

1 SAMUEL 29

1Samuel 29:1–11

The Philistines Mistrust David

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Introduction: 1Sam. 29 is an interesting chapter. David has allied himself with the Philistines and the Philistines are about to attack Israel. We have already talked about Saul and his army and how God is going to remove Saul and his sons from this life. We already know about Saul in great detail; however, his army has gone along with him as well. Saul would say, "Where's David?" and someone would try to locate him for Saul. Saul would say, "Saddle up, let's ride; let's find David and kill him" and they would all move out with Saul in pursuit of David, who had done them no wrong, had done Saul no wrong and had done Israel no wrong. However, God works out these events so that David and his men would not be fighting against Saul and his men; David and his men are not going to fight against the army which represents Israel. God works out these events so that there is no confusion in what David should or should not do.

What we have in this chapter is the initial gathering of the Philistines forces. They will all assemble in Aphek and first take stock of their forces before moving onto Shunem (vv. 1–2). Achish has asked David to join him as his personal bodyguard, along with his army (1Sam. 28:1–2). The Philistine generals recognize David and object to his joining their ranks to fight against Israel, despite the high recommendation of Achish (vv. 3–5). Achish apologetically tells David that he must leave, making it clear that he trusts him implicitly (vv. 6–9). Achish suggests to David that he leave first thing in the morning, which David does (vv. 10–11a). While David is proceeding south, the Philistine army advances to the north (v 11) to Shunem.

The key cities of these final chapters of 1Samuel are all well known to us. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown tell us: *Gilboa, Jezreel, Shunem, En-dor, are all found [today], still bearing the same names. They lie within sight of each other. Aphek is the only one of the cluster not yet identified [however, we do have a good idea where it is]. Jezreel on the northern slope of Gilboa, and at the distance of twenty minutes to*

*the east, is a large fountain, and a smaller one still nearer; just the position which a chieftain would select, both on account of its elevation and the supply of water needed for his troops.*¹

At least one exegete, Matthew Henry, talks about how David is close to God, in contrast to Saul, who is far from God, and he notes the difference in results.² The problem is, David is not in fellowship; he is in the wrong place; he does not belong with the Philistines; he should not be going to war against Israel. We have gone into great detail in 1Sam. 27 just how far out of bounds David is. Furthermore, in 1Sam. 30, we will see David and his men disciplined as well as David turning back to God (1Sam. 30:6). There is a contrast between Saul and David in these two chapters; but it is a contrast between a believer about to die the sin unto death as versus a believer who can and will recover from his own reversionism.³

McGee gives us a more accurate summary of the events leading to this: *David has become so discouraged and despondent because of Saul's determination to kill him that he left the land of Israel. God had not told him to leave any more than He told Abraham to leave the land. On the part of both these men it was a lapse of faith. So David stepped out of the land and moved over into the country of Philistia.*⁴

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Prologue (1Samuel 28:1–2)

Because 1Sam. 28:3–25 were obviously inserted, I am going to briefly cover 1Sam. 28:1–2, which, chronologically, belong with this chapter of 1Samuel. 1Sam. 28:3–25 chronologically follow 1Sam. 29 in time. What you will notice is, how smoothly 1Sam. 28:1–2 fit together with 1Sam. 29. I would guess in the source material, these were found together, written by the same author (who is probably David).

If I were teaching this to a congregation, we would go in this order: 1Sam. 28:1–2 1Sam. 29:1–11 1Sam. 28:3–25 1Sam. 30–31. This is roughly the chronological order; however, what is really happening is some of these narratives follow Saul (1Sam. 28:3–25 1Sam. 31) and some of them follow David (1Sam. 28:1–2 1Sam. 29–30). Many of these events are occurring simultaneously, about 70 miles apart.

A complete exegesis of the following two verses can be found with the exegesis of 1Sam. 28.

Slavishly literal:

And so he is in the days the those and so gathers Philistines their camps to the war to engage in war in Israel. And so says Achish unto David, “Understanding you understand that with me you go out in the camps—you and your men.”

1Samuel
28:1

Moderately literal:

And it happened [or, and it came to pass; lit., and it was] in those days the Philistines congregated their camps for war to fight against Israel. Furthermore [lit., and], Achish said to David, “You fully understand that you will go out with me in the camps—you and your soldiers.”

And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines congregated their forces to go to war against Israel. Furthermore, Achish said to David, “Please understand that you and your soldiers will go out with me to where my army is.”

¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 1Sam. 29:1.

² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29 introduction.

³ An R. B. Thieme III term; you may want to substitute in the word *apostasy*.

⁴ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 151.

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines decided to make another move against Israel. Achish tells David that he is expected to be allied with the Philistine army.

The listing of the various translations along with the Hebrew exegesis is to be found with our examination of 1Sam. 28.

Translation: *And it happened* [or, *and it came to pass*; lit., *and it was*] *in those days* the Philistines congregated their camps for war to fight against Israel. The Philistines and the Jews had an ongoing hatred for each other going back to the time of the judges. God had given the land of the Philistines to Israel and the Philistines were forever looking to take bites out of the land that Israel occupied. I don't know how things are during the time that you are reading this, but as I write this, we have almost the exact same situation occurring between the Israelis and the Palestinians (the name *Palestine*, by the way, has its roots in the word *Philistine*). Israel did not seem to make any inroads over the years on Philistine territory (if we limit their territory to their five cities and the immediate surrounding area), but the Philistines seemed to be continually driving a wedge between Israel and Judah, as well as encroaching upon Judah's territory. Being heathen and not understanding that God had given this land to the Jews, the Philistines certainly believed that they had more rights to this land than Israel did. Therefore, the Philistines would gather their armies periodically to attack Israel, which is what was occurring at this point in time. David, because he is a brilliant man, should have been able to foresee that this would be a possibility during the year and a quarter that he lived in the land of the Philistines.

I have mentioned just how messy the border between Israel and Philistia was. The Philistines apparently had owned Beth shan for much of its history, even though that is right in the midst of Manasseh. We have a hard time grasping that, as our borders tend to be quite clear, well-marked, and contiguous. However, what we find here is not unlike Israel in modern history. There are a few streets which are considered Palestinian, a few which are considered Israeli; and there are people of the wrong type living in each. The borders of Israel at the time of this writing are relatively fluid, and so it was in the days of Saul and before. In fact, there were apparently whole cities within Israel's borders which were essentially controlled by heathen (Judges 1:27, for instance).

You will also notice that there will be an occasional alliance (like David and Achish) and there will be a lot of animosity as well. We have the same thing today. I have an acquaintance who is a Palestinian who said that when she lived in Israel/Palestine, that those who had lived there (Israelis and Palestinians) essentially got along well, and the newer settlers were the ones who often stirred up trouble. My point is, what we find today as I write this is not altogether different from the time of David and Saul; except that they engaged in more direct warfare.

Translation: *...Furthermore* [lit., *and*], Achish said to David, "You fully understand that you will go out with me in the camps—you and your soldiers." Achish calls David in and tells him, "You understand that, as a part of this country, you must take part in our military excursions." The idea is, it did not matter whether these attacks were against Israel or anyone else. This was a well-understood principal in the ancient world. Any man who was a part of a country, also had a responsibility to serve his country in the military. Even though there were exceptions (Saul did not draft every single male), an exception would not be made for David, who is a military man (it is highly unlikely that Achish had any idea that David was once a shepherd boy). David is beholden to Achish; and, as an adult male, he has an obligation to defend the country in which he has chosen to live.

Gill writes: *David, and whereby he was like to be drawn into a dilemma; either to fight against his country, which he could not do conscientiously; or be guilty of ingratitude to Achish, and incur his displeasure, and be liable to be turned out of his country, or treated in a worse manner, even he and his men, to be seized on and cut to pieces by the forces of the Philistines, should he refuse.*⁵ Do you see the moral dilemmas which result when you move a little out of God's will and direction for your life? David went to Philistia originally just to escape Saul's constant hounding; now he finds himself in the compromised position of being expected to go to war against his own country.

⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:1.

By the way, it is not just David that Achish expect to join him; he certainly expects for David to bring his army with him. They are also beneficiaries of life in Philistia, so they are also subject to conscription. Achish believes that they have all been making raids against southern Judah, so the idea of expecting them to fight against Israel is reasonable. Recall the last thing that Achish said about David at the end of 1Sam. 27: “He has made himself odious among his people Israel; therefore, he will become my servant forever.” The same verse tells us that Achish trusts David. Achish has no reason to think that there is any problem at all with his request (which is, for all intents and purposes, a royal command).

And so says David unto Achish, “For so you [even] you know [that] which does your servant.”

1Samuel
28:2

David answered Achish, “Certainly you [even] you will know that which your servant will [can?] do.”

And so says Achish unto David, “For so a keeper to my head I make you all the days.”

Then Achish said to David, “Certainly I will make you my bodyguard [lit., a *guard with reference to my head*] perpetually.”

David answered Achish, “Now you will see what your servant can do.”

Then David said to David, “I will make you my permanent bodyguard from now on.”

Again, the Hebrew exegesis of this verse along with the various English translations can be found in the exegesis of 1Sam. 28.

What is the gist of this verse? David appears to agree to join forces with Achish against the Jews. Achish makes David his permanent bodyguard.

Translation: David answered Achish, “Certainly you [even] you will know that which your servant will [can?] do.”

David’s answer appears to be vague and somewhat ambiguous; I assume that this allows the listener to take it in whatever way he chooses to take it. “You certainly know what your servant does.” Now, I base my assessment on this sentence alone. It is my opinion that David really does not know exactly what he will do; he is being plunged further and further into this morally ambiguous situation. Furthermore, consider this: David came to Philistia to escape Saul and his army—the Philistines are mobilizing a huge army right at this point in time. How wise would it be for David to tell Achish, “Okay, I have been lying to you all along. I have not made any raids against Judah. Furthermore, I am not taking my army into battle against Israel.” David has an army of 600; the Philistines have thousands of men mobilized for war. If David says the wrong thing, he and his army and their wives and children could be wiped out (remember, David is out of fellowship, so he is not really clinging to the promises of God).

Now Achish does not take this response as vague or noncommittal, regardless of the way that David meant it. Achish takes this as an unqualified affirmative response. Achish now has great trust in David, which will be made clear by what he says next.

Translation: ...Then Achish said to David, “Certainly I will make you my bodyguard [lit., a *guard with reference to my head*] perpetually.” Achish was apparently satisfied with David’s response, even though it sounds noncommittal to me; and assigns David probably the most important job he could assign him: he made David his personal bodyguard. This indicates that Achish had great trust in David. Achish will be one of the leaders in this war against Israel (it is not clear if he is the head of this attack or not). We also know that the Philistines have before been routed when their leader is killed (as with Goliath). So Achish has a tremendous amount of trust in David. He is trusting David with his very life. It is unlikely that he suspects David of anything, given the position which he awards him.

You have got to think that this gets David to thinking. He is out of God’s geographical will. He is often out of fellowship. His anointment to become king of Israel was a long, long time ago. This man Achish is putting a great deal of trust in him. He treats David in the way that Saul should have treated him. He trusts David in the way that Saul should have trusted him. Perhaps David is thinking to himself, “Maybe this is where I should be.” David’s

ambiguous response may not have been an attempt on his part to do anything but to think this situation through while talking to Achish. One can only imagine the confusion that must be in David's soul. Saul could have trusted him completely, yet did not; here is a traditional enemy of the Jew, and he trusts David implicitly—with his very own life.

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The Philistine Armies Initially Gather at Aphek

Slavishly literal:

And so gather Philistines all their camps [in] Aphek; and Israel is camping in the spring which [is] in Jezreel.

1Samuel
29:1

Moderately literal:

The Philistines gathered all their forces [or, camps] [in] Aphek; and Israel was bivouacking by the spring which [is] near Jezreel.

While the Philistines garnered all of their forces in Aphek, Israel bivouacked by the spring near Jezreel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so gather Philistines all their camps [in] Aphek; and Israel is camping in the spring which [is] in Jezreel.

Septuagint

And the Philistines gather all their armies to Aphek and Israel encamped in Aendor, which is in Jezrael.

Significant differences:

The Septuagint version I have has Israel in *Aendor* and the MT has them camping near a spring (and the Hebrew here could *not* be transliterated *Aendor*). The Peshitta is in agreement with the MT. 1Sam. 29 did not survive as part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. None of the ancient manuscripts which I have support the REB or the NAB, including the Latin (not even by transliteration). My guess is, the Alexandrian LXX reads *Harod*. The only footnote offered by any of my sources is in the REB, which unhelpfully footnotes *En-harod* with: *probable reading; Hebrew: at the spring*.⁶

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

The Philistines had brought their whole army to Aphek, while Israel's army was camping near Jezreel Spring.

The Message

The Philistines mustered all their troops at Aphek. Meanwhile Israel had made camp at the spring at Jezreel.

NAB

Now the Philistines had mustered all their forces in the spring of Harod near Jezreel.

NLT

The entire Philistine army now mobilized at Aphek, and the Israelites camped at the spring in Jezreel.

REB

The Philistines mustered their entire army in Aphek; the Israelites encamped at En-harod in Jezreel.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

The Philistines assembled their whole army at Aphek, and Israel camped at the spring in Jezreel.

⁶ *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 634.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HSBC

The Philistines brought all their military units together at Aphek while Israel was camped by the spring in Jezreel.

Young's Literal Translation

And the Philistines gather all their camps to Aphek, and the Israelites are encamping at a fountain which is in Jezreel..

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines muster their forces in Aphek; and the Israelites camp by a fountain or spring in Jezreel.

1Samuel 29:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbats (קָבַץ) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to take, to grasp with the hand; to collect; to congregate</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
P ^h ilish ^{tîy} (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh-NEH</i>]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
ʾāphêq (אָפֶק) [pronounced <i>uh-FAYK</i>]	transliterated <i>Aphek</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #663 BDB #67

Translation: The Philistines gathered all their forces [or, camps] [in] Aphek;... I've covered the **Doctrine of Aphek** in Joshua 12:18; now might be a good time to refer to it. There are several *Aphek*'s in Scripture, and here we are probably speaking of Aphek in Ephraim, which was probably where the Philistines camped when they fought against Israel in I Sam. 4:1. At this time, Aphek would have been on the northern rim of Philistine territory. This would likely be near, but not on, the northern coast of the Mediterranean. Although this could be the Aphek listed in the point above in the southern portion of Judah, it is more likely that this is located in Ephraim. Given that the Philistines control the territory of Dan around this time, moving eastward into Ephraim would make the most sense. Recall that when the Philistines camped here before, the Israelites went back to get the Ark of God for good luck, which would have been located in the Tabernacle of God which was at Shiloh in Ephraim.

Recall from the previous chapter (vv. 1–2) that these are Philistines from the 5 cities of Philistia. Therefore, if Achish of Gath is there, then we would expect the four rulers of the other city-states to be there as well. Only one

commentary⁷ that I use seems to think that Achish is the supreme ruler here subject to some checks and balances by his generals.

This was, by the way, an initial gathering of the Philistine armies. They are not going to necessarily make this their main camp from which to attack. Once they gather and number their troops in relative peace, then they will move northward toward Jezreel. This tells us that this incident that we will study in 1Sam. 29 actually precedes 1Sam. 28:1–4. Several Philistine battalions move through Aphek up to the valley of Jezreel to Shunem (1Sam. 28:4). There is no way that they would move from Shunem and backtrack to Aphek. Furthermore, David is going to be kept from going anywhere close to Shunem, which will be the final stop of the Philistine armies prior to their attack against Israel. This makes this verse occur previous in time to 1Sam. 28:4, where the Philistines are gathering in Shunem. Also in that verse, I gave you a chronological chart of these two chapters, which I will expand upon in 1Sam. 31.

Now, the only thing I have a problem with is, 1Sam. 28:1–2 seem to be properly placed at the beginning of this chapter and 1Sam. 28 should have consisted of vv. 3–25. Furthermore, the eyewitness to the events of 1Sam. 28:3–25 would be different than the eyewitness of the events of 1Sam. 28:1–2 and 1Sam. 29. This tells us that the bulk of 1Sam. 28 was inserted by an editor and written by someone entirely different. This does not mean that it is a phoney account, or anything like that; it simply means that the source material is different and its insertion into Scripture as a part of Scripture was something which occurred later. We do not know who wrote the book of Samuel (it is one book in the Hebrew)—like the book of Genesis, I believe there were several original authors: Samuel, David, Jonathan (for at least 1Sam. 14) and the author of 1Sam. 28 (which actually could have been the same man who recorded 1Sam. 14—Jonathan's armor bearer). It is my opinion that David was the final author/editor of Samuel (given that his death is not recorded until Kings). Since he was an eyewitness to most of the events of 1Sam. 16–2Sam. 24, and since he was closely associated with Jonathan, who was an eyewitness to 1Sam. 9–15 (and Samuel was also an eyewitness to some of these events) as well as with Samuel (who would have been an eyewitness to most of 1Sam. 1–10), David would be the likely person to have written and edited the entire book of Samuel.

I want you to recognize that there is an invisible hero here—someone observed the events of 1Sam. 28, and yet, we do not even know him by name. He is probably one of the two men who accompanied Saul, but we don't know his name and we won't know his name until we slip from this life into eternity. However, if you look around your church, you are going to see a lot of invisible heroes—people who you might even think are too far beneath you to associate with, people who might even be praying quietly on your behalf day after day.

The question in the back of my mind is, *why the slopping editing job?* That is, why not have 1Sam. 28:3–25 follow 1Sam. 29? That would give us a better chronological order and it would place 1Sam. 28:1–2 where they belong, with 1Sam. 29. After putting in several months of study on these two chapters, this question jumps out at me, as does the odd editing job, and I don't know if I have a satisfactory explanation as to why it is done this way. Maybe, for those of us who are curious about authorship, this is God the Holy Spirit's way of making it clear that this is an insertion, a narrative by a different author, which narrative stands out because it requires a different eyewitness and is obviously just stuck right smack dab in the middle of another narrative. Apart from this, I do not know why the history of Saul and the witch of Endor was placed where it is.

I should make two points at this time: first of all, I will try to record all of my questions and concerns, whether or not I have an answer. Part of this reason is, as I continue to study the passage, the answer will become clear to me. Given my age and forgetfulness, it is a good idea to write these questions down, as I could otherwise easily forget them. Furthermore, I am not embarrassed to record a question for which I do not have a satisfactory answer. I have no idea who will read this study of Samuel in the future, but I doubt that it will be the casual believer or the new

⁷ Jamieson, Fausset and Brown comment: *The Philistine government had constitutional checks—or at least the king was not an absolute sovereign; but his authority was limited—his proceedings liable to be controlled by "the powerful barons of that rude and early period—much as the kings of Europe in the Middle Ages were by the proud and lawless aristocracy which surrounded them"* (the final quote is from Chalmers). Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 1Sam. 29:9.

believer. I pose these questions for the person who does read and study what I have written so that they will have questions of their own to answer which I could not.

Secondly, by introducing a question like this, by indicating that 1Sam. 28:3–25 is from a difference source and obviously inserted, I am not questioning in any way the inspiration of the Word of God. I am not questioning the inspiration of that portion of God's Word nor am I questioning that this is the Word of God. Just because the final book is written by several authors that one editor wove together, this does not in any way indicate that the narrative lacks divine inspiration and guidance. Our understanding of divine inspiration should not be altered simple because David, for instance, took what Samuel wrote, appended to it what he personally witnessed, and then inserted some narratives from sources which he trusted. After all, if David had not included the account of Saul and the witch of Endor, then that statement of 1Chron. 10:13–14 would make no sense, as it would reference something which Saul did that we would not have a record of (Chronicles was recorded long after the books of Samuel and Kings).

Another question: could the final editor of the book of Chronicles have inserted 1Sam. 28:3–25 into the book of Samuel, so that he had something to refer back to? I doubt it. Believers in the Old Testament, particularly those closely associated with the plan of God, were not in the habit of appending lengthy narratives to the Word of God. The manuscripts which we have of Scripture which are separated by as much as a millennium show little if any change. What is most likely is, David saw this as important to include about Saul. David did not denigrate Saul to bring himself up—David is very honest in presenting himself as well. We see David's warts as well as his good points. Saul's choices, the depths to which he sank, as a dog returning to his vomit, is important for us to see.

1Samuel 29:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yis'ra'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis'-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
chânah (חֲנָה) [pronounced <i>khaw-NAW</i>]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #2583 BDB #333
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
'ayin (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i>]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
Yiz'r ^{er} êl (יִזְרְעֵל) [pronounced <i>yiz'-r^e-GAIL</i>]	<i>God will sow; that which God planted; it is transliterated Jezreel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3157 BDB #283

Translation: ...and Israel was bivouacking by the spring which [is] near Jezreel. The bēyth preposition has a number of meanings; however, here, I have rendered it *near* instead of *in*. The reason is, if this spring were *in* Jezreel, this would simply read *by the spring of Jezreel* (spring would be in the construct).

Keil and Delitzsch give us a description of this fountain: *This fountain is the present Ain Jalûd (or Ain Jalût, i.e., Goliath's fountain, probably so called because it was regarded as the scene of the defeat of Goliath), a very large fountain, which issues from a cleft in the rock at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern border of Gilboa, forming a beautifully limpid pool of about forty or fifty feet in diameter, and then flowing in a brook through the valley (Rob. Pal. iii. p. 168).*⁸ I don't know if this is the correct one, but they paint a vivid picture of it.

Jezreel of Issachar was the summer residence of Ahab and his house (1Kings 18:45, 46). Jezreel was *situated on a mountain, with an extensive and splendid prospect over the large plain that was called by its name. It was afterwards called Esdraela.*⁹ Jezreel is situated between Scythopolis and Legio and can be found in the present-day Zerîn, situated in the northwest mountains of Gilboa

There is a tributary on my map which runs by Jezreel and feeds into the Jordan River. This location is in Issachar, and puts us reasonably close to Endor. My original problem with this location is, we are about 40 miles northeast of Aphek, which is quite a distance away for two armies to be. However, this makes sense, as this is not actually where the Israelites and the Philistines will do battle. The Philistines are initially gathering their troops to go to war. They are not ready to move against Israel, so they first gather some distance away from Saul and his army. They will advance as a group to Shunem when they are ready to go to war. (1Sam. 28:4).

It is interesting the order in which this occurs. Saul gathers his army far north of the Philistine army, recognizing that there will be a conflict soon. More than likely, Saul had men who relayed to him that the Philistines were mustering their forces. I don't know exactly how he chose to go to this particular area; maybe Saul is choosing the battleground. In any case, he chooses a choice place for his troops to cool their heels; near a natural spring, which is a necessity for a large army.

Saul is quite fearful of what will happen. This is not Saul the great leader and warrior of his early years; but this is Saul, the coward, the reversionist, a man who had become an enemy of God. He fears dying at the hand of the Philistines; he fears dying under discipline from God; he fears the pain and suffering of war.

And warlords of Philistines are passing over to hundreds and to thousands and David and his men were passing over in the coming after with Achish.

1Samuel
29:2

The warlords were marching [lit., passing] with respect to hundreds and with respect to thousands; and David and his men were marching [lit., passing] in the rear with Achish.

The warlords continued to march guiding hundreds and guiding groups of thousands; while David and his men were marching in the rear with Achish.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And warlords of Philistines are passing over to hundreds and to thousands and David and his men were passing over in the coming after with Achish.

Septuagint

And the lords of the Philistines went on by hundreds and thousands, and David and his men went on in the rear with Anchus.

Significant differences:

None.

⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 29:1.

⁹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 142.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The Philistine rulers and their troops were marching past the Philistine army commanders in groups of a hundred and a thousand. When David and his men marched by at the end with Achish,...
NLT	As the Philistine rulers were leading out their troops in groups of one hundred and one thousand, David and his men marched at the rear with King Achish.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The Philistine leaders were marching by with their companies and regiments. David and his men were marching in the rear with Achish.
JPS (Tanakh)	The Philistine lords came marching, each with his units of hundreds and of thousands; and David and his men came marching last, with Achish.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	As the Philistine leaders were passing <i>in review with their units of hundreds and thousands</i> , David and his men were <i>passing in review</i> behind them with Achish.
Young's Updated LT	And the princes of the Philistines are passing on by hundreds, and by thousands, and David and his men are passing on in the rear with Achish.

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines had their army organized in units of 100 or 1000. David was in the rear with Achish, as his personal guard.

1Samuel 29:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
צָרְאִיִּם (צרון) [pronounced s ^e -RAW-neem]	<i>warlords, lords, princes, czars, generals, officers; officials, VIP's</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5633 BDB #710
Equivalent to sârîym (סָרִיִּם) [pronounced <i>saw-REEM</i>]. Compare 1Sam. 29:6 with 29:4, 9. Strong's #8269 BDB #978.			
P ^h ilish ^{tîy} (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
עָבָר (עבר) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mê'âh (מאה) [pronounced may-AW]	<i>one hundred</i>	feminine plural numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547

1Samuel 29:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿălâphîym (אַלְפִּיִּם) pronounced <i>uh-law- FEEM</i>	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

Translation: The warlords were marching [lit., passing] with respect to hundreds and with respect to thousands;...

This was a very serious act of aggression against Israel. The Philistines hated the Israelites, just like Arab groups hate the Jews today. Therefore, if they have their troops built up enough to engage the Israelites in battle, then they will. It is almost automatic. At this point, they are meeting in Aphek first, just to determine their troops numbers and to set up battle protocol, as these troops probably came from the five main Philistine cities. Once they are organized, then they will march to Shunem.

Gill suggests¹⁰ that these *warlords* were five in number, one for each primary city-state in Philistia. Joshua 13:3 Judges 3:3 and 1Sam. 6:4, 16, 18 would appear to support this, inasmuch as the same word is used there for the *five lords of the Philistines*. Furthermore, çeren is the only word used when making reference to the *five Philistine lords* in Scripture. Some of these lords were over groups of a hundred men; others over thousands of men. Judges 16:18 seems to indicate that this word had a broader usage (however, there is no reason to necessarily construe the word any differently in the other places where it is found (Joshua 13:3 Judges 3:3 16:5, 8, 18, 23, 27, 30, 1Sam. 5:8, 11 6:4, 12, 16, 18 7:7 29:2, 6–7 1Chron. 12:19). Most of the commentators to whom I refer also see this as an effort of all the Philistine city-states, meaning that Achish is among equals (the four other city-state warlords).¹¹

Israel's army also was divided into hundreds and thousands (1Sam. 8:12), which suggests that their arithmetic system, like ours, has a special place for tens, hundreds and thousands.

1Samuel 29:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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

¹⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:2.

¹¹ At the present time, I consult approximately twenty commentaries, and only Jamieson, Fausset and Brown imply that Achish is the top dog, subject to some checks and balances. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 1Sam. 29:9.

1Samuel 29:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions, soldiers, companions</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʿābar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾachārôn (אַחֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-kha-ROHN</i>]	<i>coming after, behind, later, following, last</i>	feminine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #314 BDB #30
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
ʾākîysh (אַכִּישׁ) [pronounced <i>aw-KEESH</i>]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37

Translation: ...and David and his men were marching [lit., passing] in the rear with Achish. David developed a good relationship with Achish. Recall that he demonstrated a marvelous sense of humor when David had gone to Gath previously (1Sam. 21). Since Achish did not kill David, David felt comfortable going back to him. Given that they apparently have this unspoken pact of nonaggression, it is very natural that David and Achish would ride together. Achish is not terrifically jealous of David like Saul is. He may be using David; but he does not get weird about it.

Now, recall that David has, more or less, consented to join in with Achish against the Israelites. He had little choice; Achish had trusted him and provided him refuge from Saul, who had spent a decade pursuing David. In those days, it was customary to be willing to defend your own country (something which most young people in the United States do not find to be an imperative). Philistia had become David's country as a result of David's volition. Therefore, it was only right for David to join them. However, Israel was David's country over which he would rule, which places David in a tenuous position. Matthew Henry describes his situation below:

Matthew Henry comments: *If [David] should quit his post [not fight against the Israelites], he would fall under the indelible reproach, not only of cowardice and treachery, but of base ingratitude to Achish, who had been his protector and benefactor and had reposed a confidence in him, and from whom he had received a very honourable commission. Such an unprincipled thing as this he could by no means persuade himself to do.*

If he should, as was expected from him, fight for the Philistines against Israel, he would incur the imputation of being an enemy to the Israel of God and a traitor to his country, would make his own people hate him, and unanimously oppose his coming to the crown, as unworthy the name of an Israelite, much more the honour and trust of a king of Israel, when he had fought against them under the banner of the

uncircumcised. If Saul should be killed (as it proved he was) in this engagement, the fault would be laid at David's door, as if he had killed him. So that on each side there seemed to be both sin and scandal. This was the strait he was in; and a great strait it was to a good man, greater to see sin before him than to see trouble. Into this strait he brought himself by his own unadvisedness, in quitting the land of Judah, and going among the uncircumcised. It is strange if those that associate themselves with wicked people, and grow intimate with them, come off without guilt, or grief, or both. What he himself proposed to do does not appear. Perhaps he designed to act only as keeper to the king's head, the post assigned him (1Sam. 28:2) and not to do anything offensively against Israel. But it would have been very hard to come so near the brink of sin and not to fall in. Therefore, though God might justly have left him in this difficulty, to chastise him for his folly, yet, because his heart was upright with him, he would not suffer him to be tempted above what he was able, but with the temptation made a way for him to escape, 1Cor. 10:13.¹²

There is little worse than to be put into a difficult position by your own volition, which is what has happened to David. He is out of fellowship, out of God's geographical will, and now in a place where, whatever he seems to choose will be wrong. As Henry says above, only God can provide David a way out of this predicament.

One commentator, Abarbinel, suggests that David was there strictly as a bodyguard and that he would not have raised his hand against the Israelites.¹³ Think this through a little: David is there with 600 warriors—are they going to surround Achish and not let anyone through, and yet not use their weapons? That would make little sense. They might remain in Achish's vicinity, but part of their protection is going to involve killing any Israeli soldier that comes near. You cannot twist the situation here into David finding a way to fulfill his obligation to Achish and yet do nothing against Israel—he is clearly trapped in a damned if you do and damned if you don't situation. David is out of God's geographical will and apparently out of fellowship as well (it is implied that he fears Saul in 1Sam. 27:1). Being out of fellowship and out of God's geographical will is the easiest way to go from a black and white world, into a world of grays. God, in His grace, will solve David's dilemma.

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The Philistine Generals Object to David Joining Them

And so say leaders of Philistines, "What the Hebrews the these?"

The leaders of the Philistines said, "What [is up with all] these Hebrews?"

And so says Achish unto leaders of the Philistines, "[Is] not this David, a servant of Saul king of Israel who is with me here days and here years and I have not found in him anything from a day [of] his falling away until the day the this?"

1Samuel
29:3

So Achish said to the leaders of the Philistines, "[Is] not this David, a servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been here with me [for] days and [for] years and [yet] I have not found in him anything [negative] from the day he fell away until this day?"

The leaders of the Philistines said, "What is up with all of these Hebrews?"

Achish answered them, saying, "This is Saul's man, David, who has been with me for a long time and yet I have not found any fault in him from the time that he fell away even until today."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

¹² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:1–5.

¹³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:2.

Latin Vulgate	And the princes of the Philistines said to Achis: What mean these Hebrews? And Achis said to the princes of the Philistines: Do you not know David who was the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, and hath been with me many days, or years, and I have found no fault in him, since the day that he fled over to me until this day?
Masoretic Text	And so say leaders of Philistines, "What the Hebrews the these?" And so says Achish unto leaders of the Philistines, "[Is] not this David, a servant of Saul king of Israel who is with me here days and here years and I have not found in him anything from a day [of] his falling away until the day the this?"
Peshitta	Then the princes of the Philistines said to Achish, "What are these men marching here?" And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "This is David, the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, who has been with us a year and some months, and I have found no fault in him from the day he came to me until this day."
Septuagint	And the lords of the Philistines said, "Who [are] these that pass by?" And Anchus said to the captains of the Philistine, "[Is this] not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel? He has been with us some days, even this second year, and I have not found any fault in him from the day that he attached himself to me even until this day."
Significant differences:	In the MT, David has fallen away from (or defected from) Saul (who is not named). In the LXX, David is said to have attached himself to Achish. In the Peshitta, David is said to have come to Achish. In the Vulgate, David has fled over to Achish. Now, even though the specific meaning of this phrase is quite different in the ancient translations, the difference is minor with respect to the overall meaning.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The Philistine rulers and their troops were marching past the Philistine army commanders in groups of a hundred and a thousand. When David and his men marched by at the end with Achish, the commanders said, "What are these worthless Israelites doing here?" "They are David's men," Achish answered. "David used to be one of Saul's officers, but he left Saul and joined my army a long time ago. I've never had even one complaint about him." [vv. 2–3].
NLT	But the Philistine commanders demanded, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" And Achish told them, "This is David, the man who ran away from King Saul of Israel. He's been with me for years, and I've never found a single fault in him since he defected to me."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The Philistine officers asked, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" Achish asked the Philistine officers, "Isn't this David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me now for a year or two? I've found nothing wrong with him from the day he defected until now."
JPS (Tanakh)	The Philistine officers asked, "Who are those Hebrews?" "Why, that's David, the servant of King Saul of Israel," Achish answered the Philistine officers. "He has been with me for a year or more, and I have found no fault in him from the day he defected until now."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible	Then said the princes of the Philistines, What are these Hebrews [doing here]? And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, Is [this] not David, servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me [for] a year or two, and I have found in him nothing [suspect], from the day of his
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coming over [or, *falling away*] to me [so it should be, as per the Aramaic, Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate] to this day?"

HCSB Then the Philistine commanders asked, "What are these Hebrews *doing here*?" Achish answered the Philistine commanders, "That is David, servant of King Saul of Israel. He has been with me a considerable period of time. From the day he defected until today, I've found no fault with him."

MKJV And the rulers of the Philistines said, What *are* these Hebrews *doing*? And Achish said to the rulers of the Philistines, Is this not David the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me *these* days, or *these* years. And I have not found anything *evil* in him from the day he fell away until today?.

Young's Updated LT And the heads of the Philistines say, "What *are* these Hebrews?" and Achish says unto the heads of the Philistines, "Is not this David servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me these days or these years, and I have not found in him anything *wrong* from the day of his falling away till this day."

What is the gist of this verse? The officers of the Philistine army confront Achish, asking him, essentially, "What are Hebrews doing here?" Achish reassures them that this is David, who has not done anything wrong before Achish for the past year or so.

1Samuel 29:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
P ^h ilish ^t îy (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^h -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
mâh (מָה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
`erîym (עֲרִימ) [pronounced ġī ^{be} -VREEM]	<i>those from beyond; transliterated Hebrews, Eberites</i>	proper masculine plural gentis/noun with the definite article	Strong's #5680 BDB #720
`êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced KEHLleh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article	Strong's #428 BDB #41

Translation: The leaders of the Philistines said, "What [is up with all] these Hebrews?" The Philistines have gathered for battle, and they are passing in review, and they notice David and his 600 men bringing up the rear with Achish. Several of them (and possibly all of them) go right to Achish and ask, "What is going on? Why do we have all these Hebrews with us?" They are about to go to battle with the Jews. It seems ill-advised to have a battalion of Hebrews directly behind them given that they are about to face off with Jews in front. This could result in a

nightmare in battle with Hebrews on both sides of them. Therefore, this is a legitimate question. It is unclear whether or not they knew that this was David. I suspect that several of them knew it was David or thought that it was David.

I suspect that one or two saw David and the Hebrews, and then commented around to the others, to see how the rest of them felt about this situation. When there was an unofficial consensus of opinion, many of the officers decided to approach Achish en masse.

A different word is used here for leadership than what we found in v. 2; I suspect the word found in v. 2 refers to specifically the five kings of the five cities of Philistia; and the *sarim* here refers to these men as well as many of the officers beneath them. In other words, I think Achish was approached by perhaps a couple dozen officers of the Philistine army. The intention is for this delegation to be reasonably large and to carry enough authority to overrule Achish at any point. Achish would not be able to simply look at the other four Philistine lords and say, “Well, what of your junior officers? They are going to do the bulk of the fighting—what do they say about this?”

1Samuel 29:3b

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
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾākîysh (אָכִישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
Pʿlishîṭîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
hă (הֵא) [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
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw- VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

1Samuel 29:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʿE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Shâʾûwl (שׂוּאָל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...So Achish said to the leaders of the Philistines, “[Is] not this David, a servant of Saul king of Israel,... What Achish does is, answer with a rhetorical question. He is not asking these leaders to answer “true” or “false” with regards to whether or not this is David. It is his way of clearly identifying who David is and making it perspicuous that he knows exactly who David is. David is not just some guy from Israel, but he was Saul’s right-hand man for awhile. Achish does not say that much, but he identifies David as a servant of Saul. Achish is asked about all of the Hebrews which are there, and he answers specifically about one of them, David, their leader.

I believe that Achish expected this question, so he already had an answer planned for them. Notice the way that he presents this—he first tells them, “Hell, yes, these are Hebrews; in fact, this is David—he used to be Saul’s right hand man.” It should be clear to all of the officers who have approach Achish that he knows exactly who David is and what his reputation is. However, Achish will quickly add more information to allay their fears.

1Samuel 29:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
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 the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

1Samuel 29:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾô (וּ) [pronounced oh]	or, or rather, otherwise, also, and	conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14
Gesenius and Thenius take this to mean <i>if perchance</i> and Keil and Delitzsch do agree that it may be taken that way in some passages (although K & D don't believe that ʾô should be so understood in this passage). Keil and Delitzsch: <i>This is evidently incorrect; for even though there are certain passages in which וּ may be so rendered, it is only where some other case is supposed [apparently within the same sentence], and therefore the meaning or still likes at the foundation. These questions of David were suggested by a correct estimate of the circumstances, namely, that Saul's suspicions would leave him to the conclusion that there was some understanding between Jonathan and David, and that he would take steps in consequence to prevent Jonathan from making David acquainted with the result of his conversation with Saul.</i>¹⁴			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, thus	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040.
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
bê (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
m ^e ûwmâh (מְאוּמָה) [pronounced m ^e -oo-MAW]	anything, and it is usually found in negative sentences; therefore, with the negative, it is often rendered <i>nothing</i>	indefinite singular pronoun/adverb	Strong's #3972 BDB #548
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, away from, on account of, since, than, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; today (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Together, these mean *since, from the time when, since the day (time) of, when, from the day when, from when.*

¹⁴ Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 504–505.

1Samuel 29:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5307 BDB #656

Extended Qal meanings: to fall [to the ground, in battle], to die, to die a violent death; a man felled [by sickness]; [a building] falling down [in decay]; about to fall, about to come to ruin; [a fetus] falling out [or, being born, being aborted]; to fall away [used of members of a body]; [a face being] cast down [in sorrow], to fall down, to come down [from heaven], to descend; [sleep, terror, calamity] to fall upon [anyone]; to throw oneself, to cast oneself; to rush upon; to fall prostrate, to prostrate oneself; to fall upon someone [in affection]; to fall upon [an enemy], to attack; to alight [from a beast or chariot], to let oneself down; to encamp [as an army]; [a prayer] to fall before [someone for consideration, to be heard]; to fall away, to desert.¹⁵ I hope that the relationship is clear between the basic meaning, to fall, and the extended understanding of this verb.

Since the idea here is, David has deserted Israel, let me give you several places where we find this verb used in that way: 1Chron. 12:19 Jer. 37:13 38:19.

What follows is the alternative Greek text:

empiptô (ἐμπίπτω) [pronounced em-PIHP-toh]	fall on [among, into]; to fall into [one's power], to be entrapped by; to be overwhelmed with	3 rd person singular, aorist active indicative	Strong's #1706
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The form of the verb here is ἐνέπεσε. This is actually a combination of Strong's #1722 and Strong's #4098.

prós (πρός) [pronounced prahç]	facing, face to face with; to, towards; for; about, according to, against, among, at, because of, before, between, by, with	directional preposition with the accusative	Strong's #4314
ἐμέ, με	me	1 st person singular pronoun; accusative case	Strong's #1473

Translated: [...he fell in with](#) [lit., facing, with] [me...](#)

ʿad (עד) [pronounced ʿahd]	as far as, even to, up to, until	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; today (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, thus	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: [...who has been here with me \[for\] days and \[for\] years and \[yet\] I have not found in him anything \[negative\] from the day he fell away until this day?](#) Achish is also making it clear that David did not just arrive, but that he has been with Achish for a long time. During that time, Achish has found no fault in him, from the day he deserted Saul until this day.

¹⁵ Taken from H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 557.

Achish uses the phrase *these days or, rather, these years* to indicate a long but unspecific period of time. In all actuality, he had David living in Philistia for a year and four months, but he had known David for considerably longer. All the time that Achish knew David, there was never a reason for Achish to distrust him. Now, had Achish known that David was raiding one group of people, but claiming to raid a different group, that may have changed his mind. *...from the day he fell away...* is also nonspecific. This could have been from the beginning when he first fell out with Saul and the first time he came to Achish, or it could refer back to the second time he came to Achish. However, to reconstruct this, I think Achish is being intentionally vague, to imply a trust in David which goes back further than it actually goes back. That is, Achish is considerably satisfied with David's integrity after a year and a few months, but he phrases his evaluation to sound as though it goes further back. This is similar to someone asking about a friend of yours and you say, "Oh, yeah, I've known Charlie Brown forever." You haven't known C. Brown forever; that is impossible. However, your turn of the phrase makes it sound as though you have known C. Brown all your life.

The idea of *finding* sin or guilt in someone is used often in Scripture: 1Sam. 25:28 Dan. 6:5 John 19:6 Rom. 12:17 1Peter 3:16 are a few examples of this.

With regards to the verb *to desert*, you may want to look over the definitions which I have offered in the Hebrew exegesis. In the definitions which I offer, I try to stick with the most common ones; and often, they serve me throughout the exegesis of any book. However, sometimes with a word like *nâphal*, a more detailed look is required. I do not want to offer a translation, and then for someone to come along several years later and believe it to be unjustified. A good translation is the key to the understanding of all Scripture. There were some cults who really liked to use Moffett's translation because it suited their points of view. I have also included the Septuagint which seems to convey the proper gist of this verse. David fell from a higher status under Saul to Achish. David went from being royalty under Saul to being a cast-off who is now with Achish. Achish offers no details, insofar as we know; just the gist of David's status.

Furthermore, Achish assures these officers that not only is David a safe bet, but he was been under Achish's watch for the past year or so, and Achish has found no reason to be concerned about David and his former status. Note that Achish's answer is essentially two-pronged: (1) "Yes, I know exactly who David is" and (2) "You do not need to worry about his ultimate allegiance." This gist of Achish's answer is, "Yes, I know who this is and I am giving you my personal assurances that everything is fine."

And so are angry upon him leaders of Philistines and so say to him leaders of Philistines "Cause to return the man and he will return unto his place which appointed him there. And he will not go down with us in the battle and he will be to us for an adversary in the battle. And in how will he make himself pleasing here unto his adonai? Will [it] not [be] in heads the men the these?

1Samuel
29:4

The leaders of the Philistines were angry with [or, because of] him and the leaders of the Philistines said to him, "Send back the man that he will return to the place which you assigned him then. He will not go down with us to the battle that he not become to us an adversary in the battle. And in what way could he ingratiate himself here to his lord? Would [it] not [be] with the heads of these men?

The leaders of the Philistines were extremely angry with Achish because of David and they said to Achish, "Send this man back so that he can return to the place where you originally assigned him. He cannot go down with us into this war or he will become our adversary in the battle. How do you think he will fall into good graces with his lord? With the heads of these men here?

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so are angry upon him leaders of Philistines and so say to him leaders of Philistines, "Cause to return the man and he will return unto his place which appointed him there. And he will not go down with us in the battle and he will be to

us for an adversary in the battle. And in how will he make himself pleasing here unto his adonai? Will [it] not [be] in heads the men the these?.

Peshitta
Septuagint

...lest he be an adversary to us there...

And the captains of the Philistines were displeased at him, and they say to him, "Send the man away, and let him return to his place, where you set him, and let him not come with us to the war, and let him not be a plotter in the camp. And how will he be reconciled to his master? Will it not be with the heads of those men?"

Significant differences:

A slight difference; the MT says David might be **an adversary in the battle** and the LXX says he might be **a plotter in the camp**. In the Peshitta, he is being **an adversary to us there** (which might be the English translator freely translating?).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The Philistine army commanders were angry and shouted: Send David back to the town you gave him. We won't have him going into the battle with us. He could turn and fight against us! Saul would take David back as an officer if David brought him the heads of our soldiers.
The Message	Angry with Achish, the Philistine officers said, "Send this man back to where he came from. Let him stick to his normal duties. He's not going into battle with us. He'd switch sides in the middle of the fight! What better chance to get back in favor with his master than by stabbing us in the back!
NLT	But the Philistine commanders were angry. "Send him back!" they demanded. "He can't go into the battle with us. What if he turns against us? Is there any better way for him to reconcile himself with his master than by turning on us in battle?.
REB	The commanders were indignant and said, 'Send the man back to the place you allotted to him. He must not fight side by side with us, for he my turn traitor in the battle. What better way to buy his master's favour, than at the price of our lives?

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	But the Philistine officers were angry with Achish. "Send the man back," the Philistine officers told him. "Return him to the place you assigned him. He shouldn't go with us into battle. He shouldn't be allowed to become our enemy during the battle. Is this man going to try to regain his master's favor? He'll do it with the lives of our men!
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	The Philistine commanders, however, were enraged with Achish and told him, "Send that man back and let him return to the place you assigned him. He must not go down with us into battle only to become our adversary during the battle. What better way could he regain his master's favor than with the heads of our men?.
WEB	But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; and the princes of the Philistines said to him, Make the man return, that he may go back to his place where you have appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us: for with what should this <i>fellow</i> reconcile himself to his lord? should it not be with the heads of these men?
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And the heads of the Philistines are angry against him, and the heads of the Philistines say to him, "Send back the man, and he does turn back unto his place whither you have appointed him, and does not go down with us into battle, and is not to us for an adversary in battle; and with what does this one reconcile himself unto his lord—is it not with the heads of those men?"

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistine officers object to David's presence, telling Achish to send David back to the land he gave him. The officers do not want David into battle, because he could at anytime turn against them and kill them in order to gain back Saul's favor.

1Samuel 29:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâtsaph (קָצַף) [pronounced kaw-TSAF]	<i>to be wroth, to be angry, to be in a rage</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7107 BDB #893
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
Pʿlishîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced pʰ-lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: *The leaders of the Philistines were angry with [or, because of] him...* Although this could mean that these leaders were mad *because of David*, it probably means that they were angry *with Achish*. The adverb could be interpreted in either way and it is not unusual for two masculine singular suffixes in the same sentence to stand for two different people in the Hebrew (my point being, there is no way to determine for certain to whom *him* refers). Because the *him* in the next section refers to Achish, *him* in this portion probably also refers to Achish. You will note that in my moderately literal translation, both masculine singular suffixes refer to Achish; but in my more freely translated verse, I apply the first to David and the second to Achish. You will note that both approaches make perfect sense. In either case, as the Philistine generals saw it, Achish's decision to include David in this battle endangered their lives.

1Samuel 29:4b			
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
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

1Samuel 29:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
P ^h ilish ^{tîy} (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35

Translation: ...and the leaders of the Philistines said to him, "Send back the man..." Recall that there is a preposition in the Hebrew which shows respect and deference, and there is one which does not; the Philistine leaders used the one which does not. Furthermore, there is no use of the particle of entreaty here; they flat out tell Achish to send David back. Given the number of Philistine soldiers involved in this assault, we are dealing simply with the leaders of the various battalions and with the heads of the city-states, equal to Achish (we discussed the word *çeren* back in v. 2 which would indicate that four of these men are equal to Achish). So there is no confusion, this not the men under Achish who are giving him this order, but the kings who are equal with him, as well as generals who are not beholden to him. Achish is being ordered to send David back by his peers and by those who are under him.

1Samuel 29:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 29:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b ʋ]	<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 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced eɫ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced maw-KOHW]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced paw-KAHD]	<i>appoint, set, make, committed, laid up</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

Translation: ...that he will return to the place which you assigned him then. There was no argument as to whether David should be a part of the Philistine landscape; he was just not going to go into battle against the Jews. That was far to risky, in the eyes of the Philistine leaders and generals. Achish had assigned David to Ziklag, and this was not a part of the argument. No doubt, there were those who wanted David run out of the Philistine neighborhood altogether; however, there is that expression *pick your battles*. These generals and kings drew the line at David going to war with them against Jews.

1Samuel 29:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced yaw-RAHD]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432

1Samuel 29:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: *He will not go down with us to the battle...* The position of the generals and kings is forceful. They leave nothing open to debate. They don't go up to Achish and say, "Okay, this is our take on the matter...do you see what we mean? So we just don't feel that David should be fighting along side us." It is much more direct and forceful. "This David is *not* going down into the battle with us." This is a non-negotiable order.

I guess I should mention that, no other exegete that I am aware of sees these men as the generals under Achish who are speaking to him (although they could make up part of this counsel). Again, the number of soldiers involved (groups of hundreds and thousands), as well as the use of the word *çeren* indicate that these are men who are equal to Achish.

McGee comments: *When war was about to break out, David and his men marched with the Philistines. All the lords of the Philistines knew David, and when they saw him marching with them, they did not like it—and rightly so. I am sure that if you saw a person who had been your enemy suddenly turn and be on your side, you would want to make sure that he was not going to come up from the rear and attack you. that sometimes happens even among Christian brethren today. When a formerly unfriendly person suddenly becomes friendly, you wonder if he is really your friend or whether he has some ulterior motive in mind.*¹⁶

1Samuel 29:4e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

¹⁶ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; pp. 151–152.

1Samuel 29:4e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^{eh}]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition with the 1 st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^{eh}]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
sâtân (שׂטן) [pronounced saw-TAWN]	<i>an adversary, an accuser, one lying in wait</i>	masculine singular noun (also used as a proper noun)	Strong's #7854 BDB #966
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<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	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^{eh} châmâh (מלחמה) [pronounced mil-khâw-MAW]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
kaí (καί) [pronounced kâi]	<i>and, even, also</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
mē (μή) [pronounced may]	<i>not, neither, never, no; lest; nothing, without; also [in a question requiring a negative answer]</i>	adverb; a qualified negation	Strong's #3361
gínomai (γίνομαι) [pronounced GIN-oh-mî]	<i>to become [something it was not before]; to be born; to arise, come about; to be made, to be created; to happen, to take place</i>	3 rd person singular, present middle imperative	Strong's #1096
epiboulê (ἐπιβουλή, ἡς, ἥ) [pronounced eh-pee-bou-LAY]	<i>a plotter, one who lies in wait, one who plans against another</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1917
The actual word found here is epiboulos (ἐπίβουλος) [pronounced eh-PEE-boo-loss]. This could be a more primitive form or a similar noun (it is not found in the NT).			
tês (τῆς) [pronounced tayç]	<i>of the; from the</i>	feminine singular definite article; genitive and ablative cases	Strong's #3588
parembolê (παρεμβολή) [pronounced pare-em-boh-LAY]	<i>a camp, encampment; barracks; army in line of battle; a throwing in beside (literal translation)</i>	feminine singular noun; genitive case	Strong's #3925

In the Hebrew, David is said to possibly become [an adversary in battle](#); and in the Greek, he is said to become [one who plots against the encampment of Philistines](#). Even those these are technically different, the meaning is essentially the same.

Translation: ...that he not become to us an adversary in the battle. These men who confront Achish explain their position. It is nonnegotiable, but they are going to explain their position. Their biggest fear is that David will turn on them in battle. Had Saul been killed in front of David, there is a good chance that he might have turned against the Philistines.

Robert Gordon comments: *Achish has been blinded by David's charm, but the Philistine commanders take a more pragmatic view of the situation. It is hard not to agree with their assessment, even though we are never given an express statement of David's intention.*¹⁷ As we have seen, the Philistines have already had experience with the Israelites changing sides (1Sam. 14:21).

You may well note that David's attacks against the Geshurites, Gezrites, and Amalekites is not mentioned, because David was able to keep the victims of his raids secret, by killing every man, woman and child. Had the Philistine leaders known that David was lying to Achish about these raids, they would have had even more reason to exclude David from this war.

Now, one of the things running through your mind is, *what is David doing, volunteering himself to fight against the Jews?* and *will God let him get away with that?* I've got two opinions here which I may expand upon later. David is out of God's geographical will at this point, and that many of his decisions are faulty because of that. Your follow up question invokes my second opinion: David has a limited leadership role at this time. It is important insofar as it involves his growth as a leader; however, I don't believe that David's mistakes carry the same weight as they would if he were king. That is, I think that David could do the same thing as a leader of these 600 men and as a king over Israel, that God would treat him differently. To wit, a sin committed as a leader of the 600 has less by way of consequence than the same sin committed by David as king. I think as you move up the chain of command, as you assume more authority, you also take on more responsibility—not in simply the most obvious sense, but before God as well. As a member of a congregation, with little or no authority within the church and outside of the church, you might get a minor slap on the wrist for this sin or that; however, for the pastor to commit the same sin, his discipline would be greater. I am not trying to give you a reason not to seek a leadership position in your church—but when you go after any position of power, make certain that you are willing to take the responsibility that goes with it.

Now that I think about it, I believe that Thieme taught something very similar to this: that in some cases, a person received double-discipline; and in some cases, there was triple-compound discipline. Therefore, if you desire this or that position of authority—if you believe your opinion should be the foremost opinion—you must be willing to take the heat as well.

Application: While you sit around your small house with the rusted 15 year old car outside in the rain, you think how you would like to win the lottery or how much you would like that promotion as it would give you more power and more money. As the saying goes, *be careful what you wish for, as you just might get it.* With money and position comes responsibility. Do you think God is going to drop a million dollars in your lap if all you are going to do is buy a new car and electronic gear (or, shoes if you are a woman¹⁸)? When God gives you money, you have a responsibility; when God gives you authority, you have greater responsibilities. It is a fact of life. You have a great increase in your financial and authority status, and those sins that God gives you a slap on the wrist for might suddenly turn into much greater and more painful discipline.

¹⁷ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 197.

¹⁸ Sorry, I couldn't help myself.

1Samuel 29:4f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle (with the definite article)	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Bammâh (בַּמָּה) [pronounced <i>bahm-MAW</i>] means <i>wherein, wherewith, by what means</i> . This combination of particles is often used for indirect questions and can be rendered <i>in what?, in what thing?, on what account?, why?, how?, in what way?, by what means?</i>			
râtsâh (רָצָה) [pronounced <i>raw-TSAWH</i>]	<i>to make oneself pleasing, to ingratiate oneself [to someone else]; to obtain anyone's favor or grace</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7521 BDB #953
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
`el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
`ădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]	<i>lord, master, owner, superior, sovereign; can refer to the trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 BDB #10

Translation: ...And in what way could he ingratiate himself here to his lord? David's estrangement from Saul was well known, not only in Israel but in the neighboring kingdoms. David does not just show up to Gath and Achish says, "Okay, no problem; hang out with your guys in Ziklag." Achish knows what is going on with Saul and David. Most of those under him also are cognizant of this. They may not know all of the details; they certainly do not know the spiritual repercussions—but they know the basics. Saul has branded David an outlaw. David used to be a high-ranking general under Saul, and now he is not. However, as the leaders point out here, what better way for David to ingratiate himself to Saul than to double-cross the Philistines in the midst of battle. This is a very logical conclusion; we know that if David suddenly turned on the Philistines and killed every single one of them, that Saul would be thankful for a few days, and then David would be on his crap-list again. However, the Philistines do not know this. They may not be fully aware of the nature of Saul's fight with David, that it is based solely upon his mental attitude sins exacerbated by his mental illness. They simply know that Saul and David are on the outs with one another and that David could be looking for a way to get back in Saul's good graces. They don't realize that this would be futile for David to even try (as he had done on several occasions).

1Samuel 29:4g

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
hă (ה) [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
lô' (לֹא or לֹא') [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bê (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
rô'sh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
'iysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions, soldiers, companions</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
hëmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced haym-mawh]	<i>they, those; themselves; these [with the definite article]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun with the definite article	Strong's #1992 BDB #241

Translation: ...Would [it] not [be] with the heads of these men? Here is what David will give in exchange for Saul's appreciation: the heads of the Philistine soldiers. This is the viewpoint of the men speaking to Achish; we already know that such an act would only temporarily cause Saul to back off from pursuing David's life; however, they don't know this. The fears and suspicions of these Philistine leaders are very reasonable.

What is occurring here is a wonderful out for David. He finds himself in a morally tenuous situation, and God gives him an out. He has been a guest of Achish in the land of the Philistines, and, as such, is beholden to them. Understood well during that period of time what a man's obligation to serve in the military, something which we do not have an appreciation for in our country. So David was under a moral obligation to serve militarily under Achish. However, he was going to be the next king of Israel. It makes little sense for such a one to go into battle against Israel on the side of their enemies. God delivers David here. God works out all things for good on David's behalf. As we have discussed, David is not even in fellowship nor is he in God's geographical will; yet God still takes care of him. We have little or no true appreciation with regards to God's grace. Most of us still think that, if we are good, God is going to bless us. God gives us multifarious blessings regardless; and God even blesses us in difficulties. Learn from this passage; learn from David's life; recognize how God works in the life of David, despite the fact that David is outside God's will right now. These men of the Old Testament are examples to us, lessons to us, so that we might better apprehend God's grace to us.

The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge concludes: *The princes reasoned wisely, according to the common practice of mankind; and it was well for David that they were such good politicians. it was ordered by a gracious Providence that they refused to let David go with them to this battle, in which he must have been either an enemy to his country, or false to his friends and to his trust. Had he fought for the Philistines, he would have fought against God and his country; and had he in the battle gone over to the Israelites, he would have deceived and become a traitor to the hospitable Achish. God therefore*

delivered him from such disgrace; and by the same kind Providence he was sent back to rescue his wives, and the wives and children of his people, from captivity.¹⁹

And is not this David who they answer to him in the dancing, to say ‘Has slain Saul in his thousands and David in his ten thousands’?”

1Samuel
29:5

And is this not the David of whom they sing [lit., *whom they sing regarding him*] in dances, saying, ‘Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands’?”

Furthermore, isn’t this the David of whom they sing when celebrating, saying, ‘Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands’?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And is not this David who they answer to him in the dancing, to say ‘Has slain Saul in his thousands and David in his ten thousands’?”
Septuagint	[Is] this not David who they began to celebrate in dances, saying, ‘Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands’?”

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The Israelites even dance and sing, "Saul has killed a thousand enemies; David has killed ten thousand enemies!"
The Message	Isn't this the same David they celebrate at their parties, singing, Saul kills by the thousand, David by the ten thousand!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Isn't this David of whom people sing in dances: 'Saul has defeated thousands but David tens of thousands'?"
JPS (Tanakh)	Remember, he is the David of whom they sang as they danced: Saul has slain his thousands; David, his tens of thousands."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	Isn't this the David they sing about during their dances: Saul has killed his thousands, but David his tens of thousands?"
Young's Updated LT	Is not this David, of whom they answer in choruses, saying, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David among his myriads'?"

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistine generals ask Achish if this is the same David that the Israelite women sing about; the song which goes, “Saul has killed thousands; and David tens of thousands.”

¹⁹ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 1Sam. 29:4.

1Samuel 29:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hă (ה) [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
lô' (ל' or לו) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
zeh (זה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'ânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
It is reasonable to render this <i>speak [or, answer] loudly, speak up [in a public forum]</i> . 'ânâh occasionally has a very technical meaning of giving a response in court, and could be rendered <i>testify</i> . in some contexts, this word can mean <i>to sing</i> . BDB lists this on p. 777.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
m ^e chôwlâh (מְחֹלָה) [pronounced m ^e khoh-LAW]	<i>dances, dancing</i> (which usually accompanies and celebrates a victory of some sort)	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4246 BDB #298

Translation: *And is this not the David of whom they sing [lit., whom they sing regarding him] in dances,...* The men of Philistia were familiar with David. They knew of him by his reputation, which he retained in other countries, despite what Saul did. This word for dances very likely is a part of a celebration.

1Samuel 29:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^h]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
nâkâh (נכה) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
Shâʾûwl (שאול) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʾălâphîym (אלפים) pronounced <i>uh-law- FEEM</i>	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
r ^e bâbâh (רבבה) [pronounced r ^{eb} vaw- ^B VAW]	<i>multitude, myriad, ten thousand</i>	feminine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7233 BDB #914

Translation: ...saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands'?" This song which the Jewish women sang quickly became a folk song throughout the land and extended beyond Israel (1Sam. 18:7 21:11). Apparently, this song was known far and wide; at least these few lyrics. There is some irony here, lost on the Philistines (and lost on most casual readers of Scripture as well). It appears as though this song is also what nudged Saul's jealousy and mental attitude sins against David (see 1Sam. 18:8–15). So, David is there with the Philistines, in part, because of this song. The Philistine leaders do not want him there because of this song.

It is interesting what these men know and don't know about David. This song to which they refer probably goes back a decade or two (recall, this was sung around the time that David had defeated Goliath). Achish, who probably had David investigated, was aware of his being on the outs with Saul. These Philistine leaders may or may not have been aware that Saul was out to kill David; none of them realize that David is to be king over Israel (even though many Israelites appear to be aware of this, including Saul). None of them know that David's recent attacks have been against the enemies of Israel and that he has been lying about this to Achish. Like all situations, neither Achish nor these other leaders have all of the facts. The news which they had was quite limited in scope, and they

had to make whatever decisions they could based upon what they knew. The decision here was a good and reasonable one, from their viewpoint. It also gets David off the hook, as we have discussed.

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Achish Tells David the Decision of the Philistine Generals

And so calls Achish unto David and so he says unto him, "Living Y^ehowah, for upright you [are] and good in my [two] eyes [in] your going out and your coming in with me in the camp, for I have not found in you evil from a day of your coming in unto me until the day the this. And in [two] eyes of the officers, not good you.

1Samuel
29:6

Achish then called to David and said to him, "[As] Y^ehowah [is] alive, you [are] upright [or, *you (have) integrity*]. And in my eyes your going out and your coming in with me in the camp [has been] good, for I have not found in you evil from the day you came in to me until this day. However [lit., *and*], in the eyes of [my] officers you are not approved [or, *good*].

Achish then called David aside and told him, "As Jehovah lives, I believe that you are upright and honest. I have observed your actions as being honorable and I have not found any evil in you from the day that you came to me up to this very day. However, my officers do not approve of you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so calls Achish unto David and so he says unto him, "Living Yehowah, for upright you [are] and good in my [two] eyes [in] your going out and your coming in with me in the battle, for I have not found in you evil from a day of your coming in unto me until the day the this. And in [two] eyes of the officers, not good you..
Septuagint	And Anchus called David, and said to him, "[As] the Lord lives, you [are] upright and approved in my eyes, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army, and I have not found evil to charge against you from the day that you came to me until this day. But you are not approved in the eyes of the lords.

Significant differences: Not really.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Achish called David over and said: I swear by the living LORD that you've been honest with me, and I want you to fight by my side. I don't think you've done anything wrong from the day you joined me until this very moment. But the other Philistine rulers don't want you to come along.
NLT	So Achish finally summoned David and his men. "I swear by the LORD," he told them, "you are some of the finest men I've ever met. I think you should go with us, but the other Philistine rulers won't hear of it.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Then Achish called David and told him, "I solemnly swear, as the LORD lives, you are a dependable man. I consider your campaigning with me a good thing, because I've never found anything wrong with you from the day you came to me until now. But the rulers don't approve of you.
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JPS (Tanakh)

Achish summoned David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you are an honest man, and I would like to have you serve in my forces; for I have found no fault with you from the day you joined me until now. But you are not acceptable to the other lords.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV

Then Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign. For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, the lords do not approve of you.

HCSB

So Achish summoned David and told him, "As the LORD lives, you are an honorable man. I think it is good to have you working with me in the camp, because I have found no fault in you from the day you came to me until today. But the leaders don't think you are reliable.

Young's Updated LT

And Achish call unto David, and says unto him, "Jehovah lives, surely you are upright, and good in mine eyes is your going out, and your coming in, with me in the camp, for I have not found in you evil from the day of your coming in unto me till this day; and in the eyes of the princes you are not good.

What is the gist of this verse? Achish calls David over and tells him that he has no problem with David joining them, but that his officers will not hear of it.

1Samuel 29:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
ʾâkîysh (אַכִּישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e/]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

1Samuel 29:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
chay (חַי) [pronounced KHAH-ee]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Achish then called to David and said to him, “[As] Y^ehowah [is] alive,... This oath which Achish takes is interesting; we expect such an oath from David or Jonathan or even from Saul; but not from a Philistine. We could suppose that Achish is attempting to be politically correct, but I think this indicates that he is a believer. If he is a believer, there are a number of implications and tangents that we could go on. Why is he going to war against Saul? How could David be a positive influence on Achish if he has been dishonest in his dealings with Achish? What is up with this oath, when David has actually been dishonest with Achish? On the other hand, if Achish is simply being politically correct, then we have no questions, was what he is saying is meaningless. At this point, I am very curious as to the comments by other exegetes.²⁰

It is interesting that a heathen should make these remarks. Let me tell you how others interpreted these words:

Theories About Achish Taking an Oath by Jehovah

Theologian	Viewpoint	Criticism/Comment
Barnes ²¹	These are not the actual words used by Achish, but the gist of what he had to say.	It makes little sense to me to use Jehovah's name to convey the <i>gist</i> of what Achish had to say. Why not record what Achish actually said?

²⁰ The way that I exegete these verses is, I first work on the translation from the Hebrew, with an eye to other ancient translations. I also compare what I have to other English translations and, in some cases, follow the lead of translators from the past (if I stray from most translations, then I will spend a great deal of time justifying that). While translating, I also comment on the what I have translated. Then, having a better feel for the overall chapter, I go back and supplement my original commentary (thank God for word processing software). Then, after I have completed a verse and have taken two running jumps at commentary, then I read what other exegetes have written. Once and awhile, they change my mind on what position I have taken. For instance, I was uncertain about these *warlords* in this chapter: *were they the generals under Achish or were they his equals?* Whereas, this may seem obvious to you, it was not to me until my second pass over these verses, where it became more clear. The fact that great commentators in the past agreed with me made me more confident in the position that I took.

²¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:6.

Theories About Achish Taking an Oath by Jehovah

Theologian	Viewpoint	Criticism/Comment
Clarke ²²	<i>Achish has actually embraced or is favourably disposed towards the Jewish religion.</i> ²³	The biggest objection to this opinion is that David has been out of fellowship each time he personally speaks to Achish (remember, he lies about his raids; he has lied about his mental health). You cannot be out of fellowship and be a witness for Jesus Christ.
Gill ²⁴	Achish has some knowledge of Jehovah, as he did of angels, through his conversations with David.	Although this is possible, we have no evidence of this (apart from this verse). David appears to be generally out of fellowship throughout, and he continually lies to Achish, which further suggests that he is out of fellowship.
Kimchi ²⁵	Most heathen believe in a <i>First Cause</i> , so Achish was merely swearing to David by Him in Whom David believed, which gave greater strength to the oath. In the alternative, Achish may have simply been acquiescing to David's God, not out of reverence, but simple respect for David.	Achish is trying to make a point here as to how much he personally trusts David; it seems apropos to swear an oath by David's God to give what he is saying credence. That he does this out of respect for David also makes sense. There is no reason that both could not be true.

Could Achish have been positive toward the God of Israel through someone else? It seems unlikely; and, since he is about to attack and destroy the Jewish army, any sort of alliance with the God of Israel also seems unlikely.

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It might be interesting to take a quick look back in the book of 1Samuel at all of the times an oath was taken in the name of Jehovah.

“As Jehovah Lives” in the Book of 1Samuel

Scripture	Quotation	Background
1Sam. 14:39	<i>“For, as Yahweh lives, who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.” But there was not a man among all the people who answered him.</i>	Saul issued a stupid order that no one should eat or drink until he had avenged himself on the Philistines. Jonathan had not heard this order and ate some honey. Saul here is saying, “Even if Jonathan my son ate something, he will die” not realizing that his son had eaten. The people around Saul talked him out of this foolish course of action.

²² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:9.

²³ Ibid. I made very slight editing changes to the text.

²⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 26:9.

²⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:6.

“As Jehovah Lives” in the Book of 1Samuel

Scripture	Quotation	Background
1Sam. 14:45	The people said to Saul, “Will Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it: as Yahweh lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he has worked with God this day.” So the people rescued Jonathan, that he didn't die.	This is part of the same narrative from above. It is the people who swear by Jehovah that Saul will not harm Jonathan.
1Sam. 19:6	Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan: and Saul swore, “As Yahweh lives, he shall not be put to death.”	Saul, after telling Jonathan and his servants that he wants to kill David, backs off, at Jonathan's insistence, and swears that he will not kill David (in the next half of this chapter, Saul sends messengers at night to capture David at his home).
1Sam. 20:3	David swore moreover, and said, “Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes; and he says, Don't let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as Yahweh lives, and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death.”	David is solemnly testifying to Jonathan that his life is constantly in danger because of Saul.
1Sam. 20:21	“Behold, I will send the boy, saying, Go, find the arrows. If I tell the boy, Behold, the arrows are on this side of you; take them, and come; for there is peace to you and no hurt, as Yahweh lives.”	If Jonathan determines that it is safe for David to return (David has just begun to hide out permanently from Saul), then he will give him a signal; and Jonathan here is solemnly testifying that, if he gives this signal, then David will be safe.
1Sam. 25:26	“Now therefore, my lord, as Yahweh lives, and as your soul lives, seeing Yahweh has withheld you from blood guiltiness, and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now therefore let your enemies, and those who seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.”	Abigail recognized her husband, Nabal, as a worthless man. Since she convinced David not to kill him, she swears by Jehovah for all men who are David's enemies to be like him (powerless before David). It is more of a prayer to God than a promise to David.
1Sam. 26:10	David said, “As Yahweh lives, Yahweh will strike him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall go down into battle and perish.”	David is using this phrase to guarantee Saul's eventual doom, which, at that time, David was assured of in his own soul. If someone has treated you unfairly, then give them over to God. God can take care of them.
1Sam. 26:16	“This thing isn't good that you have done. As Yahweh lives, you are worthy to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, Yahweh's anointed. Now see where the king's spear is, and the jar of water that was at his head.”	David is berating Abner for not carefully guarding his master, Saul. He tells them that they are worthy of death for this failure.
1Sam. 28:10	Saul swore to her by Yahweh, saying, “As Yahweh lives, there shall no punishment happen to you for this thing.”	You may recall from the previous chapter that Saul swore to the witch of Endor that he would not punish her for violating his edict (she did not know who he was at the time).

“As Jehovah Lives” in the Book of 1Samuel

Scripture	Quotation	Background
1Sam. 29:6	Then Achish called David, and said to him, “As Yahweh lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the host is good in my sight; for I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me to this day: nevertheless the lords don't favor you.”	Our passage here. Achish swears to David that he has always found David to be trustworthy.

As you might notice, many of the times that this phrase is used, it means very little, and assures the hearer of nothing. The key every time is the character of the person who makes the statement. If you can't trust the person, then you cannot trust their vow. Also, you will note that this phrase is not just used as a vow, but as an emphatic.

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1Samuel 29:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâshâr (יָשָׁר) [pronounced yaw-SHAWR]	<i>right, correct, accurate, lacking in contradictions, upright, straight, uniform, having internal integrity, even</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #3477 BDB #449
`attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: ...you [are] upright [or, you (have) integrity]. This is quite interesting that Achish sees David as upright (or as having integrity), when in fact, David has actually been dishonest with him and dishonest about where he has been and what he has been doing. However, unlike the information which Saul received, as to David's whereabouts, we have not found the same thing with Achish. Achish has trusted David from the beginning, even though it could be argued that David's time with him has been David's worst time, his effect upon Achish has been positive for the most part. Again, this is interesting and leaves us wide open for speculation.

1Samuel 29:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ţôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced <i>toh^bv</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

1Samuel 29:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
This can mean <i>in my eyes, to my way of thinking, in my opinion, in my estimation.</i>			
yâtsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôwʾ (בֹּא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
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 the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH]	<i>camp, encampment; an army camp; those who are camped [army, company, people]; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4264 BDB #334

Translation: *And in my eyes your going out and your coming in with me in the camp [has been] good,...* Achish tells David that in all of his observations of David, David's comings and going have been good. The mention of *camp* here could refer either to the encampment of the Philistines where they are right here; or to David's camp in Ziklag. I would assume that Achish is referencing the latter, as it is not clear that David has spent much time with Achish preparing for battle.

So far, David has responded just as he should have responded when Achish called him into battle. He was living on Philistine land, and therefore had some responsibility to the Philistine army. When he was called to serve, he showed up. On the other hand, it appears as though David was outside the geographical will of God; so, even though he did some things which were okay; he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. At no time, did God guide David, through a prophet or through the Ephod, to leave Israel.

1Samuel 29:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
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
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
bê (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
bôw' (בוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yôwm (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>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: ...for I have not found in you evil from the day you came in to me until this day.... Achish goes on; he apparently has not looked too deep, but David has never turned on Achish and David has never made any attacks on Philistine encampments. So, despite the battles David has engaged in previously against the Philistines, David's behavior has been good with respect to Achish during this time period. It is almost as though David has been traded from one sport's franchise to another; at one time he was a rival, and now he is an ally. It is interesting how easily Achish is taken in by David (although David never did plot evil against Achish). It makes me think that Achish is a young man who did not have a previous history in the wars against David. However, this theory ignores the

fact that he would have been brought up to hate the Jews; it also brings into question how so young a man could be ruler over one of the five Philistine cities. On the other hand, recall how Saul let the king of the Amalekites live? He seemed to have as much in common with this king as with his own men, and he apparently had some respect for him—this king was his counterpart. Achish may have a similar point of view with David—David may be, in his eyes, his Jewish counterpart. For David to become his ally is a great coup. Again, please realize, I am only thinking aloud here; only speculating.

Recall that Saul accused David of sedition and of turning his own son against him; Achish was probably aware of these charges, and David did nothing of the sort while on Philistine land. So Achish is pleased with this odd alliance that he has with David.

We are never told whether Achish had spies observe David and report back, but, given that Achish does not appear to know that David has lied to him about his exploits, I would think that Achish does not have spies following David (at least, not into battle). At best, Achish has a few observers here or there near Ziklag, who might note when David and his men come and go.

I hope that you can see the irony in what Achish is saying. Achish trusts David implicitly, enough to trust him with his life, while David has lied to him repeatedly. One might even say that David is using Achish. On the other hand, Saul did not trust David at all, taking steps to kill him again and again, even though David's dealings with Saul have been completely honest and above board.

1Samuel 29:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
ʕ ^e rânîym (סָרְנִים) [pronounced <i>s^e-RAW-neem</i>]	<i>warlords, lords, princes, czars, generals, officers; officials, VIP's</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5633 BDB #710
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
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced <i>toh^bv</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ah^t-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: ...*However* [lit., *and*], *in the eyes of [my] officers you are not approved* [or, *good*]. However, it is clear that David does not enjoy this same favor with Achish's officers. They are very suspicious of him. It does not

matter whether David has established a reputation with Achish. They are concerned that he will turn around and attack them in battle.

Here's the deal: certain individuals people inspire trust and respect from some; yet not from others. We are able to look at certain individuals and have a gut reaction. I can recall one particular student that I had a unnatural dislike for and suspected him of one evil act in my room. I was self-aware enough to recognize that what I felt about this kid was a gut feeling and not necessarily accurate. I've had teachers take an unnatural dislike to me as well. Similarly, there are people I have liked and trusted immediately. I cannot give you an explanation was to why they inspired this trust. I believe this was the case with Achish and David; I think they had a mutual trust for one another. The other officers simply knew who David was, knew he was a great general of the Hebrews, and was not about to let him and his army take up the rear of the Philistine battle line. This was simple prudence on their part.

And now return in peace and you will not do evil in [two] eyes of officers of Philistines." 1Samuel 29:7 **Therefore, return in peace and you will not do evil in the eyes of [my] Philistine officers."**

Therefore, return in peace so that you do not antagonize the Philistine officers.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And now return in peace and you will not do evil in [two] eyes of officers of Philistines."
Peshitta	Therefore, return now and go in peace, that you do not displease the lords of the Philistines."
Septuagint	Now then return and go in peace, thus thou shalt not do evil in the sight of the lords of the Philistines."
Significant differences:	The Hebrew word translated <i>evil</i> could also be rendered <i>displeasure</i> ; so there is no difference in the ancient texts.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Go on back home and try not to upset them.
The Message	So it's best that you leave peacefully, now. It's not worth it, displeasing the Philistine warlords."
NJB	So go home, in peace, rather than antagonize them."
NLT	Please don't upset them, but go back quietly."
TEV	...so go back home in peace, and don't do anything that would displease them."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	So leave peacefully without doing anything to displease the Philistine rulers."
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	So go back now; and go peaceably, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines."
HCSB	Now go back quietly and you won't be doing anything the Philistine leaders think is wrong."
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And now, turn back, and go in peace, and you do no evil in the eyes of the princes of the Philistines."

What is the gist of this verse? Achish asks David to return home (to Ziklag) so that he does not antagonize the other Philistine officers.

1Samuel 29:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; yough</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ʿattâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^b</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>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88
shâlôwm (שְׁלֹמִים) or shâlôm (שְׁלֹמִים) [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: *Therefore, return in peace...* Achish appreciated that David showed up with his men to fight with him; but now needs for David to return. If Philistine officers kings cannot accept David, then there is no reason to take this further. Any attempt to try to convince them to accept David so close to the actual battle would be problematic. He asks David to return to Ziklag in peace. This means without a fuss and with the idea that David is still allied with the Philistines.

Gill makes a statement which I don't know yet if I buy into it, but wanted to include it nevertheless: *The Jews distinguish between wishing persons to go in peace, and to go to peace; the former they observe has not issued happily, when the other has, and they instance in the wish of Jethro to Moses, and of David to Absalom.*²⁶

1Samuel 29:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

²⁶ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:7. This is apparently based upon the reference T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 64. 1. Sepher Alphas, par. 1. fol. 421. 2.

1Samuel 29:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
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
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ra' (רָע) [pronounced <i>rahg</i>]	<i>evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; misery, distress, injury; that which is displeasing [disagreeable, unhappy, unfortunate, sad]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #948
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
'êynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
ç ^e rânîym (סָרְנִים) [pronounced <i>s^e-RAW-neem</i>]	<i>warlords, lords, princes, czars, generals, officers; officials, VIP's</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5633 BDB #710
P ^e lish ^{tiy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...and you will not do that which is displeasing in the eyes of [my] Philistine officers.” By returning in peace, David will demonstrate to these generals and kings that he is trustworthy. They will observe David leaving quietly and peacefully, and will realize that he means them no harm. Achish does not want these men to be antagonized or upset concerning David prior to battle. Their thoughts need to be focused on the war against Israel.

McGee: *Although King Saul was David's enemy at the time, David would never turn against his own people; however, David's lapse of faith in stepping out of the land meant he was also stepping out of the will of God. This opened the way for sin to come into his life. The interesting thing is, Christian friend, that when a child of God steps out of the will of God, he will not lose his salvation, but he will have trouble.*²⁷ Remember these words for when we get to 1Sam. 30—the trouble that David will find himself in.

And so says David unto Achish, “For what have I done and what have you found in your servant from a day when I was to your faces until the day the this that I cannot go and fight in enemies of my Adonai the king?”

1Samuel
29:8

Then David said to Achish, “What have I done and what have you found in your servant from the day when I was [first] before you until this day that I cannot go out and fight against the enemies of my adonai the king?”

²⁷ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 153.

Then David said to Achish, “Just what have I done or what have you found in your servant going back as far as the first day I was in your presence up until now that indicates that I cannot go out and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says David unto Achish, “For what have I done and what have you found in your servant from a day when I was to your faces until the day the this that I cannot go and fight in enemies of my Adonai the king?”
Septuagint	And David said to Anchus, “What have I done to you? And what have you found in your servant from the first day that I was before you even until this day, that I should not come making war against the enemies of the lord my king?”

Significant differences: No fundamental differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	“But what have I done?” David asked. “Do you know of anything I’ve ever done that would keep me from fighting the enemies of my king?”
The Message	“But what have I done?” said David. “Have you had a single cause for complaint from the day I joined up with you until now? Why can’t I fight against the enemies of my master the king?”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™	“What have I done?” David asked Achish. “What have you learned about me from the time I came to you until now? Why shouldn’t I fight your enemies, Your Majesty?”
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	And David said to Achish, “But what have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”
HCSB	“But what have I done?” David replied to Achish. “From the first day I was with you until today, what have you found against your servant to keep me from going along to fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”
Young’s Updated LT	And David says unto Achish, “But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant from the day that I have been before you till this day—that I go not in and have fought against the enemies of my lord the king?”

What is the gist of this verse? David offers a polite protest. He asks what has Achish found in him that would prevent him from going to war against the enemies of the king.

1Samuel 29:8a

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

1Samuel 29:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾākîysh (אָכִישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mâh (מָה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Not sure yet if there is a meaning which may be assigned to this combination. Literally, <i>for what</i> ; possibly, <i>what</i> .			
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: Then David said to Achish, “What have I done... I am hesitant to break this sentence up into pieces. It does fit together as a unified whole. David cannot just walk away without saying something. This is simply a matter of protocol. He is not going to say, “You don’t want me out there fighting? Fine by me; see you after awhile.” Even though Achish has already told him that he has done nothing wrong, David asks first, *what have I done?* I.e., what specific act or acts has David committed that indicate that he should not go out against the Hebrews?

1Samuel 29:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâh (מָה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
mâtsâʾ (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

1Samuel 29:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʕE ^B -ved]	slave, servant	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, away from, on account of, since, than, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; time; today (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (לִּ) (pronounced P)	to, for, towards, in regards to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	face, faces; presence	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>before you, before your face, in your presence, in your sight, in front of you</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in Your judgment</i> .			
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced ʕahd]	as far as, even to, up to, until	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
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	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: ...and what have you found in your servant from the day when I was [first] before you until this day... Secondly, David asks, *what have you found (or, discovered) in your servant?* Maybe there was something which it was discovered that David said, which indicated his thoughts to rebel against Achish. David asks for Achish to go back to the very first day that they met, which was not when David was pressed into service, but the day he showed up and acted crazy. From that day to this, David asks if he has done anything or has anything been discovered in him to indicate that he could not be an ally of Achish. As Gordon notes²⁸, what David says here just does not have the same ring of truth as it did when he asked Saul essentially the same question in 1Sam. 26:18.

²⁸ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 198.

It is almost as though David said this first and what Achish previously said came after; however, Achish will respond to what David says here. Again, I think a great deal of this is proper protocol. David cannot simply give Achish the high five, say, “See ya,” and return to Ziklag.

1Samuel 29:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (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
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i>]	<i>to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	1 st person singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3898 BDB #535

The Greek lacks the definite article and the second verb (the Greek equivalent to lâcham) is an aorist active participle.

b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʾâya ^b v (אֹיָב) [pronounced <i>aw-YA^BV</i>]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #340 BDB #33
ʾădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]	<i>lord, master, owner, superior, sovereign; can refer to the trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 BDB #10
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...that I cannot go out and fight against the enemies of my adonai the king? Finally, the end of this sentence; *what has David done to indicate that he could not go to war against the enemies of Achish?* David does not even refer to his own people as Jews, but feels estranged from them. No matter who he helped, he still got turned in to Saul when his whereabouts was discovered. I think that David is sincere here; willing to go to war against Saul and against his fellow Jews.

Notice how more direct and unambiguous David is at this point. Recall back in 1Sam. 28:2, David said, “You will know what your servant is capable of doing.” Hell, that could mean just about anything. However, here, David sounds unequivocally gung ho, ready to go to war against the enemies of Achish, which is the Israeli army. David is not trying to talk Achish into letting him fight the Jews; he is merely following a certain protocol. “I’ll pay for dinner.” “No, let me catch this one.” “No, I will pay.” Whether it is a matter of dinner or of war, we are looking at

the same protocol. Have you ever separated two people in a fight and the other person who was certainly going to lose kept trying to get out of your grip and jump back into the fight, all the time swearing and cussing and vowing to beat the pie out of the other person? This is David. He is not going off to fight Israel; he knows it and Achish knows it. However, he acts as though this is a big deal, and how much he wants to fight against Saul and his soldiers. Given what David said in 1Sam. 28:2, we can tell he is conflicted over this. The other Philistine kings and generals gave David the out that he needed. Now he can act as though he really wanted to go to war against his own country. By the way, in putting this spin on this passage, this certainly goes against some commentators who are trying to make David out to be the good guy, no matter what.²⁹ However, my explanation concerning David's motivations with reference to Achish is quite consistent. Don't forget that he has been lying to Achish about his raids, acting as though he was attacking his own people. So this is very much in character with David and his general dishonesty with Achish.

Gill gets this right when he writes: *This question is anticipated by the speech of Achish, who had declared he had found no evil in him; but David must say something to put on an appearance of concern for being dismissed, when he was heartily glad of it...nothing was more foreign from his heart, and against his will, than fighting against the Israelites, and which he determined to avoid if possible; and glad at heart he was to be thus excused, and freed from the straits and difficulties he was involved in; but that the Philistines might have no cause of suspicion of him, and that he was warmly attached to their interest among whom he was still to continue, he put on these airs.*³⁰

Matthew Henry also properly understands the gist of this passage, as he writes: *[David] seemed anxious to serve him [Achish] when he was at this juncture really anxious to leave him, but he was not willing that Achish should know that he was.*³¹

Keil and Delitzsch offer an interesting approach, which I don't agree with, but will quote just the same: *Partly for the sake of vindicating himself against this suspicion, and partly to put the sincerity of Achish's words to the test, David replied, "What have I done, and what have you found in your servant, since I was with you until this day, that I am not to come and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" These last words are also ambiguous, since the king whom David calls his lord might be understood as meaning either Achish or Saul.*³² I think they surely got it right when David was just keeping himself from suspicion; but the rest, well, I just don't know.

And so answers Achish and so he says unto David, "I know that good you [are] in my eyes as an angel of God. Only officers of Philistines have said, "He will not go up with us in the battle."

1Samuel
29:9

Then Achish answered David and said, "I know that you [are] upright in my eyes, as an angel [or, messenger] of God. Only, the officers of the Philistines have stated, "He will not go up with us into the battle."

Then Achish answered David, saying, "I know that you are trustworthy in my eyes, just like an angel of God. However, the officers of the Philistines have unequivocally stated that you will not go up with us into battle.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

²⁹ Clarke sees David as upset, because his reputation was injured here. Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:8. Some are even more mixed up than Clarke: Abarbinel believed that the Philistines were afraid of David but not of his men. Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:8. That the Philistines were more concerned about David than his men—certainly, that makes sense—but that they had no concerns about David's men is silly. They said, "What are these Hebrews [doing here]?"

³⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:8.

³¹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:6–11.

³² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 29:8–9.

Masoretic Text	And so answers Achish and so he says unto David, “I know that good you [are] in my eyes as an angel of God. Only officers of Philistines have said, ‘He will not go up with us in the battle.’
Septuagint	And Anchus answered David, “I know that you are good in my eyes, but the lords of the Philistines say, ‘He shall not come with us to the war.’
Significant differences:	The Hebrew, the Peshitta and the Alexandrian Septuagint add the phrase <i>as an angel of God</i> . The Septuagint lacks this phrase. Since a variety of manuscripts support this longer reading, this would probably be the most reasonable text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Achish said: I believe that you're as good as an angel of God, but our army commanders have decided that you can't fight in this battle.
The Message	“I agree,” said Achish. “You're a good man—as far as I'm concerned, God's angel! But the Philistine officers were emphatic: ‘He's not to go with us into battle.’
NJB	In reply, Achish said to David, ‘In my opinion, it is true you are as good as an angel of God; but the Philistine chiefs have said, “He must not go into battle with us.”
NLT	But Achish insisted, “As far as I'm concerned, you’re as perfect as an angel of God. But my commanders are afraid to have you with them in the battle.
REB	Achish answered, ‘I agree that you have been as true to me as an angel of God, but the eph commanders insist that you are not to fight alongside them.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™	Achish answered David, "I admit that in my judgment you're as good as God's Messenger. However, the Philistine officers said, ‘He shouldn't go into battle with us.’
JPS (Tanakh)	Achish replied to David, “I know; you are as acceptable to me as an angel of God. But the eph officers have decided that you must not march out with us to the battle.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	Achish answered David, "I'm convinced that you are as reliable as an angel of God. But the Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not go into battle with us.'
WEB	Achish answered David, I know that you are good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.
Young's Updated LT	And Achish answers and says unto David, “I have known that you are good in mine eyes as a messenger of God; only, the princes of the Philistines have said, He does not go up with us into battle.

What is the gist of this verse? Achish simply reconfirms what he has already told David—his generals do not trust David to go into battle side by side with him.

1Samuel 29:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (l) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

1Samuel 29:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʿâkîysh (אָכִישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
yâdaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHḠ]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
ʿattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced ah ^t -TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced gay-nah-YIM]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

This can mean, *in my eyes, to my way of thinking, in my estimation, in my opinion.*

Translation: Then Achish answered David and said, “I know that you [are] upright in my eyes,... This is a reiteration of what Achish has already said. He is making sure that David knows that this was not his decision. Furthermore, this is simply polite protocol, as I have already pointed out.

1Samuel 29:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
mal'ôk ^e (מַלְאָךְ) [pronounced mah ^l -AWK ^e]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isa. 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
ʾēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43

This phrase is missing from the primary version of the LXX; however, it is found in the Hebrew, the Peshitta and the Alexandrian LXX.

Translation: ...as an angel [or, messenger] of God. This is an interesting statement for Achish to make. He has already spoken of *Jehovah*; now he speaks of *an angel of Elohim*, which is sometimes a name for Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. I believe, however, that Achish means this more generally, as an emphasis upon David's character. The idea is, David is as reliable as a messenger from God (or a prophet from God). This is an interesting statement, as David has not actually been completely forthright with Achish.

I have mentioned this before; we often have a tendency to trust some people without really having a reason to; and to mistrust others, again without a reason for doing so. We occasionally form opinions of others which are not based upon any rational or empirical evidence. David has lied to Achish, yet Achish trusts David implicitly. Interestingly enough, David will be, for the most part, a person that Achish can trust—except for his exploits.

Swearing by Jehovah and comparing David to an angel of God is Achish attempting to speak to David in terms of his own religion. Wesley point of view is quite similar; he offers: *The heathen acknowledged good spirits, which also they worshipped as an inferior sort of deities, who were messengers and ministers to the supreme God; Achish had learned the title of angels, from the Israelites his neighbors, and especially from David's conversation.*³³ In other words, Achish learned the vocabulary from David (or from neighboring Israelites); but this does not make him a believer.

1Samuel 29:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾak ^e (אָכַל) [pronounced ahk ^e]	<i>surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception. Also used as an affirmative particle	Strong's #389 BDB #36

³³ John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, 1Sam. 29:9. Some minor editing.

1Samuel 29:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
P ^h lish ^{tîy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated Philistines	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
`amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
`âlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
`îm (עִם) [pronounced geem]	with, at, by, near	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^e h]	in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khâw-MAW]	battle, war	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: Only, the officers of the Philistines have stated, “He will not go up with us into the battle.” Achish tells David that, regardless of what he thinks, this is the decision of the Philistine officers. Achish must abide by this decision this close to battle.

Philistines from all over are going to war against the Jews; therefore, many of these generals are independent of Achish. The warlords are equal to him. Apart from the fact that the Philistines are separated into groups of 100's and 1000's, I don't know anything else about their organization. I suspect that we have five independent divisions on hand, with five warlord-leaders, and a multitude of officers below them. This is no different than the allies battling together, side-by-side, during World War II; these Philistines just apparently had even a closer bond.

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David's Departure from the Philistine Armies

And now rise early in the morning and servants of your Adonai who came with you; and you have arisen early in the morning and light to you [all], and depart.”

1Samuel
29:10

Now, therefore, rise up early in the morning with the servants of your Adonai who came with you. When you rise up in the morning and [it is] light [lit., *light to you*], depart.”

Rise up early tomorrow morning, you and your soldiers, and depart when it is daybreak.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And now rise early in the morning and servants of your Adonai who came with you; and you have arisen early in the morning and light to you [all], and depart.”
Peshitta	Now therefore, rise up early in the morning with your master’s servants who came with you, and at daybreak, go on your way.”
Septuagint	Now then rise up early in the morning, you and the servants of thy lord that are come with you, and go to the place where I appointed you, and entertain no evil thought in your heart, for you are good in my sight: and rise early for your journey and let there be light upon you, and depart.”
Significant differences:	The LXX inserts an additional couple phrases into this verse, which are not found in the MT or in the Peshitta. The Vulgate also has <i>you and your servants</i> . Despite the differences, the end result involves little difference in overall meaning.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	You and your troops will have to go back to the town I gave you. Get up and leave tomorrow morning as soon as it's light. I am pleased with you, so don't let any of this bother you.
The Message	So get an early start, you and the men who came with you. As soon as you have light enough to travel, go.”
.	
NLT	Now get up early in the morning, and leave with your men as soon as it gets light.”
REB	Now rise early tomorrow with those of your lord’s subjects who have followed you, and go to the town which I allotted to you; harbor no resentment, for I am well satisfied with you. be up early and start as soon as it is light.” [and go...with you; so Greek; Hebrew omits].
TEV	So then, David, tomorrow morning all of you who left Saul and came over to me will have to get up early and leave as soon as it’s light.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™	Get up early in the morning with Saul's servants who came with you, and go to the place I have assigned to you. Don't worry about the unkind words, because I still approve of you. Get up in the morning, and leave when it's light.
JPS (Tanakh)	So rise early in the morning, you and your lord’s servants who came with you—rise early in the morning, and leave as soon as it is light.” [The Tanakh footnotes the LXX addition].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	So get up early in the morning, you and your masters’ servants who came with you. When you’ve all gotten up early, go as soon as it’s light.” [Note the location of the apostrophe in the HCSB; I don’t think this is a typo; <i>Adonai</i> is a plural noun here].
NRSV	Now then rise early in the morning, you and the servants of your lord who came with you, and go to the place that I appointed for you. as for the evil report, do not take it to heart, for you have done well before me. Start early in the morning, and leave as

soon you have light.” [...and go to the place...done well before me is not found in the Hebrew].

WEB Therefore now rise up early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you; and as soon as you are up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

Young's Updated LT And now, rise you early in the morning, and the servants of your lord who have come with you, when ye have risen early in the morning, and have light, then go.”

What is the gist of this verse? Achish asks David to take his men and ride back to Ziklag the next morning.

1Samuel 29:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ʿattâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shâkam (שָׁכַם) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHM</i>]	<i>to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start; morning</i> (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i>]	<i>morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE^b-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]	<i>lord, master, owner, superior, sovereign; can refer to the trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 BDB #10
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

1Samuel 29:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	with, at, near, by, among, directly from	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

The LXX adds: *...and go to the place where I appointed you, and entertain no evil thought in thy heart, for you are good in my sight.* English versions which typically follow the LXX did so at this point; and those which follow the MT typically left this phrase out.

Translation: *Now, therefore, rise up early in the morning with the servants of your Adonai who came with you.* Achish is not pulling rank here per se. He is giving David a direct order; however, this is simply because of his position as king. He is required to do this. He cannot very well say, “If you don’t mind, would you check with the guys and see if it is okay for you to more out tomorrow morning?” But he is giving an order which he knows David will obey and would probably have done on his own.

There is the very interesting phrase, *the servants of your Adonai*. In the Greek, this is a masculine singular both here and in v. 8 (where David calls Achish *my adonai*). However, in the Hebrew, David calls Achish *my adonai* (masculine singular) whereas here, in v. 10, *Adonai* is in the plural. This gives us several possibilities as to Achish’s meaning. This could be the intensive plural. David called Achish *my adonai*; but Achish refers to himself as *my Adonai*, essentially deifying himself and making it clear that David’s army is in reality his army. The problem is, Achish has not displayed this sort of egotism at any time in the past. There is no power struggle between he and David, so he does not need to remind David that he, Achish, is in charge of everything. Achish has displayed some confidence with regards to David’s loyalty—that is, because he assumed that David was making raids on Judah, that David would be his loyal servant forever—but that is not an inordinate display of power. Therefore, that possible interpretation seems unlikely. The second interpretation is, David’s small army is the army of the Lord (*Adonai*) God, and Achish is acknowledging that fact. Given that Achish swears by David’s God in v. 6 and tells David that he is like an *angel of God* in v. 9, this appears to be the most reasonable understanding. The 3rd possibility is that this is simply the plural, and Achish is saying that David’s army serves both Adonai, David’s Lord, and Achish. This seems an unlikely, if not convoluted, interpretation. There is a fourth interpretation, that Achish is referring to Saul, but this seems unlikely, when David’s allegiance appears to Achish to be to him and not to Saul.³⁴ What we really have here is Achish trying to speak to David in the vocabulary of his religion. Achish is simply attempting to be politically correct. All that Achish is saying is, “You David, and your soldiers, will need to leave tomorrow morning.”

What we find out in the book of Chronicles is, there were also some from the tribe of Manasseh who joined David around this time. 1Chron. 12:17–22: *David went out to meet them, and answered them, If you be come peaceably to me to help me, my heart shall be knit to you; but if you be come to betray me to my adversaries, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it. Then the Spirit came on Amasai, who was chief of the thirty, and he said, Your are we, David, and on your side, you son of Jesse: peace, peace be to you, and peace be to your helpers; for your God helps you. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band. Of Manasseh also there fell away some to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they didn’t help them; for the lords of the Philistines on advise sent him away, saying, “He will fall away to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads.” As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and*

³⁴ At least three commentators took this viewpoint: Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:10. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:6–11. Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 29:10. I must admit, this surprised me.

Jozabad, and Jediahel, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zillethai, captains of thousands who were of Manasseh. They helped David against the band of rovers: for they were all mighty men of valor, and were captains in the host. For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great host, like the host of God. In fact, the first half of 1Chron. 12 lists some of the notable men who came to David at Ziklag to side with him and remained with him as great heroes of his administration.

1Samuel 29:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i>]	<i>morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ôwr (אוֹר) [pronounced <i>ohr</i>]	<i>light</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #216 BDB #21
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: *When you rise up in the morning and [it is] light [lit., light to you], depart.”* The order is for them to rise up when it becomes light and move out then. This is a further indication of trust by Achish. He does not require David to pack up and ship out right at this moment. It is obviously still light, as the generals were able to see David; and the implication is, it is near dark. David and Achish and their men have probably been on the move for much of the day. Achish tells David that he can rest up first, and then depart after they have rested. We could read more into this: that Achish is not worried about David and his army, and not worried about being struck by him in the night—which is true. At this point, Achish is simply being courteous and thoughtful.

You will note that Achish treats David with deference and common courtesy throughout. When he calls David into military service in the first place, to now where he tells David his service will not be required. Everything that Achish says and does during this time period indicates that he has great respect for David. Not one time does he assert his authority in such a way as to indicate, “I am king; I run things around here; you need to do what I command you to do.”

There are a lot of things at play here. As mentioned, we have the problem of David being obligated to stand with Achish against Israel as opposed to the fact that David will be the next king over Israel. But, besides that, we have the problem that David is out of God's geographical will and out of fellowship, so God must discipline David as well. So, you can see, despite David's mistakes and lies, God will still execute His plan—God's plan always marches forward, with or without us. We essentially have the opportunity to move with God's plan, which brings us happiness in time, and rewards in eternity, or we can remain out of fellowship, in opposition to God's plan, which makes us, ultimately, unhappy, and deprives us of eternal rewards. To draw an analogy, we can choose to catch a touchdown pass on our winning team, or we can choose to sit on the sidelines and watch our team win. The former is much more exhilarating and personally satisfying.

McGee: The Philistines were definitely the enemies of his people. David spent some time there and became a good friend of the king of Gath, who was one of the lords of the Philistines. Then when war broke out between the Israelites and the Philistines, David found himself in an awkward spot. Since he had become friends with at least one of the lords of the Philistines, he felt he should be his ally. But God intervened and prevented David from attacking his own people. This was a narrow escape for him. Had God not intervened, David would have done something that he would have regretted the rest of his life

Christian friend, we do not realize how many times God intervenes in our lives. We sometimes overstep the boundaries God has set, and we are not where we should be, or we are not doing what we should be doing. When we make errors in judgment, many times God graciously intervenes to keep us from committing a terrible sin that we would regret the rest of our lives. I am sure you can look back upon your life and recall many such occasions.³⁵

Now God has taken something which was a moral ambiguity and solved the problem for David, despite the fact that he was out of fellowship. Let me quote a few New Testament passages: Rom. 8:28: **But we know that to the ones loving God all things work together for good, to those being called according to purpose.** 1Cor. 10:13: **No temptation has taken you except what is human; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able. But with the temptation, He will also make the way out, so that you may be able to bear it.** 2Peter 2:9: **But the Lord knows to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unjust for a day of judgment.** David may be out of fellowship and out of God's geographical will, but he was a believer in Jesus Christ; therefore, God will play a key role in David's life.

Application: There are times when we are thrown into morally ambiguous circumstances. If this is a situation that you cannot work out on your own, then you need to let God take care of it. This does not mean that every time you have a problem or a need, that you simply go sit on a park bench and wait for God to take care of it for you. However, there are times when you cannot solve a problem, no matter what you do—and under those circumstances, you must let God take care of the problem.

And so arises early David—he and his men—to go in the morning to return unto a land of Philistines. And Philistines went up [to] Jezreel. 1Samuel 29:11

David arose early—he and his men—to go in the morning; to return to the land of the Philistines. However [lit., and] the Philistines went up [to] Jezreel.

David and his men arose early the next morning and returned to the land of the Philistines. However, the Philistine soldiers went up to Jezreel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so arises early David—he and his men—to go in the morning to return unto a land of Philistines. And Philistines went up [to] Jezreel.

³⁵ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 151.

Septuagint So David arose early, he and his men, to depart and guard the land of the Philistines; and the Philistines went up to Jezrael to battle.

Significant differences: The Septuagint adds *to battle* at the end of this verse; the Peshitta and the MT do not. This is not a significant difference with regards to the overall meaning.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV David and his men got up early in the morning and headed back toward Philistia, while the Philistines left for Jezreel.

The Message David rose early, he and his men, and by daybreak they were on their way back to Philistine country. The Philistines went on to Jezreel.

NLT So David headed back into the land of the Philistines, while the Philistine army went on to Jezreel.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Early the next morning David and his men returned to Philistine territory, while the Philistines went to Jezreel.

JPS (Tanakh) Accordingly, David and his men rose early in the morning to leave, to return to the land of the Philistines, while the Philistines marched up to Jezreel.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB So David and his men got up early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

Young's Updated LT And David rises early, he and his men, to go in the morning, to turn back unto the land of the Philistines, and the Philistines have gone up to Jezreel.

What is the gist of this verse? David and his men returned to Ziklag, while the Philistines went up to Jezreel to fight against the Saul and the Israelites.

1Samuel 29:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâkam (שָׁכַם) [pronounced shaw-KAHM]	<i>to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start; morning (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

1Samuel 29:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (יִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions, soldiers, companions</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{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	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôqer (בֹּקֶר) [pronounced <i>BOH-ker</i>]	<i>morning</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #1242 BDB #133
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^b</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
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
P ^h ilish ^{tîy} (פִּלִּשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^h-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: David arose early—he and his men—to go in the morning; to return to the land of the Philistines. Achish was the man in authority and if he chose to send David back, David essentially had no choice in the matter. So David and his men got up with the sun the next morning and returned to Ziklag, their apportioned section of Philistia. They traveled due south for a little more than 50 miles. What they would find waiting for them is 1Sam. 30.

Darby comments: *How dreadful would it have been, had David been with the Philistines, and taken part in the defeat of God's people, and in the death of him whose life he had often spared so touchingly! How*

far the child of God may go astray when he puts himself under the protection of unbelievers, instead of relying on the help of God in all the difficulties which beset the path of faith! It is through these very difficulties that every grace is developed. And observe the danger the believer is in—if his faith be not simple, but fails ever so little of being thrown into the arms of God's enemies through the persecution of professors. Nature grows weary, and seeks comfort afar from the narrow path which leads through the briars. This happens whenever the people of God, following their own will, confide their interests to those who seek nothing but their own advantage in a less difficult position, which is neither that of God nor that of faith. And the more glorious a work there is for faith, the more nature grows weary, if faith becomes weak.³⁶ As God said in Jer. 17:5: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man, and who makes flesh his arm."

What must happen with David is tricky. God must first lead him out of this moral dilemma in which he finds himself and then God must discipline David to bring David back to Himself. What we find here is perfect timing in a series of events where even a half a day's difference could have changed everything. In the following chapter, God will place David under discipline, which will knock David flat on his behind; but when he gets up, he will be in fellowship, executing the plan of God for his life. David will, in a matter of a few minutes, change from a leader who has led all these men astray, to the great leader that he was and would be.

Application: God's timing is perfect and it is futile to argue with God when it comes to His timing. God essentially picked me up from where I lived and moved me 2000 miles. I had three options of where to move, and the move I least wanted to make was the only move where any door opened. My other two options were closed to me. When I changed jobs, I did not always do so willingly; but when the smoke cleared, it would be obvious that it was God's grace and God's timing which moved me from one position to another. Now, in my own case, even though there was certainly some praying involved, I did not hear some voice out of heaven, nor some tiny voice deep inside my heart, or anything else which smacks of the supernatural (or of the psychotic). God gave me a kick, so to speak, and, whenever there were options, He would open the door He wanted me to go through. God made sure that I had access to God's Word, to excellent Bible teaching, and part of my guidance throughout these many years came from learning God's Word. All of this was grace—my exposure to good Bible teaching came from someone else. The time to listen was provided by God. All I had to do was exercise a little positive volition toward the teaching of God's Word—God took care of every other detail after that.

Application/tangent: I look back on those days of initially being exposed to good Bible teaching, and I recall being amazed at how most Christians had little or no interest in God's Word. I was acquainted with a number of people involved in the charismatic movement (in fact, all of the closest people to me were involved in the charismatic movement); it became quite apparent to me that they were very interested in their personal experiences, but not as much in God's Word (although they seemed to be very sincere). But even those I knew outside of the charismatic movement—I met with a group of believers from the church I attended and, in my youthful zeal, played a tape of outstanding Bible teaching for them. None had any interest. They were willing to get together and give their idea of this or that; but not really willing to be taught. In fact, I found out, just like the unbeliever is often very negative towards the gospel, and very anti-God; so most believers have little or no interest in learning God's Word. What most of them want to do is to take the ideals that they have learned in life (often from their parents or from the society around them) and tie these ideals to their newly found faith. This is why many believers in California will have a liberal bend while many in Texas will be considerably more conservative. They did not necessarily come to these conclusions based upon God's Word, but upon the teaching they received prior to believing in Jesus Christ.

1Samuel 29:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (י) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

³⁶ John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Old and New Testaments*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 29:1–11.

1Samuel 29:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
P ^h lish ^{tîy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^h -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced ġaw-LAWH]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
Yiz ^{er} êl (יִזְרְעֵל) [pronounced yiz ^{er} -r ^e -ĠAIL]	<i>God will sow; that which God planted; it is transliterated Jezreel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3157 BDB #283

Translation: ...However [lit., and] the Philistines went up [to] Jezreel. As we saw in v. 1, Jezreel is where Saul and his army were. The Philistines moved their army north to stand opposite the Israelites in Jezreel. What awaits Saul is 1Sam. 31.

1Sam. 30 will follow David back to his camp. Chapter 31 will tell us about the war between the Philistines and the Israelites. So, we will move next to these two parallel events. However, first, we should take a quick detour to **1Chron. 12:19–21**, where certain men are said to hook up with David at this time. As we have studied in previous chapters, as David is on the run from Saul, men from all over Israel come to David to join up with him and to support him. During this specific period of time, when he leaves the Philistines and goes back down to Ziklag, some men from Manasseh hook up with David, and they also will assist him when he finds that his camp has been raided in his absence. Therefore, we may want to take a quick trip to 1Chron. 12:19–21 to see who came to David at this time and helped him out in his hour of need.