; to be regarded, to be cared for; to be heard and answered; to render obedience, to obey; to be understood</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
dâ <sup>b</sup> var (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** *The words which David spoke were heard [by many],...* David spoke directly to at least two groups of soldiers. David's brothers overheard what he had to say, which would indicate that several overheard what David had to say. David has not, at least not in Scripture, challenged Goliath yet, nor has he, insofar as we can tell, expressly stated that he was willing to fight Goliath. He obviously was thinking about it, but he did not approach Saul directly. However, those who heard David ask these questions did approach Saul.

## 1Samuel 17:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i> ]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאֹוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...[who] made [them] known to [lit., before] Saul,... Sometimes the action is lost in the translation. Not one individual person went to Saul and told him that there might be a man interested in fighting Goliath—at least two or three men went to Saul and told Saul of David's inordinate interest in Saul's offer. That is indicated by the masculine *plural* of the verb *nâgad*. So David is seriously pondering Saul's offer and meanwhile, several men approach Saul and tell him that there might be a taker out there for his offer.

Here is another thing which is missed in the translation—not everyone was able to go to Saul directly; you just don't leave your post and go directly to the commander-in-chief and give your take on the situation. Saul had a staff of men, and perhaps a secretary of sorts; apparently, these men did not necessarily speak directly to Saul, but spoke to his staff, in the presence of Saul. The verb *nâgad* does not mean to just speak, but *to make something very obvious, to declare, to explain, to inform*. These men did not necessarily get an audience with Saul immediately, but they did eventually speak in the presence of Saul, and perhaps to his staff while Saul listened.

## 1Samuel 17:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

**Translation:** ...so he [Saul] seized him [David]. The modern translations have Saul sending for David, receiving David, and all other sorts of similar scenarios. Saul did not simply send for David—he *seized* David (or, more likely, one of his staff sergeants went and grabbed up David). Saul’s offer to the one who defeats Goliath had been the talk of the camp. However, with David, it was apparently more than simple interest, and this was perceived by several men. Saul did not simply send out this polite invitation to David, asking him if he would like to come and have an audience with the king; Saul sent someone to grab David up and he was taken directly to Saul.

For the time being, recognize that Saul is in a tight spot. We have discussed his bravery before, and there is no doubt as to Saul’s tremendous bravery, even in the face of overwhelming odds. However, he was in a quandary here. He did not think that he could defeat Goliath; nor did he believe that he could send any of his sons out to defeat Goliath. The Jewish people were not a tall or necessarily powerful people, and Saul’s best soldiers were probably more than a head shorter than Goliath (as they were all a head shorter than Saul—1Sam. 9:2–10:23), and were at least 100–200 lbs. under Goliath’s weight. So, we have this man wandering about, asking seriously about Saul’s offer, and Saul grabs him up.

Now, given that Saul *seized* David, and that David was his in-house musician, and that Saul will seem to be reticent about sending David out (v. 33) seem to be contradictory. That is, why would Saul send someone out to grab up David, as though David is the answer to his prayers, and then have second thoughts about it once he sees David. If David is the palace musician, then Saul has already seen him. Does Saul realize that this is the same man who has come to him and played his stringed instrument in order to soothe the eruptions of his mental illness? We don’t know. We don’t know if David is mentioned by name; we don’t know that, even if he is mentioned by name, that Saul knows who he is.<sup>61</sup> I will explain all of that in the verses to come.

**And so says David unto Saul, “[Let] not fall a heart of a man upon him; your servant will go and fight with the Philistine the this.”**

1Samuel  
17:32

**Then David said to Saul, “Do not let the heart of [any] man [or, *my lord*] fail [lit., *fall*] because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”**

**So David said to Saul, “Do not let the heart of any soldier fail because of this man; your servant will go and fight this Philistine.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And when he was brought to Saul, he said to him. “Let not any man’s heart be dismayed in him: I your servant will go, and will fight against the Philistine.”

Masoretic Text

And so says David unto Saul, “[Let] not fall a heart of a man upon him; your servant will go and fight with the Philistine the this.”

Septuagint

And David said to Saul, “Let now, I pray you, the heart of my lord be dejected within [or, *upon*] him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” [in this verse, we return to Septuagint beta]

Significant differences:

The middle line is somewhat confusing in the Hebrew, and I think the translators of the LXX did as well as they could with it. In the Latin and Hebrew, it appears as though David is suggesting that no man should be upset or concerned about this situation; in the Greek, David tells Saul not to be upset about this situation.

<sup>61</sup> You may be thinking, *just how many David, son of Jesse’s, does Saul know?* Good question. I have worked several different very jobs and I have come into contact with a large variety of people in a number of different ways. I often recognize this person or that on the street or in the mall, but it is difficult for me to figure out who they are until I know the context of my relationship to them. I can hear a person’s name, and it might ring a bell; however, until I know how we are acquainted, it is often difficult to put a face to that name. So it is possible that Saul even hears, “Yeah, this is some dude named David, a son of Jesse’s” and still not realize that this is also his musical therapist, if you will.



**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	“Your Majesty,” he said, “this Philistine shouldn’t turn us into cowards. I’ll go out and fight him myself!”
NLT	“Don’t worry about a thing,” David told Saul, “I’ll go fight this Philistine!”
TEV	David said to Saul, “Your Majesty, no one should be afraid of this Philistine! I will go and fight him.”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word™</i>	David told Saul, “No one should be discouraged because of this. I will go and fight this Philistine.”
JPS (Tanakh)	David said to Saul, “Let no man’s [in LXX, <i>not my lord’s</i> ] courage fail him. Your servant will go and fight that Philistine!”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And David said unto Saul, Let not the heart of my lord fail because of him, —   thy servant   will go, and fight with this Philistine.
NASB	And David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”
<i>Young’s Updated LT</i>	...and David says unto Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go, and has fought with this Philistine.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** By the time that David was brought to Saul, he (David) had made up his mind that he was going to fight Goliath. David told Saul that no one should be faint of heart, as he would be willing to fight the giant of a man.

**1Samuel 17:32a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #1732 BDB #187
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong’s #413 BDB #39
Shâʾûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #7586 BDB #982
lôʾ (לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518



## 1Samuel 17:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced lay <sup>b</sup> ]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
ʾādām (אָדָם) [pronounced aw-DAWM]	<i>a man, a human being, mankind, Adam</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #120 BDB #9
In the Septuagint, this reads <i>the heart of my lord</i> rather than <i>the heart of [any] man</i> .			
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** Then David said to Saul, “Do not let the heart of [any] man [or, my lord] fail [lit., fall] because of him;... It is obvious to David that many of the soldiers were anxious because of the challenge of Goliath. No doubt many had dreamed this night or that of being the one selected to fight Goliath, and they would awake in a cold sweat, moments before clashing with him. Goliath’s size and his challenge have caused many brave Israelites to fear him, and therefore, they feared all of the Philistines, which was the intention of Goliath in the first place. David tells Saul that no one should become anxious or fearful because of Goliath. David is functioning almost like a priest here. Recall Deut. 20:1–4: “When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. Now it will be when you approach the battle, the priest will come near and speak to the people. And he will say to them, ‘Listen, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God is the One Who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’” And then David tells Saul why he should not fear Goliath.

## 1Samuel 17:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʿE <sup>b</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced law-KHAHM]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** ...your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” There is no reason for anyone to be upset because of Goliath. David will go and fight against this man. Notice that everything in this second half of the verse is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. Although David did not generally speak of himself in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, here he calls himself Saul's servant, and from that standpoint, speaks in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. A very arrogant (or, even overconfident) man would have put all of this in the 1<sup>st</sup> person.

Saul, on the other hand, is rather reticent about sending David out to face Goliath. He looks at David, who is small and looks very young (he is very young). He is not even well-armed, as David did not show up as a soldier, but simply to bring supplies to his brothers.

And so says Saul unto David, “You are not able to go unto the Philistine the this to fight with him for a youth you [are], and he [has been] a man of war from his youthful years.”

1Samuel  
17:33

But Saul told David, “You are not able to fight [lit., to go to fight] against this Philistine because you [are but] a youth and he [has been] a warrior [lit., a man of war] since his youthful years.”

But Saul told David, “You cannot expect to fight against this Philistine because you are but a boy, and he has been a warrior since he was a youth.”

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so says Saul unto David, “You are not able to go unto the Philistine the this to fight with him for a youth you [are], and he [has been] a man of war from his youthful years.”

##### Septuagint

And Saul said to David, “You will not in anyway be able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are a mere youth, and he is a man of war from his youth.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	“You don’t have a chance against him,” Saul replied. “You’re only a boy, and he’s been a soldier all his life.”
NLT	“Don’t be ridiculous!” Saul replied. “There is no way you can go against this Philistine. You are only a boy, and he has been in the army since he was a boy!”
REB	Saul answered, ‘You are not able to fight this Philistine; you are only a lad, and he has been a fighting man all his life.’
TEV	“No,” answered Saul, “How could you fight him? You’re just a boy, and he has been a soldier all his life!”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word™</i>	Saul responded to David, “You can’t fight this Philistine. You’re just a boy, but he’s been a warrior since he was your age.”
JPS (Tanakh)	But Saul said to David, “You cannot go to that Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth!”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Saul said to David, You are not able to go to right against this Philistine. You are only an adolescent, and he has been a warrior from his youth.
NASB	Then Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are <i>but</i> a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.”
<i>Young’s Updated LT</i>	And Saul says unto David, “You are not able to go unto this Philistine, to fight with him, for a youth you <i>are</i> , and he <i>is</i> a man of war from his youth.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul judges David from his outward appearance. There is no way, in Saul’s mind, that this young man (possibly even a teen) could stand up against Goliath. “You are but a youth, and Goliath has been a warrior from his youth on up.”

### 1Samuel 17:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Shâʾûwl (שׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #7586 BDB #982
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong’s #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #1732 BDB #187
lôʾ (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518

## 1Samuel 17:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâkôl (יָכֹל) [pronounced yaw-COAL]	<i>to be able, can, to have the ability, to have the power to; to be able to bear; to be able to bring oneself [to do anything]; to be lawful, to be permitted; to be powerful, to prevail</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3201 BDB #407
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced law-KHAHM]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced geem]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** But Saul told David, “You are not able to fight [lit., *to go to fight*] against this Philistine... In the Hebrew, Saul first of all tells David that he is “not able to go to this Philistine, to fight with him.” David is not simply unable to fight with Goliath, but he is unable to even go to Goliath. That is an action that Saul says David simply cannot do. As much as Saul would like to see a warrior fight Goliath, there is no way, in Saul’s mind, that David is this warrior. We don’t have Saul simply arguing with David for argument’s sake; Saul can see no purpose in sending this boy out to fight a veteran warrior. He looks at this from human viewpoint. Do you recall the first scouting expedition of Israel into the land. The majority report read: “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” (Num. 13:31b). They were correct—from the perspective of human viewpoint. And Saul is correct as well—from the perspective of human viewpoint.

## 1Samuel 17:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
nā'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced <i>NAH-ġahr</i> ]	<i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it</i>	masculine personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
mil'châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
nê'ârîym (נְעָרִים) [pronounced <i>nêġôo-REEM</i> ]	<i>youth</i> (it is always found in the plural, so we might render it <i>youthful years</i> )	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5271 BDB #655

**Translation:** ...because you [are but] a youth and he [has been] a warrior [lit., a man of war] since his youthful years." In this latter half of v. 33, Saul states his reasons why David is unable to face Goliath—David, himself, is just a youth, a boy. He is not a soldier, he is not a warrior; he might not even be taken by Saul's military for any battle. Although Saul probably knows little about David's background, the fact that David has four brothers older than he is who are not in the military at this time, would indicate that David is very much the youth—this would make David somewhere between 16 and 18, as an educated guess on my part. At the oldest, maybe he is a youthful looking 21 or 22 year old. However, given that he has 3 or 4 older brothers who are not in the military, and given that he has been a keeper of sheep long enough to learn how to play an instrument, I would place David in his mid to late teens.

You may wonder, *why do you do that? Why do you make such a big deal out of guessing David's age when it is not given?* First of all, that is in my nature—it appeals to two aspects of my character: my logic and my mathematical sense—so when I see a place where numbers and logic are involved, I almost am unable to stop myself from speculating. However, what is more important is this gives us a time table. David has already been anointed by Samuel as king over all Israel. That has happened within the past year, an incident which David has not chosen to share with Saul. His father, Jesse, had not even considered that David was royal material. Now, had you or I been anointed king, we would be looking around for our crown, cash and royal crib. David will be made king over all Israel at the age of 30 (2Sam. 5:4). Between Saul's death and David being crowned king over all of Israel, approximately 3 years of political intrigue will transpire (David will be king over Judah during most of those

3 years). What this tells us is that, between David being anointed king over Israel and his becoming king over Israel, 10 years will pass, indicating that David is a very patient young man. Let's see if I can put this into perspective—some children of privilege may see their parents die while they are young (in their mid or late teens) and a trust fund is set up for them to access at age 25 (with allowances if the child enters college). Well, from the point of being made, between the time that he is made an heir to this trust fund up until actual receiving said trust fund, this youth is put into a state of impatient limbo. He might even legally challenge the will to get his trust fund early. That money is there, it belongs to him, and he wants it right now! In fact, one of the reasons for a trust fund, is so that the stupid 18 year old will not squander his entire fortune prior to the age of 25. David has been made heir to a trust fund—that trust fund is the kingship of all Israel. He recognizes that God has only anointed him as king, but that God has not set him as king over Israel yet. David can push the issue; he can go into this aforementioned impatient limbo state; or he can simply wait on God and God's timing. As of this point in time, he's got 10 years to wait.

Now, notice what David is not doing. He does not try to talk Saul into fighting Goliath. After all, once Saul is dead, David becomes king. Notice what David does: he is willing to risk his life right now. He is willing to fight a warrior that no one else in Israel is willing to face. David has this trust fund sitting up for him off in the horizon and David focuses on his life at hand. He is not in a limbo state; he is not impatient; he is not going to put his life on hold until he receives what God has promised him. The challenge to all Israel right now is this huge giant named Goliath.

Now, understand what doctrinal information is running through David's mind right now:

### What is Going Through David's Mind as He Speaks to Saul?

1. God has anointed him king over all Israel and God is all-knowing. God is not going to anoint a man who will die prior to becoming king.
2. Goliath is not just defying Saul and some army; Goliath is defying God and the nation of God.
3. Goliath stands in direct opposition to the army of God.
4. Goliath cannot expect to win in any war against the army of God.
5. Therefore, by faith, David can face Goliath in a one-on-one battle and expect to be victorious. You see, it is an all-or-nothing proposition. Either God rules over and protects Israel, or He does not. Either God's promise to David to make him king can be trusted, or it cannot. What David holds to is all or nothing.

Listen, either God exists and His promises can be trusted, or God does not exist and His promises are meaningless. Either you can trust God and all of his promises or you cannot. Because David has faith in God, his motivations and actions are set—David has to act as he does, because he believes in God and he believes God.

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**Application:** This Bible of yours is filled with promises—with thousands of promises made by God to you. Either they are all true or they are not. You can choose to trust God or not. His laws and mandates are either all to be obeyed or not.<sup>62</sup> It is a package deal. You don't get to simply pick and choose what you want to obey and what you don't; you don't get to pick and choose that which you have faith in and that which you don't.

**And so says David unto Saul, "Shepherding was your servant for his father in the sheep and came the lion and the bear and he carried a lamb from the flock,..."**

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**David then replied to Saul, "Your servant was a shepherd for his father among the sheep when [lit., and] [there] came a lion (and [later] a bear), and it carried [off] a lamb from the flock,..."**

<sup>62</sup> Obviously, this is dependent upon dispensational interpretation. There are obviously laws pertaining to sacrificial animals, for example, which are not applicable to us today.



David then replied to Saul, “Your servant has been a shepherd of sheep for his father; some time ago, there came a lion (and later a bear), which carried off a lamb from this flock,...

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says David unto Saul, “Shepherding was your servant for his father in the sheep and came the lion and the bear and he carried a lamb from the flock,...
Septuagint	And David said to Saul, “Your servant was tending the flock for his father; and when a lion came and a she-bear, and took a sheep out of the flock,...

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	But David told him: Your majesty, I take care of my father’s sheep. And when one of them is dragged off by a lion or a bear,...
NAB	Then David told Saul: “Your servant used to tend his father’s sheep, and whenever a lion or a bear came to carry off a sheep from the flock...
NLT	But David persisted. “I have been taking care of my father’s sheep,” he said. “When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock,...

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™	David replied to Saul, “I am a shepherd for my father’s sheep. Whenever a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock,...
JPS (Tanakh)	David replied to Saul, “Your servant has been tending his father’s sheep, and if a lion or a bear came and carried off an animal from the flock,...

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	But David said to Saul, “You servant was tending his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock,...
Young’s Updated LT	And David says unto Saul, “A shepherd has your servant been to his faith among the sheep, and the lion has come—and the bear—and has taken away a sheep out of the drove,...

What should be obvious from reading this verse is that the separation of verses is not inspired. The separation of the Bible into verses and into chapters occurred a millennium after the closing out of the Old Testament canon (and these were two separate acts; the Old Testament was **not** separated into verses and into chapters at the same time). There is no reason in the world that v. 34 should stop where it does. It is obviously continued into v. 35, and the two must be taken together in order to form an entire thought. The man who separated these verses and yet presented vv. 20 and 28 as whole verses must have been out of his mind! Vv. 46–47 will also be divided in the worst way possible. You will wonder, *just what was this guy thinking?*

**What is the gist of this verse?** David is about to give Saul his credentials. His ability to face Goliath is based on two previous incidents: the time a lion came into his sheepfold and carried off a lamb; and the time a bear came into the sheepfold and carried off a lamb.

David is not exercising a blind faith in God. All evidence in his life points to the fact that God can be trusted. He will now cite some of this evidence for Saul’s benefit.



## 1Samuel 17:34a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced eI]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâʾûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	<i>which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
râʾâh (רָעָה) [pronounced raw-GAWH]	<i>shepherding, tending [a flock]; a shepherd, one who tends sheep</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
ʿebed (עָבַד) [pronounced ʿE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâv (אָב) [pronounced aw <sup>B</sup> V]	<i>father, both as the head of a household or clan</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
Some codices cited by the Massorah have <i>my father</i> rather than <i>his father</i> . <sup>63</sup> Apparently, we do not have any copies which read that way.			
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eH</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
tsôn (צֹאן) [pronounced tzohn]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #6629 BDB #838

**Translation:** David then replied to Saul, “Your servant was a shepherd for his father among the sheep... David is telling Saul why he is qualified to fight Goliath. He is giving his credentials. What he is about to describe is rather intense and may not be suitable for younger viewers. However, it is likely that he related this story once before to

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 306.

his father and brothers, and is probably one of the reasons that they do not regard David seriously. What he is going to tell us is true; however, don't try this at home.

### 1Samuel 17:34b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'ăriy (אֵרִי) [pronounce, <i>uh-REE</i> ]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun and the definite article	Strong's #738 BDB #71
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dôw <sup>b</sup> v (דּוֹבֹ) [pronounced <i>do<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>bear</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1677 BDB #179
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i> ]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êder (עֵדֶר) [pronounced <i>ĠAY-der</i> ]	<i>flock, herd</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5739 BDB #727

**Translation:** ...when [lit., *and*] [there] came a lion (and [later] a bear), and it carried [off] a lamb from the flock,... There are actually two instances which David will speak of, although they are parallel incidents. A lion came into the fold and carried off a lamb. On another occasion, a bear also came into the fold and carried off a lamb. Keil and Delitzsch confirm the accuracy of my translation, that these were two separate incidents, and that the mention of the bear is a subordinate thought.<sup>64</sup>

That there were lions in Palestine during that time period is testified to in Judges 14:5–18 2Sam. 23:20 1Kings 13:24–26 1Chron. 11:22 Amos 3:12. That there were bears is confirmed in 2Sam. 17:8 2Kings 2:24 Amos 5:19. Bear in mind, that over the past two millenniums, great changes have taken place in the Land of Promise (I'm not lyin' about this).<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 486.

<sup>65</sup> Yeah, I realize, it's the lowest form of humor in the English language.

...and I go out after him and I struck him and I rescue [the lamb] from his mouth and so he rises up upon me and I took in his beard and I struck him and I killed him.

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...so I went out after it and I struck it, rescuing [the lamb] from its mouth. Then he rose up against me, so I grabbed its beard, struck it [again] and killed it.

...so I took off after the lion, striking it, and thus rescuing the lamb from its mouth. However, it rose up against me, so I grabbed it by the beard and struck it again and killed it.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	...and I go out after him and I struck him and I rescue [the lamb] from his mouth and so he rises up upon me and I took in his beard and I struck him and I killed him.
Septuagint	...then I went forth after him, and struck him, and drew [the spoil] out of his mouth; and as he rose up against me, then I caught hold of his throat, and struck him, and killed him.

Significant differences: The differences of the two words appears to be one of interpretation. There is no significant difference in meaning.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...I go after it and beat the wild animal until it lets the sheep go. If the wild animal turns and attacks me, I grab it by the throat and kill it.
NAB	...I would go after it and attack it and rescue the prey from its mouth. If it attacked me, I would seize it by the jaw, strike it, and kill it.
NLT	...I go after it with a club and take the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death.
REB	...I go out after it and attack it and rescue the victim from its jaws. Then if it turns on me, I seize it by the beard and batter it to death.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	...I went after it, struck it, and rescued the sheep from its mouth. If it attacked me, I took hold of its mane, struck it, and killed it.
JPS (Tanakh)	...I would go after it and fight it and rescue it from its mouth. And if it attacked me, I would seize it by the beard and strike it down and kill it.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	...I went out after him and attacked [lit., <i>smote</i> ] him, and rescued <i>it</i> from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized <i>him</i> by his beard and struck [lit., <i>smote</i> ] him and killed him.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	...and I have gone out after him, and strike him, and delivered out of his mouth, and he rises against me, and I have taken hold on his beard, and struck him, and put him to death.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David not only killed the predator in both instances, but he rescued the lamb as well.

## 1Samuel 17:35a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
ʿachar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #310 BDB #29
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645

**Translation:** ...so I went out after it and I struck it,... We have a lot of *and*'s in this verse and the previous verse when describing the action. The intention is to grab our attention and to hurry the action along. The idea is that all of this happened quickly. What David tells Saul probably was the sequential action; however, it occurred so quickly that it did not seem as though there was a sequence of action. The perfect tense also adds to the brevity of action.

David was incredibly brave. He is describing two separate incidents as one, as both incidents were almost identical. In the previous verse, a lion (and later a bear) came into his flock and took out a lamb in its jaws. David immediately lights out after it and strikes the lion. There appears to be no hesitation on David's part; he acted almost instinctually.

I would analyze the situation. First off, it is not going to get any better. The lion has found a local McDonald's right in his own neighborhood and he is now going to drop by on a regular basis. Lions grow bolder, particularly with hunger, and they are going to get their food where it is easiest to get. David has to nip this problem in the bud. But again, David didn't sort all of this out; nor did he even devise any sort of a plan; he took off after the lion without thinking, grabbed it and struck it.

With this verb *to strike, to smite, to strike down*, it is not a verb strictly reserved for hand-to-hand combat without weapons. Although David is said to strike the animal twice (once to make it let go of the lamb and once to kill it), it does not tell us what sort of a weapon that he used. I personally doubt that he used his bear hands.<sup>66</sup> My guess is that he chased after the lion and struck it with his shepherd's staff, which may have been thrown. A second possibility is that he struck the lion with a rock hurled by his sling. A third possibility is that David struck the lion close up, with a rock or a knife. He probably didn't shoot the animal with an arrow nor did he lob a spear at it, for two reasons: (1) David was a shepherd and these would be hunting weapons; therefore, he would not necessarily be carrying them. (2) David does not assault Goliath with either weapon, indicating to us that he was not carrying these weapons; furthermore, he did not ask for Saul to provide him with either weapon. Had he been successful in killing these animals with either of those weapons, then we would have expected him to carry them into battle as well (particularly since his killing the lion and bear are the chief reasons he gives Saul to indicate that he is able to fight Goliath). I should mention that we have one instance of a man killing a lion with his bare hands in Scripture—Samson, who was abnormally strong (if not supernaturally so), did in Judges 14:6. I don't think that David killed either the lion or the bear with his bare hands, as nothing is ever said in Scripture about David having supernatural strength like Samson.

<sup>66</sup> I am truly disgusted with myself.

Keil and Delitzsch confirm that there are even modern instances (modern to them) of an Arab killing a lion with a stick.<sup>67</sup>

1Samuel 17:35b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâtsal (לָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i> ]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced <i>peh</i> ]	<i>mouth, edge</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6310 BDB #804

The continual use of the singular suffix further indicates that David is speaking of two separate incidents.

**Translation:** ...rescuing [the lamb] from its mouth. David rescued the lamb from the lion's mouth (and later from the bear's mouth). That is, he made the lion drop the lamb (which seems more likely than him grabbing the lamb and taking it from the lion's mouth). Apparently, where he struck the lion was so painful that it stopped thinking about eating and dropped his prey. David knew something about the animal's anatomy. My guess would be that David struck the lion with his staff, either in the ear, eye or nose. We would assume that the lamb was killed when the lion or bear grabbed it up originally. There is an interesting, semi-parallel passage, Amos 3:12, which reads: *Therefore, thus says Y<sup>e</sup>hovah, "Just as the shepherd snatches [or, delivers] from the lion's mouth a couple of legs or a piece of an ear, so will the sons of Israel dwelling in Samaria be snatched away—with the corner of a bed and the cover of a couch!"*

1Samuel 17:35c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced <i>koom</i> ]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

<sup>67</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 486. They reference Rosenmüller, *Bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, pp. 132–133.

## 1Samuel 17:35c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châzaq (חַזַּק) [pronounced <i>khaw-ZAHK</i> ]	<i>to take, to strengthen, to repair, to hold fast, to grab</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #2388 BDB #304
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
zâqân (צַחַן) [pronounced <i>zaw-KAWN</i> ]	<i>chin, beard</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2206 BDB #278

**Translation:** *Then he rose up against me, so I grabbed its beard,...* Here is the first wâw consecutive, which means that there was a moment where things stopped. David chased after the lion, grabbed it, struck the lion, and the lion dropped the lamb. Then there was a moment. Suddenly, the lion rose up against David. The first thing that David does is grab the lion by the beard (it is less specific as to what David grabbed earlier—the mane?). What David grabbed would be the hair at the lion's mouth, or at his neck (which is more likely). I know nothing about the anatomy of a lion or a bear myself, so I don't know if David grabbed them hard enough to crush the windpipe or not, or even whether such a thing is possible.

## 1Samuel 17:35d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i> ]	<i>to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

**Translation:** *...struck it [again] and killed it.* The action resumes, and it is almost a blur of action again; in fact, if you have been paying attention to the grammar, there are an unusual numbers of *and*'s in vv. 34–35 (9 of them). Grammatically, this is called a polysyndeton, and the emphasis here is upon the swiftness of the action. The climax of the action is second to the action itself.<sup>68</sup> David grabs the lion's hair near the chin or neck and strikes it once more, probably with a knife, this time causing the animal to die. Since this combat appears to be immediate (David

<sup>68</sup> From *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; pp 208, 212.



does grab the animal's beard), David would have to strike the animal the second time from closeup, which would be why I would suggest that he used a knife. The only reason that I would speculate that David did not use a knife, is that, a knife does not appear to be a part of the equipment which he has with him as he approached Goliath (see v. 40). However, just because a knife is not mentioned specifically here or in v. 40, that does not mean that David was not carrying one (the weapons which are part and parcel to the narrative are the only ones mentioned).

You no doubt sensed some animosity between David and his eldest brother. After this particular incident occurred, David no doubt told his family (at least, the first occasion with the lion), and his brothers probably did not believe him and probably thought that he just made this up. On the one hand, there was likely some jealousy on their parts, and, on the other, they just didn't believe him, and were simply irritated with him. I wouldn't be surprised if David never relayed the second event—the killing of the bear—to his family.

There are several translations (the REB, NAB and NJB quickly come to mind) that refer to this as more typical of David's time with the sheep. "Whenever a lion or bear came into the sheepfold and took a lamb, I would go after the beast, save the lamb, and kill the beast if necessary." I don't think that was the case. I don't think that this incident occurred, say, a half-dozen times. However, it did occur twice, and with two different animals, and for a reason. This incident had to occur twice so that David did not think that he simply bested a lion or bear by accident. Had it only happened once, he might even question whether it happened or not. I had a very amazing thing happen to me, which I have rarely told anyone, and, even though it occurred three times, I still question myself whether or not it really occurred. So God allowed David to kill two animals. Secondly, these had to be different kinds of animals. David knows that he is prepared to fight Goliath, as he himself has faced two types of powerful animals. The animals are different, their attack is different, and fighting them would be somewhat different. Goliath is inferior to a lion and to a bear; therefore, David knows that he can defeat Goliath.

Barnes presents a scenario wherein David killed a lion and a bear together. Although I don't rule this out as impossible, the reason that God allowed David's sheepfold to be attacked by both a lion and a bear on two separate occasions is so that David would have the confidence to face Goliath. One time would have seemed almost surreal, if not an unusual one-time event. Two times helps to bolster David's confidence in God.

**Application:** You may not want to be tested, and you may not think that you need to be tested; however, being tested and passing the test also gives a believer confidence and the ability to face the next, and greater test. Recall that our lives are not our own; what we do and how we face adversity is a part of our Christian witness. People are watching and angels are watching. You are on display, so to speak, at all times. Your life is led in a picture window on 5<sup>th</sup> and Main. And, so you completely understand this, these tests you face are not for your benefit only; you are not an island as a Christian—you are part of a team. No matter how much or how little contact you have with the outside world, you are still a member of a team.

**Also the lion and the bear has killed your servant and has been the Philistine the foreskinned the this as one from them for he has defied ranks of Elohim living ones.** 1Samuel 17:36

**Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear and so will be [the end] of this uncircumcised Philistine, for he defies the ranks of the Living God [or, Elohim].**

**You servant has killed both the lion and the bear, and will do the same to this uncircumcised Philistine, because he defies the armies of the Living God.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

Also the lion and the bear has killed your servant and has been the Philistine the foreskinned the this as one from them for he has defied ranks of Elohim living ones.

##### Septuagint

Your servant struck down both the lion and the bear, and the uncircumcised Philistine will be as one of them. Shall I not go and strike him, and remove this day a reproach from Israel? For who [is] this uncircumcised one, who has defied the



**army of the living God?** You will note that the Septuagint is much more talky than the MT.

Significant differences: There is an additional line and a half in the Greek. This makes me think that perhaps the Hebrew text was difficult to read at one point, and one line plus was dropped out for that reason. It would make sense for David to ask for permission to stand before the Philistine.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Sir, I have killed lions and bears that way, and I can kill this worthless Philistine. He shouldn't have made fun of the army of the living God!

NLT I have done this to both lions and bears, and I'll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God!

REB I have killed lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will fare no better than they; he has defied the ranks of the living God.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ I have killed lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them because he has challenged the army of the living God."

JPS (Tanakh) Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and that uncircumcised Philistine shall end up like one of them, for he has defied the ranks of the living God.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Emphasized Bible* Thy servant could slay ||either a lion or a bear||, and |this uncircumcised Philistine| shall become |as one of them| [Sep. inserts: "Shall I not go and smite him, and turn aside today reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised one..."] for he hath reproached the ranks of a Living God. I updated the English in Rotherham's footnote.

NASB "Your servant has killed [lit., *smitten*] both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

*Young's Updated LT* Both the lion and the bear has your servant struck down, and this uncircumcised Philistine has been as one of them, for he has reproached the ranks of the living God."

**What is the gist of this verse?** David states unequivocally that he was able to kill both a lion and a bear, and is therefore qualified to kill Goliath. Again, David repeats what the true issue is: Goliath is defying the army of God. For this reason alone, David is assured of victory.

### 1Samuel 17:36a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

## 1Samuel 17:36a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿārîy (אֲרִי) [pronounce, uh-REE]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun and the definite article	Strong's #738 BDB #71
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so</i>	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
dôwᵇv (דָּבָר) [pronounced doᵇv]	<i>bear</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1677 BDB #179
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʿEB-ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** [Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear...](#) David summarizes, so that there is no confusion on Saul's part. "I have killed a lion and I have killed a bear." David further states this, so he can draw an analogy to what he will do to the uncircumcised Philistine.

**Application:** There are times when we are tested, and we boldly ask, "What the hell for? If you already knew that I could pass this test, why put me through it?" Testing serves at least two purposes: (1) we stand as a testimony before the angels of God as approved and (2) we are prepared for life's greater challenges. Had David not faced this lion or bear, the idea of suddenly fighting Goliath would never have occurred to him. He would have no reason to think that he could stand against Goliath in battle. Obviously, even if he did interview with Saul, he would have no reason that he could give Saul why he is able to go into battle against Goliath.

In school, we might receive a quiz or two over a day's worth of material; then we are tested over that particular chapter or unit. At the end of a six weeks period, we might be given a test over all the material of that six weeks; and, finally, at the end of the semester or at the end of the year, we are given a test over all of the material covered during that time period. Sometimes, years later, we are tested over several courses on a college placement exam. It all began with a very minor, 15 minute quiz over a very small amount of material. Our life is similar; we are tested from time to time by these minor, almost insignificant tests. Thieme used to dub these, *the charge of the mosquito*. Then we face the more difficult challenges, which tests Thieme would call *the charge of the elephant*. It is a part of our growth, and the charge of the mosquito prepares us for the charge of the elephant. It is often these major tests where significant divine good is produced.

Let me give you a specific example. You're married, you have a family, and you are faced with the very real temptation of adultery. Succumbing to adultery could ruin your marriage and scar your children's lives. Resisting the temptation strengthens your marriage and stabilizes your family. You don't face adultery necessarily as your first temptation. You may be first lured by pornography, by pre-marital sex, by adulterous flirtations. Successfully meeting those challenges early on may be the key to your fortitude to avoid adultery later on in life. It was successfully standing up to the charge of the mosquito which prepared you for the charge of the elephant. When you exhibit no self-control when it comes to pre-marital sex or pornography, then how do you think you will resist adultery? This is why 50% of married people stray—they were not faithful *before* meeting their future spouse, so they are not faithful *after* marriage.

Since we are on the topic of resisting sin, let me throw in some advice given me by a roommate many years ago: sometimes the key is knowing your own limits and not putting yourself in a position to be tempted. You may go out

on a date with someone that you have no interest in, but if sex is somehow put on the table, well, then, you'll just see what might happen. You might be married, and have coffee with a co-worker. That can be perfectly innocent and it could be a temptation that you have saddled yourself with. God is going to test you; you do not need to help out by testing yourself. Now, who would have thought that, in the chapter that deals with David and Goliath, in a chapter that has no sex in it, that we would find application in this area?

### 1Samuel 17:36b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>e</sup> tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿârêl (אֲרֵל) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>having foreskins, foreskinned ones; generally rendered uncircumcised</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #6189 BDB #790
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i> ]	<i>one, first, certain, only; but it can also mean a composite unity</i>	numeral	Strong's #259 BDB #25
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

**Translation:** ...and so will be [the end] of this uncircumcised Philistine,... David killed both the lion and the bear, and will therefore do the same to this Philistine.

It is here where we have additional material in the LXX. [Shall I not go and strike him, and remove this day a reproach from Israel? For who \[is\] this uncircumcised one,...](#) Often, when the Massoretic text accidentally leaves out a portion, we can find the same beginning and ending points. That is, the copyist looks up at a word, copies it, and then looks back up at that word, but actually looks at that word as it occurs a few lines later, and begins to copy again, leaving out what was between these two occurrences. However, we do not have that here. We do have *this uncircumcised Philistine* followed by a couple words, and then we find uncircumcised Philistine again, which is where we pick up the verse. However, this is not a classic example of Homoeoteleuton, as we do not have exactly the same word at the stopping and starting points. Because of this, I am not aware of any translation which inserts these words which are found in the Septuagint; and I know of only one translation which footnotes this addition (Rotherham's *Emphasized Bible*).

Personally, I see no reason that a translator would insert this additional text had he not found it in the Hebrew text that he was working with; which Hebrew text is going to be a millennium older than the MT that we follow. However, we do not know the relative value of that Hebrew text, and I do not have access to the Dead Sea Scrolls, which may or may not include this additional prose (and, as often is the case, the NRSV is silent here, although it is probably the best source of Dead Sea Scrolls information found in a translation<sup>69</sup>).

<b>1Samuel 17:36c</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>keey</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
châraph (חָרַף) [pronounced <i>khah-RAHF</i> ]	<i>to defy, to reproach, to scorn, to reproach, to scornfully defy; to discredit, to shame, to rebuke</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2778 BDB #357 & #358
ma'ārekeh (מַעֲרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-ġuh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
ʾēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i> ]	<i>living, alive</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

**Translation:** ...for he has defied the ranks of the Living God [or, *Elohim*]. Here is *why* David will be able to defeat Goliath—he has defied the armies of the Living God. David will amplify this answer (and v. 37a should have been a part of v. 36).

And so says David, “Y<sup>e</sup>howah Who delivered me from a hand of the lion and from a hand of the bear, He [even] He will deliver me from a hand of the Philistine the this.”

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Then David added, “Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who delivered me from the claws [lit., *hand*] of the lion and from the claws [lit., *hand*] of the bear, He [even] He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

And Saul says unto David, “Go and Y<sup>e</sup>howah is with you.”

And Saul said to David, “Go and Y<sup>e</sup>howah will be with you.”

Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who delivered me from the claws of the lion and the bear will also deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

So, Saul relented, saying, “Go and Jehovah be with you.”

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

<sup>69</sup> As opposed to other translations available to me at this time. Even of greater help is *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (Martin Abegg Jr., et al). However, you do not necessarily need one, as I use it all the time in examining these passages.

Latin Vulgate	And David said, "The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."
Masoretic Text	And so says David, "Yehowah Who delivered me from a hand of the lion and from a hand of the bear, He [even] He will deliver me from a hand of the Philistine the this." And Saul says unto David, "Go and Y <sup>e</sup> howah is with you."
Septuagint	The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this uncircumcised Philistine." And Saul said, to David, "God, and the Lord will be with you."
Significant differences:	That David is speaking is not mentioned in the LXX, as this is continued from the previous verse.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The LORD has rescued me from the claws of lions and bears, and he will keep me safe from the hands of this Philistine. "All right," Saul answered, "go ahead and fight him. And I hope the LORD will help you." [the indentations throughout the CEV are not consistent]
NAB	David continued: "The LORD, who delivered me from the claws of the lion and the bear, will also keep me safe from the clutches of this Philistine." Saul answered David, "Go! The LORD will be with you."
NLT	The LORD who saved me from the claws of the lion and the bear will save me from this Philistine!" Saul finally consented. "All right, go ahead," he said. "And may the LORD be with you!"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	The LORD," David went on, "who saved me from lion and bear will also save me from that Philistine." "Then go," Saul said to David, "and may the LORD be with you!"
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### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go and may the LORD be with you."
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And David says, "Jehovah, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He does deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul says unto David, "Go, and Jehovah is with you."

**What is the gist of this verse?** David tells Saul what the true issue is: God delivered him from the claws of the lion and the bear; so David knows that God will deliver him when he faces the giant Philistine. Saul recognizes David's spirituality and tells him to go ahead. He says, "God will be with you" rather than "May God be with you."

## 1Samuel 17:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced naw-TSAHL]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
ʾărîy (אֲרִי) [pronounce, uh-REE]	<i>lion</i>	masculine singular noun and the definite article	Strong's #738 BDB #71
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
dôw <sup>b</sup> (דָּוָב) [pronounced do <sup>b</sup> V]	<i>bear</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1677 BDB #179
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it</i>	masculine personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced naw-TSAHL]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5337 BDB #664

## 1Samuel 17:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** Then David added, “Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who delivered me from the claws [lit., *hand*] of the lion and from the claws [lit., *hand*] of the bear, He [even] He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” David now gives the true perspective about what has occurred. He is not presenting himself as this tremendous, heroic Ninja warrior, but as one whom God has delivered (compare Daniel 3:28 6:22 2Cor. 1:10 2Tim. 4:17–18). David knows that God has delivered him in the past and knows that God will continue to deliver him. Furthermore, despite the great size of this Philistine, it is very likely that Goliath would lose against a lion or a bear. In other words, David has already fought his toughest opposition; God has already prepared David for this by testing him with greater opponents. Goliath will be easy, by comparison.

You will notice the repetition of the word *hand* (yâd (יָד) [pronounced *yawd*]). The *hand* is the instrument by which a thing is done. With the animals, it can be taken very literally to refer to the paws or claws of the bear and lion (although they have other dangerous aspects to them; namely their teeth). However, when David speaks of the *hand* of Goliath, he is setting up a similar and parallel usage, even though Goliath does not have *claws*. Yâd, in this case, refers to the *power* or *strength* of something, with an emphasis upon the *menace* of that something. God delivered David from the power and menace of the bear and the lion, and will likewise deliver him from the power and menace of Goliath.<sup>70</sup>

## 1Samuel 17:37b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâʾûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

<sup>70</sup> Expanded from *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 410.



## 1Samuel 17:37b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
עַל (על) [pronounced <i>eel</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
הֵלַךְ (הֵלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK</i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
וְ (or וּ) [pronounced <i>veh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
יְהוָה (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
הָיָאֵח (הָיָאֵח) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
עִמָּךְ (עִמָּךְ) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity, with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix, pausal form	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

**Translation:** *And Saul said to David, “Go and Y<sup>e</sup>howah will be with you.”* Saul really cannot argue with David on this point. In fact, when it comes to matters of God, Saul is pretty much at a loss (recall how he tried to placate God with sacrifices back in 1Sam. 14?). He recognizes David as a man of great faith and is ready to yield to that. However, understand the sad fact here. Saul, with David's faith, could have stood up to Goliath. It is a matter of faith that David is willing to face off Goliath.

We know that Saul is a very flawed man; this will become more and more apparent as we dig deeper into this half of the book of Samuel. However, it should be clear that Saul respects a man of God's Spirit. Saul will long recognize Samuel's great spirituality and his contribution to Israel. When Samuel dies, Saul will pursue his guidance even beyond the grave. The point is, he recognizes David's faith; he believes that David believes and he believes what David believes; and he recognizes the power of David's faith. Saul is the right man to be commander-in-chief, because another man would have still dismissed David as being a flake.

Some have accused Saul's statement, *“Go and Jehovah will be with you”* as phoney, insincere and/or hypocritical. Saul is a flawed man; he does not have the strength of character to face Goliath himself, although he should have (I hesitate to berate Saul too much for this, as I would not have the faith to stand up against Goliath either). Saul recognizes the faith in David, and he is swayed by David's logical argument, which is a spiritual argument. What he says is simply a common statement shared between believers (1Sam. 20:13 1Chron. 22:11, 16). The NIV Study Bible makes the appropriate comment *Saul is now dependent on David not only for his sanity...but also for the security of his realm.*<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 398.

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## David Prepares to Battle the Philistine

**And so clothes Saul David [with] his garments [possibly, *outer garment, leather garment*] and he placed a helmet of bronze upon his head and so he clothes him [in] body armor.** 1Samuel 17:38 **So Saul put his outer garment [possibly, *leather garment*] [upon] David and he placed a bronze helmet on his head, and put body armor [on] him.**

**So Saul placed his own leather garment on David, along with a bronze helmet for his head, and a coat of body armor.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

**Masoretic Text** And so clothes Saul David [with] his garments [possibly, *outer garment, leather garment*] and he placed a helmet of bronze upon his head and so he clothes him [in] body armor.

**Septuagint** And Saul clothed David with a military coat, and [placed] his brazen helmet on his head.

Significant differences: The Greek has the gist of the Hebrew, but leaves the final phrase out.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

**CEV** Saul had his own military clothes and armor put on David, and he gave David a bronze helmet to wear.

**NAB** Then Saul clothed David in his own tunic, putting a bronze helmet on his head and arming him with a coat of mail.

**NJB** Saul dressed David in his own armour; he put a bronze helmet on his head, dressed him in a breastplate.

**NLT** Then Saul gave David his own armor—a bronze helmet and a coat of mail.

**TEV** He gave his own armor to David for him to wear; a bronze helmet, which he put on David's head, and a coat of armor.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

**God's Word™** Saul put his battle tunic on David; he put a bronze helmet on David's head and dressed him in armor.

**JPS (Tanakh)** Saul clothed David in his own garment; he placed a bronze helmet on his head and fastened a breastplate on him.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

**NASB** Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor.

**Young's Updated LT** And Saul clothes David with his long robe, and has put a helmet of brass on his head, and does clothe him with a coat of mail.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul is going to allow David to fight Goliath. Saul now puts his own battle ware on David. He puts his tunic (possibly leather outer ware) on David, as well as his helmet and a coat of armor.

## 1Samuel 17:38a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâbash (לְבַשׁ) [pronounced <i>law-BAHSH</i> ]	<i>to put on [someone else], to clothe [someone else], to put a garment on someone</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3847 BDB #527
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
maddîym (מַדְיִים) [pronounced <i>mahd-DEEM</i> ]	<i>measure, cloth garment, outer garments; armored coat; carefully tailored clothing; a thick piece of cloth, a leather garment; a carpet</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #4055 BDB #551

Although we know that *mad* means *cloth garment, outer garment*, it is unclear as to its plural meaning. For instance, in Judges 5:10, it is obvious that we are not simply speaking of *outer garments* (you may not even recognize from the English where the word *maddîym* is in this verse). Here, I believe that *maddîym* refers to a thick, leather coat; Keil and Delitzsch suggest an armored coat.

**Translation:** *So Saul put his outer garment [possibly, leather garment] [upon] David...* There are a couple of clues which tell us what is actually going on here. The key is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix; Saul doesn't just put any leather coat on David; he puts *his* leather coat on David. Saul, thinking that it is possible that David will defeat Goliath, wants to contribute. He takes his own leather coat and puts it on David first (the idea is that the leather is more difficult to penetrate with a weapon). Saul is going to take some credit if Goliath is killed. In fact, from a distance, it will almost look like Saul (except that David is much shorter than Saul).

## 1Samuel 17:38b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

## 1Samuel 17:38b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qôw <sup>b</sup> vâ <sup>r</sup> (קוֹוָבָר) [pronounced KOH <sup>B</sup> -vawg]	<i>helmet</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6959 BDB #875
n <sup>e</sup> chôsheth (נְחֹשֶׁת) [pronounced n <sup>e</sup> -KHÖH-sheth]	<i>copper, bronze, brass; that which is made of brass or copper, money, fetter, bonds, leg irons</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5178 BDB #638
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
rô <sup>h</sup> sh (רֹשׁ) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

**Translation:** ...and he placed a bronze helmet on his head,... Saul also places a bronze helmet on David's head. It is not clear where this came from, whether it was Saul's, or special equipment designed for a few soldiers (there is no way that the army could have afforded helmets for everyone). With the helmet, David will be unrecognizable. This does not mean, however, that people will see the fighting and think that it is Saul (given the outer leather garment) because David is probably a head shorter than Saul.

## 1Samuel 17:38c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâbash (לְבַשׁ) [pronounced law-BAHSH]	<i>to put on [someone else], to clothe [someone else], to put a garment on someone</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3847 BDB #527
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shir <sup>e</sup> yôwn (שִׁירְיוֹן) [pronounced shir <sup>e</sup> -YOHN]	<i>body armor</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8302 BDB #1056

**Translation:** ...and put body armor [on] him. Finally, there is body armor; again, not a standard issue to the soldiers of Israel, but something which would help to protect David in battle.

And so fastens David his sword from upon to his garments [possibly, *outer garment, leather garment*] and so he willing chooses to walk for he had not tested [the gear]. And so says David unto Saul, “I am not able to walk in these things for I have not tested [them].” And so removes [from] himself David from upon him.

1Samuel  
17:39

Then, David fastened his [Saul’s] sword around [lit., *from upon to*] his outer [possibly, *leather*] garment and then he tried [lit., *willingly chose*] to walk because he had not [yet] tested [the gear]. He then said to Saul, “I am not able to walk in these things, for I haven’t practiced [using them].” Then he took these things off [lit., *removed (from) himself from upon him*].

Finally, David fastened a sword around his leather garment and then attempted to walk, because he had not yet tested this gear out. He then said to Saul, “I am unable to walk in these things because I haven’t properly practiced using them.” Then he removed all of the gear that Saul had given him.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so fastens David his sword from upon to his garments [possibly, <i>outer garment, leather garment</i> ] and so he willing chooses to walk for he had not tested [the gear]. And so says David unto Saul, “I am not able to walk in these things for I have not tested [them].” And so removes [from] himself David from upon him.
Septuagint	And he girt David with his sword over his coat: and he labored walking [with them] once and again. And David said to Saul, “I will not be able to go with these, for I have not proved [them].” So they remove them from him.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David strapped on a sword and tried to walk around, but he was not used to wearing those things. “I can’t move with all this stuff on,” David said. “I’m just not used to it.” David took off the armor...
NJB	...and buckled his own sword over David’s armour. David tried to walk but, not being used to them, said to Saul, ‘I cannot walk in these; I am not used to them.’ So they took them off again.
NLT	David put it on, strapped the sword over it, and took a step or two to see what it was like, for he had never worn such things before. “I can’t go in these,” he protested. “I’m not used to them.” So he took them off again.
REB	...he then fastened his sword on David over his tunic. But David held back, because he had not tried them, and said to Saul, ‘I cannot go with these; because I am not used to them.’ David took them off,... The REB footnotes that the Hebrew reads David fastened on his sword.
TEV	David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor and tried to walk, but he couldn’t, because he wasn’t used to wearing them. “I can’t fight with all this,” he said to Saul. “I’m not used to it.” So he took it all off.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

## God's Word™

David fastened Saul's sword over his clothes and tried to walk, but he had never practiced doing this. "I can't walk in these things," David told Saul. "I've never practiced doing this." So David took all those things off.

## JPS (Tanakh)

David girded his sword over his garment. Then he tried to walk; but [Septuagint reads "was unable to walk, for..."] he was not used to it. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk in these, for I am not used to them." So David took them off.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:***The Emphasized Bible*

And David girded his sword above his military coat, but was reluctant to go, for he had not proved them, —so David said unto Saul—

I cannot go in these for I have not proved them.

And David put them off him.

## NASB

And David girded his sword over his armor and tried to talk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them."

And David took them off [lit., off from himself].

*Young's Updated LT*

And David girds his sword above his long robe, and begins to go, for he has not tried it; and David says unto Saul, "I am not able to go with these, for I had not tried." And David turns them aside from off him.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David willingly tries putting on the sword which Saul lends him. However, when he tries to maneuver with his armor and sword, David is less than comfortable with his new equipment, so he takes it all off.

**1Samuel 17:39a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châgar (גָּגַר) [pronounced khaw-GAHR]	to belt, to cinch, to gird, to encircle, to bind, to tie, to rope, to fasten around [onself]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2296 BDB #291
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	beloved and is transliterated David	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chereb (כֶּרֶב) [pronounced khe-RE <sup>BV</sup> ]	sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

## 1Samuel 17:39a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Together, they mean <i>from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to</i>			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
maddîym (מִדְּיָמַי) [pronounced <i>mahd-DEEM</i> ]	<i>measure, cloth garment, outer garments; armored coat; carefully tailored clothing; a thick piece of cloth, a leather garment; a carpet</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4055 BDB #551

**Translation:** Then, David fastened his [Saul's] sword around [lit., *from upon to*] his outer [possibly, *leather*] garment... The final gear which David fastens to himself is the sword. Now, it says, *his* sword, and, in English, the closest thing which matches *his* in case and gender is the guy to whom this belongs. However, we do not have professional writers recording this history. The last time we had an article of gear attributed to anyone was in the previous verse where Saul puts *his* leather garment (or whatever it was) on David. So this is Saul's sword, not David's. Furthermore, had this been David's sword, then he would have taken his own sword into battle against Goliath (as he would have already *tested* his own weapon), but, as we will observe, David leaves the sword behind with everything else (as he will borrow Goliath's sword to end this battle). Finally, we also know that this sword does not belong to David, as he probably does not own a sword in the first place and there is no mention of him bringing a weapon to go to war with (he was not going to this camp to engage in warfare). The upshot of all this is that David has on Saul's personal sword, his personal outer or leather garment, which was probably the forerunner of the bullet proof vest, and his personal helmet and body armor. Since David fastens the sword himself to his side, we may assume that David did not respond with an immediate negative attitude toward Saul's offerings here. He was willing to try this equipment out and he was prepared to use it if he perceived it as being potentially beneficial to him in fighting Goliath.

As mentioned previously, the Greek reads that Saul fastened the sword to David. The end result is the same—David tries out the equipment, is uncomfortable with it, and takes it all off. What the Greek seems to lack is David's clear willingness to try out Saul's weaponry and armor, a factor I believe to be important to the narrative.

## 1Samuel 17:39b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâ`al (יָאָל) [pronounced <i>yaw-AHL</i> ]	<i>to willingly chose, to be willing to, to give ascent to; to undertake, to attempt, to try</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2974 BDB #383

Rotherham renders this *reluctant* instead, and footnotes this as *so it should be*, mentioning the Septuagint.<sup>72</sup> However, I personally do not find any basis for this rendering.

<sup>72</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 306.



## 1Samuel 17:39b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־לֵ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâçâh (נָסָה) [pronounced <i>naw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to test, to try, to attempt, to try to do a thing; to practice doing a thing</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #5254 BDB #650

**Translation:** ...and then he tried [lit., *willingly chose*] to walk because he had not [yet] tested [the gear]. David is wearing all of this military gear for the first time. He has never gone to war before, so he does not own this type of equipment himself. Here, he is attempting to simply walk and maneuver in all this gear. Had David used this equipment, practiced in it, and done the things which foot soldiers do with it regularly, then it is very likely that he would have been willing to use all of it. However, this made him slow and clumsy, and he did not know how to properly wield a sword. The use of the word *yâ'al* indicates that David did not just pretend to check out Saul's equipment, but he actually considered using it. He willingly attempted to walk with all of this equipment. David tested the equipment because he was about to go into battle against the more fearsome of the Philistines. David did not approach this challenge in a half-assed way. He did not begin with the attitude "I'll use my equipment only." Nor did he just take what was offered him, and charge out into the battle. He tried what Saul offered, he tried to walk in it, and he finds out that it is too cumbersome for him.

## 1Samuel 17:39c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

## 1Samuel 17:39c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâkôl (יָכוֹל) [pronounced <i>yaw-COAL</i> ]	<i>to be able, can, to have the ability, to have the power to; to be able to bear; to be able to bring oneself [to do anything]; to be lawful, to be permitted; to be powerful, to prevail</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3201 BDB #407
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʾelleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>EEHL-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective (with the definite article)	Strong's #428 BDB #41
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâçâh (נָצַח) [pronounced <i>naw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to test, to try, to attempt, to try to do a thing; to practice doing a thing</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #5254 BDB #650

**Translation:** He then said to Saul, “I am not able to walk in these things, for I haven’t practiced [using them].” David made an honest attempt to try out all of this new gear (*new* to him). The word *yâ`al* means *to willingly choose, to willingly consent, to attempt*. In other words, David did not approach this with a closed mind. He didn’t think, in the back of his head, “I’ll just humor Saul for a few moments, and then I’ll take all this crap off.” He attempted to maneuver about in this gear, and he was completely uncomfortable with it. The idea of *testing* is more *to practice working with something*. David had simply not worked out with this equipment as a soldier would normally do. It was more of a hindrance than a benefit to him. I should add, by the way, that David is in fellowship; he is empowered by God the Holy Spirit.

**Application:** There are times when it is appropriate to have a closed mind—with regards to clearly settled, doctrinal issues. However, this does not mean, because you know doctrine, that you know everything. David reveals an open mind here, and clear judgment. He does not reject Saul's equipment outright; nor does he simply accept whatever is thrust upon him. He examines it with an open mind. Christians need to be discerning; but you do not need to be closed-minded about everything.

### 1Samuel 17:39d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çûwr (וָרַח) [pronounced <i>soor</i> ]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to*

**Translation:** *Then he took these things off* [lit., *removed (from) himself from upon him*]. David's only reasonable choice here was to remove all of this equipment. He tried it on, he tried to move in it, and it became clear to him that he would not be a successful combatant if he continued to wear all of this stuff.

In all of this, there is a spiritual point. David's dependence will be upon God and not upon the weapons of war. He will not go into battle unarmed; however, he will take a lot less than we would expect. David does not think that he will simply walk out there and Goliath will die of a heart attack; however, he is not dependent upon the newest weapon technology. He is not being unrealistic—what he will carry into battle against Goliath will be essentially what he had on him when facing the lion and the bear.

McGee makes an application here as well: *David...said, "I can't fight with these because I haven't tested them. I will just have to fight with the equipment I'm used to." What a lesson there is for us in this. Let's not try to be something we are not, or try to do something we are really not called to do. If God has called you to use a slingshot, friend, don't try to use a sword. If God has called you to speak, then speak. If God has called you to do something else, well, do that. If God has called you to sing, sing. But if He has not called you to sing, for goodness sake, don't do it. Too many people are trying to use a sword when the slingshot is really more their size.*<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> J. Vernon McGee; *I & I1 Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 96.

And so he takes his staff in his hand and so he chooses for himself five smooth of stones from the brook and he places them in an article of the shepherd which to him and in the wallet and his sling in his hand and so he draws near unto the Philistine.

1Samuel  
17:40

So David took his staff in his hand and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook and placed them in his shepherd's pouch [lit., *in the shepherd's bag which (is) to him*], even in the wallet; and his sling is in his hand and he approached the Philistine.

So David picked up his staff and then chose five smooth stones from the river bed, placing them in his shepherd's bag. He also carried a sling and approached the Philistine.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                   And so he takes his staff in his hand and so he chooses for himself five smooth of stones from the brook and he places them in an article of the shepherd which to him and in the wallet and his sling in his hand and so he draws near unto the Philistine.

Septuagint                        And he took his staff in his hand, and he chose for himself five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had for his storage, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.

Significant differences:       No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                 ...and picked up his shepherd's stick. He went out to a stream and picked up five smooth rocks and put them in his leather bag. Then with his sling in his hand, he went straight toward Goliath.

NJB                                 He took his stick in his hand, selected five smooth stones from the river bed and put them in his shepherd's bag, in his pouch; then, sling in hand, he walked towards the Philistine.

NLT                                 He picked up five smooth stones from a stream and put them in his shepherd's bag. Then, armed only with his shepherd's staff and sling, he started across to fight Goliath.

REB                                 ...then picked up his stick, chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in a shepherd's bag which served as his pouch, and, sling in hand, went to meet the Philistine. 17:40 **which...pouch:** *so Gk; Heb.* Which was his and in the pouch.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™                    He took his stick with him, picked out five smooth stones from the river-bd, and put them in his shepherd's bag. With a sling in his hand, he approached the Philistine.

JPS (Tanakh)                    He took his stick, picked a few [lit., *five*] smooth stones from the wadi, put them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag and, sling in hand, he went toward the Philistine.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible*            Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in his shepherd's [lunch] bag [a whole kid's skin, slung from his shoulder], in his scribe; and his sling was in his hand, and he drew near the Philistine.

NASB                               And he took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in *his* pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.

*Young's Updated LT*           And he takes his staff in his hand, and chooses for him five smooth stones from the brook, and puts them in the shepherds' accouterments that he has, even in the bag,

and his sling *is* in his hand, and he draws near unto the Philistine. I had to replace two very archaic words here: *habiliments* and *scrip*, which were replaced with *accouterments* and *bag*, respectively. The first refers to the gear of a particular profession and the second to a *bag, purse or wallet*.

**What is the gist of this verse?** In this verse, we find out just exactly what David is taking into battle. He has his shepherd's staff, a sling, and a bag or pouch or wallet of some sort; he picks up five smooth stones and places them into this pouch.

1Samuel 17:40a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
maqêl (מַקְלֵךְ) [pronounced <i>mah-KAYL</i> ]	<i>rod, staff</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4731 BDB #596
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

**Translation:** *So David took his staff in his hand...* It is important to recognize that David does not approach Goliath unarmed. When he told Saul that he could not use his equipment because he had not trained with it, David was telling the truth. When he killed the lion and the bear, it was not with the armor and sword that Saul offered him. David had certain weapons with which he had become proficient. David, in vv. 35–36, does not tell us with what weapon or weapons he killed the lion or the bear. I would have assumed that he grabbed the beard of the lion and planted a knife into him. However, he may have used his staff the first time that he struck the lion.

The staff was carried by most shepherds and was apparently just a long piece of sturdy wood used to support one while walking through hills or unsteady ground; to beat bushes where the sheep may stray, or where snakes might hide; or to correct errant shepherd dogs, which is why Goliath will say, "Am I a dog that you approach me with sticks?"<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; pp. 136–137.

## 1Samuel 17:40b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced <i>baw-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>to choose</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #977 BDB #103.
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
chămishshâh (חֲמִישָׁה) [pronounced <i>khuh-mish-SHAW</i> ]	<i>five</i>	numeral, feminine construct	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
challuq (חָלֻק) [pronounced <i>khahl-LÛK</i> ]	<i>smooth</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2512 BDB #325
ʿeben (אֲבֵן) [pronounced <i>EH<sup>B</sup>-ven</i> ]	<i>stone</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
nachal (נַחַל) [pronounced <i>NAHKH-al</i> ]	<i>brook, torrent</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5158 BDB #636

**Translation:** ...and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook... During the rainy season, the valley where David walked was a stream; however, it was probably dry at this time. David reached down and took 5 stones from the dry bed.

Now, interestingly enough, Goliath had four relatives (apparently three sons and a brother) who were also giants, who are later killed in 2Sam. 21:16–22. It is possible that David, in all of the information that he gleaned, also found out about Goliath's four relatives, and carried five stones just in case they ran at him after he killed Goliath. In other words, it is possible that David didn't have five stones just in case the first one didn't kill Goliath; he had five stones for Goliath and his four sons.<sup>75</sup>

Although I cannot find this in any of my present translations, for some reason, I recall David as taking five *pebbles* from the brook (which is completely misleading). What David took out were stones probably the size of baseballs, which could be hurled at the speed of a 100 mph or so,<sup>76</sup> and such a stone was capable of striking a man down and even killing him.

<sup>75</sup> This is how Thieme presents this passage. So does McGee in J. Vernon McGee; *I & 11Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 97.

<sup>76</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 398.



## 1Samuel 17:40c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
sûwm (שׁוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כֶּלִי) [pronounced <i>k<sup>ee</sup>lee</i> ]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
râʿâh (רֹעֵה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAWH</i> ]	<i>shepherding, tending [a flock]; a shepherd, one who tends sheep</i>	masculine singular, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #7462 BDB #944
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #834 BDB #81
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yal <sup>e</sup> qûwṭ (יָלֶקֶט) [pronounced <i>yah<sup>l</sup>-KOOT</i> ]	<i>a receptacle, a wallet, a bag, pouch, script</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3219 BDB #545

**Translation:** ...and placed them in his shepherd's pouch [lit., *in the shepherd's bag which (is) to him*], even in the wallet;... David carries with him a shepherd's pouch, and he places the stones inside one of the compartments of this bag (I am assuming that it has compartments). This is apparently his food and provision sack, which would make it actually larger than most pouches. Interestingly enough, this is the only Old Testament passage to mention this pouch (or, *scrip*), although it will be noted several times in the New Testament (Matt. 10:10 Mark 6:8 Luke 9:3 10:4 22:35–36). According to Freeman, this pouch is made out of leather, and often thrown over one's shoulder, and still used today.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 137.



## 1 Samuel 17:40d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kela <sup>r</sup> (קֶלַח) [pronounced KEH-lahg]	a sling	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7050 BDB #887
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	hand	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

**Translation:** ...and his sling is in his hand... Only the weapons which David will use are mentioned. He carries his staff in one hand, and the sling in the other. You may recall from Judges 20:16, the tremendous accuracy that one was able to achieve using a sling (**Out of all these people, 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss**). Even though that is certainly a saying, it simply indicates that they were very accurate with this weapon.

The Open Bible tells us about the sling: *[It is] a leather pouch with two long cords. It was swung in a circle overhead until great speed was attained. At the right moment one cord was released, and centrifugal force hurled the stone at the enemy.*<sup>78</sup> Freeman gives us even more information: *The sling was made of leather, or of plaited work of wood, rushes, hair, or sinews. The middle part, where the stone lay, was called the cup...because of its cup-like depression. It was wider than the ends, but the sling gradually narrowed toward the extremities, so that it could be easily handled. In the Egyptian sling, which probably was the same as the Hebrew, there was a loop at one end which was laced over the thumb, in order to retain the weapon when the stone was hurled and the other end became free. The sling was used by shepherds to keep the beasts of prey from the flock, and also to keep the sheep from straying. Husbandmen likewise used it to drive away birds from the fields of corn. In war it was a formidable weapon in skillful hands. The Egyptian slinger carried a bag of round stones depending from his shoulder, as David did...In using the sling, the stone was put into the broad hollowed part, the ends were grasped together in the hand, and after a few whirls around the head to give impetus, the stone was discharged, frequently with force enough to penetrate helmet or shield.*<sup>79</sup>

David is very proficient in the use of either of these pieces of equipment—his staff and his sling. Now, just because these are the only weapons mentioned does not mean that this is all David carried. He had his shepherd's bag (wherein he placed the five stones). I would guess that he also had a knife strapped to his side, which would seem to be a necessary tool/weapon for a shepherd. The knife is never mentioned because he does not use it. Now, you might say—why is he not also carrying a bow and/or a spear? Both of David's hands are full. He has his staff in one hand and the sling in the other; he would carry a staff or a spear, but not both, as carrying both would be redundant. He would not necessarily pack a bow either, as that would require additional equipment (arrows and a way to carry them), as well as both hands free (he would have to lay his sling and staff down to use the bow). So, it would be illogical for him to carry a spear or a bow, but reasonable for him to carry a knife. You should have

<sup>78</sup> *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 389.

<sup>79</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 137.

a reasonable idea as to how David approached Goliath. He takes weapons with him. He does not go barehanded; he is not unprepared.

Barthel tells us: *These slings were deadly weapons, not children's toys, nor were they used exclusively by simple shepherds. Assyrian, Greek, and Roman armies all included special units of sharpshooters equipped with slings.*<sup>80</sup>

1Samuel 17:40e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i> ]	<i>to come near, to draw near, to approach, to come hither</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> iy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** ...and he approached the Philistine. This must have been a surprise to Goliath, for anyone of the Jews to move toward him. 80 times, Goliath had mocked the Jews, intimidating them. All of this was psychological. No matter what the Jews chose to do, Goliath had them psychologically on the run. He expected that even if a man, after all this time, developed enough fortitude to step forward, he would still be at a psychological disadvantage. He did not plan on David, however.

The NIV Study Bible writes an excellent summary of this verse: *God's newly appointed shepherd of his people (see 2Sa 5:2; Ps 78:72) goes to defend the Lord's threatened and frightened flock.*<sup>81</sup>

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## David Battles Goliath

And so goes the Philistine, going and approaching unto David and the man bearing the [large] shield [was] to his faces.

1Samuel  
17:41

And the Philistine also advanced, moving closer [lit., *going and approaching*] to David. The man bearing the [large] shield [was] before him.

The Philistine also began to approach David, with his shield bearer in front of him.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

<sup>80</sup> Manfred Barthel, *What the Bible Really Says*; ©1982; © by Quill; p. 160.

<sup>81</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 398.

Masoretic Text	And so goes the Philistine, going and approaching unto David and the man bearing the [large] shield [was] to his faces.
Alexandrian Septuagint	And the Philistine advanced and drew close to David, and a man bearing his shield [was] before him, and the Philistine looked on. This verse comes from the Alexandrian Septuagint; it is not found in the beta Septuagint.

Significant differences: The Greek adds an additional phrase. Recall that the primary version of the Septuagint (I have been called it the beta Septuagint) is much shorter than the Hebrew or the Alexandrian version.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Goliath came toward David, walking behind the soldier who was carrying his shield.
NJB	The Philistine, preceded by his shield-bearer, came nearer and nearer to David.
NLT	Goliath walked out toward David with his shield bearer ahead of him,...
TEV	The Philistine started waling toward David, with his shield bearer walking in front of him. He kept coming closer,...

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The Philistine, preceded by the man carrying his shield, was coming closer and closer to David.
JPS (Tanakh)	The Philistine, meanwhile, was coming closer to David, preceded by his shield-bearer.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him.
Young's Updated LT	And the Philistine goes on, going and drawing near unto David, and the man bearing the buckler <i>is</i> before him,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** As Goliath observes David coming out toward him from the line of soldiers, he also moves forward. His shield bearer is in front of him, and Goliath looks David over carefully (v. 42a).

### 1Samuel 17:41a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
P <sup>o</sup> lish <sup>tiy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>o</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

## 1Samuel 17:41a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qârêb (קָרַב) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAY<sup>e</sup>V</i> ]	<i>approaching, coming near, drawing near</i>	adjective	Strong's #7131 BDB #898
Apart from one vowel point, the masculine singular, Qal active participle is identical to the adjective. The vowel points were added long after the original text was written.			
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** [And the Philistine also walks, moving closer](#) [lit., *going and approaching*] [to David](#). Much of this battle is to be psychological (at least in Goliath's mind). He cannot just stay where he is. No matter where he is standing, he also has to move toward David. He needs to intimidate David. As we will see, Goliath is not yet ready to battle David. He will have to belittle him first. As we read in Prov. 16:18: [Pride goes before destruction, and arrogance precedes stumbling](#).

## 1Samuel 17:41b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
nâsâʿ (נָסָא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i> ]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
tsinnâh (צִנְחָה) [pronounced <i>tzin-NAW</i> ]	<i>large shield</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6793 BDB #857
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

## 1Samuel 17:41b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i>. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i>.</p>			

**Translation:** *The man bearing the [large] shield [was] before him.* In poker, this is known as a *tell*. Goliath is huge and muscular and foreboding; however, right in front of him is a shield bearer. There are two men out on the field here, and the shield bearer is a human shield holding up a shield. Goliath always keeps this man out in front of him, which indicates that his demeanor is more bravado than bravery. He is not going to get struck by a stray arrow or spear, shot from the crowd. No one stands in front of David. Psychologically, David scores.

<p><b>And so examines [carefully] the Philistine and so he sees David and so he despises him for he was a youth and ruddy with a fair appearance.</b></p>	<p>1Samuel 17:42</p>	<p><b>The Philistine [carefully] examined [the approaching David] and [when] he saw David, he despised him, because he was a youth, reddish with a fair appearance.</b></p>
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**The Philistine carefully examined the approaching David, as well as the soldiers who stayed far behind him; and when he was able to see David clearly, he disdained him, because David was a very young man, reddish in color, with a very youthful appearance.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so examines [carefully] the Philistine and so he sees David and so he despises him for he was a youth and ruddy with a fair appearance.
Septuagint	And Goliath saw David, and despised him; for he was a lad, and ruddy, with a fair countenance.

Significant differences: We have an additional phrase in the Hebrew—an important one—which indicates that Goliath looked the situation over quite carefully. Also, we find Goliath's name in the LXX, but not in Hebrew.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NAB	When he had sized David up, and seen that he was youthful, and ruddy, and handsome in appearance, he held him in contempt.
REB	He looked David up and down and had nothing but disdain for this lad with his ruddy cheeks and bright eyes. 17:42 <b>lad...eyes:</b> <i>prob. rdg; Heb. obscure.</i>
TEV	...and when he got a good look at David, he was filled with scorn for him because he was just a nice, good-looking boy.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	When the Philistine caught sight of David, he scorned him, for he was but a boy, ruddy and handsome.
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### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible

And when the Philistine looked around and saw David, he scorned *and* despised him; for he was but an adolescent, with a healthy reddish color, and a fair face.

NASB

When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance.

Young's Updated LT

...and the Philistine looks attentively, and sees David, and despises him, for he was a youth, and ruddy, with a fair appearance.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The Philistine examines David carefully and notes that he is a handsome, but a very young man. He disdains David immediately.

### 1Samuel 17:42a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâbaṭ (נָבַט) [pronounced <i>naw<sup>b</sup>-VAHT</i> ]	<i>to look intently at, to examine carefully; to regard, to consider</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5027 BDB #613
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** The Philistine [carefully] examined [the approaching David]... Actually, the Philistine was looking at everything carefully. He of course, examined the approaching soldier carefully, to get a feel for him; and he looked at the soldiers behind him. Goliath was a man who lacked ethics, and he looked over everything carefully, making certain that it was not a trick or a trap. It is possible that Goliath is squinting because he cannot see very well. He examines David as carefully as he can, watching his every move. He is looking over everything carefully, trying to figure out what sneaky thing Israel might be planning.

### 1Samuel 17:42b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** ...and [when] he saw David,... All Goliath sees is David. There is no trap; David even approaches him without a shield bearer. As Goliath moved forward, he had to get an idea as to whom his enemy would be, and he also had to be cognizant of everything around him. However, all he sees is David.

### 1Samuel 17:42c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâzâh (בָּזָאָה) [pronounced baw-ZAW]	<i>to despise, to regard with contempt, to hold in contempt</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #959 BDB #102
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâyâh (הָיָאָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
nâ'ar (נָעָר) [pronounced NAH-ġahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad <sup>m</sup> ôwnîy (אֲדָמָוֹנִי) [pronounced ad <sup>e</sup> -moh-NEE]	<i>red, ruddy</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #132 BDB #10
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
yâpneh (יָפֵה) [pronounced yaw-FEH]	<i>fair, beautiful</i>	adjective; masculine singular construct	Strong's #3303 BDB #421
mar <sup>e</sup> eh (מַרְאֵה) [pronounced mahr-EH]	<i>the act of seeing, sight, vision; appearance, that which is seen</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4758 BDB #909

**Translation:** ...he despised him, because he was a youth, reddish with a fair appearance. Goliath immediately hates David. First of all, he is a Jew; and the Philistines, in general, hated the Jews. As you are well aware, many of the Arabs have this persistent hatred for all Jews; Goliath did as well. Prejudice against the Jew did not suddenly spring out of nowhere. It has its roots in Satanic doctrine. Goliath also hates David because he is a youth. He's 16 or 18 or 20 years old. He does not appear to be a soldier even. It is as though all of the Jews got together and chose the least worthy person to face Goliath. David is twice called *ruddy* (or *reddish* in appearance), which distinguishes him from his fellow Jews. I would assume that most of the Arab and Jewish peoples had a brownish color to them; however, David did not tan well, he reddened. Finally, David is a good-looking young man. He is not a grizzled soldier. He is not young, but mean-looking. He is simply a good-looking young man, and Goliath hates him for it. He is also willing to stand up to Goliath, and Goliath hates him for that as well.

Edersheim has always turned a nice phrase; he describes this scene: *Goliath had evidently retired within the ranks of the Philistines, satisfied that, as before, his challenge had remained unanswered. And now*



*tidings that a champion of Israel was ready for the fray once more called him forth. As he advanced, David waited not till he had crossed the wady and ascended the slope where Israel's camp lay, but hastened forward, and picked him fives stones from the dry river-bed in the valley. And now the Philistine had time to take, as he thought, the full measure of his opponent. Only a fair-looking, stout, unarmed shepherd-youth, coming against him with his shepherd's gear, as if he were a dog! Was this, then, the champion of Israel? In true Eastern fashion, he advanced, boasting of his speedy and easy victory; in true heathen spirit the while cursing and blaspheming the God in Whose Name David was about to fight.<sup>82</sup>*

**And so says the Philistine unto David, "A dog me that you are coming unto me in the sticks?" And so curses the Philistine David in his Elohim.** 1Samuel 17:43

**The Philistine roared at David, "[Am] I a dog that you come to me with sticks [and stones]?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his God, [Elohim].**

**The Philistine roared at David, "Am I a dog that you come after me with sticks?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his God.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

atin Vulgate	And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with a staff?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.
Masoretic Text	And so says the Philistine unto David, "A dog me that you are coming unto me in the sticks?" And so curses the Philistine David in his Elohim.
Septuagint	And the Philistine said to David, "Am I as a dog, that you come against me with a staff and stones?" [And David said, "No, but worse than a dog."]. And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The bracketed words are not in the Alexandrian or Hebrew text.

Significant differences: In the Hebrew, Goliath does not say *stones*. We don't know whether Goliath observed David pick up the stones—my guess is that he did, as he did look David over very carefully as David approached him. Goliath would have seen David reach down into the stream for the stones. Notice that *staff* in the Hebrew is plural, but singular in the Latin, Greek and Syriac. I will try to explain that a little later in the Hebrew exegesis. Only the Greek adds *and stones*.

Also, in the Alexandrian Septuagint, we have an additional phrase at the end.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Do you think I'm a dog?" Goliath asked. "Is that why you've come after me with a stick?" He cursed David in the name of the Philistine gods...
NAB	The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with a staff?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods...
NLT	"Am I a dog," he roared at David, "that you come at me with a stick?" And he cursed David by the names of his gods.
TEV	He said to David, "What's that stick for? Do you think I'm a dog?" And he called down curses from his god on David.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<sup>82</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 471.

God's Word™

The Philistine asked David, "Am I a dog that you come to [attack] me with sticks?" So the Philistine called on his gods to curse David.

JPS (Tanakh)

And the Philistine called out to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with sticks?" The Philistine cursed David by his gods;...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

Young's Updated LT

And the Philistine says unto David, "Am I a dog that you are coming unto me with staves?" And the Philistine reviles David by his gods.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath continues the insults. David is carrying a staff, which could be used for, among other things, to ward off dogs. Goliath asks if he is a dog, that David approaches him with sticks (plural). David is probably carrying only the staff. Then Goliath curses David; although it could be that Goliath curses David by his own gods, he probably curses David using the title Elohim if not the proper name Jehovah.

1Samuel 17:43a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Pʿilishʿtîy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>pʰ-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hă (הֵ) [pronounced <i>heh</i> ]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
keleb (כֶּלֶב) [pronounced <i>KĒH-leʰv</i> ]	<i>dog</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3611 BDB #476
ʾânôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

## 1Samuel 17:43a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
bôw' (בוּא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
maq <sup>l</sup> ôwth (מַקְלוֹת) [pronounced <i>mahk<sup>e</sup>-LOHTH</i> ]	<i>sticks, staves, rods, staffs</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4731 & #4732 BDB #596

In the Septuagint, Goliath adds, *and stones*. Here, it is a tough call. Even though Goliath cannot see the stones (David put them into a pouch), he no doubt noticed David selecting the stones as he advanced toward Goliath. Let me go out on a limb and suggest that Goliath could not see well from distance. In v. 42, Goliath does not simply *look* at David, but he *carefully examines* him. It could be that Goliath was squinting, carefully examining David because he could not see him well from a distance and because a man needs to know his enemy. The fact that Goliath uses the plural of *stick* could indicate that he could not see what David was carrying. It could have looked like *sticks* from a distance. Again, this is only a theory. In any case, a reference to *sticks and stones* seems quite reasonable.

It would also make sense for the Latin, Greek and Syriac to change *sticks* into *stick*, as David is only carrying one stick. Why Goliath uses the plural may not have occurred to them.

The tradition of the Peshitta is that Goliath makes mention of *a staff and a sling*. I don't know that Goliath can even see David's sling from where he is standing.

**Translation:** *The Philistine roared at David, "[Am] I a dog that you come to me with sticks [and stones]?"* Goliath was not a stupid Philistine. When he was carefully examining David, and examining the Jewish soldiers who were in the ranks behind David, he also took note of what David carried. Goliath would continue the psychological warfare. The Jews generally held dogs in low esteem, although there is evidence that dogs were bred and trained to handle certain tasks in the ancient world. They were certainly not pets in Israel as we have today. Obviously, when one needed to control a pack of dogs, often sticks or staves were used to either fend them off, or send them on their way. This does not mean that dogs were absolutely useless. Dogs are scavengers (see what happens when you don't feed King for a few days), and they will eat carrion. So, if diseased sheep or livestock died; or even if a diseased person died, they were often left for the dogs to eat. This actually prevented the spread of many infectious diseases (as long as one avoided contact with dogs, which were considered unclean by the Jews). Goliath probably knew how to speak Hebrew and probably knew several things about the Jews, including their general distaste for dogs. So he goads David by suggesting that David came out to fend him off as though he were a wild dog. "What are you going to do—chase me off with that stick like I am some kind of dog?" Goliath asks. There are actually quite a number of similar statements made referencing dogs: 1Sam. 24:14 2Sam. 3:8 9:8 16:9 2Kings 8:13. In every single statement, a dog is the antithesis of *man's best friend*.

At this point, I am reminded of I Cor. 1:27–28: **God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God.** Before Goliath, David appears weak, and he is despised by Goliath; however, David will defeat this uncircumcised Philistine.

<b>1Samuel 17:43b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâlal (לָלַל) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAL</i> ]	<i>to curse, to execrate</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7043 BDB #886
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tiy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
’êlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

**Translation:** **Then the Philistine cursed David by his God, [Elohim].** There are other words for *God* that Goliath could have used. When he cursed David, it was using the name of David’s God. Goliath did not call on his own gods to curse David—that meaning cannot be inferred from the original Hebrew text; nor did Goliath use the name of his own god in vain in order to curse David (that viewpoint just makes little sense). Goliath cursed David by his (David’s) God. Obviously, Goliath was looking to rattle his opponent, to put him off balance.

A reasonable question might be, *did Goliath fear David?* Before the two engage in battle, Goliath makes at least two statements which have the intent of belittling David, rattling him, thus making him an easier opponent to defeat. However, I don’t think that Goliath even saw it coming. He was certainly a man of bravado and intimidation, and he simply played these cards as a part of his character. It would unnerving for most men to hear that in the next 15 minutes, they will become a carcass for birds and wild animals to feed off of.

**And so says the Philistine unto David, “Come unto me and I may give your flesh to the bird of the [two] heavens and to beast of the field.”**

1Samuel  
17:44

**The Philistine again spoke to David, “Come [on over] to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the animals of the field.”**

**The Philistine continued, saying, “Come on up to me and I will feed your flesh to the birds in the sky and to the wild animals in the fields.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so says the Philistine unto David, “Come unto me and I may give your flesh to the bird of the [two] heavens and to beast of the field.”
Septuagint	And the Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the earth.”

Significant differences: No significant differences. We have *field* in the Hebrew; *earth* in the Greek and Latin.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	...and shouted, “Come on! When I’m finished with you, I’ll feed you to the birds and wild animals!”
NLT	“Come over here, and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals!” Goliath yelled.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™	“Come on,” the Philistine told David, “and I’ll give your body to the birds.”
JPS (Tanakh)	...and the Philistine said to David, “Come here, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field.”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	The Philistine also said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field.”
Young’s Updated LT	And the Philistine says unto David, “Come unto me, and I give your flesh to the fowl of the heavens, and to the beast of the field.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Goliath continues his psychological warfare against David by threatening to feed his flesh to the birds and to the animals.

**1Samuel 17:44a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> iy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong’s #6430 BDB #814

## 1Samuel 17:44a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (לָא) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative with the voluntative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʿel (לָא) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** The Philistine again spoke to David, “Come [on over] to me... The Philistine continued his psychological warfare against David. Again, the idea is to get David to mentally give up before they even fight. What Goliath is going to do is tell David what will become of him when he comes to Goliath.

## 1Samuel 17:44b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bâsâr (בָּשָׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAWR</i> ]	<i>flesh; body; animal meat</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1320 BDB #142
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿôwph (עוֹפִי) [pronounced <i>gohf</i> ]	<i>birds; used collectively for anything that flies, including bats and flying insects</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5775 BDB #733



## 1Samuel 17:44b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	heavens, skies	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
b <sup>e</sup> hêmâh (בְּהֵמָה) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> hay-MAW]	mammal, beast, animal, cattle	feminine singular construct, often used in the collective sense	Strong's #929 BDB #96
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	field, land, open field, open country	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

In the Aramaic, Septuagint and Vulgate, this reads *beasts of the earth*.<sup>83</sup> In my version of the Peshitta, this reads *beasts of the field* (the Peshitta is the Syriac version; and Syriac is a specialized form of Aramaic). Despite the fact that this difference is insignificant, I still prefer to mention it. Those people who glibly think that the doctrines of Scripture are radically different because someone changed the text obviously have no clue as to how many manuscripts we have; how many checks and balances we have; and the fact that 99% of the differences are not doctrinal in nature.

**Translation:** ...and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the animals of the field.” Goliath’s promise to David is to feed his carcass to the birds of the sky and to the wild animals of the field.

Interestingly enough, Moses said something similar to Israel, should Israel fall into deep apostasy. You may recall the blessings given from Mount Gerizim and the curses delivered from Mount Ebal. “But it will be, if you do not obey Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curse will come upon you and overtake you...Y<sup>e</sup>howah will cause you to be defeated before you enemies; you will go out one way against them, and you will flee seven ways from before them, and you will be [a vision] of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. And your carcasses will be food for all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.” (Deut. 28:15, 25–26). A similar passage describing the disposition of the enemy armies to God in Jer. 34:20 and Rev. 19:17–18.

And so says David unto the Philistine, “You are coming unto me in a sword and in a spear and in a javelin [possibly, a shield] and I am coming unto you in a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah of Armies, Elohim of ranks of Israel, Whom you have defied [this day].”

1Samuel  
17:45

Then David responded to the Philistine, “You have come to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin [or possibly a shield], but I have come to you in the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah of the Armies, the Elohim of the ranks of Israel, Whom you have defied [this day].”

David responded to him, saying, “You come to me with a sword and a spear and a javelin; however, I come to you in the name of Jehovah of the Armies, the God of the ranks of Israel—Whom you have defied this day!

Here is how others have handled this verse:

<sup>83</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham’s *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 306.



**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so says David unto the Philistine, “You are coming unto me in a sword and in a spear and in a javelin [possibly, a <i>shield</i> ] and I am coming unto you in a name of Y <sup>h</sup> owah of Armies, Elohim of ranks of Israel, Whom you have defied [this day].
Septuagint	And David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword, and with spear, and with shield; but I come to you in the name of the Lord God of hosts of the army of Israel, which you have defied...
Significant differences:	In the Hebrew, it sounds as if there are two titles (meaning, possibly, two members of the Godhead); in the Greek, there is clearly one title of one Person of the Trinity. As is most often the case, the Latin and Syriac are in agreement with the Hebrew text.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	David answered: You’ve come out to fight me with a sword and a spear and a dagger. But I’ve come out to fight you in the name of the LORD All-Powerful. He is the God of Israel’s army, and you have insulted him too!
NLT	David shouted in reply, “You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD Almighty—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.
REB	David answered, ‘You have come against me with sword and spear and dagger, but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel which you have defied.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word™</i>	David told the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Armies, the God of the army of Israel, whom you have insulted.
JPS (Tanakh)	David replied to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom you have defied.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.
<i>Young’s Updated LT</i>	And David says unto the Philistine, “You are coming unto me with sword, and with spear, and with buckler, and I am coming unto you in the name of Jehovah of Hosts, God of the ranks of Israel, whom you have reproached.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David responds to the Philistine, but not in kind. David is not looking to gain some sort of a psychological advantage over Goliath. That is meaningless, insofar as David is concerned. David simply tells Goliath that he has come with all kinds of hand-to-hand combat weapons, but David has come in the name of Jehovah God of the Armies of Israel, whom Goliath has defied.

## 1Samuel 17:45a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** [Then David responded to the Philistine...](#) David, on the other hand, is not engaging in psychological warfare. He is not trying to match Goliath shout for shout. What he will make clear are the doctrinal issues involved. He will shout so that both the Israelites and the Philistines can hear that this is a battle which has come about because Goliath and his fellow Philistines have defied the Living God of Israel.

## 1Samuel 17:45b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2719 BDB #352

## 1Samuel 17:45b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
chănîyth (חַנִּיִּת) [pronounced <i>khuh-NEETH</i> ]	<i>spear</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
kîydôwn (כִּידוֹן) [pronounced <i>kee-DOWN</i> ]	<i>spear, lance, javelin; and possibly shield</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3591 BDB #475

**Translation:** "You have come to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin [or possibly a shield],... David points out what Goliath has brought to the table. David did not walk out against Goliath without a clue. He also knows what Goliath has. Goliath is carrying a sword and a spear, and he either has a bronze javelin or a bronze shield slung over his back. Even though he has a shield bearer before him, my assumption is that is a huge shield. When Goliath becomes involved in hand-to-hand combat, he would need a smaller shield which he could hold in one hand.

## 1Samuel 17:45c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾânôkîy (אֲנֹכִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #935 BDB #97

## 1Samuel 17:45c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (לָא) [pronounced e/]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
shêm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly y <sup>hoh</sup> -WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ts <sup>eb</sup> â`ôwth (צְבָאוֹת) [pronounced tz <sup>eb</sup> -vaw-OHTH]	<i>armies, wars</i>	masculine plural noun, simply the plural of Strong's #6635, but often used in titles	Strong's #6635 BDB #838

**Translation:** *but I have come to you in the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah of the Armies,...* It is difficult to be anti-military when one examines the Old Testament (that is, as the Word of God). God Himself is many times referred to as *Jehovah of the Armies*. Many of the great men of the Bible are warriors; sometimes when a list of great men is given (where we are given little additional information about them), they are warriors as well (e.g., 2Sam. 23:24–39).

David needs little else. He comes in the name of Jehovah of the Armies. God is the Commander-in-Chief of the greatest army of all—the army of angels. Goliath has approached David in human viewpoint; David has approached Goliath with divine viewpoint. *Our help is in the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who made heaven and earth* (Psalm 124:8). As Hezekiah said to his people, when threatened by Sennacherib, king of Assyria: *“Be strong and courageous; do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria, nor because of all the multitude which is with him; for the One with us is greater than the one with him. With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God to help us and to fight our battles.”* (2Chron. 32:7–8a). *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses* (II Cor. 10:4). As Moses told the people early on: *“When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them, for Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt is with you. Now it will be that when you are approaching the battle, the priest will come near and speak to the people.”* (Deut. 20:1–2).

What David is doing here is very public—public to Israel and to the Philistines. It is important that he be equal to this great test which he faces. Do you see how important the attack of the lion and the bear are? These attacks in private gave David the confidence to face Goliath publically.

## 1Samuel 17:45d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods</i> or <i>God</i> ; transliterated <i>Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
ma'ārekeh (מַעְרָכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-ġuh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line</i> ; this is also translated <i>armies</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
Yisʿrāʾēl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Although one could interpret this as the titles of 2 members of the Godhead in the Hebrew (Latin and Syriac); it is one and one person only in the Greek.

**Translation:** .....the Elohim of the ranks of Israel,... David goes on. He has come in the name of the God of the ranks of Israel. Jehovah God is the God of Israel, and therefore the God of Israel's army. *Y<sup>h</sup>owah* (or, if you will, *Jehovah*) is the name of a particular member of the Godhead. Throughout much of the Old Testament, this name references the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate form. He is over all Israel's army. However, the plural *Elohim* refers to the *Godhead, the Trinity*. In fact, it would not be completely out of line to translate *Elohim* as *the Triune God*. God is over the ranks or the armies of Israel. He is their Commander-in-Chief. In this case, I would suggest that we are speaking of God the Father.

## 1Samuel 17:45e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
chāraph (חָרַף) [pronounced <i>khah-RAHF</i> ]	<i>to defy, to reproach, to scorn, to reproach, to scornfully defy; to discredit, to shame, to rebuke</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2778 BDB #357 & #358
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

In the Greek, *this day* belongs with v. 45. V. 46 begins with an *and*.

**Translation:** ...Whom you have defied [this day]. Most of the translations get this right. Certainly, Goliath defies the armies of Israel; however, Who he really defies is the God of Israel's armies. As mentioned, the Greek adds *this day* to v. 45. In fact, the Greek is a bit more powerful, and I will follow the Greek in my translation.

The day the this [or, *And...*] delivers you over Y<sup>e</sup>howah [today] into my hand and I have struck you [down] and so I have removed your head from upon you and I have given a carcass of a camp of Philistines the day the this to a bird of the [two] heavens and to animal [or, *living thing*] of the earth and knows all the earth that there [exists] an Elohim for Israel.

1Samuel  
17:46

And Y<sup>e</sup>howah [today] will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you down and I will remove your head from you and this day I will give [your carcass and] the carcasses of the camp of Philistines to the birds of the heavens and to the living things of the earth, so that all the earth will know that there [is] an Elohim for [possibly, *in*] Israel!

And today Jehovah will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you dead and I will remove your head from your body and I will feed your carcass and the carcasses of the Philistine army to the bids of the heavens and to the living things of the earth, so that all of the earth will know that there is a God in Israel.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	This day, and the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will slay you, and take away your head from you: and I will give the carcasses of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the earth: that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.
Masoretic Text	The day the this [or, <i>And...</i> ] delivers you over Y <sup>e</sup> howah [today] into my hand and I have struck you [down] and so I have removed your head from upon you and I have given a carcass of a camp of Philistines the day the this to a bird of the [two] heavens and to animal [or, <i>living thing</i> ] of the earth and knows all the earth that there [exists] an Elohim for Israel.
Septuagint	...this day. And the Lord will shut you up this day into my hand; and I will kill you, and take away your head from off you, and I will give your limbs and the limbs of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky, and to the wild beasts of the earth; and all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel.

Significant differences: In the Greek, *this day* is placed with the previous verse. If this were the case, then we would find a wâw consecutive or a wâw conjunction in the Hebrew, which we do not (however, see the exegesis below).

The first verb is an accurate rendering into the Greek. The second verb translation is reasonable for the Greek, so I do not note that as a difference. In the Greek, David says he will give over Goliath's limbs as well as those of his army to the birds and beasts; in the Hebrew, it is simply the carcass of Goliath's army. As is most often the case, the difference in the Greek translation and the Hebrew text has very little impact on the overall meaning. The Latin and Syriac are both in agreement with the Hebrew, except that they both read *carcasses* rather than *carcass*.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Today the LORD will help me defeat you. I'll knock you down and cut off your head, and I'll feed the bodies of the other Philistine soldiers to the birds and wild animals. Then the whole world will know that Israel has a real God.
NJB	Today the LORD shall deliver you into my hand; I will strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will leave your corpse and the corpses of the Philistine army for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field; thus the whole land shall learn that Israel has a God.

- NLT Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel!
- REB The LORD will put you into my power this day; I shall strike you down and cut your head off and leave your carcass and the carcasses of the Philistines to the birds and the wild beasts; the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 17:46 **leave...Philistines:** so Gk; Heb. leave the carcass of the Philistines.
- TEV This very day the LORD will put you in my power; I will defeat you and cut off your head. And I will give the bodies of the Philistine soldiers to the birds and animals to eat. Then the whole world will know that Israel has a God,...

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

- God’s Word™ Today the LORD will hand you over to me. I will strike you down and cut off your head. And this day I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals. The whole world will know that Israel has a God.
- JPS (Tanakh) This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hands. I will kill you and cut off your head; and I will give the carcasses [Septuagint reads “your carcass and the carcasses.”] of the Philistine camp to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. All the earth shall know that there is a God in [So many Heb. manuscripts And ancient versions; other manuscripts and the editions read “to.”] Israel.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- The Emphasized Bible ||This day|| will Yahweh deliver thee into my hand I will smite thee and take thy head from off thee, and will give thy dead body and the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day unto the birds of heaven and unto the wild beasts of the earth, —that all the earth may know that Israel hath a God;...
- NASB “This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. and I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,...
- Young’s Updated LT This day does Jehovah shut you up into my hand—and I have struck you, and turned aside your head from off you, and have given the carcase of the camp of the Philistines this day to the fowl of the heavens, and to the beast of the earth, and all the earth knows that God is for Israel.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David continues making the doctrinal issue clear—the God of Israel will give Goliath to David in battle. David furthermore tells Goliath that he will cut off his head and that the bodies of the Philistine army will become food for the birds and wild animals. He concludes by saying that all the land will know that there is a God for Israel.

<b>1Samuel 17:46a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong’s Numbers</b>
yōwm (יֹמ) [pronounced yohm]	day, today (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong’s #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, thus	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong’s #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260



## 1Samuel 17:46a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
In the Greek, <i>this day</i> belongs with the previous line. “Whom you have defied this day!” The word <i>today</i> is added in the Greek after <i>Lord</i> . However, there is no <i>and</i> which precedes the next verb. Here's the deal: the imperfect tense begins with a yodh (י), which can be mistaken for a wâw conjunction (ו). The vowel point is the same; however, the vowel points were added later. If this mistake is an accurate appraisal of the situation, then the verb would be in the perfect (completed) tense. When speaking of what Jehovah Elohim will do, it is very common to use the perfect tense.			
My point here is, this could be reasonably argued either way. In any case, the overall meaning is changed very little and there are no resultant doctrinal problems.			
çâgar (גָּרַח) [pronounced saw-GAHR]	<i>shut up, to close up; however, in the Piel and the Hiphil, it means to deliver over</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5462 BDB #688
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
The Greek inserts the word <i>today</i> at this point. Although this is not followed by many translations, I have followed this in my translation.			
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

**Translation:** *And Y<sup>e</sup>howah [today] will deliver you into my hand...* David makes the doctrine clear. It is Jehovah God of Israel Who will deliver Goliath into the hand of David, meaning simply that David would prevail over Goliath in this one-on-one battle.

## 1Samuel 17:46b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645

**Translation:** *...and I will strike you down...* The first thing that will happen is that David will strike Goliath down in battle. David is going to give Goliath a blow-by-blow account of how their battle will go. This is not so much

bravado on David's part, but a prophetic utterance. He makes it clear to both sides of this battle that the God of the Jews will deliver them, and this is exactly how He will do it.

### 1Samuel 17:46c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çûwr (וּרָו) [pronounced <i>soor</i> ]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
êth (תָּ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rô`sh (רֶשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i> ]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to*

**Translation:** *...and I will remove your head from you...* The second thing that will happen is that David will cut off Goliath's head. David is telling Goliath his entire battle plan right up front. This must have seemed like an odd thing to say for David to call out, as David was clearly not carrying a sword (he probably did carry a knife). No doubt, Goliath squinted a bit more at these remarks, looking for David's sword.

### 1Samuel 17:46d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
The Greek Septuagint inserts <i>...your carcass and...</i>			
peger (פֶּגֶר) [pronounced <i>PĒH-ger</i> ]	<i>corpse, carcass</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6297 BDB #803

## 1Samuel 17:46d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
machāneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH]	camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>e</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated Philistines	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day, today (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, thus	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
lāmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿōwph (עוֹף) [pronounced gōhf]	birds; used collectively for anything that flies, including bats and flying insects	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5775 BDB #733
shāmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	heavens, skies	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lāmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chayyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khay-YAWH]	living thing, animal, organisms, life forms	feminine singular construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #312
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land	feminine singular noun (with a definite article)	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...and this day I will give [your carcass and] the carcasses of the camp of Philistines to the birds of the heavens and to the living things of the earth,... Goliath has threatened to feed David's body to the birds and beasts; David tells him and all who are listening, that David will give the body of Goliath and the bodies of the Philistine army as food for the air born and land scavengers of the wilderness.

## 1Samuel 17:46e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 17:46e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâda' (יָדָע) [pronounced yaw-DAHĠ]	<i>to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yêsh (יֵשׁ) [pronounced yaysh]	<i>being, substance, existence; used as a substitute for to be (without reference to number or tense); to be present, to be ready, to exist; the verb to be may be implied</i>	substantive with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3426 BDB #441
'êlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
The MT has the lâmed preposition here. However, 2 early printed editions, the Aramaic, the Septuagint, the Syriac and the Vulgate read <i>in</i> instead. <sup>84</sup>			
Yis'ra'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-row-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** ...so that all the earth will know that there [is] an Elohim for [possibly, in] Israel! David knows that he will defeat Goliath and that the entire Philistine army will be defeated, not because he is a great warrior, but because God is the God of Israel. He is not a god which they made up, but the True God of the Universe.

We have spoken many times of textual criticism, and here I have applied one of the laws of textual criticism that you may not grasp at first. When there are two readings, one chooses the *least likely* of the readings. This is because it is more human nature to take a phrase which is somewhat obscure and attempt to cause it to make more sense. We would expect to find *in Israel* at the end of this verse, and so we do the four of the early translations and paraphrases. However, the MT has *for* or *with regards to* Israel. The idea is that God functions on behalf of Israel. This is somewhat of a regional claim which David is making now. All of the various surrounding nations had their own gods; David now claims that there is a God for Israel—the implication is that He is the omnipotent God.

<sup>84</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 307.

Throughout much of Israel's history, God acted in such a way that all of the world would know that He is the God of Israel, Who delivers and preserves Israel. In Joshua 4:24, we read: "For Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed, just as Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God had done to the Sea of Reeds, which He dried up before us until we had crossed; that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of Y<sup>e</sup>howah is mighty, so that you may fear and respect Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God forever." When Elijah compares his God to the heathen gods, prior to the demonstration of the God of Israel's power, he says: "O Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word." (1Kings 18:36b). Similar passages: 1Kings 8:43 2Kings 19:19 Psalm 46:10 Isa. 37:20 52:10.

**And know all the [organized] assembly the this that not in sword and in spear saves Y<sup>e</sup>howah, for to Y<sup>e</sup>howah the battle and He has given you [all] into our hand."** 1Samuel 17:47

**As a result [lit., and], all this assembly will know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah does not save by the sword or by the spear, for the battle is Y<sup>e</sup>howah's, and He has given you into our hands."**

**Finally, this entire assemblage of armies will know that Jehovah does not deliver with a sword or spear, for this battle is Jehovah's and He will give all of you into our Hand."**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear: for it is His battle, and He will deliver you into our hands.
Masoretic Text	And know all the [organized] assembly the this that not in sword and in spear saves Y <sup>e</sup> howah, for to Y <sup>e</sup> howah the battle and He has given you [all] into our hand."
Septuagint	And all this assembly will know that the Lord delivers not by sword or spear, for the battle [is] the Lord's and the Lord will deliver you into our hands."

Significant differences: Interestingly enough, we find *Lord* once in the Vulgate, twice in the Masoretic text, and thrice in the Greek. Apart from that, and the word *hand* (plural in the Greek and Latin; singular in the Hebrew), the versions are in agreement.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	Everybody here will see that the LORD doesn't need swords or spears to save his people. The LORD always wins his battles, and he will help us defeat you.
NLT	And everyone will know that the LORD does not need weapons to rescue his people. It is his battle, not ours. The LORD will give you to us!"
TEV	...and everyone here will see that the LORD does not need swords or spears to save his people. He is victorious in battle, and he will put all of you in our power."

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)	And this whole assembly shall know that the LORD can give victory without sword or spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and He will deliver you into our hands."
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#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...and that all this gathered host [usually rendered <i>convocation</i> ] may know that <not with sword and with spear> doth Yahweh save, —for <unto Yahweh> belongeth the battle, and he will deliver you into our hand.
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NASB

and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD's and He will give you into our hands."

Young's Updated LT

...and all this assembly does know that not by sword and by spear does Jehovah save, that the battle is Jehovah's, and He has given you into our hand."

**What is the gist of this verse?** David continues with the doctrinal viewpoint. All that observe this fight will know that Jehovah God does not deliver by advanced weaponry, but because He is sovereign.

1Samuel 17:47a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâda <sup>c</sup> (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHÇ</i> ]	<i>to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
qâhâl (קָהָל) [pronounced <i>kaw-HAWL</i> ]	<i>an organized assembly, a called convocation; this is not just a crowd, but people who were assembled for a reason</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6951 BDB #874
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô <sup>c</sup> (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88



## 1Samuel 17:47a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chănîyth (חַנִּיִּת) [pronounced <i>khuh-NEETH</i> ]	<i>spear</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2595 BDB #333
yâsha' (יָשָׁא) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAHG</i> ]	<i>to deliver, to save</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3467 BDB #446
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** *As a result* [lit., *and*], *all this assembly will know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah does not save by the sword or by the spear,...* Goliath is a huge man and he is carrying a sword and a spear and a shield (or javelin). David says that all those assembled there will find out that God does not deliver by the sword or by the spear. This is a recurring theme in Scripture: Ex. 14:13–18 Judges 7:2, 4, 7 1Sam. 2:9–10 14:6 2Chron. 14:11 20:15 Psalm 33:16–17 44:6–7 Eccles. 9:11 Hosea 1:7 Zech 4:6. This of course does not mean that David would go into battle weaponless against Goliath; it simply means that God will deliver His Own despite the disparity of weaponry.

## 1Samuel 17:47b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** *...for the battle is Y<sup>e</sup>howah's,...* When it comes to war, God has chosen who will be victorious. David has faith that God has chosen Israel, as He had given all the Land of Promise to Israel and the Philistine were encroaching on that gift.

## 1Samuel 17:47c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251



## 1Samuel 17:47c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâthan (נתן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

One early printed edition, the Aramæan (also known as the Targum of Jonathan), Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate all have *hands* here instead.<sup>85</sup>

**Translation:** *...and He has given you into our hands.* David uses the perfect tense for *to give*; God has given all of the Philistine army into the hand of Israel.

Time and time again, God acted on behalf of Israel to show that He was the God of the Universe: “Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, ‘By this you will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah.’ Listen, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will be turned to blood.” (Ex. 7:17). See also Ex. 9:14, 16, 29 Deut. 4:34–35 Joshua 2:10–11 4:23–24 1Kings 8:59–60 18:36–39 2Kings 5:15 19:19. Salvation has always been by faith in Jehovah God. For those heathen who observed God acting on behalf of Israel—if they chose to believe in Him, they were also saved. Therefore, the various Old Testament saints often made it clear that the God of Israel was acting in their behalf.

Note in this particular passage that David takes an entirely different approach to this battle than does Goliath. What Goliath said was meant to rattle David; it was meant to throw David off his game. Goliath wanted what he perceived as an easy defeat to be even easier. David is not looking to throw any kind of fear into Goliath. Should Goliath be afraid? Certainly, but that is not why David has said what he said. David is making a doctrinal point for all Israel and all of the Philistines to hear.

Do you recall earlier in this chapter when Jesse spoke to David and it was clear that Jesse continued to teach David right and wrong almost in such a way that was second nature to Jesse. The expression, *the apple doesn't fall far from the tree* is apropos at this time. David now explains that he is going to be victorious, despite Goliath's obvious advantage of size and strength, and that it is because he, David, represents the Living God of Israel. David explains to all who are listening, including the thousands of men who did not have the nerve to face Goliath, and including every Philistine soldier, that the key here is God's relationship with Israel. Just like Jesse apparently did, David teaches. He makes the doctrinal issues clear to both armies. One purpose, believe it or not, is that some Philistines might choose to believe in the God of Israel during their last few hours on this earth.

<sup>85</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 307.

And he was that stood up the Philistine and he comes and so he draws near to meet David. And so hastens David and so he runs [toward] the battle line to meet the Philistine.

1Samuel  
17:48

And it was when the Philistine stood up and advanced and drew near to meet David, that David quickly ran [toward] the battle line to meet the Philistine.

And when the Philistine stood up and advanced toward David, David quickly ran toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

**Masoretic Text** And he was that stood up the Philistine and he comes and so he draws near to meet David. And so hastens David and so he runs [toward] the battle line to meet the Philistine.

**Septuagint** And the Philistine arose and went to meet David.

**Significant differences:** The Philistine rises up and goes to meet David; David's eagerness is seen in the Hebrew as he advances as well. As usual, the Latin and Syriac are in agreement with the Hebrew text.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

**CEV** When Goliath started forward, David ran toward him.  
**NLT** As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him.  
**REB** When the Philistine began moving closer to attack, David ran quickly to engage him.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

**God's Word™** When the Philistine moved closer in order to attack, David quickly ran toward the opposing battleline to attack the Philistine.  
**JPS (Tanakh)** When the Philistine began to advance toward him again, David quickly ran up to the battle line to face the Philistine.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

**NASB** Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.  
**Young's Updated LT** And it has come to pass, that the Philistine has risen, and he goes, and draws near to meet David, and David hastens and runs to the rank to meet the Philistine,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Both David and the Philistine move toward one another (in the Septuagint, David does not immediately advance).

### 1Samuel 17:48a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>veh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (ה'יָהּ) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

## 1Samuel 17:48a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because, when</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
qûwm (קָוַם) [pronounced <i>koom</i> ]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârab (קָרַב) [pronounced <i>kaw-RA<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to come near, to approach, to draw near in the Qal stem</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong #7126 BDB #897
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ <sup>ʿ</sup> (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
This word is a synonym. See Strong's #7122 BDB #894.			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** *And it was when the Philistine stood up and advanced and drew near to meet David,...* This portion of v. 48 is all that we have in the Septuagint: *And the Philistine arose and went to meet David.* Like many discrepancies, it is difficult to determine whether one should follow the Septuagint or the MT. Most of this chapter is not found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (which means it was damaged; that does not mean it did not exist). In any case, the Philistine had determined that the time for talking had passed and that it was time to kill David.

## 1Samuel 17:48b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâhar (מָהַר) [pronounced <i>maw-HAHR</i> ]	<i>to hasten, to hurry, to make haste; its transitive use is to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #4116 BDB #554
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i> ]	<i>to run</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
ma'ărekeh (מַעֲרֵכָה) [pronounced <i>māh-guh-reh-KEH</i> ]	<i>row, rank, battle line; this is also translated armies</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4634 BDB #790
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
P <sup>h</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** ...that David quickly ran [toward] the battle line to meet the Philistine. Again, this is lacking in the Greek text. There is actually no reason for David to quickly advance. In the next verse, he will be loading his sling. Furthermore, David is already at about the halfway mark, as he has reached down into the dry river bed and taken up five stones. There are no real problems for us, whether we follow the Greek or the Hebrew here.

David will fight a lot battles. In Psalm 27:1–3, we writes: *Y<sup>e</sup>howah is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear? Y<sup>e</sup>howah the defense of my life; whom should I dread? When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell. Though a large army encamp against me, my heart will not fear. Though war arise against me, I am confident.* What set David apart from Saul more than anything else was the doctrine in his soul and the faith that he had in God.

And so puts forth David his hand unto the manufactured good and so he takes from there a stone and so he slings and so he strikes the Philistine unto his forehead and so sinks the stone in his forehead and so he falls upon his face ground-ward.

1Samuel  
17:49

Then David put his hand into the bag and took a stone from there and slung [it]. It struck the Philistine against his forehead so that [lit., *and so*] the stone sunk into his forehead and he fell upon his face to the ground.

Then David took a stone from his bag and slung it toward the Philistine. It struck him in the forehead so hard that the stone cracked his skull bone, causing the Philistine to fall face-down onto the ground.

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so puts forth David his hand unto the manufactured good and so he takes from there a stone and so he slings and so he strikes the Philistine unto his forehead and so sinks the stone in his forehead and so he falls upon his face ground-ward.

Septuagint                              And David stretched out his hand to his scribe, and took from there a stone, and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead, and the stone penetrated through the helmet into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the ground.

Significant differences:              The Greek mentions a helmet; the Hebrew, Latin and Syriac do not. It does make more sense that the rock slung by David struck this heathen on his bare forehead (or between the eyes).

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV    He put a rock in his sling and swung the sling around by its straps. When he let go of one strap, the rock flew out and hit Goliath on the forehead. It cracked his skull, and he fell facedown on the ground.

NAB    David put his hand into the bag and took out a stone, hurled it with the sling, and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone embedded itself in his brow, and he fell prostrate on the ground.

NJB    Putting his hand in his bag, he took out a stone, slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead; the stone penetrated his forehead and he fell face downwards on the ground.

NLT    Reaching into his shepherd's bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it from his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face downward to the ground.

TEV    He reached into his bag and took out a stone, which he slung at Goliath. It hit him on the forehead and broke his skull, and Goliath fell face downward on the ground.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)                              David put his hand into the bag; he took out a stone and slung it. It struck the Philistine in the forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB    And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung *it*, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground.

Young's Updated LT

...and David puts forth his hand unto the vessel, and takes from there a stone, and slings, and strikes the Philistine on his forehead, and the stone sinks into his forehead, and he falls on his face to the earth.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David reached into his bag and took out one of the stones. He slung the stone at Goliath, striking him in the head and it knocked him down.

1Samuel 17:49a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i> ]	<i>to send, to send for, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
k <sup>o</sup> lîy (כֹּלִי) [pronounced <i>k<sup>o</sup>lee</i> ]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3627 BDB #479

**Translation:** Then David put his hand into the bag... David already had a battle plan. He did not charge out there against Goliath without some sort of plan of action. He quickly reaches into his pouch, wherein were the five stones.

1Samuel 17:49b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:49b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there, thither, whither</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
ʿeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced EH <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>stone</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6

**Translation:** ...and took a stone from there... He took out one of the stones. This was a reasonably large stone, perhaps the size of a baseball.

## 1Samuel 17:49c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâla' (קָלַעַ) [pronounced kaw-LAH]	<i>to sling, to hurl forth, to throw</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7049 BDB #887

**Translation:** ...and slung [it]. Given David's weapon and his prowess with that weapon, we may assume that the speed of this rock would have been 90–100 miles per hour, not unlike a pitched ball from a very fast baseball pitcher.

## 1Samuel 17:49d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645



## 1Samuel 17:49d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The use of the imperfect is interesting here, as the striking of the stone would seem to be an instantaneous action. Perhaps what is in view is the striking of Goliath's forehead along with his falling over, leading to David decapitating him.			
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Pʿilishîy (פִּלִּישְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>pʰ-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mêtzach (מִצְחוֹ) [pronounced <i>MAY-tsahkh</i> ]	<i>brow, forehead; used metaphorically to mean boldness, firmness, dogmatism [of a prophet]</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4696 BDB #594

**Translation:** [It struck the Philistine against his forehead...](#) We do not know exactly the kind of a helmet that Goliath wore (v. 5). However, it obviously allowed David enough room above the eyes so that he could strike Goliath in the forehead. Perhaps this his Goliath slightly higher than right between the eyes. Imagine being struck in the forehead by a pitched baseball straight on (a batter is turned slightly, and often a beanball hits him in the forehead at an angle as he moved away from the ball). However, this rock hit Goliath straight on. So, what we have is something akin to a pitched ball, except that it is a rock. Very likely, this cracked Goliath's skull bone. In any case, it will be clear that this both stuns Goliath and knocks him down.

## 1Samuel 17:49e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וְ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ṭâbaʿ (טָבַע) [pronounced <i>taw<sup>b</sup>-VAWḠ</i> ]	<i>to sink, to sink down</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2883 BDB #371
ʿeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced <i>EH<sup>B</sup>-ven</i> ]	<i>stone</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #68 BDB #6
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

## 1Samuel 17:49e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mêtzach (מֵצַח) [pronounced MAY-tshakh]	<i>brow, forehead</i> ; used metaphorically to mean <i>boldness, firmness, dogmatism</i> [of a prophet]	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4696 BDB #594

**Translation:** ...so that [lit., and so] the stone sunk into his forehead... The ball was traveling at such a speed as to cause an indentation in Goliath's forehead. Whether Goliath had a weakness here (and had never been struck before) or whether this simply was an extremely fast rock coming head on, we don't know. In any case, it did not crush the skull, but it probably cracked the skull bone and possibly broke Goliath's nose (depending upon where the stone struck him).

## 1Samuel 17:49f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ʿâl and pânîym usually mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> . Here it simply means <i>upon his face or against his face</i> .			
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...and he fell upon his face to the ground. It is probable that this did not kill Goliath immediately, but it did nail him pretty good. This knocked him over and it is very likely that he had a concussion and passed out for a minute or so. Because of the impact, his brain hemorrhaged and that may have been the cause of his death, which came mercifully quickly. It is also possible (and more likely) that this simply knocked Goliath out and that David will kill him by decapitation. More explanation will follow in the next verse.

**And so prevails David from the Philistine in the sling and in the stone. And so he strikes the Philistine and so he kills him. And a sword [is] not in a hand of David.** 1Samuel 17:50

**In this manner [lit., and so], David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. He struck and killed the Philistine, but [there was] no sword in the hand of David.**

**So David prevailed over the Philistine using only a sling and a stone. He struck and killed the Philistine, even though David did not carry a sword.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

**Masoretic Text** And so prevails David from the Philistine in the sling and in the stone. And so he strikes the Philistine and so he kills him. And a sword [is] not in a hand of David.  
**Alexandrian Septuagint** So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him, and there was no sword in the hand of David. This verse was taken from the Alexandrian Septuagint; it is not found in the LXX B.

**Significant differences:** The Hebrew and Alexandrian LXX are simpatico. The more common version of the LXX lacks this verse.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

**CEV** David defeated Goliath with a sling and a rock. He killed him without even using a sword.  
**NLT** So David triumphed over the Philistine giant with only a stone and sling. And since he had no sword,...

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

**God's Word™** So using [only] a sling and a stone, David proved to be stronger than the Philistine. David struck down and killed the Philistine, even though David didn't have a sword in his hand.  
**JPS (Tanakh)** Thus David bested the Philistine with sling and stone; he struck him down and killed him. David had no sword;...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was not sword in David's hand.  
**Young's Updated LT** And David is stronger than the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and strikes the Philistine and puts him to death, and there is no sword in the hand of David.

**What is the gist of this verse?** What David promised was fulfilled here—he is victorious over Goliath with only a sling and a stone. He did tell Goliath that he would take off his head, but David is not carrying a sword.

**1Samuel 17:50a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:50a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châzaq (חַזַּק) [pronounced <i>khaw-ZAHK</i> ]	<i>to tie up, to bind; to hold fast, to adhere to, to be stuck to; to be strong, to be firm, to increase in prosperity, to strengthen</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2388 BDB #304
When châzaq is followed by מִן or לְ, it means <i>to prevail over, to be stronger than</i> ; when followed by a lâmed, it means <i>to persist (in something), to be constant, to be earnest</i> .			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
kela <sup>ʿ</sup> (עֲקֵלָע) [pronounced <i>KEH-lahg</i> ]	<i>a sling</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7050 BDB #887
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced <i>EH<sup>b</sup>-ven</i> ]	<i>stone</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #68 BDB #6

**Translation:** In this manner [lit., and so], David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. So that there is no misunderstanding about this, David prevailed over the Philistine using only this sling and stone. There were no other weapons involved. Some Bibles make reference to Judges 3:31, where the judge Shamgar strikes down 600 Philistines with an ox goad; and to 15:15 where Samson kills a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. The key was that God was on their side. Any viable weapon would have worked.

## 1Samuel 17:50b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i> ]	<i>to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

**Translation:** He struck and killed the Philistine. The stone not only struck the Philistine in the head, but it possibly killed him as well. The Philistine apparently suffered an almost immediate cerebral hemorrhage. However, the actual blow which killed the Philistine is not completely clear. We think linearly, so we see this as David struck Goliath with a stone, killed him, and then (v. 51) ran up to him and cut off his head. However, in the next verse, it is said that David executed Goliath. My thinking would be this: This portion of v. 50 merely summarizes the event, although there are details on both sides of this. That is, David did knock down and then kill Goliath. In v. 49, David knocked Goliath down (and probably out) with his sling and a stone. In v. 51, David executes Goliath with Goliath's own sword. V. 50 summarizes all of the action.

## 1Samuel 17:50c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
ʿêyn (אֵין) [pronounced <i>ān</i> ]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34

## 1Samuel 17:50c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** ...but [there was] no sword in the hand of David. The author is amazed that David had no other weapons which he used. David has promised to take off Goliath's head. Now, even though David is probably carrying a knife, Goliath is a big man, and David does not want to spend the next 15 minutes decapitating Goliath. Cutting off Goliath's head will have to be accomplished with Goliath's own sword. This statement also helps to explain what David does next. We know that David was led by the Spirit of God, as he already told Goliath that he would decapitate him, even though David was not carrying a sword.

**And so runs David and so he stands unto the Philistine. And so he takes his sword and so he draws her out from her sheath. And so he kills him and so he cuts off in her his head.**

1Samuel  
17:51

**Then David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took his sword out of its sheath and he executed him, using it [lit., by it] to cut off his head.**

**And so see the Philistines that was dead their soldier, they flee.**

**When the Philistines saw that their soldier was dead, they quickly departed.**

**Then David ran over to the Philistine and stood over him. He took his sword out of its sheath and executed Goliath, using the sword to cut off his head.**

**When the Philistines saw that their champion had been killed, they ran for their lives.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so runs David and so he stands unto the Philistine. And so he takes his sword and so he draws her out from her sheath. And so he kills him and so he cuts off in her his head.

##### Septuagint

And so see the Philistines that was dead their soldier, they flee.

And David ran, and stood upon him, and took his sword, and slew him, and cut off his head. And the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, and they fled.

##### Significant differences:

The Hebrew contains a few extra phrases which give us a better idea as to what is going on. *In her* simply refers to David using Goliath's sword; we might better understand this as *by [means of] it [the sword]*. The Latin and Syriac tell us that David draws the sword out of its sheath; but they do not include the prepositional phrase *by it*.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	David ran over and pulled out Goliath's sword. Then he used it to cut off Goliath's head. When the Philistines saw what had happened to their hero, they started running away.
NAB	Then David ran and stood over him; with the Philistine's own sword [which he draw from its sheath] he dispatched him and cut off his head. When they saw that their hero was dead, the Philistines took to flight. The portion of text enclosed with brackets is not found in the oldest translation (by which, I assume, the NAB translators refer to the LXX).
NLT	...he ran over and pulled Goliath's sword from its sheath. David used it to kill the giant and cut off his head.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™	David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took Goliath's sword, pulled it out of its sheath, and made certain the Philistine was dead by cutting off his head. When the Philistines saw their hero had been killed, they fled.
JPS (Tanakh)	...so David ran up and stood over the Philistine, grasped his sword and pulled it from its sheath; and with it he dispatch him and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their warrior was dead, they ran.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran.
Young's Updated LT	...and David runs and stands over the Philistine, and takes his sword and draws it out of its sheath, and puts him to death, and cuts off with it his head. And the Philistines see that their hero <i>is</i> dead and flee.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David, having the upper hand, runs toward the Philistine, takes out his sword, and decapitates Goliath with his own sword. The Philistines who are watching this battle see that Goliath has been killed by this lad and they retreat.

**1Samuel 17:51a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i> ]	<i>to run</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253



## 1Samuel 17:51a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿamad (אָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i> ]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
I would have expected the preposition ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ] here instead (which means <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> ). My guess is that David did not necessarily stand with one foot on Goliath's chest, but that he did stand next to Goliath, on the side where his sword was.			
Pʿilishʿtîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>pʰ-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** [Then David ran and stood over the Philistine](#). We don't have the wrestling stance of David standing over Goliath, his right foot on Goliath's chest, and his arms in the air in victory. David stood next to Goliath, probably on the side where Goliath's sword was. Recall that the preposition in question often implies respect or deference. In other words, David did not stand over Goliath like some kind of conquering hero, but he stood next to him, giving him deference, giving him perhaps even a little space.

## 1Samuel 17:51b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʿêth (עִתְּ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>BV</sup></i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:51b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâlahp (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAHF]	<i>to draw out, to draw off</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8025 BDB #1025
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ṭa'ar (טָעַר) [pronounced TAH-ḡahr]	<i>razor, sheath</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8593 BDB #789

**Translation:** He took his sword out of its sheath... It is not clear to David if Goliath is dead. Obviously, he has been knocked down and he fell hard. However, David is not taking any chances. He is brave, but he is not stupid. He grabs Goliath's sword and takes it out of its sheath. This phrase is missing from the Septuagint.

## 1Samuel 17:51c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מָוַת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to kill, to cause to die, to execute</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Polel imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
The Polel is equivalent to the Piel (intensive) stem (while neither Mansoor nor Zodhiates acknowledge it, both Owen and Seow do). Although there is an intensification of the verb, the Piel also carries with it a sense of causation.			
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kâraṭh (כָּרַת) [pronounced kaw-RAHTH]	<i>to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3772 BDB #503
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

## 1Samuel 17:51c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rô'sh (רֹשׁ) [pronounced rohsh]	head, top, chief, front, choicest	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

**Translation:** ...and he executed him, using it [lit., by it] to cut off his head. Recall our discussion in v. 50. Here it says that David executed Goliath, and the intensive stem is used. My thinking is that this is where Goliath died. He was knocked down before and lost consciousness. However, right here is where David actually kills him by lopping off Goliath's head.

## 1Samuel 17:51d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p <sup>o</sup> -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because, when	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced mooth]	to die	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹר) [pronounced gib-BOAR]	strong man, mighty man, soldier, warrior, combatant, soldier, veteran	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1368 BDB #150
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nûwç (נוּוַח) [pronounced noose]	to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630

**Translation:** When the Philistines saw that their soldier was dead, they quickly departed. The Philistines see this compactly-built, ruddy young man kill their champion. If this small Israelite can kill their greatest champion, then they don't see themselves as standing a chance against the entire Israeli army. Therefore, the Philistines run for their lives. You may recall Goliath's original proposal—if a warrior defeats him, then the Philistines would become slaves to Israel. That was simply a load of crap. The expectation was that the Philistines would either take Israel in a relatively bloodless battle, or that they would soundly defeat them after first subjecting them to the psychological

torment of Goliath. However, none of them ever thought for a moment that Goliath's proposal committed them to slavery, as none could see Goliath as being defeated.

Edersheim gives us a description of what has happened: *Words ceased. Slowly the Philistine giant advanced to what seemed easy victory. He had not even drawn the sword, nor apparently let down the visor of his helmet, —for was not his opponent unarmed? And a well-directed thrust of his spear would lay him bleeding at his feet. Swiftly the shepherd ran to the encounter. A well-aimed stone from his sling—and the gigantic form of the Philistine, encased in its unwieldy armour, mortally stricken, fell heavily to the ground, and lay helpless in sight of his dismayed countrymen, while the unarmed David, drawing the sword from the sheath of his fallen opponent, cut off his head, and returned to the king with the gory trophy. All this probably within less time than it has taken to write it down. And now a sudden dismay seized on the Philistines their champion and pride so suddenly swept down, they fled in wild disorder. It was true, then, that there was a god in Israel! It was true that the war was Jehovah's, and that He had given them into Israel's hand! Israel and Judah raised a shout, and pursued the Philistines up that ravine, through that wady, to Shaarim, and beyond it to the gates of Gath, and up that other wady to Ekron.*<sup>86</sup>

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## Israel Is Victorious over the Philistine Army

**And so rise up men of Israel and Judah and so they [are caused to] shout and so they pursue the Philistines as far as your going [to the] valley [or possibly Gath] and as far as gates of Ekron. And so fell slain [and wounded] Philistines in a way of Shaaraim and as far as Gath and as far as Ekron.**

1Samuel  
17:52

**The men of Israel and Judah arose and were caused to shout. They pursued the Philistines as far as the road leading to [lit., your going to] the valley [or, Gath] and as far as the gates of Ekron. Philistines fell slain [and wounded] on the road to Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron.**

**Because of David's victory, the men of Judah and Israel rose up and shouted in excitement. They pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and Ekron. Many of the Philistines fell slain or wounded all along the road to Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the men of Israel and Juda rising up shouted, and pursued after the Philistines till they came to the valley and to the gates of Accaron, and there fell many wounded of the Philistines in the way of Saraim, and as far as Geth, and as far as Accaron.

Masoretic Text

And so rise up men of Israel and Judah and so they [are caused to] shout and so they pursue the Philistines as far as your going [to the] valley [or possibly Gath] and as far as gates of Ekron. And so fell slain [and wounded] Philistines in a way of Shaaraim and as far as Gath and as far as Ekron.

Septuagint

And the men of Israel and Juda arise and shouted and pursued them as far as the entrance to Geth [Alexandrian LXX reads Ga] and as far as the gate of Ascalon. And the slain men of the Philistines fell in the way of the gates [Hebrew, Shaaraim] both to Geth, and to Accaron.

<sup>86</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 472. Note that Edersheim assumed that there was a visor on Goliath's helmet. We don't know for certain.

**Significant differences:** The Philistines are named twice in the Hebrew, once in the Greek. There may be some confusion as to how far the battle went, as the Greek and the Hebrew do not seem to line up at this point. I will take these differences into account as I exegete this verse.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

**CEV** But the soldiers of Israel and Judah let out a battle cry and went after them as far as Gath and Ekron. The bodies of the Philistines were scattered all along the road from Shaaraim to Gath and Ekron.

**NLT** Then the Israelites gave a great shout of triumph and rushed after the Philistines, chasing them as far as Gath [As in some Greek manuscripts; Hebrew reads *a valley*] and the gates of Ekron. The bodies of the dead and wounded Philistines were strewn all along the road from Shaaraim, as far as Gath and Ekron.

**REB** The men of Israel and Judah at once raised the war cry and closely pursued them all the way to Gath and up to the gates of Ekron. The road that runs to Shaaraim, Gath, and Ekron was strewn with their dead. **17:52 to Gath:** *so Gk; Heb.* to a valley.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

**God's Word™** Then the soldiers of Israel and Judah rose up, shouted a battle cry, and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Wounded Philistines lay on the road to Shaaraim and all the way to Gath and Ekron.

**JPS (Tanakh)** The men of Israel and Judah rose up with a war cry and they pursued the Philistines all the way to Gai [Septuagint reads "Gath"; cf end of verse] and up to the gates of Ekron; the Philistines fell mortally wounded along the road to Shaarim up to Gath and Ekron.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

**NASB** And the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance [lit., *your coming*] to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the slain Philistines lay along [lit., *fell*] the way to Shaaraim, even to Gath and Ekron.

**NKJV** Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley [So with MT, Syr., Tg., Vg.; LXX *Gath*] and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron.

**Young's Updated LT** And the men of Israel rise—also Judah—and shout, and pursue the Philistines till you enter the valley, and unto the gates of Ekron, and the wounded of the Philistines fall in the way of Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Despite the problems with the various readings, the Israelites chased the Philistines from Israelite territory to Philistine territory, killing and wounding many of them in the chase.

## 1Samuel 17:52a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1Samuel 17:52a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qûwm (קוּמ) [pronounced <i>koom</i> ]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>man, each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y <sup>e</sup> hûwdâh (יְהוּדָה) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>hoo-DAW</i> ]	possibly means <i>to praise, to be praised</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Judah</i>	masculine proper noun/location	Strong's #3063 BDB #397
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûwaʿ (רוּעוּ) [pronounced <i>roo-AHG</i> ]	<i>to shout, to raise a shout, to cry out, to give a blast, are caused to shout</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7321 BDB #929

**Translation:** [The men of Israel and Judah arose and were caused to shout.](#) Both the Israelites and the Philistines were poised for battle. The Israelites, when they saw David defeat Goliath so quickly and easily, they shouted in victory and began to pursue the Philistines. They responded almost by reflex.

## 1Samuel 17:52b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râdaph (רָדַף) [pronounced <i>raw-DAHf</i> ]	<i>to pursue, to follow after; to chase with hostile intent, to persecute</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7291 BDB #922
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>e</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

## 1Samuel 17:52b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
bōwʾ (בוּא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
gay <sup>eo</sup> (גַּי) [pronounced <i>gah<sup>ee</sup></i> ], which	<i>valley</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1516 BDB #161
Some translators transliterate this as <i>Gai</i> (as it is also found in the Alexandrian LXX, the Syriac, Vulgate and Aramaic). <sup>87</sup> LXX β has <i>Gath</i> (actually, <i>Geth</i> ). The difference in the Hebrew: <i>valley</i> is גַּי and <i>Gath</i> is תַּג.			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
shaʿar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced <i>SHAH-gahr</i> ]	<i>gates [control of city can be implied]; entrance [through the gates]</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044
ʿeqrōwn (עֶקְרוֹן) [pronounced <i>gek<sup>e</sup>-ROHN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Ekron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #6138 BDB #785

**Translation:** They pursued the Philistines as far as the road leading to [lit., *your going to*] the valley [or, *Gath*] and as far as the gates of Ekron. As the Israelites advanced, the Philistines quickly retreated. The two armies had gathered west of the point between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea, west of the point between Gath and Ekron. Possibly Philistine soldiers came from Ekron in the north, and others came from Gath to the south. They met in the middle and advanced into Israel (Philistia and Israel had a shifting border between them). The chase given here means that they did not travel as far as Gath, but in that general direction. However, they did chase the Philistines all the way to the gates of Ekron. What I see occurring is that the Philistines broke off and retreated in two directions; some of them towards Gath and others toward Ekron. The Israelites stopped pursuing the group which broke off and headed toward Gath, but they pursued those who retreated to Ekron all the way to the city gates.

The other possible reading, which would go along with the Masoretic text and most other texts, is that the Israelites moved down into the valley and then pursued the Philistines as far as the gates of Ekron. However, the remainder of this verse would indicate that Israel chased the Philistines to Gath and to Ekron, which means that, at some point, that the troops would have had to split up, one group going north and the other group going south.

<sup>87</sup> The Syriac, Vulgate and Aramaic as per New King James Version; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994; p 256. Alexandrian LXX as per *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*; Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1992; p. 380.



## 1Samuel 17:52c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced <i>naw-FAHL</i> ]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
châlâl (חָלַל) [pronounced <i>chaw-LAWL</i> ]	<i>slain, fatally wounded, wounded, pierced; from a verb which means to bore, to pierce</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2491 BDB #319
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
derek <sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>way, distance, road, journey, manner, course</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
sha'arayim (שַׁעְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>shah-ġuh-RAH-yim</i> ]	<i>gate of the sea; and is transliterated Shaaraim</i>	proper singular noun location	Strong's #8189 BDB #1045
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>ġahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Gath (גַּת) [pronounced <i>gath</i> ]	<i>wine-press and is transliterated Gath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1661 BDB #387
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>ġahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
eq <sup>r</sup> ôwn (עֶקְרוֹן) [pronounced <i>ġek<sup>e</sup>-ROHN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Ekron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #6138 BDB #785

**Translation:** Philistines fell slain [and wounded] on the road to Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. I first of all questioned whether Shaaraim was an actual city or not. However, it is mentioned as being near Socoh and Azekah as a possession of Judah in Joshua 15:35–36. Since that is where we are right now (see v. 1), Shaaraim must be an actual city. My guess is that it is mentioned as the point at which the Philistine and Israeli troops split. Barnes

tells us that it is a city in the Shephelah which was probably in the possession of the Philistines.<sup>88</sup> If that is the case, in this battle, the Israelites probably took it back. Some of the Philistines went south to Gath and others went north to Ekron, with the Israelites right behind them in hot pursuit. Obviously, the Philistine army was decimated in this retreat.

The writer of Hebrews alluded to this incident, and others like it, when he wrote: **What more can I say? For time will fail me if I speak of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, or David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight.** (Heb. 11:32–34).

<b>And so return sons of Israel from burning after Philistines. And so they divided up their camp.</b>	1 Samuel 17:53	<b>The sons of Israel then returned from hotly pursuing the Philistines and they plundered their camp.</b>
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**The sons of Israel then returned from their pursuit of the Philistine, and plundered their camp.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the children of Israel returning, after they had pursued the Philistines, fell upon their camp.
Masoretic Text	And so return sons of Israel from burning after Philistines. And so they divided up their camp.
Peshitta	And the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and plundered their camps.
Septuagint	And the men of Israel returned declining from after the Philistines, and they trampled their camp.

Significant differences: The Syriac and Hebrew give the impression that the Jews actually took things from the Philistine camp, which is normal in war. In the Latin, the Jews are *falling upon the came of the Philistines*, which makes no sense, since the Philistines are gone; in the Greek, the Jews simply trample the camp of the Philistines.

The first verb appears to be different, but it can be rendered *from being in hot pursuit* from the Hebrew; so the verbs are essentially in agreement here.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	When the Israelite army returned from chasing the Philistines, they took what they wanted from the enemy camp.
NAB	On their return from the pursuit of the Philistines, the Israelites looted their camp.
NJB	Turning back from their ferocious pursuit of the Philistines, the Israelites plundered their camp.
NLT	Then the Israelite army returned and plundered the deserted Philistine camp.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	When the Israelites came ack from their pursuit of the Philistines, they looted all the goods in the Philistine camp.
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<sup>88</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 45.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	And the sons of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines and plundered their camps.
Young's Updated LT	...and the sons of Israel turn back from burning after the Philistines, and spoil [or, divide] their camps.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The Israelites are not quite ready to invade the cities of the Philistines; so, once they Philistines get to Gath and Ekron, the Jews return and divide up whatever they left behind.

1Samuel 17:53a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis'raêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
dâlaq (דָּלַק) [pronounced <i>daw-LAHK</i> ]	<i>to burn, to flame; to hotly pursue</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1814 BDB #196
'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> îy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** The sons of Israel then returned from hotly pursuing the Philistines... There are some idioms which last for a long time. Here we have the word *dâlaq*, which means *to burn, to flame*. It is also used *to hotly pursue, to be in hot pursuit [of someone]*. Once the Israelites got to the gates of Ekron and Gath, they stopped pursuing the Philistines, and returned to their campsite. Israel chose not to attack the cities of Gath and Ekron (which they were probably not ready to do), and they returned.

## 1Samuel 17:53b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâçá´ (שָׁחַץ) [pronounced <i>shaw-SAHÇ</i> ]	<i>to divide, to cleave, to tear apart, to tear in pieces</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8156 BDB #1042
´êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
machãneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh-NEH</i> ]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4264 BDB #334

**Translation:** ...and they plundered their camp. The Philistines had a plan from the beginning. This was to camp on the border of Israel and to let Goliath deal with the Israelites. They were there for 40 days, so the Philistines had a few things which they had gathered by way of food and animal. They knew that they were going to be there for awhile, as they had this strategy with Goliath already worked out. They had some weapons and supplies still in the camp, as well as all of their camping gear and tents. On the other hand, the Israelites had not planned on being there for forty days. Therefore, their rations were probably running low. So the Israelites returned, went to the former campsite of the Philistines and divided up all that they left behind. The verb here means that they divided this camp up; in fact, they tore it to pieces. The result was that this camp would no longer be suitable for the Philistines to return to. Think of this as sort of an excellent garage sale where everything is free for the taking. This, by the way, is the pay that many soldiers received—taking the items left behind by the defeated army.

**And so takes David a head of the Philistine and so he brings him [to] Jerusalem and his manufactured goods he put in his tent.**

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17:54

**David took the head of the Philistine and brought it [to] Jerusalem, but he put Goliath's [lit., his] armor and weapons [lit., manufactured goods] in his [own] tent.**

**David took the head of the Philistine to Jerusalem, but he placed Goliath's armor and weapons in his own tent.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

**Masoretic Text** And so takes David a head of the Philistine and so he brings him [to] Jerusalem and his manufactured goods he put in his tent.

**Septuagint** And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

Significant differences: None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

**CEV** David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem, but he kept Goliath's weapons in his own tent.

NLT (David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem, but he stored the Philistine's armor in his own tent.)

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™ David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he kept Goliath's armor in his tent.

JPS (Tanakh) David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; and he put his weapons in his own tent.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB Then David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent.

Young's Updated LT And David takes the head of the Philistine, and brings it in to Jerusalem, and his weapons he has put in his own tent.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The head of Goliath was taken to Jerusalem, probably to be put on display, but David kept his sword and armor.

### 1Samuel 17:54a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rô'sh (רֶשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i> ]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tiy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 1 Samuel 17:54a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
y <sup>e</sup> rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced y <sup>oo</sup> -shaw-LAH-yim]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	Proper singular noun, location; pausal form	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

**Translation:** David took the head of the Philistine and brought it [to] Jerusalem,... This seems a bit barbaric by our standards, but apparently Goliath's head was probably taken to Jerusalem and put on display. What is interesting is the implied preeminence of Jerusalem. However, that is going to require some discussion. In Judges 1:8, we see that the Jews took Jerusalem from the Jebusites, but that they did not eradicate the Jebusites completely. In fact, they lived side-by-side the Jebusites at the point in time that the book of Judges was written (Judges 1:21).<sup>89</sup> In Judges 19:11–12, Jerusalem is called a *city of foreigners*, which does not mean that it was controlled by Jebusites; it simply means that there was a significant population of Jebusites who still lived there (which is in agreement with Judges 1:21). The fact that David took the head of Goliath to Jerusalem tells us that either there was a place there where the head could be displayed or David had some sort of tie to the city that we are not aware of.

Another thing that we do not know is *when* David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem or *where* in Jerusalem he put it; or, even *why* he took it there. We would assume from the context that it was very close to this time period that we are in. But again, the question is, *why Jerusalem?* By the way, just because I ask a question does not mean that I am able to answer it. My only guess here is that this was somehow related to Saul's promise of wealth.

Barnes suggests that David took the head to the tabernacle in Jerusalem.<sup>90</sup> His reasoning is that David was recognizing God's power in this victory. We do not know where the tabernacle is right at this time, and it is possible that it is in Jerusalem. However, there is no indication that it is there. Again, there is the problem with the city being inhabited by Jebusites. However, since the two groups lived side-by-side (Judges 1:21), this is not out of the question. Recall that one of the mysteries to us is, *where exactly is the Tabernacle (or Tent) of God?* If that were the case, I would have expected this passage to read, *David took Goliath's head to the Tent of God, but placed Goliath's weapons in his own tent.* You see, there would be a contrast there that most authors would want to express.

It is not impossible that this passage tells us that David originally kept the weapons as his own, with the *intention* of putting Goliath's head on display for all to see. Although his intention is not mentioned, that Goliath's head ends up in Jerusalem at some point in the future would also be a possible way to interpret this passage.

Because David will still have Goliath's head in hand when he goes to speak with Saul, this means that the account of this victory had to have been made at least a week later, if not several years later.<sup>91</sup> If that were not the case,

<sup>89</sup> Compare Joshua 15:63, which says essentially the same thing. That particular verse may be a gloss (added on by a later writer).

<sup>90</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 45.

<sup>91</sup> Because this passage tells us that David brought Goliath's head to Jerusalem, Barthel uses that as the crux of his argument to assert that this entire story is a fabrication to glorify David, and that this was written about 350 years after the event supposedly occurred. Manfred Barthel, *What the Bible Really Says*; ©1982; © by Quill; pp. 161–162. A significant portion of Barthel's book seems to focus on unsettling the idea that the Bible is accurate and inspired by God. However, as has been

then the mention of taking Goliath's head to Jerusalem would be mentioned at the end of the chapter rather than here, allowing for more of a chronological order.

There is the possibility that, when David walks in to speak with Saul and is carrying Goliath's head (1Sam. 17:57), King Saul himself may suggest that the head be taken to Jerusalem. We still don't know the reason; however, if David does this under Saul's direction, then perhaps Goliath's head put on display in Jerusalem was done to intimidate the resident Jebusite population. That is the short explanation; therefore, let us ask the question...

### **If Saul Ordered Goliath's Head to be Displayed, Why did he Choose Jerusalem ?**

1. Bear in mind that these points are going to be based on the assumption that Saul tells David, "Why don't you take Goliath's head and put it on display in Jerusalem." This is a very reasonable assumption, but we have no Biblical proof of this.
2. Let me suggest to you that Saul knew what he wanted to do with the head of Goliath—he had the perfect place for it. Therefore, when Abner goes to summon David to meet Saul, Abner tells David to bring Goliath's head along (as per the request of the king).
3. Saul's intent is to place Goliath's head on display in Jerusalem. The general intention of this display would be to intimidate the Jebusites living in Jerusalem.
4. Jerusalem was on or near the border of Benjamin and Judah.
5. The Jebusites had lived in Jerusalem for at least 400 years.
6. That the Jebusites could become a problem for Saul is a very real possibility.
7. Jerusalem, because it is so close to Saul's residence (or palace) is not a city where Saul needs a fomenting rebellion.
8. Given that David entered into the camp of the Israelites to deliver food and supplies to his brothers indicates that men could freely come and go from this Israeli-Philistine standoff.
9. Because of this, and because both Israelites and Jebusites lived in Jerusalem, what was happening on the battlefield in Socoh would have been a matter of interest to all of Israel, including the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
10. If the Philistines defeat Israel, then it makes sense that the Jebusites might move to control Jerusalem.
11. It is reasonable to suppose that, simultaneous with the standoff in Socoh, revolution was fomenting in Jerusalem.
12. A fomenting revolution does not simply disappear and peter out for no reason.
13. The display of Goliath's huge head in the middle of Jerusalem would no doubt send a clear message to any Jebusite thinking about revolting against Israel.
14. David always seems to have a tie to Jerusalem; perhaps Saul sending him here at this time was the beginning of David's fascination with this city.

This particular assumption and explanation fills in a lot of gaps and explains a great deal as to why David would haul Goliath's head to Jerusalem. There may be other reasons or other factors involved, but I think that this gives us a very reasonable background for these events.

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Once David becomes king (5–10 years in the future), he will go into Jerusalem, apparently with the idea of making it the city of the king. He meets with Jebusite resistance, and David's army beats them down. There are several unanswered questions: (1) Why Jerusalem? It is obvious that he receives little recognition in his own home, so there is no reason for him to stay in that area. (2) If David had some previous attachment to the city, you would think that the Jebusites had something to do with that; however, the account of 2Sam. 5:6–9 1Chron. 11:4–8 does not belie any special love of David for the Jebusite people (nor, they for him). (3) There is no indication that David owns property or land in Jerusalem (there is no indication that he had the wherewithal to purchase land or property either). Finally, even if he did, as king, own property in Jerusalem, that would be unimportant, as a king owns

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explained, there is no problem or contradiction that this passage tells us that David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem.



property everywhere. None of this means that we have a contradiction of any sort; it simply means that we do not know what drew David to Jerusalem.

<b>1Samuel 17:54b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (תֶּ֫חַ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כְּלִי) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup>lee</i> ]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
sûwm (שׂוּמ) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>eh</i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced <i>OH-hel</i> ]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #168 BDB #13

**Translation:** ...but he put Goliath's [lit., *his*] armor and weapons [lit., *manufactured goods*] in his [own] tent. David did keep some souvenirs from this victory. I want you to see how this is related to the previous verse. Israel returned from pursuing the Philistines and they plundered the Philistine's camp. However, Goliath's belongings (the ones that he had on him) were not taken by anyone—they belonged to David. Whether or not David went with the other Israelites in pursuit of the Philistines, the things which Goliath carried belonged to David.

Apparently, what we have here is that David, at least for awhile, kept the weapons of Goliath in his personal possession (that did change later, however). However, Goliath's head was taken to Jerusalem, and again, we do not know why or when exactly—although I have strongly suggested that this was at Saul's request to keep the Jebusites under control.

There is always the possibility that David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem after he became king; however, the problem with this explanation is twofold: (1) where is Goliath's head for the next 30 or 40 years and (2) the sword of Goliath will be in several hands in the relatively near future, so it would not make sense to speak of what happens to Goliath's head way in the future, but the sword only in the very near future. The implication is, David took the head of Goliath into Jerusalem fairly soon after this battle. The educated guess which I have made is, Saul tells David to take the head there and put it on display; and (possibly) to get his reward in Jerusalem. However, there is nothing in Scripture which indicates that Saul so ordered David. The implication is that this is what David chose to do. Again, David's relationship to Jerusalem is unknown, so his motivation is unknown. We may speculate (something which I love to do), but speculation is simply speculation.

To tie this to the earlier portion of this chapter, David probably had a mule that helped carry all of the things which his father had sent. Therefore, he had transport for these former possessions of Goliath. He also had his brothers who could help carry this stuff, but it is unlikely that David would have asked them to do such a thing, even given the circumstances.

Some suggest that David, after he became king and made Jerusalem the capital city, took Goliath's head and put it on display there. However, the sword of Goliath will show up in several different places after this time. It sounds as though both of these things were done together. That is, David immediately put Goliath's weapons in his tent and immediately took the head to Jerusalem. It would make less sense for David to immediately place Goliath's weapons in his tent and to eventually take the head to Jerusalem. Again, this tells us that there is some sort of a tie between David and the city of Jerusalem, although it is not clear what that tie is.

### Why Goliath's Head Was Taken by David to his Meeting with Saul and Then to Jerusalem

I think the most logical explanation is this: David is carrying Goliath's head, as that is what a soldier would do after such a tremendous victory on the field. He plans to keep Goliath's weapons, which is typical (the victors kept the possessions of those they kill). Then Saul calls David to his office. David, although he certain about the disposition of Goliath's weapons (they're his now), he thinks that Saul might want to see the head of Goliath or do something with it (this is also not unusual in the ancient world). In other words, David returns from the battlefield with Goliath's head and weapons. He places the weapons in his tent. Saul calls for him, and he carries Goliath's head with him to the meeting. He may have even asked Abner, "Should I bring this?" And Abner answered, "Yeah, why don't you. Good idea." Or, as I have suggested before, perhaps Abner told David to bring the head (and this may be at Saul's request). So David purposely brings Goliath's head to the tent of Saul; he doesn't carry it in there absent-mindedly.

As I have already suggested, it might be Saul who suggests to David that the head be taken to Jerusalem and put on display. After all, Jerusalem was co-owned by the Israelites and the Jebusites. Taking and mounting the giant head of an enemy there might make a statement to them.<sup>92</sup> Obviously, none of these particulars are recorded in Scripture. We only know that David took the head of Goliath to Jerusalem sometime after his meeting with Saul, whereto he went, carrying Goliath's head. However, these conjectures would reasonably explain why David took Goliath's head to this meeting, and why David took it to Jerusalem.

There is no reason for us to expect the Bible to explain each and every historical event in great detail. We already know that there were some very significant historical events which are not recorded in the Bible (e.g., the destruction of Shiloh and the relocation of the Tent of God). As usual, there is no reason to balk at the order in which these things take place (v. 57 obviously precedes v. 54a in time), since topical order is more important to the oriental mind than is chronology.

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## Saul Interviews David a Second Time

<sup>92</sup> Edersheim suggests that David *nailed the head of the Philistine on the gates of Jerusalem, right over in sight of the fort which the heathen Jebusites still held in the heart of the land.* Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 472.

And as saw Saul David going out to meet the Philistine, he had said unto Abner, chief of the army, "Son of who [is] this, the youth, Abner?"

1Samuel  
17:55

As Saul had observed David going out to meet the Philistine, he asked Abner, [his] chief of staff [lit., *chief of the army*], "Whose son [is] this, this youth, Abner?"

And so says Abner, "Living your soul, the king, if I have known."

Abner replied, "Quite frankly, your majesty, I don't know [lit., (As) *your soul lives, O king, if I know*]."

While Saul observed David going out to fight the Philistine, he turned to his chief of staff, Abner, and asked him, "Abner, just who is this young man, anyway?"

Abner replied, "Hell if I know, your majesty."

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And as saw Saul David going out to meet the Philistine, he had said unto Abner, chief of the army, "Son of who [is] this, the youth, Abner?"

And so says Abner, "Living your soul, the king, if I have known."

##### Alexandrian Septuagint

And when Saul saw David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abener the captain of the army, "Whose son is this youth?" And Abener said, "As your soul lives, O king, I know not." This and all subsequent verses were taken from the Alexandrian Septuagint, as they are not found in LXX β.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

##### CEV

After King Saul had watched David go out to fight Goliath, Saul turned to the commander of his army and said, "Abner, who is that young man?"

"Your Majesty," Abner answered, "I swear by your life that I don't know."

##### NJB

When Saul saw David going to engage the Philistine he said to Abner, the army commander, "Abner, whose son is that boy? 'On your life, O king,' Abner replied, 'I do not know.'

##### NLT

As Saul watched David go out to fight Goliath, he asked Abner, the general of his army, "Abner, whose son is he?"

"I really don't know," Abner said.

##### TEV

When Saul saw David going out to fight Goliath, he asked Abner, the commander of his army, "Abner, whose son is he?"

"I have no idea, Your Majesty," Abner answered.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

##### God's Word™

As Saul watched David going out against the Philistine, he asked Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?"

Abner answered, "I solemnly swear, as you live, Your Majesty, I don't know."

##### JPS (Tanakh)

When Saul saw David going out to assault the Philistine, he asked his army commander Abner, "Whose son is that boy, Abner?" And Abner replied, "By your life, Your Majesty, I do not know."

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

Now when Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?" And Abner said, "By your life, O king, I do not know."

Young's Updated LT

And when Saul sees David going out to meet the Philistine, he had said unto Abner, head of the host, "Whose son *is* this—the youth, Abner?" And Abner says, "Your soul lives, O king, I have not known."

**What is the gist of this verse?** As David goes out to fight Goliath, Saul turns to Abner and asks who the father of David is, and Abner does not know.

1Samuel 17:55a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
yâtsâ` (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ` (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>t</sup> iy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** As Saul observed David going out to meet the Philistine,... Saul has a large army and does not know everyone in his army. They aren't wearing uniforms, so Saul does not necessarily know that David is not a regular

soldier with his outfit. After 40 days and 80 challenges, Saul was desperate. Had David gone before him on the first or second day, Saul may not have even allowed David to fight against Goliath. However, he was desperate by the 40<sup>th</sup> day.

In Scripture, there also seems to be this thing with the number 40: Jesus fasted in the desert and was tested for 40 days; Noah in his ark was rained upon for 40 days; and here we have Goliath facing the Jews and challenging them for 40 days.

### 1Samuel 17:55b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾăb <sup>h</sup> nêr (אֲבִנֵר) [pronounced u <sup>b</sup> v <sup>e</sup> -NAYR]	<i>my father is Ner or my father is a lamp, and is transliterated Abner</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
tsâbâʾ (צָבָא) [pronounced tsaw <sup>b</sup> -VAW]	<i>army, war, or warfare</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6635 DB #838
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
n <sup>a</sup> ar (נֶעַר) [pronounced NAH-ġahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
ʾăb <sup>h</sup> nêr (אֲבִנֵר) [pronounced u <sup>b</sup> v <sup>e</sup> -NAYR]	<i>my father is Ner or my father is a lamp, and is transliterated Abner</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4

I believe that this is the first time that we have a proper noun, other than *Jehovah* or *Elohim*, used as a vocative in conversation in Scripture.

**Translation:** ...he asked Abner, [his] chief of staff [lit., chief of the army], “Whose son [is] this, this youth, Abner?” If you talk to the movie screen, you might be calling out, “He’s your harp player, Saul—don’t you recognize him?” Saul employs a great many people. As the king of Israel, Saul has a lot on his mind. He has a huge army, a large staff in his palace, and Saul does not necessarily study David or David’s biography while David plays for him (1Sam. 16:21–22). When we have Saul sending a message to Jesse concerning David, it is very likely that all Saul

said to his staff was, “Contact this young man’s father and he is therefore needed at the palace.” It is not even clear how often David has played for him up until this time (it is possible that he has just played once or twice for Saul), as we do not know how much time transpired between 1Sam. 6:22 and 7:1. Part of the reason that a king or head of state has a large staff is that they can keep track of certain names, events, and other things which knowledge would overwhelm a king.

Also, apart from a context, sometimes it is difficult to recognize people. I have had associations in several different contexts with a variety of people. They have been a student of mine in college or in high school; or I acted as their real estate agent. Other people I have met socially. So, when I run into these people, without knowing the context of our relationship, I often have a more difficult time recalling their name. It is possible that Saul recognized David, but did not know from where. Saul is prompting Abner to help him out here.

There are four other explanations which are often given, which I should mention. Therefore, let me restate the problem, and offer some possible explanations:

David has played harp for Saul in what appears to be the time period previous to Saul going to war against the Philistines; therefore, why doesn’t Saul recognize David here? Recall that Saul even sent a letter to David’s father Jesse asking if David could remain with him there.

### Why Does Saul not Recognize David?

1. Saul has a lot on his mind; he knows a great many people. With a large army and a large staff, there is no reason to think that Saul has studied David’s biography. Even though a letter was sent to Jesse’s father to request for David to remain there, how much of that letter did Saul compose and how much was written on his behalf. Perhaps all he did was sign it.
2. Saul’s mental illness may have affected his ability to recognize people, and therefore did not recognize David.
3. Saul did recognize David from the palace, but did not recall his father’s name. Since he had promised to free David’s father’s family from taxes and public service, Saul would need to know who David’s father was. This is also a very reasonable question, as you will notice, at no time does Saul say anything that indicates he does not recognize David. All of his questions concern the name of David’s father.
4. There is an additional explanation (found in *Hard Sayings of the Bible*) which attempts to rearrange 1Sam. 16–18 in a chronological order. I have already covered the most reasonable ordering of the various events of this chapter (which really only involves David’s appointment as Saul’s armor bearer), and their complete rearrangement of these passages only serves to introduce more problems than it solves.<sup>1</sup> However, I will correctly place all of these events in chronological order at the end of this chapter.
5. Perhaps Saul’s letter to Jesse about keeping David occurred after this battle that we have just examined. Perhaps David played for Saul in the palace; the war began, and David returned home; then, when he went to the front and killed Goliath, Saul decided, “I need this young man here full time with me; in fact, he will bear my armor.” So, he must know David’s father’s name in order to make this official request.
6. The final explanation is not too different from #2: Saul did know David and he recognized him; however, he now saw David in a whole new and unexpected light, and he wanted to know more about this young man. It might be akin to finding out that your gardener has a PhD in philosophy.

Any of these explanations easily dispel all apparent and imagined contradictions associated with this passage. As you can see, there are no real contradictions between this verse and the previous chapter. Saul asking for the name of David’s father poses us no great problem whatsoever. In this case, there are at least six possible explanations which easily explain the end of 1Sam. 16 and this question of Saul’s.

<sup>1</sup> Although many commentators cover this question, it is covered in greatest detail in *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 213–214.



Another reasonable question is, *why does Saul need to know the name of David's father?* There are two reasons. The first is that Saul promised the man who killed Goliath that his father's family would be exempt from taxation and public service. However, there may be a second, more insidious reason—Saul was always on the lookout for good soldiers (1Sam. 14:52). Given David's performance against Goliath, Saul certainly would want David and any of his brothers serving in the military. Saul, when he asked Abner this question, was unaware that three of David's brothers were serving in his army right this moment.

By the way, as you may recall from 1Sam. 14:49–51, Abner is a relative of Saul's. He is either Saul's uncle (which is my opinion) or his first cousin. We discussed this in great depth in 1Sam. 14:51.

### 1Samuel 17:55c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾăb <sup>h</sup> êr (אָבִיָּר) [pronounced <i>u<sup>b</sup>v<sup>2</sup>-NAYR</i> ]	<i>my father is Ner or my father is a lamp, and is transliterated Abner</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i> ]	<i>living, alive</i>	masculine plural adjective construct	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i> ]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʾim (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i> ]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
yâda <sup>ʿ</sup> (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHṢ</i> ]	<i>to see; to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to know, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect, pausal form	Strong's #3045 BDB #393

I believe that this is the first time we have found this idiom in Scripture, which could be roughly translated, “Hell if I know.” We would have expected a negative rather than an hypothetical particle, resulting in the more formal, “I do not know, your majesty.”

**Translation:** *Abner replied, “Quite frankly, your majesty, I don't know [lit., (As) your soul lives, O king, if I know].”* We have an interesting informal answer here, the first time this occurs in Scripture. This is equivalent to Abner saying, “I don't know.” However, idiomatically, this would be better rendered, “Hell if I know.” Or, if that is too colorful for you, “Darned if I know.” Why doesn't Abner know David and why would Saul think that Abner knew David? That's simple. Abner was commander-in-chief, under Saul, of Saul's army. Therefore, Saul would have expected Abner to know about any great Israeli warrior. Its not unlike a talent scout for a major league team; they



are going to know about the major players and the potential major players. Abner doesn't know David because David does not fall into that particular context. There is no reason that he would be identified with the great warriors of his time—even his own family viewed him with disdain.

**And so says the king, “Inquire you son of whom this, the young man.”** 1Samuel 17:56 **So the king ordered, “Inquire then [lit., you] whose son this young man is.”**

**The king then ordered, “Then find out who this young man is.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And so says the king, “Inquire you son of whom this, the young man.”  
Alexandrian Septuagint            And the king said, “You will ask whose son this youth is.”

Significant differences:            None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                      “Then find out!” Saul told him.  
NJB                                      The king said, ‘Find out whose son the lad is.’  
NLT                                      “Well, find out!” the king told him.  
TEV                                      “Then go and find out,” Saul ordered.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*<sup>™</sup>                            The king said, “Find out whose son this young man is.”  
JPS (Tanakh)                         “Then find out whose son that young fellow is,” the king ordered.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                      And the king said, “You inquire whose son the youth is.”  
*Young's Updated LT*                and the king says, “Ask you whose son this *is*—the young man.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Abner is told by Saul to find out who David's father is.

1Samuel 17:56			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek <sup>o</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

## 1Samuel 17:56

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâ'al (שׂאֵל) [pronounced shaw-AHL]	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire, to question, to interrogate</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
'elem (עֶלֶם) [pronounced ĠEH-lem]	<i>a young man</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5958 BDB #761

**Translation:** So the king ordered, "Inquire then [lit., you] whose son this young man is." Abner has nothing to do with Saul's personal staff at the palace. So he therefore had no idea who David was. However, this is his assignment—find out who the heck this young man is.

Throughout the earlier portion of these past two chapters, we have had to make the topically-oriented writing of the orient coincide with our linearly-oriented sensibilities. In fact, it is such a different approach, that often contradictions are alleged, as we westerners tend to assume all written events should be recorded in the manner to which we are accustomed—in accordance with their occurrence in time. Therefore, it may be helpful to examine...

## The Order of Events in David's Early Life

Scripture	Event
1Sam. 16:11 17:28	David shepherded his father's sheep.
1Sam. 16:18a	David became skillful playing musical instruments and probably wrote psalms and music while shepherding. One may infer this from some of his psalms which deal with nature as God's creation (Psalm 8–9) or psalms which deal with shepherding (Psalm 23).
1Sam. 17:34–37	David killed both a lion and a bear which attacked his flock.
1Sam. 16:18	David became acquainted with at least one of Saul's men. As suggested, this probably occurred while David was singing to his flock out on the Judæan hills, and this man happened to hear him and followed his voice. It would also be reasonable that David was scarred from his recent encounter with either the lion or the bear, which became a topic of their conversation.

## The Order of Events in David's Early Life

Scripture	Event
1Sam. 16:14–18	It is both suggested to Saul to submit to music therapy and a suitable musician (David) is suggested.
1Sam. 16:19–21a	Saul sends for David and David become his palace musician. Their direct contact was probably limited and Saul may have been called to war very soon after David was employed by the palace.

It is at this point that people become confused. They think that David first plays music in the palace for Saul; Saul likes him, and then says, "Why don't you act as my armor bearer?" Then Saul sends a letter home to Jesse. There are several problems in assuming that the events in 1Sam. 16:14–23 follow one right after the other without the intervening Israeli-Philistine war:

1. Why would Saul make an armor bearer out of David simply because David plays a mean guitar?
2. If David is Saul's armor bearer, why is he back at home while Saul is at war?
3. If David plays music for Saul, if David is Saul's armor bearer, and if Saul has already sent a former request home to David's father saying, "I need David with me full time" why is Saul asking who David's father is and why isn't David with Saul full time already in 1Sam. 17?

The most reasonable explanation is this: the war with the Philistines occurred soon after David began play music for Saul (1Sam. 16:14–21a, 23), but before Saul made David his armor bearer (1Sam. 16:21b–22).

Let me quickly add, even though this is a very reasonable explanation, and the one which I will present, it is not the only explanation for these supposed contradictions.

1Sam. 17:1–3	The mobilization of Philistine troops in Israeli territory requires Saul to assemble his army to meet the Philistines.
1Sam. 17:15	Without Saul at the palace, David did not really have a function. Although it was likely that he continued to receive a salary and/or benefits, he returned temporarily to his flock of sheep (who were under another's care). It is possible that, when David was first employed by Saul, that he held down two jobs: playing music for Saul in the palace and watching over his father's flock of sheep. Therefore, for awhile, David traveled back and forth between the palace and his father's house.
1Sam. 17:2–11	Simultaneous with David being at home, the army of Israel is at a standoff with the Philistines, because Goliath has challenged any individual Israeli to a fight.
1Sam. 17:17–23a	Jesse takes advantage of the fact that David is back home and he sends David with supplies to the three older brothers, who are serving Saul in military service.
1Sam. 17:23b–30	David hears the challenge of Goliath and makes inquiries about him.
1Sam. 17:31–39	When David's earnest interest in fighting Goliath is reported to Saul, Saul calls for David. When David expresses a real interest in fighting Goliath, Saul balks at the idea, primarily because of David's size and age (too small and too young). David tells Saul about his encounter with the lion and the bear. Saul then agrees to let David face Goliath, and first tries to get David to wear his armor. This doesn't work for David, so he takes it off.
1Sam. 17:40–50	David kills Goliath in battle.

## The Order of Events in David's Early Life

Scripture	Event
1Sam. 17:55	While David faces and defeats Goliath, Saul turns to his Commander-in-chief of his ground forces and asks who David's father is. It appears as though Saul does not recognize who David is (and it is possible that he simple does not know the name of David's father, who would be a recipient of Saul's promise to the one who defeats Goliath).
1Sam. 16:21–22 17:2	After coming to know David and to love and respect him, Saul makes David his armorbearer. Saul may have had many armorbearers. In any case, Saul kept David on full time at the palace, making him an armor bearer as well as the palace musician (which justified his full-time employment). Then he requested Jesse that David remain with Saul in the palace full time.
<p>Barnes writes: <i>The difficult of reconciling [1Sam. 16:19–23]...with xvii. 55–58 is met thus: The words [of 1Sam. 16:19–23]...are the ultimate sequence of David's first visit to Saul, and of his skill in music, and are therefore placed...[there]; but they did not really come to pass till after David's victory over Goliath (see xviii. 2). It is quite conceivable that if David had only played once or twice to Saul, and then returned to his father's house for some months, Saul might not recognise him.</i><sup>93</sup></p>	
Now, a preview of coming attractions:	
1Sam. 18:3–5	Saul then sent David out on a number of military missions. <sup>94</sup> This represents another promotion. David began as the palace musician; and then armorbearer was added to his duties after defeating Goliath in battle, making David a full-time employee of the palace. Then he was made a general in Saul's army. Because David was at the palace full-time and because he served as a general in Saul's army, he became acquainted with Jonathan, Saul's son, and they became true friends.
1Sam. 18:6–9	Saul knew that God had rejected him as king. When he began to hear that people in general regarded David with great respect and affection (an unofficial national song spoke of David being greater in war than Saul), Saul began to become jealous and suspicious of David.
1Sam. 18:10–11	Saul's mental illness increased in severity and duration, and he even attacked David twice during his music therapy.
1Sam. 18:12–13	Saul sent David out from the palace into the military full-time. It is possible that 1Sam. 18:13 is a demotion from 1Sam. 18:5.

It should be obvious that, although 1Sam. 16–18 is roughly in chronological order, there are some events which are placed correctly as per topic, but not as to their chronology. Both the Hebrew and the Greek ordering of Scripture should make it clear that the sacred writings were arranged in a similar fashion—there is some regards to chronology, but topical arrangement is often the overriding factor.

If you accept this particular chronology, which does no damage to Scripture whatsoever, then there are no longer any contradictions with regards to Saul's question, "Who is this man's father?"

<sup>93</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 41. The NIV records much the same sentiment, but more briefly, in *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 396.

<sup>94</sup> You may wonder, *why so many military missions in Israel?* Simply look at the amount of conflict in the Middle East today. Satan will always inspire animosity toward the Jews, and therefore, wherever they are gathered en masse, Satan will attack them with all means possible.

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Let me make it clear: there are some problems in the Old Testament with regards to numbers and contradictions—numbers, particularly large numbers, are not always in agreement throughout the Old Testament (for instance, compare Ezra 2:2–42 and Neh. 7:7–45). However, with regards to the historical accounts and events which we find in Old Testament, we have few if any serious problems. There have been many books written touting Old Testament contradictions and today, there are many websites which do that same. However, for the most part, the lists of these alleged contradictions is repetitive (*From where did Cain get his wife? Gen. 2 is a different account of creation than Gen. 1; etc.*) and have all been carefully and thoroughly answered. Our passage is a case in point.

**And as a return of David from a striking of the Philistine, and so takes him Abner and so he brings him to faces of Saul (and a head of the Philistine [is] in his hand).** 1Samuel 17:57

**And as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul (and the head of the Philistine [was still] in his hand).**

**As David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner brought him before Saul, while the head of the Philistine was still in his hand.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And as a return of David from a striking of the Philistine, and so takes him Abner and so he brings him to faces of Saul (and a head of the Philistine [is] in his hand).
Alexandrian Septuagint	And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him in before Saul, and the head of the Philistine was in his hand.

Significant differences: None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	When David came back from fighting Goliath, he was still carrying Goliath's head Abner took David to Saul,...
NLT	After David had killed Goliath, Abner brought him to Saul with the Philistine's head still in his hand.
TEV	So when David returned to camp after killing Goliath, Abner took him to Saul. David was still carrying Goliath's head.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner brought him to Saul. David had the Philistine's head in his hand.
JPS (Tanakh)	So when David returned after killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him to Saul, with the head of the Philistine still in his hand.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	So when David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And when David turns back from striking the Philistine, then Abner takes him and brings him in before Saul, and the head of the Philistine <i>is</i> in his hand.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Rather than ask around, Abner goes and gets David and brings him to Saul. David is still carrying Goliath's head (Abner possibly even suggests, "Bring that with you").

1Samuel 17:57a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
P <sup>h</sup> lish <sup>tîy</sup> (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>e</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

**Translation:** *And as David returned from killing the Philistine,...* David had placed Goliath's armor and sword in his own tent. It apparently was his intention to take the head of Goliath to Jerusalem, which he had not done yet—or, as I have already suggested, it was Saul's intention for Goliath's head to be taken to Jerusalem. It would make little sense for everyone to first regroup in Jerusalem and then for Abner to bring in David (after the head has been put on display). If Saul asked for Abner to inquire as to who David was while David was facing off Goliath, it would seem that Abner would not wait a few days before following Saul's order—particularly since David is right there with the army of Israel.

## 1Samuel 17:57b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾăbʿnêr (אַבְנֵר) [pronounced <i>u<sup>b</sup>v<sup>e</sup>-NAYR</i> ]	<i>my father is Ner or my father is a lamp, and is transliterated Abner</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בָּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** ...Abner took him and brought him before Saul... I have supposed that they were all still in the camp between Socoh and Azekah. This would have occurred after the Israelites had chased down and defeated the Philistines. It is not clear whether David or Saul chased after the Philistines; however, we would have expected Abner to have been involved in the chase, as he is chief of staff. In any case, either immediately after the Philistines retreated or even during, Abner brings David in before Saul. They may still be out in the field, or this may take place at Saul's palace.

## 1Samuel 17:57c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251



1Samuel 17:57c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rô`sh (רֶשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i> ]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
P <sup>h</sup> ilish <sup>tîy</sup> (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p<sup>h</sup>-lish-TEE</i> ]	transliterated <i>Philistine</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun) with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

**Translation:** ...*(and the head of the Philistine [was still] in his hand)*. David had just picked up Goliath’s head and was going to transport it to Jerusalem. Or, in the alternative, Abner went to speak to David; the head was there, and Abner said, “Bring it along.” Or, David had plans to take the head to Jerusalem (1Sam. 17:54) and brought it with him, as Jerusalem would be his next intended stop. And, one more possibility (my preference): Saul might be the one to suggest that David take Goliath’s head to Jerusalem.

**And so says unto him Saul, “A son of whom [are] you, the young man?”**

1Samuel  
17:58

**Then Saul asked him, “Whose son [are] you, young man?”**

**And so says David, “A son of your servant Jesse, a Bethlehemite.”**

**And David replied, “[I am] the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.”**

**Then Saul asked him, “Just whose son are you, young man?”**

**And David replied, “I am the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.”**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text  
Alexandrian Septuagint

and so says David, “A son of your servant Jesse, a Bethlehemite.”  
And Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” And David said, “The son of your servant *Jessæ* the Bethlehemite.” Vv. 55–58 came from the Alexandrian Septuagint, as they are not found in LXX β.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV

...and Saul asked, “Who are you?”  
“I am David the son of Jesse, a loyal Israelites from Bethlehem.”

NLT “Tell me about your father, my boy,” Saul said.  
And David replied, “His name is Jesse, and we live in Bethlehem.”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, my boy?” And David answered, “The son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” And David answered, “I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

Young's Updated LT And Saul says unto him, “Whose son are you, O youth?” And David says, “Son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** Saul asks David directly who his father is. David tells him that it is Saul's servant, Jesse, a man from Bethlehem.

### 1Samuel 17:58a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâʾûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i> ]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
n <sup>a</sup> ʿar (נָעַר) [pronounced <i>NAH-ġahr</i> ]	<i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article (pausal form)	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654

**Translation:** Then Saul asked him, “Whose son [are] you, young man?” Saul, possibly recognizing David and possibly not, asks him whose son is he. However, Saul's question is not one of mere idle curiosity; recall that Saul

promised that he would make the house of David's father free from taxes and public service (v. 25). So that he can reward the family of David, he has to know who this family is and where they reside. However, I should also point out that Saul will not feel obligated to fulfil his promises completely,<sup>95</sup> as, he possibly rationalized to himself, he made these promises to members of his army and not to David.<sup>96</sup>

A second reason why Saul might have asked the name of David's father is, he may have been interested in drafting David's other brothers into military service. Given David's size and youth, yet given his tremendous confidence and performance, Saul would want as many men like David in his army as he could get. Saul probably does not know that three of David's brothers are already under his command.

Is it possible that Saul, at least at this time, doesn't perceive that David is unique? Very likely. These reasons may appear to be contradictory. If Saul is going to exempt David's family from public service and taxes, then would he turn around and draft David's brothers? Saul, as we have seen, will do whatever is expedient. For some people, their word means nothing. They give you assurances of this or that because that is what you want to hear. However, when it comes time to make good on these assurances, then they will inform you that you must have misunderstood them or they will simply cite *new circumstances*.

**Application:** Throughout this latter portion of the book of 1Samuel, we will see David and Samuel contrasted again and again. Samuel is a politician—he tells you what you want to hear. What he does could end up being entirely different. When you, as a believer in Jesus Christ, give your word to someone, you should consider that a binding, oral contract, not to be later broken or amended to suit your own convenience. Do not make a promise when you have no intention of following through. When your word as a Christian means nothing, then you are an embarrassment.

### 1Samuel 17:58b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Yîshay (יֵשַׁי) [pronounced <i>yee-SHAH-ee</i> ]	transliterated <i>Jesse</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3448 BDB #445

<sup>95</sup> See 1Sam. 18:19.

<sup>96</sup> Suggested by Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 485.

## 1Samuel 17:58b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bêyth hallach <sup>e</sup> mîy (בֵּית הַלַּחֲמִי) [pronounced bayth-hahl-lahkh <sup>e</sup> -MEE]	place of food, place of bread and is transliterated Bethlehemite	gentilic adjective, referring to a city	Strong's #1022 BDB #112

**Translation:** And David replied, “[I am] the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.” David replies that he is the son of Jesse, who lives in Bethlehem. The term *servant* simply shows respect for Saul’s kingly office. All citizens of Israel were subjects of Saul and therefore subject to his directives.

Like many conversations recorded in Scripture, this is only a small portion of what Saul and David said to one another. Saul will come away from this meeting with a whole new respect for this young man (assuming that he recognized David in the first place; or, comes to realize who David is). David would be the age of his sons, which is also appealing to a father; and Saul may even have been instrumental in initiating the friendship between David and Jonathan, Saul’s son (see 1Sam. 18:1, which implies a fuller conversation and introduces the relationship between David and Jonathan).

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You will recall that, throughout my exegesis of this chapter, when we came to the Septuagint, I sometimes indicated that this portion was not found in LXX β, but only in the Alexandrian Septuagint. Apparently, LXX β is the oldest Greek manuscript (at least, according to the implications of a footnote in the NAB<sup>97</sup>). There are differing opinions on whether these portions found in LXX α and in the MT have been added or whether they belong there. Keil and Delitzsch give us lists of theologians from their time period who come down on one side or the other.<sup>98</sup>

For those who see all of this material as having been added, their opinions are as follows: David was Saul’s armor-bearer, and therefore, he was with Saul when Israel faced off with the Philistine army. All of this stuff about him being a shepherd returning to his father’s sheep, and about Saul not knowing his lineage, was added material.

In LXX β, much of this chapter is missing, and has been referred to from time to time when I give you the Greek rendering. However, it is very difficult to keep track of what is in LXX β and what is not. So that it is clear what is missing and what is there, the blue-colored font is what is found in the MT and the LXX β and the LXX α. The magenta font is the additional text, found both in the MT as well as the Alexandrian Septuagint (LXX α).<sup>99</sup> Afterward, I will comment further on this dispute.

### The LXX β of 1Samuel 17 (with the Missing Portions in Magenta)

The Philistines gathered their armies [lit., *camps*] for war. They were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah. [Specifically], they set up camp between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. Saul and the men of Israel were also gathered; setting up [their] camp in the valley of Elah. They organized [themselves for] battle to meet the Philistines. The Philistines stood toward the mountain on one side [lit., *this*] while the Israelites stood

<sup>97</sup> *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 605.

<sup>98</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 482.

<sup>99</sup> The NAB does something like this, but in black and white with one set of passages bracketed and the other not, it is much more difficult to follow. *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 605 (see footnote).

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toward the mountain on the other [lit., *that*] with a valley between them.

A man of the midst came out from the camp of the Philistines. His name [is] Goliath from Gath [and] his height is nearly 7 feet tall [lit., *four (MT reads six) cubits and a span*]. He was wearing a helmet of bronze on his head and scaled body armor; the weight of the body armor [was] 125 lbs [lit., *5000 shekels*] [and it was] bronze; and [he had] bronze shin guards above his feet and a bronze javelin [was slung] between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weavers' beam and the head of his spear [was] 15 lbs. [lit., *600 shekels*] of iron. And his shield bearer walked before him.

He stood and called out to the army of Israel, saying, "Why have you [all] come forth to prepare a battle? [Am] I not the Philistine and you [all are] servants of Saul? Choose for yourselves [one] man and he will come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, then we will be your servants; but if I am able with respect to him to strike him down, then you will be our servants and you will serve us." Then the Philistine said, "I defy [or, *scorn, discredit, shame*] the army of Israel this day! Give me a man and we will fight together."

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they became dismayed and very afraid.

Now David was the son of a man—this Ephrathite—from Bethlehem [in] Judah [whose] name [was] Jesse and he had [lit., *to him*] eight sons. Furthermore, his father [lit., *the man*] had come [to be] old among men [or, *in years*] in the days of Saul. So three of Jesse's sons went—the [3] oldest [lit., *greatest*] ones have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who have gone to the battle: Eliab, the firstborn, Abinadab his second [born], and Shammah the third [born]. David [was] the youngest and the three older [lit., *greater*] [sons] have followed [lit., *gone*] after Saul. However, David [periodically] departed and returned from [serving] Saul to feed his father's sheep [in] Bethlehem.

The Philistine came near morning and evening; and he set himself [there] [for] forty days.

Then Jesse said to David his son, "Please take to your brothers 2 cups [lit., *an ephah*] of roasted corn and these ten [loaves] of bread and take [them] quickly to the camp to your brothers. Also, you will take these ten cuttings of cheese to their chief commander [lit., *to the captain of the thousand*]. And make personal contact [with] your brothers concerning [their] welfare and bring [back] a message from them [lit., *their pledge, their exchange*]. Saul and they and every man of Israel [are] in the Valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines."

David then arose early in the morning and he left the sheep together with a keeper. He carried [the supplies] and went just as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the fortification [of wagons] and the army was going out toward the battle line, having made a battle cry [lit., *shouted in the war*]. Israel and the Philistines had set [themselves] up in [battle] array, army to meet army.

David left his supplies in the care of the camp commander [lit., *the supplies from attachment to him to a hand of one keeping the supplies*] and he ran to the battle line and inquired [lit., *and he went and he inquired*] about his brothers' welfare. And [while] he was speaking with them, the man of the midst was coming up—Goliath the Philistine [is] his name, from Gath, from the ranks of the Philistines—and he issued the same challenge as before [lit., *he spoke like these (same) words*]; but [this time] David heard [him].

When they saw the man, each man of Israel fled from him because [lit., *and*] they were greatly afraid. And the Israelites conversed [lit., *one of Israel would say*]: "Have you [all] seen this man coming up?" "[The one] coming up to defy [and shame] Israel?" "[So] it is, the man who defeats him, the king will enrich [with] great riches and he will give to him his daughter." "And he will make his father's house free [from taxes and public service] in Israel."

Then David said to the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who strikes down this Philistine

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and [thus] removes [this] shame [and disgrace] from Israel? For who [is] this uncircumcised Philistine who [lit., that] defies the armies of the Living God?"

And the people answered the same thing [lit., *this word*], saying "So [it] will be done for the man who defeats him."

His older brother Eliab heard him speaking to the men and his anger burned against David; therefore, he said, "Why did you [really] come down and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert-wilderness? I know your presumptuousness and the evil of your mind—you came down with the intent of seeing the battle."

David responded, "What have I done now? [Was] it not [just] a word?" Then he [David] turned [himself] from proximity to Eliab [lit., *him*] toward another and he asked the same thing and the people returned [to] him the same answer [lit., *a word as the former word*].

The words which David spoke were heard [by many, who] made [them] known to [lit., *before*] Saul, so he [Saul] seized him [David]. Then David said to Saul, "Do not let the heart of [any] man [or, *my lord*] fail [lit., *fall*] because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." But Saul told David, "You are not able to fight [lit., *to go to fight*] against this Philistine because you [are but] a youth and he [has been] a warrior [lit., *a man of war*] since his youthful years."

David then replied to Saul, "Your servant was a shepherd for his father among the sheep when [lit., *and*] [there] came a lion (and [later] a bear), and it carried [off] a lamb from the flock, so I went out after it and I struck it, rescuing [the lamb] from its mouth. Then he rose up against me, so I grabbed its beard, struck it [again] and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear and so will be [the end] of this uncircumcised Philistine, for he defies the ranks of the Living God [or, *Elohim*].

And Saul said to David, "Go and Y<sup>e</sup>howah will be with you." So Saul put his outer garment [possibly, *leather garment*] [upon] David and he placed a bronze helmet on his head, and put body armor [on] him. Then, David fastened his [Saul's] sword around [lit., *from upon to*] his outer [possibly, *leather*] garment and then he tried [lit., *willingly chose*] to walk because he had not [yet] tested [the gear]. He then said to Saul, "I am not able to walk in these things, for I haven't practiced [using them]." Then he took these things off [lit., *removed (from) himself from upon him*].

So David took his staff in his hand and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook and placed them in his shepherd's pouch [lit., *in the shepherd's bag which (is) to him*], even in the wallet; and his sling is in his hand and he approached the Philistine.

And the Philistine also advanced, moving closer [lit., *going and approaching*] to David. The man bearing the [large] shield [was] before him. The Philistine [carefully] examined [the approaching David] and [when] he saw David, he despised him, because he was a youth, reddish with a fair appearance. The Philistine roared at David, "[Am] I a dog that you come to me with sticks [and stones]?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his God, [Elohim]. The Philistine again spoke to David, "Come [on over] to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the animals of the field."

Then David responded to the Philistine, "You have come to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin [or possibly *a shield*], but I have come to you in the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah of the Armies, the Elohim of the ranks of Israel, Whom you have defied [this day]. And Y<sup>e</sup>howah [today] will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you down and I will remove your head from you and this day I will give [your carcass and] the carcasses of the camp of Philistines to the birds of the heavens and to the living things of the earth, so that all the earth will know that there [is] an Elohim in [possibly, *for*] Israel! As a result [lit., *and*], all this assembly will know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah does not save by the sword or by the spear, for the battle is Y<sup>e</sup>howah's and He has given you into our hands."

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And it was when the Philistine stood up and advanced and drew near to meet David, that David quickly ran [toward] the battle line to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand into the bag and took a stone from there and slung [it]. It struck the Philistine against his forehead so that [lit., and so] the stone sunk into his forehead and he fell upon his face to the ground. **In this manner [lit., and so], David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. He struck and killed the Philistine, but [there was] no sword in the hand of David.**

When the Philistines saw that their soldier was dead, they quickly departed. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took his sword out of its sheath and he executed him, using it [lit., by it] to cut off his head.

The men of Israel and Judah arose and were caused to shout. They pursued the Philistines as far as the road leading to [lit., your going to] the valley [or, Gath] and as far as the gates of Ekron. Philistines fell slain [and wounded] on the road to Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron.

The sons of Israel returned from hotly pursuing the Philistines and they plundered their camp. David took the head of the Philistine and brought it [to] Jerusalem, but he put Goliath's [lit., his] armor and weapons [lit., manufactured goods] in his [own] tent.

**As Saul had observed David going out to meet the Philistine, he asked Abner, [his] chief of staff [lit., chief of the army], "Whose son [is] this, this youth, Abner?"**

**Abner replied, "Quite frankly, your majesty, I don't know [lit., (As) your soul lives, O king, if I know]."**

**So the king ordered, "Inquire then [lit., you] whose son this young man is." And as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul (and the head of the Philistine [was still] in his hand).**

**Then Saul asked him, "Whose son [are] you, young man?"**

**And David replied, "[I am] the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite."**

If you read only what is found in blue, you will get the gist of what is found in LXX β. My educated guess is that someone was very concerned that Saul knew David as his musical therapist, but did not recognize him here, and therefore, the references which seemed contradictory to some scribe were removed by that scribe. The missing text is just too neat and clean and too much in keeping with the possibility that there is a contradiction here. The other problem was that David had also been made Saul's armor bearer (1Sam. 16:21), so what was he doing at home during a time of war?

First off, to answer why Saul did not know David's family: Saul probably had a lot of employees, and though he perhaps had even met David directly before, he probably had little if any direct contact with David after that. He simply heard David play music in the palace (and this may have occurred fewer than a half dozen times). Even if David played the music in the same room, Saul did not necessarily look at David, examine him carefully, or pause to examine David's resume and lineage. Saul was the king, for pity's sake—he had things on his mind, duties to perform, and decisions to make. The background of the palace guitarist was not that important.

An even better and equally plausible solution to this apparent contradiction is that Saul did recognize David from the palace, but he had since forgotten who his father was (which is exactly the question he asks Abner). Previously, that information was of no real concern to Saul, so he had forgotten it. However, now he had promised to release David's father's house from fiscal responsibility to the state and possibly from public service to the state, so he now needed to know who David's father was. If you have never forgotten a person's name before, then you may not grasp the intricacies of this excellent explanation.



Next, we have the problem of David being assigned the duty of being Saul's armor bearer back in 1Sam. 16:21. Now, let's just think about this for a moment. Saul has this musician in the palace that he grows fond of, so he says, "Hey, dude, why don't you carry my armor? Sure, you have no experience in war, but you play a jammin' guitar, and so I want you to carry my armor." Doesn't make sense, does it?<sup>100</sup> But, would it make sense for Saul to appoint David as his armor bearer *after* David defeats Goliath? Absolutely. David has proven himself in war, he turns out to be a delightful young man (who bonds readily with Saul's son Jonathan), so, at that point, it would make sense for Saul to make David his armor bearer. Some of this material is written down several years and even decades after the incidents occur. Furthermore, the Jews are not as chronological as we tend to be (personally, I have been attempting to exegete most Scripture chronologically). Therefore, in 1Sam. 16:21, we simply have a summary of the relationship between Saul and David written from the standpoint of several years later. David was not a musician one day, and then armor bearer the next. After David proves himself in battle, he becomes Saul's armor bearer. Wouldn't you want someone who has a clear picture of the spiritual issues to be by your side? Saul did. He had never lost his respect for Samuel, but, unfortunately, no longer had Samuel to spiritually guide him. David was possibly sort of a young substitute for Samuel. Furthermore, David had proven himself in battle; again, all the more reason for Saul to appoint him as Saul's armor bearer.

Something which Robert Gordon<sup>101</sup> points out is, if David is in a full-time contract with the palace, playing guitar and bearing armor, then why does he have his shepherd supplies with him when facing Goliath? This would be typical of a man who split his time between watching sheep and working in the palace, but not of one given completely over to public service. Another reason to suggest that David was first a musician in the palace of Saul, a war breaks out, David returns home, Saul goes to war, David goes to the battlefield, David kills Goliath, and then, after all that, Saul makes David his armor bearer and brings him on as full-time army/palace personnel.

There is another reason why the magenta text belongs there; one that I would not have understood without reading Keil and Delitzsch several times on this point. V. 11 (blue text) has a thought which is completed in v. 16 (magenta text). What falls in between those two verses is parenthetical. Apart from this understanding, v. 16 seems to pop out of nowhere. You read it in its immediate context and you wonder, *what is this verse doing here?* However, leave out vv. 12–15 and read vv. 11 and 16 together, and they make perfect sense. This would be connecting a verse which is clearly acknowledged to be there, with a verse that is disputed. However, they stand well together. In fact, it is surprising that the CEV or Moffatt did not move v. 16 to follow v. 11 (which is something both of these translations commonly do).

I need to be relatively unbiased here. So there are a couple of reasons why it could be argued that the magenta text does not belong. (1) Vv. 12–13 (David's genealogical background) are superfluous, as that information is found in the previous chapter. (2) There is the difficulty of v. 54 of David taking the head of Goliath to Jerusalem. Israel does not control Jerusalem at this time in history.

We have already discussed the first argument—it is very likely that there are two authors involved here—probably Samuel and David—and that the latter passage clearly identifies David of 1Sam. 17 to be the David of the previous chapter. We have also answered the second objection as well—Jerusalem was probably not under Israel's control; however, the Israelites and Jebusites probably lived side-by-side in relative peace in Jerusalem and Goliath's head was taken there as somewhat of an object lesson for the Jebusites.

<sup>100</sup> Allow me this tangent: this is a problem with many exegetes—they have several positions which have either been ingrained or positions that they have taken for this reason or that, and they interpret Scripture in accordance with these positions. What most exegetes lack is any true sense of logic. In fact, much of what is missing from the average theologian is a good sense of logic. They need a course in logic and in geometric proofs so that they simply don't spout off this opinion or that without carefully examining the various possibilities and then choosing the possibility which makes the most sense.

<sup>101</sup> Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 65.

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The removal of the magenta text (that which is found in the MT and LXX  $\alpha$ , but not in LXX  $\beta$ ) actually puts us in a more difficult position than before. It does not really solve any problems, but introduces more problems. We are left with having to figure out where did David come from and how did he come to visit with Saul, the king of Israel. Did he accompany Saul as a musician during the battle? Why the hell for? And if David was there as Saul's armor bearer (or, to be more accurate, one of Saul's armor bearers—compare 2Sam. 18:15), on what basis did Saul appoint him to that position in the first place? Because he was a really good musician? And what about the 40 days? Why would David hang out with Saul for 40 days, and then suddenly volunteer his services (we are assuming the magenta text should be removed in asking this question)? And why does David still have all of his shepherding equipment? Furthermore, why did David, as Saul's armor bearer, have no practice with Saul's equipment? Although not improbable, there is no reason to ignore what we find in LXX  $\alpha$  or in the Masoretic text, as leaving out that text creates more problems than it purports to solve.

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Here's the deal: when we are faced with questionable passages, there are several things that we consider under the concept of textual criticism. We can explain why these passages were removed—some copyist read them, felt as though they were contradictory, and excised them. After all, pretty much every commentator I refer back to made a comment about explaining Saul's asking Abner the name of David's father, even though David played guitar for Saul in the palace. So, this is an issue worthy of discussion, but a problem which we have easily explained. However, we can see, after carefully examining the issues, how the inclusion of these several passages actually makes more sense than their removal.

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Finally—and even though this is not by any means enough reason to take a position—every single translation that I am aware of includes these passages which are not found in LXX  $\beta$  (even Brenton includes them in his appendix). Furthermore, there are not even a handful of translations which even make reference to the fact that these passages are missing in LXX  $\beta$ . That would certainly indicate that the bulk of scholarly Christendom believes these passages to be a part of the Word of God.

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