

# 1 Samuel 29 Commentary

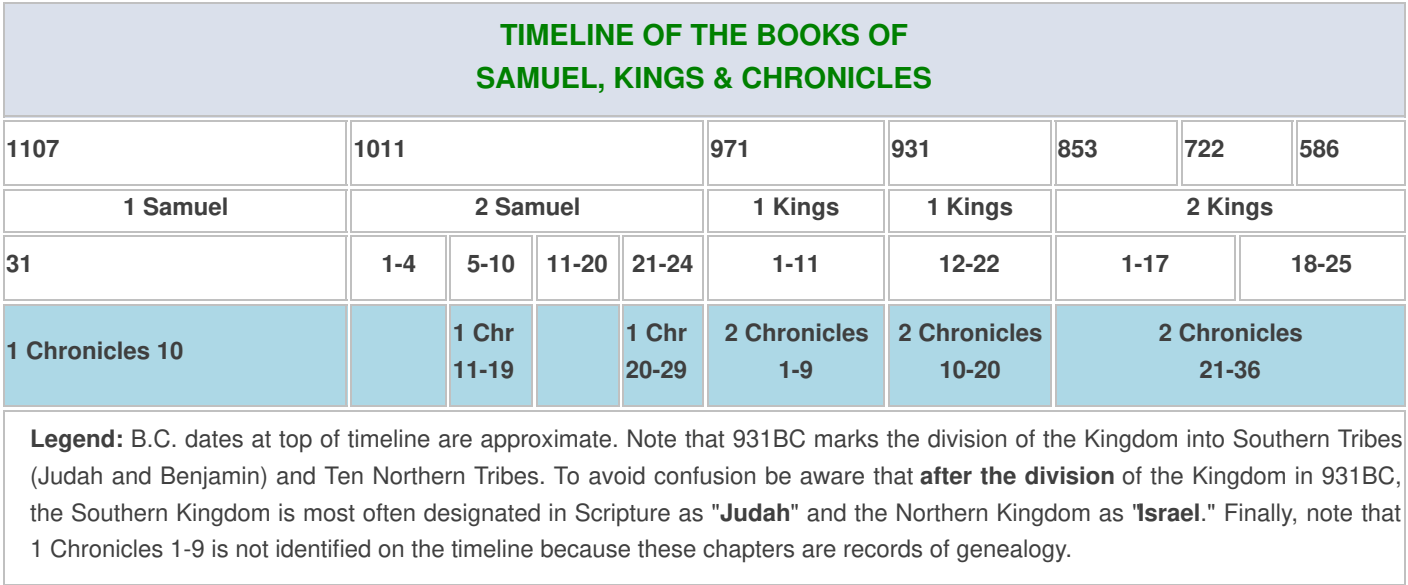
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- 1 Samuel 29:1
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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[1 Samuel Chart](#), from Charles Swindoll



[The Ryrie Study Bible](#)

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1 Samuel 29:1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring which is in Jezreel.

- **the Philistines:** 1Sa 28:1-2
- **Aphek:** 1Sa 4:1 Jos 19:30 1Ki 20:30
- **Jezreel:** 1Sa 28:4 Jos 19:18 Jdg 6:33 1Ki 18:45,46 21:1,23 2Ki 9:36 Ho 1:4-11
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 28:1+ Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, "Know assuredly that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men." "Very well, you shall know what your servant can do." So Achish said to David, "Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life."

1 Samuel 28:4+ So the Philistines gathered together and came and camped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together and they camped in Gilboa.

### PHILISTINES GATHER TO FOR SLAUGHTER AT JEZREEL

**Now** - This marks the writer returning to his story in 1Sa 28:4 after interrupting it with the story of Saul's visit to the medium.

**The Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek** - Note in 1Sa 28:1 the text says they camped at Shunem. If you look at the map above, clearly they had to first come to Aphek and march on from there to Shunem in the heart of Israeli territory in the plain of Jezreel.

**while the Israelites were camping by the spring which is in Jezreel** - Israel was at the southeastern end of the plain of Jezreel (in the map above Jezreel is just south of Shunem). In short, the two armies were camped across from each other in preparation for the battle. As an aside, it is notable that Jezreel means "God Scatters," which is exactly what transpired with the Israeli forces and also the lay people who realized the cause was lost! They all scattered (fled)!

**1 Samuel 29:2 And the lords of the Philistines were proceeding on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were proceeding on in the rear with Achish.**

- **the lords:** 1Sa 29:6,7 5:8-11 6:4 Jos 13:3
- **but David:** 1Sa 28:1,2
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Chronicles 12:19-22 From Manasseh also some defected to David **when he was about to go to battle with the Philistines against Saul**. But they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines after consultation sent him away, saying, "At the cost of our heads he may defect to his master Saul." 20 **As he went to Ziklag there defected to him from Manasseh:** Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu and Zillethai, captains of thousands who belonged to Manasseh. 21 They helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor, and were captains in the army. 22 For day by day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army like the army of God.

### PHILISTINES ON THE MOVE WITH DAVID COMING BEHIND

**And the lords of the Philistines were proceeding on by hundreds and by thousands**- The point is that the Philistines had a huge contingent numbering in many thousands of soldiers. And although not stated in this section, remember that the Philistines had iron chariots in their army, making them a frightening, formidable force. No wonder "When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly." (1Sa 28:5). Recall his fear drove him to attempt communication with God, but God had shut the door of heaven. Clearly God was sovereignly allowing the Philistines to move into place to demolish Saul's forces and ultimately to remove him as king of Israel.

**and David and his men were proceeding on in the rear with Achish** - Apparently David's forces had come to Aphek or were in

the contingent moving from Aphek toward Shunem. The text does not allow a definitive localization of David's forces. The main point is David was getting ready to be gored by one of the "[horns of his dilemma](#)!" Would he fight against his own people or would he tell Achish he could not fight them?

**1 Samuel 29:3** Then the commanders of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault in him from the day he deserted to me to this day?"

- **these days:** 1Sa 27:7
- **found:** 1Sa 25:28 Da 6:5 Joh 19:6 Ro 12:17 1Pe 3:16
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PHILISTINES COMMANDERS TO THE RESCUE

**Then** - This marks a crucial progression in the events, for as we noted above, David was in a seemingly no win situation.

**The commanders of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?"** - They are referring to David and his men.

**And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault in him from the day he deserted (defected) to me to this day** - Achish comes to the defense of David (one can imagine David saying just "cool it" Achish). David had successfully deceived Achish for 16 months (Achish exaggerates somewhat saying "**years**" but it was 1 year and four months so strictly speaking he was not incorrect). Achish explains David has been loyal to him this entire time. Notice he also uses the verb **deserted**, (literally to fall like Eli in 1Sa 4:18 but figuratively "fall away" or desert - cf 2Ki 25:11) trying to convince that Philistine commanders that David no longer had any allegiance with the Israelite forces they would soon be fighting.

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**Hebrews** ([5680](#)) (ibri/ivri) - **Gilbrant** - Used mostly in the Pentateuch and 1 Samuel, 'ivri is a proper noun meaning "Hebrew." Potiphar's wife accused Joseph, "a Hebrew man," of forcing himself on her (Gen. 39:14; see v. 17 where she identifies him as a "Hebrew slave"). Moses tried to protect a Hebrew man from an Egyptian only to find two Hebrew men fighting each other (Exo. 2:11, 13). Exodus 21:2-11 gives rules regarding the proper treatment of Hebrew slaves (cf. Deut. 15:12; Jer. 34:8-20). **Hebrews** are often referred to as **Hebrews** by foreigners: the Egyptians in Gen. 37-50 and Exo. 1-15 and the Philistines in 1 Sam. 4, 13, 14. Thus, "Hebrew" is used to distinguish the nationality of a person or persons, male or female (cf. Exo. 1:15, a Hebrew midwife). Jonah 1:9 is the only text in which a person describes himself as a Hebrew. The etymology of the word is difficult to trace. It may be derived from an Akkadian term habiru. This word likely referred to a group of fugitives. If this connection is valid, then some transformation of the meaning must have occurred in the Hebrew adoption of this term. With the exception of the specific reference to Hebrew slaves in Exo. 21, this term is not a social distinction as it was in Akkadian. Throughout its use in the OT, it is a designation for the whole ethnic population of the Israelites. Nevertheless, since "Hebrew" is a designation often ascribed to the Israelites in refuge (especially in Genesis and Exodus), a derogatory nuance may remain from its Akkadian origin. In postexilic and pre-Hellenistic times, "**Hebrew**" was not commonly used as a general designation for Israelites. In the NT, only three passages use the term "Hebrew ([Hebrais](#))." In Acts 6:1, "Hebrew" is used to designate the Jewish Christian congregation. Paul called himself a Hebrew to show that he was a Hebrew-speaking Jew rather than a Greek-speaking Jew (2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Ibri - 32v** - Gen. 14:13; Gen. 39:14; Gen. 39:17; Gen. 40:15; Gen. 41:12; Gen. 43:32; Exod. 1:15; Exod. 1:16; Exod. 1:19; Exod. 2:6; Exod. 2:7; Exod. 2:11; Exod. 2:13; Exod. 3:18; Exod. 5:3; Exod. 7:16; Exod. 9:1; Exod. 9:13; Exod. 10:3; Exod. 21:2; Deut. 15:12; 1 Sam. 4:6; 1 Sam. 4:9; 1 Sam. 13:3; 1 Sam. 13:7; 1 Sam. 13:19; 1 Sam. 14:11; 1 Sam. 14:21; 1 Sam. 29:3; Jer. 34:9; Jer. 34:14; Jon. 1:9

**James Orr on HEBREW** - he'-broo, he'-broo-es ('ibhri, feminine 'ibhriyah; Hebraios): The earliest name for Abraham (Gen 14:13) and his descendants (Joseph, Gen 39:14,17; 40:15; 41:12; 43:32; Israelites in Egypt, Ex 1:15; 2:6,11,13; 3:18; in laws, Ex 21:2; Dt 15:12; in history, 1 Sam 4:6,9; 13:7,19, etc.; later, Jer 34:9, "Hebrewess," 34:14; Jon 1:9; in the New Testament, Acts 6:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Phil 3:5). The etymology of the word is disputed. It may be derived from Eber (Gen 10:21,24,25, etc.), or, as some think, from the verb 'abhar, "to cross over" (people from across the Euphrates; compare Josh 24:2). A connection is sought by some with the apri or epri of the Egyptian monuments, and again with the Habiri of the Tell el-Amarna Letters. In Acts 6:1, the "Hebrews" are contrasted with "Hellenists," or Greek-speaking Jews. By the "Hebrew" tongue in the New Testament (Hebraisti, Jn 5:2; 19:13,17,20; 20:16) is meant ARAMAIC (which see), but also in Rev 9:11; 16:16,

Hebrew proper.

**W E Vine - Hebrew.**" The origin and meaning of this word, which appears 34 times, is much debated. The word is an early generic term for a variety of Semitic peoples and is somewhat akin to our word barbarian. So Abram is identified as a "Hebrew" (Gen. 14:13). This ethnic term indicates family origin whereas the term "sons of Israel" is a political and religious term. Unquestionably in the ancient Near East "Hebrew" was applied to a far larger group than the Israelites. The word occurs in Ugaritic, Egyptian, and Babylonian writings describing a diverse mixture of nomadic wanderers or at least those who appear to have at one time been nomadic. Sometimes the word seems to be a term of derision. Such usage recalls 1 Sam. 29:3, where the Philistine leaders asked Achish, "What do these Hebrews here?" There is considerable debate about identifying Hebrew with the well-known Habiru (Semitic warlords) who occupied Egypt in the first half of the second millennium b.c. Several other nouns are derived from the verb 'ābar. 'Ēber, which occurs 89 times, refers to the "side" (1 Sam. 14:1) or "edge" (Exod. 28:26) of something. When speaking of rivers or seas, 'ēber means the "edge or side opposite the speaker" or "the other side" (Josh. 2:10). Ma'bārâ, which appears 8 times, means "ford" (Josh. 2:7) and "ravine" or "passage" (1 Sam. 14:4). Ma'abâr appears 3 times to mean: "sweep" (of a staff, Isa. 30:32); "ford" (Gen. 32:22); and "ravine" or "passage" (1 Sam. 13:23). 'Abârâ, which occurs twice, means "crossing or ford" (2 Sam. 19:18, rsv). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

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#### **F B Meyer - 1 Samuel 29:3 What do these Hebrews here?**

It was a very natural remark. The Philistines were going into battle with the Hebrew king and his troops, and it was very anomalous that a strong body of Hebrews should be forming part of the Philistine array. They had no business to be there. The annoyance of the chief captains and lords that surrounded Achish was natural enough. For long, probably, it had been smoldering; now it broke out into flame.

It is very terrible when the children of the world have a higher sense of Christian propriety and fitness than Christians themselves, and say to one another, "What do these Hebrews here? The word "Hebrew" means one that has passed over—a separatist. The death of our Lord Jesus was intended to make all His followers separatists. Through Him they have passed from death unto life; they have been delivered out of the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The appeal of His cross to us all is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Too often, however, that call is unheeded; and, for fear of man, we mingle with the ranks of the enemies of our Lord.

If Christians attend the theater; if Sunday-school teachers, elders or deacons of a church, are found participating in the pleasures of the ungodly; if the young Christian man is found loosely consorting with the card-players of the smoking-room of an ocean steamer—may not the sneer go round, "What do these Hebrews here? "What doest thou here, Elijah!" is the remonstrance of God. "What do these Hebrews here?" that of the world, which not unfrequently has a truer sense of propriety than God's professing followers.

**1 Samuel 29:4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him, and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Make the man go back, that he may return to his place where you have assigned him, and do not let him go down to battle with us, or in the battle he may become an adversary to us. For with what could this man make himself acceptable to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of these men?"**

BGT 1 Samuel 29:4 κα λυπ θσαν π ατ ο στρατηγο τν λοφ λων κα λ γουσιν ατ π στρεψον τν νδρα ες τν τπον ατο ο κατ στησας ατν κε κα μ ρχ σθω μεθ μ ν ες τν π λεμον κα μ γιν σθω π βουλος τς παρεμβολς κα ν τ νι διαλλαγ σεται ο τος τ κυρ ατο ο χ ν τας κεφαλας τν νδρ ν κε νων

LXE 1 Samuel 29:4 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 thou didst set him; and let him not come with us to the war, and let him not be a traitor in the camp: and wherewith will he be reconciled to his master? Will it not be with the heads of those men?

KJV 1 Samuel 29:4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?

NET 1 Samuel 29:4 But the leaders of the Philistines became angry with him and said to him, "Send the man

back! Let him return to the place that you assigned him! Don't let him go down with us into the battle, for he might become our adversary in the battle. What better way to please his lord than with the heads of these men?

CSB 1 Samuel 29:4 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?"

ESV 1 Samuel 29:4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. And the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place to which you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here?"

NIV 1 Samuel 29:4 But the Philistine commanders were angry with him and said, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place you assigned him. He must not go with us into battle, or he will turn against us during the fighting. How better could he regain his master's favor than by taking the heads of our own men?"

NLT 1 Samuel 29:4 But the Philistine commanders were angry. "Send him back to the town you've given him!" they demanded. "He can't go into the battle with us. What if he turns against us in battle and becomes our adversary? Is there any better way for him to reconcile himself with his master than by handing our heads over to him?"

NRS 1 Samuel 29:4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him; and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, so that he may return to the place that you have assigned to him; he shall not go down with us to battle, or else he may become an adversary to us in the battle. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here?"

NJB 1 Samuel 29:4 But the Philistine chiefs were angry with him. 'Send the man back,' they said, 'make him go back to the place which you assigned to him. He cannot go into battle with us, in case he turns on us once battle is joined. Would there be a better way for the man to regain his master's favour than with the heads of these men here?'

NAB 1 Samuel 29:4 But the Philistine chiefs were angered at this and said to him: "Send that man back! Let him return to the place you picked out for him. He must not go down into battle with us, lest during the battle he become our enemy. For how else can he win back his master's favor, if not with the heads of these men of ours?"

YLT 1 Samuel 29:4 And the heads of the Philistines are wroth against him, and the heads of the Philistines say to him, 'Send back the man, and he doth turn back unto his place whither thou hast appointed him, and doth not go down with us into battle, and is not to us for an adversary in battle; and wherewith doth this one reconcile himself unto his lord -- is it not with the heads of those men?'

GWN 1 Samuel 29:4 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!"

BBE 1 Samuel 29:4 But the rulers of the Philistines were angry with him, and said to him, Make the man go back to the place you have given him; do not let him go down with us to the fight, or he may be turned against us and be false to us: for how will this man make peace with his lord? will it not be with the heads of these men?

- **Make this fellow:** 1Sa 14:21 1Ch 12:19 Lu 16:8
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Chronicles 12:19-20 From Manasseh also some defected to David **when he was about to go to battle with the Philistines against Saul**. But they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines after consultation sent him away, saying, "At the cost of our heads he may defect to his master Saul." 20 **As he went to Ziklag there defected to him from Manasseh:** Adnah, Jozabad, Jediahel, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu and Zillethai, captains of thousands who belonged to Manasseh.

## PHILISTINE COMMAND DAVID DEPART

**But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him** - Achish had clearly stirred up the Philistine commanders. They were not about to accept his arguments in support of David.

**and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, 'Make the man go back, that he may return to his place where you have assigned him, and do not let him go down to battle with us, or in the battle he may become an adversary to us** - The commanders issue a **command** to Achish to send David away from the battle back home to Ziklag. They feared David would turn on them in the battle with the Hebrews. The horns of David's dilemma were solved undoubtedly reflecting the strong arm of the LORD providentially moving in the hearts of the Philistine commanders to confront Achish. Proverbs 21:1 says "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes."

**TSK Note** - 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.

**For** (term of explanation) **with what could this man make himself acceptable to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of these men?** - NLT gives a good sense paraphrasing it "Is there any better way for him to reconcile himself with his master than by handing our heads over to him?" The Philistines saw this as David's opportunity to reunite with his people taking them heads of Philistines to show his renewed loyalty.

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**G C Morgan - The princes of the Philistines were wroth with him.—1 Sam. 29.4.**

These princes were wroth with Achish for allowing David to accompany the Philistines in their campaign against Israel. David's sojourn with Achish had resulted in his being compelled to join the Philistine army in its preparation for attacking the Israelites. The Philistine lords seemed suddenly to have realized the danger of this proceeding. They were familiar with the song which had celebrated his prowess, and his victories over them; and they felt that they dared not trust him in the day of battle. It is perhaps idle for us to speculate as to what the result would have been, had he been allowed to remain. On the basis of policy their objection was probably justified. Achish seems to have formed a high estimate of him, and a strong affection for him, but he was compelled to yield to the majority. There can be no doubt that it was not in the purpose of God that His anointed king should be placed in circumstances of such difficulty. Here, then, along the line of perfectly natural emotions, God is seen acting on behalf of His servant. He made the wrath of the princes praise Him, in that it accomplished His purpose. When once we have seen the fact of the Divine government, it seems impossible not to see it. It operates everywhere. It controls all circumstances, and all men, in spite of themselves, and often unknowingly to them, so that they contribute to the realization of the will of God, and the accomplishment of His purposes. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

**1 Samuel 29:5 "Is this not David, of whom they sing in the dances, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?"**

- 1Sa 18:6,7 21:11 Pr 27:14
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PHILISTINE COMMANDERS SUPPORT THEIR ARGUMENT

**Is this not David, of whom they sing in the dances, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands-** The Philistine commanders ask Achish a rhetorical question to remind him of David's reputation in slaying **his ten thousands**, undoubtedly including Philistines in those numbers! They could have reminded Achish that it was David who had beheaded Goliath, one of Gath's "favorite sons."

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**1 Samuel 29:6 Then Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been upright, and your going out**



and your coming in with me in the army are pleasing in my sight; for I have not found evil in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, you are not pleasing in the sight of the lords.

- **the Lord:** 1Sa 20:3 28:10 De 10:20 Isa 65:16 Jer 12:16
- **thou hast:** Mt 5:16 1Pe 2:12 3:16
- **going:** Nu 27:17 2Sa 3:25 2Ki 19:27 Ps 121:8
- **I have not:** 1Sa 29:3
- Heb. thou art not good in the eyes of the lords, Ge 16:6 Jos 22:30
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ACHISH CAPITULATES TO THE COMMANDERS

**Then** - Marks progression in the narrative and success in the arguments of the Philistine commanders.

**Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army are pleasing in my sight; for I have not found evil in you from the day of your coming to me to this day** - Achish is almost apologetic to David rehearsing how pleasing and faithful David had been to him. Notice that Achish uses the name of Yahweh which makes one wonder whether David had carried out to Yahwistic evangelism with this idol worshipping king? As an aside, this is the first mention of LORD since David defected to Ziklag and it is from the mouth of a pagan king, who also mentions the next word "God" (1Sa 29:9)! We will not hear these words from David until 1Sa 30:6 when "David strengthened himself in the LORD his God!"

**Nevertheless** (term of contrast), **you are not pleasing in the sight of the lords**- Literally "But in the eyes of the lords you are not good." The contrast (introduced by "**nevertheless**") was that David's presence did not please the other Philistine lords. Surely David's heart was glad to hear this unexpected turn of events which would allow him to not have to fight against his own people! He problem feels that the tangled web he had woven to this point was miraculously untangled, but the worse was yet to come!

**1 Samuel 29:7 "Now therefore return and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines."**

BGT 1 Samuel 29:7 καὶ νῦν στρέφε καὶ πορεύου εἰς ἔρην καὶ οὐ μὴ ποιῇς κακὰ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς τῶν σατραπῶν τῶν ἰλλοφίλων

LXE 1 Samuel 29:7 Now then return and go in peace, thus thou shalt not do evil in the sight of the lords of the Philistines.

KJV 1 Samuel 29:7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

NET 1 Samuel 29:7 So turn and leave in peace. You must not do anything that the leaders of the Philistines consider improper!"

CSB 1 Samuel 29:7 Now go back quietly and you won't be doing anything the Philistine leaders think is wrong."

ESV 1 Samuel 29:7 So go back now; and go peaceably, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines."

NIV 1 Samuel 29:7 Turn back and go in peace; do nothing to displease the Philistine rulers."

NLT 1 Samuel 29:7 Please don't upset them, but go back quietly."

NRS 1 Samuel 29:7 So go back now; and go peaceably; do nothing to displease the lords of the Philistines."

NJB 1 Samuel 29:7 So go home, in peace, rather than antagonise them.'

NAB 1 Samuel 29:7 Withdraw peaceably, now, and do nothing that might displease the Philistine lords."

YLT 1 Samuel 29:7 and now, turn back, and go in peace, and thou dost do no evil in the eyes of the princes of the Philistines.'

GWN 1 Samuel 29:7 So leave peacefully without doing anything to displease the Philistine rulers."

BBE 1 Samuel 29:7 So now go back, and go in peace, so that you do not make the lords of the Philistines angry.

- **displease:** Nu 22:34
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ACHISH COMMANDS DAVID TO RETURN

**Now therefore return and go in peace** - Achish gives David two commands, making it clear he is to separate from the Philistine forces. You can almost hear David breathe a sigh of relief! Once again God stepped in to protect his anointed who was about to begin his reign!

**That** (introduces purpose) **you may not displease** (lit "do evil) **the lords of the Philistines** - Literally "and you must not do evil in the eyes of the leaders of the Philistines."

**1 Samuel 29:8 David said to Achish, "But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant from the day when I came before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"**

- **But what have:** 1Sa 12:3 17:29 20:8 26:18
- **that I may not:** 1Sa 28:2 2Sa 16:18,19 Ps 34:13,14 Mt 6:13
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## DAVID'S PROTEST

**David said to Achish, "But what have I done?"** - We as the readers are thinking "David just be quiet!" It is as if David feels the need to continue his deception of Achish.

**And what have you found in your servant from the day when I came before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?** - One has to ask is David really being serious asking this question? He would seem to be running the risk that Achish might have a change of heart. We want David just to "stand down" at this point!

Some writers however propose that David's words might signify a lapse in his judgment and a promise to actually fight with Achish against his own Israelite brothers! I think that is not the best interpretation.

**1 Samuel 29:9 But Achish replied to David, "I know that you are pleasing in my sight, like an angel of God; nevertheless the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us to the battle.'**

BGT 1 Samuel 29:9 καὶ πεκρθη Αγγους πρς Δαυιδ ὁ δα τι γαθς σ ν φθαλμο ς μου ἄλ ο σατρ παι τ ν λοφ λων λ γουσιν ο χ ξει μεθ μ ν ε ς π λεμον

LXE 1 Samuel 29:9 And Anchus answered David, I know that thou art good in my eyes, but the lords of the Philistines say, He shall not come with us to the war.

KJV 1 Samuel 29:9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art 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.

NET 1 Samuel 29:9 Achish replied to David, "I am convinced that you are as reliable as the angel of God! However, the leaders of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us in the battle.'

CSB 1 Samuel 29:9 Achish answered David, "I'm convinced that you are as reliable as the Angel of God. But the Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not go into battle with us.'

ESV 1 Samuel 29:9 And Achish answered David and said, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.'

NIV 1 Samuel 29:9 Achish answered, "I know that you have been as pleasing in my eyes as an angel of God;



nevertheless, the Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not go up with us into battle.'

NLT 1 Samuel 29:9 But Achish insisted, "As far as I'm concerned, you're as perfect as an angel of God. But the Philistine commanders are afraid to have you with them in the battle.

NRS 1 Samuel 29:9 Achish replied to David, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.'

NJB 1 Samuel 29:9 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."

NAB 1 Samuel 29:9 "You know," Achish answered David, "that you are acceptable to me. But the Philistine chiefs have determined you are not to go up with us to battle.

YLT 1 Samuel 29:9 And Achish answereth and saith unto David, 'I have known that thou art good in mine eyes as a messenger of God; only, the princes of the Philistines have said, He doth not go up with us into battle;

GWN 1 Samuel 29:9 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.'

BBE 1 Samuel 29:9 And Achish in answer said, It is true that in my eyes you are good, like an angel of God: but still, the rulers of the Philistines have said, He is not to go up with us to the fight.

- **as an angel:** 2Sa 14:17,20 19:27 Ga 4:14
- **the commanders:** 1Sa 29:4
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Galatians 4:14 and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself.

### ACHISH HOLDS HIS GROUND

**But Achish replied to David, "I know that you are pleasing in my sight, like an angel of God-** HCSB - "I'm convinced that you are as reliable as the Angel of God." Note the CSB actually capitalizes "Angel" that might suggest he is alluding the an OT Christophany (cf [Angel of the LORD](#)). That seems very unlikely. The NIV has ""I know that you have been as pleasing in my eyes as an angel of God." This suggests Achish knew a little Biblical truth such as the truth that God had angels (angelic messengers). This would support the presumption that while David conspired with Achish, he never resorted to idol worship.

**nevertheless the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us to the battle-** Despite David's excellent behavior in the sight of Achish, he felt compelled to acquiesce to the arguments of the majority of the Philistine leaders.

**Ray Pritchard - The World Doesn't Trust a Compromising Christian** - There is an important lesson for us to consider at this point. A child of God defects—even temporarily—to the other side and then he discovers that the other side doesn't want him because they don't trust him. Why? Because a child of God is always a child of God. The new nature within cannot be taken away even though it can be covered up and camouflaged by compromise. That's why backsliding is a kind of spiritual suicide. The believer who cuts himself off from the people of God soon discovers the people of the world don't want him around either. So he is fated to spend his years in a kind of no-man's land, half in the world, half in the church. He is a man without a country. When I preached this sermon, a woman came up to me and thanked me for pressing home this point. "I've been too concerned with what the other women in my neighborhood think of me." She had been trying to become like them in order to win their favor. But it never works. The people of the world are smarter than that. They can recognize the true children of God and they won't respect us if we try to play on their team. The world respects Christians who stand up for what they believe. They may not like us (they might even persecute us) but they will respect us and they can't deny the reality of our faith. ([Ziklag is Burning](#))

1 Samuel 29:10 "Now then arise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you, and as soon as you have arisen early in the morning and have light, **depart**."

- 1Sa 30:1,2 Ge 22:14 Ps 37:23,24 1Co 10:13 2Pe 2:9
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ACHISH COMMANDS DAVID TO DEPART NEXT DAY

Now then arise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you, and as soon as you have arisen early in the morning and have light, **depart** - Achish commands David and his men not to delay but to depart [posthaste](#).

**1 Samuel 29:11** So David arose early, he and his men, to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

- **And the Philistines:** 1Sa 29:1 Jos 19:18 2Sa 4:4
- [1 Samuel 29 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

2 Samuel 4:4 Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from **Jezreel**, and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth (MEPHIBOSHETH WOULD HAVE BEEN AT GIBEAH).

## DAVID OBEYS KING ACHISH PHILISTINES MARCH TO JEZREEL

**So David arose early, he and his men, to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines-** David gladly obeys the command of Achish and leaves at the break of day. The phrase **return to the land of the Philistines** could be taken to mean that he was presently not in the land of the Philistines. If this takes place at Aphek that is still in Philistia.

**And the Philistines went up to Jezreel-** This phrase supports that the Philistines were still at Aphek and from there would march to Jezreel in the heart of Israel to camp at Shunem just north of Israel camped at Jezreel. [Enlarge the map above](#) to see the line marking the march from Aphek to Shunem (and Jezreel).

**TSK Note** - Jezreel, or Esdraelon, was a city of Issachar, afterwards celebrated as the residence of the kings of Israel, delightfully situated in the extensive and fertile plain of the same name, which extends from Scythopolis or Bethshan on the east to mount Carmel on the west.