

# ***I & II Samuel***

## ***Introduction***

*I & II Samuel along with I & II Kings were originally thought of as one book. Some scholars feel that I & II Chronicles were also a part of this large book. Since I & II Chronicles fall into a different division of the Hebrew Scriptures this thought is hardly tenable. These books were separated first by dividing Samuel from Kings and later dividing Samuel and Kings each into two books since the size of the scroll limited the comfort of the person who was reading such weighty scrolls. The division took place with the translation of these books into Greek. This was done in Alexandria, Egypt where there were many Jewish people who were fluent in Greek (the language of the business world) but had difficulty with Hebrew. In the time when these were first divided the name I, II, III & IV Kings was used. This is still used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation mentioned above. This is generally noted as the LXX; or the version of the seventy since tradition says seventy- two scholars did the translation. In this translation the Hebrew text is always compared with the LXX. Jerome, in his translation of these books into Latin, (the Vulgate,) followed the example of the LXX.*

*It is uncertain who wrote these chapters. Based on internal evidence it seems that the author was writing some time after the events had taken place. I & II Samuel are a composite. The writer mentions various sources which were not only available but were surely used as the writer compiled his information for these books. Some scholars feel this was written some time after the reign of Solomon but before the fall of Israel. One can assume, since scholars feel there are a number of interpolations, that the writing was edited and enlarged one or more times before it reached its completed form. Scholars have tried to categorize these assumed interpolations by harmonizing them into the work of specific editors by examining the interpolations but such attempts have not met with much success or acceptance. Since there is no agreement among scholars as to which lines are interpolations it is questionable whether such a study will ever be agreed upon and accepted.*

*Scholars also do not agree as to when these writings reached their final form, dating the writing between 750 and 460 BCE.*

*I Samuel describes the transition from government by Judges (and/or a theocracy) to a monarchy. The history of Israel is given from the time of the Judges through the death of Saul, the first king of Israel. Israel was determined to become like the surrounding nations and have a king. The story begins with the last days of the priest Eli and his family along with the priesthood of Samuel. (The name means "Name of God.") Samuel seeks to carry out his priestly duties but is urged, and then asked by God, to select a king to rule. This he considers to be a sacrilege. He did this very reluctantly. Saul, however, was apparently bi-polar or schizophrenic. This is evident in Saul's dealing with David.*

*II Samuel presents the reign of David as king. Later in his reign the revolt of David's son, Absalom is described. As David is reaching the end of his career as king several appendices are added in addition to a long Psalm of Thanksgiving. The story of David does not end with II Samuel but ends in I Kings 2:10. This is a somewhat strange division which separates II Samuel from I Kings.*

*Samuel's gifts were: foresightedness, systematic insight and the ability to inspire others during these critical times in the history of the people of Israel. Isaiah and Hebrews consider Samuel as the last of the Judges. Rabbis considered him as a Judge/Ruler which placed impossible contrasting responsibilities on him.*

*Without these books there would be a huge gap in the historical narrative of the people of Israel. This is a history that is of value as one seeks to observe the shaping of the Hebrew people and the preparatory time for the arrival of the Messiah.*

# *I Samuel*

## <CHAPTER I>

### *1. The Childhood of Samuel 1:1 – 4:1a*

#### *A. the Birth of Samuel 1:1 - 28*

<sup>1</sup> There was a man from Ramahim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim <sup>1</sup> whose name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, <sup>2</sup> the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. <sup>2</sup> Elkanah had two wives, Hannah being the name of one and Peninniah the name of the other. Peninniah had two children, Hannah had none.

<sup>3</sup> Elkanah journeyed annually from his city to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts <sup>3</sup> in the city of Shiloh <sup>4</sup> where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were priests of the Lord. <sup>4</sup> On the day when Elkanah made his sacrifice he would give portions to Peninniah and her children; <sup>5</sup> and even though he loved Hannah more <sup>5</sup> he would give her only one portion <sup>6</sup> because the Lord had caused her to be infertile.<sup>6</sup> Peninniah would taunt Hannah <sup>7</sup> a great deal, simply to irritate her because, the Lord had caused her not to have children. <sup>8</sup> <sup>7</sup> This continued year after year for each time they went to the house of the Lord in Shiloh the taunting would again take place. As a result Hannah wept <sup>9</sup> and would not eat. <sup>10</sup> <sup>8</sup> Her husband, Elkanah, would say, “Hannah, why are you weeping, and why don’t you eat? Why are you so grieved? <sup>11</sup> Don’t I mean more to you than your having a son?”

<sup>9</sup> After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah went to the Tabernacle (*or, the house of the Lord*). Eli, the priest, was sitting on a seat beside the doorway of the Tabernacle. <sup>12</sup> <sup>10</sup> She felt wretched and prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. <sup>11</sup> She made a vow, declaring: “O Lord of Hosts, assuredly look down on the affliction of your servant, I pray that you will remember me, do not forget me for if I am able to give birth to a son I will give him to you, O Lord, for his entire life and he will never have his hair cut, <sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> LXX: “There was a man from Ramah Zuphim” TAN: “Ramathaim.” In other passages the name is “Ramah.”

<sup>2</sup> This name means “dedicated.” Thus it could be translated as: “Elkanah, son of Jeruham, (a Levite), --“

<sup>3</sup> This is the first mention of “the Lord of Hosts.” The LXX has “The Lord Omnipotent.”

<sup>4</sup> This location is present day Seliun which is 9 ½ miles north of Bethel. The Tabernacle of the time of Moses was located here.

<sup>5</sup> Elkanah had married Hannah for love and Peninniah for children.

<sup>6</sup> LXX: “one prime portion.” The Hebrew is uncertain. NRSV: “To Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her.”

<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew word which here is replaced by the name Peninniah was a word that was used only about women, which means “rival,” or “adversary.” “Torment and humiliate” might aptly describe the situation under which Hannah lived. TAN: “make her miserable and taunt her.”

<sup>8</sup> LXX: “The Lord gave her no child in her affliction, and based on the despondency of her affliction: she was desperate because she had no children.”

<sup>9</sup> LXX: “she was dispirited.”

<sup>10</sup> The Hebrew seems to be flawed. A possible translation would be “Hannah rose and left her food in the room.”

<sup>11</sup> LXX: “Why does your heart smite you?”

<sup>12</sup> LXX: “lintel of the doorway.” Cf.: ANET: p. 117 b, c.

<sup>13</sup> Cf.: Numbers 6:6. This was a sign of dedication. The LXX adds: “he will not drink wine nor strong drink.” This addition is also found in the manuscript of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

<sup>12</sup> As she kept on praying <sup>14</sup> in the presence of the Lord, Eli observed that her lips were moving. <sup>13</sup> Hannah was speaking silently from the heart! Though her lips moved her voice was silent. <sup>15</sup> In view of this Eli assumed she was drunk. <sup>14</sup> Eli said, “How long will you make yourself a drunken spectacle? <sup>16</sup> Stop your drinking!” <sup>15</sup> Hannah answered: “No, my Lord, I am a woman who has a deep problem: <sup>17</sup> I have not consumed any wine nor strong drink! I have been praying and pouring out my soul before the Lord. <sup>16</sup> Do not consider me to be a degraded woman <sup>18</sup> for during this entire time I have been speaking of my anxiety and my vexing problem.” <sup>17</sup> Eli then replied, “Go in peace and the God of Israel will grant the petition you have presented to him.” <sup>18</sup> She answered: “May your maid servant receive your favor!” She then left, [*going to her quarters*] and ate. She was no longer sad. <sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> They rose early the next morning and worshiped the Lord and then returned to their home in Ramah. When Elkanah and Hannah had sexual relations the Lord remembered her and she became pregnant. <sup>20</sup> When the time came <sup>20</sup> Hannah gave birth to a son and he was named Samuel <sup>21</sup> for she said, “I have asked the Lord for him.”

<sup>21</sup> Elkanah and his household annually went to the house of the Lord to sacrifice and to pay his vow. <sup>22</sup> <sup>22</sup> Hannah did not go to Shiloh and said to her husband, “As soon as the child is weaned I will bring him that he might appear in the presence of the Lord, and live there forever.” <sup>23</sup> <sup>23</sup> Her husband Elkanah said, “Do what you feel is best. Wait until he has been weaned and then may the Lord accept your vow.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore Hannah remained at home and nursed her son until he was weaned. <sup>25</sup> <sup>24</sup> When her son was weaned she took him with her <sup>26</sup> along with gifts of a bushel of flour, <sup>27</sup> and a leather bottle of wine. <sup>28</sup> <sup>25</sup> They sacrificed a bull and brought the young child to the priest, Eli. <sup>26</sup> Hannah said, “O my lord, as surely as you are alive, I am the woman who had stood here, in your presence and in the presence of the Lord as I prayed. My prayer has been answered and the Lord has granted my petition which I made to the Lord; for I now have a son and I am loaning him to the Lord for the remainder of his life.” <sup>29</sup>

They prostrated themselves before the Lord and worshiped him there.

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<sup>14</sup> Hebrew literally: “multiplied.”

<sup>15</sup> JB: “for she was speaking under her breath.”

<sup>16</sup> TAN: “still making a drunken show of yourself? Stop your drinking and sober up.”

<sup>17</sup> LXX: “I live in a difficult day.”

<sup>18</sup> Literally; “A daughter of Belial.” In the Hebrew Scriptures Belial was evil and not to be trusted. “A base woman” might be a better translation.

<sup>19</sup> LXX: “went her way and entered into her room, and ate with her husband.” The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.

<sup>20</sup> Literally: “in the circle of time.”

<sup>21</sup> Samuel means “Name of God.”

<sup>22</sup> This vow was his and its content is unknown. This has nothing to do with the vow of his wife Hannah.

<sup>23</sup> The Dead Sea Scroll 4QSama has: “I will offer him as a Nazirite for all time.”

<sup>24</sup> The Dead Sea Scroll 4QSama and the LXX have “the utterance of your mouth.”

<sup>25</sup> Two to three years was the normal period for nursing in those days. It is very possible that she prolonged this period a bit more since she had vowed to give her son to the Lord and the Lord’s service.

<sup>26</sup> Several Hebrew MSS including the Dead Sea Scrolls say he was a three year old.

<sup>27</sup> Literally: “an ephah” which was a bit more than a bushel.

<sup>28</sup> This sentence, in Hebrew, is not entirely clear.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel was irrevocably given to the Lord, even though she used the word “lent.” She no doubt was unable to say that she was giving him since her motherly instincts were very strong and ‘lent’ was a more suitable word for her to use.

<CHAPTER 2>

*b. The Song of Hannah 2: - 10* <sup>30</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hannah also prayed this prayer, saying:

“My heart exults <sup>31</sup> in the Lord,  
my strength <sup>32</sup> is exalted in the Lord.  
My mouth derides <sup>33</sup> my enemies  
because I rejoice in your saving power. <sup>34</sup>

- <sup>2</sup>       ”There is no great holy one who is as great as the Lord.  
          [no one can be compared with you.] <sup>35</sup>  
          There is no protector <sup>36</sup> like our God.
- <sup>3</sup>       Do not speak haughtily, <sup>37</sup>  
          do not speak arrogantly,  
          for the Lord is an all-knowing God,  
          for he is the one who measures our actions.
- <sup>4</sup>       The bow of the mighty is broken  
          and those who have faltered are gaining in strength. <sup>38</sup>
- <sup>5</sup>       Those who were full have sought jobs so they can have bread,  
          while those who have been famished have ceased to labor. <sup>39</sup>  
          The barren have borne seven fold,  
          but she who had many children is desolate. <sup>40</sup>
- <sup>6</sup>       The Lord brings about death and life;  
          he brings down to the grave <sup>41</sup> and raises up.
- <sup>7</sup>       The Lord makes people poor and makes others rich,  
          he brings about humility and also exalts. <sup>42</sup>
- <sup>8</sup>       He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap, <sup>43</sup>  
          to grant them a place with princes,  
          assigning them a seat of honor, <sup>44</sup>  
          for the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s  
          and he has set the world on them.

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<sup>30</sup> Some scholars feel these 10 verses are a later interpolation.

<sup>31</sup> LXX: “is established.”

<sup>32</sup> Literally: “horn.” It is a metaphor describing an antlered animal holding its head high in triumph. TAN: “I have triumphed through the Lord.”

<sup>33</sup> Literally: “my mouth is wide.” TAN: “I gloat over my enemies.”

<sup>34</sup> NRSV & Dead Sea Scrolls have: “in my victory.” TAN: “deliverance.”

<sup>35</sup> This line is thought by some scholars to be an editorial gloss.

<sup>36</sup> LXX: “righteous.”

<sup>37</sup> LXX: “do not boast.”

<sup>38</sup> The Hebrew is unclear. NEB: “Strong men stand in mute disarray, but those who faltered put on new strength.”

<sup>39</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. LXX: “have forsaken the land.” Some scholars emend the word to read “ceased to labor.”

<sup>40</sup> LXX: “become feeble.”

<sup>41</sup> Literally: “Sheol.”

<sup>42</sup> Cf.: ANET: p. 66a.

<sup>43</sup> LXX: “dung hill.”

<sup>44</sup> The Dead Sea Scroll adds: “he grants the vow of the one who vows and blesses the vow of the just.”

- 9       ”He will safely guard the feet of the faithful,  
          but the wicked will be cut off in darkness.<sup>45</sup>  
          (It is not by one’s own might that prosperity comes.)
- 10       ”Those who oppose the Lord will be shattered,  
          for he will thunder against them in the heavens.<sup>46</sup>  
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;  
          he will empower his king  
          and exalt the power of his anointed.”<sup>47</sup>

*C. Samuel and the Sons of Eli 2:11 - 20*

11 Then Elkanah went to his home in Ramah. The boy ministered to the Lord under the guidance of the priest, Eli.

12 The sons of the priest, Eli, were scoundrels,<sup>48</sup> who had no regard for the Lord,  
13 nor any regard for the functions of a priest with the people<sup>49</sup> when the people offered sacrifices. The priest would come when the meat was boiling, having a three pronged fork in his hand,<sup>50</sup> 14 and would plunge it into the pan, kettle, cauldron or pot, and whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself.<sup>51</sup> That is how it was done to all the Israelites who offered sacrifices in Shiloh. 15 Moreover, before the fat began to burn the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who was offering the sacrifice, ‘Give me the roast for the priest for he will not accept boiled meat from you, only raw!’ 16 If the man said, ‘Let the fat burn first,<sup>52</sup> then you can help yourself to as much as you desire,’ the priest’s servant would demand: ‘No! You must give it now. If you do not give it I will take it by force!’ 17 The sin of these young men was very great in the sight of the Lord for they treated the sacrificial offering of meat to the Lord with contempt.<sup>53</sup>

18 While Samuel was ministering before the Lord he wore a linen ephod.<sup>54</sup> 19 His mother made him a little robe<sup>55</sup> bringing a new one each year<sup>56</sup> when she came to the

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<sup>45</sup> The LXX has: “He will grant the petitions of those who pray, bless those who are righteous, for a person cannot prevail simply by strength.”

<sup>46</sup> MFT: “against him he will.” NEB: “When the High God thunders out of heaven.”

<sup>47</sup> The LXX adds: “The Lord will weaken his adversaries. The Lord is holy. The wise man need not boast in his wisdom, nor is the mighty man to boast of his strength. The rich man is not to boast of his wealth, but let everyone who boasts understand and know the Lord and carry out justice, for the Lord rules with judgment and justice in the midst of the earth. The Lord has gone up to the heavens. He has thundered! He will even judge the far reaches of the earth and give strength to rulers. He will exalt the power of the Anointed One. (Χριστος)” A portion of Hannah’s song was fulfilled for her son anointed the king who would be the first ruler of Israel. The ultimate ruler – the eternal king is the Messiah.

<sup>48</sup> Literally: “sons of Belial.” MFT: “depraved creatures. They cared nothing for the Eternal, nor for the regular duties of the priest.” Two offenses prevailed at this time. 1. The priests were not trustworthy. 2. God was set aside and sacrifices became the source of people’s feasting.

<sup>49</sup> LXX: “They had no regard for the Lord; and no regard for the rightful duties of the priest for the people.” These ‘rightful duties of the priests’ are laid out in Deuteronomy 18 and Leviticus 7.

<sup>50</sup> LXX: “a flesh hook having three tines in his hand.”

<sup>51</sup> So: LXX, Targum, Syriac and Vulgate. Hebrew: “with it.”

<sup>52</sup> Literally: “offer up the smoke first.”

<sup>53</sup> TAN: “impudently disrespectful.”

<sup>54</sup> An ephod was a linen apron like covering that was worn by those who ministered to the Lord in the Tabernacle.

house of the Lord with her husband for their annual sacrifice. <sup>20</sup> At that time Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying: “May the Lord grant you children by this woman in return for what she has lent to the Lord.” <sup>57</sup> After that they would return home.

<sup>21</sup> The Lord was gracious to Hannah <sup>58</sup> and she became the mother of three sons and two daughters. The boy, Samuel, grew in the presence of the Lord.

<sup>22</sup> Eli was very old and heard all that his sons were doing to the people of Israel when they came to sacrifice. [They seduced the young women who assisted at the entrance to the Tabernacle.] <sup>59</sup> <sup>23</sup> He spoke to them, saying, “Why do you do such things? I hear about all the things you do to all the people. <sup>60</sup> <sup>24</sup> My sons, it is not a good report that I receive and that report is spread around by the people! <sup>25</sup> If a man sins against another man God will mediate for him. If a man sins against the Lord who is there to intercede for him?” They, however did not listen to their father’s words for it was the will of the Lord to have them die. <sup>61</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The boy Samuel continued to grow <sup>62</sup> in stature and in favor with the Lord and with people (*or, in esteem and favor with both the Lord and the people*).

*D. The Doom of Eli’s House 2:27 – 36* <sup>63</sup>

<sup>27</sup> A man of God came to Eli and said, “The Lord declares: I revealed myself to your ancestor when he lived in Egypt and was the subject of Pharaoh. <sup>28</sup> I selected him because from among all the tribes of Israel he was the one to be a priest and to go up to my altar and burn incense, wearing the Ephod before me <sup>64</sup> and I gave your father all my sacrifices and my offerings which I commanded and now you honor yourselves by fattening yourselves with the choicest parts of each and every offering that is offered by the people of Israel. <sup>29</sup> Why then do you look so greedily at (*or, treat with scorn*) <sup>65</sup> the sacrifices and offerings which were commanded by me that they might be your source of fattening yourselves with the choicest portions of these sacrifices made by my people, Israel? <sup>30</sup> Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: I promised that your house and that of your father would continue before me for ever, but, I, the Lord declare: That will not take place. Those who honor me I will honor. Those who spurn me will be dishonored. <sup>31</sup> Be assured that the days are coming when your strength and that of your father’s house will vanish and there will not be any aged persons in your family! <sup>66</sup> <sup>32</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> LXX: “jacket.”

<sup>56</sup> Literally: “days to days.”

<sup>57</sup> Literally: “the one asked for who was lent.” NEB: “The Lord grant you children by that woman in place of the one for which you asked him (*or, you lent him*).”

<sup>58</sup> Dead Sea Scroll: “The Lord took notice of Hannah.” A suitable translation might be: “the Lord showed his concern for Hannah and she conceived...”

<sup>59</sup> This was possibly inserted as an explanatory gloss.

<sup>60</sup> LXX has “the Lord.”

<sup>61</sup> TEV: “If a man sins against another man, God can defend him, but who can defend a man who sins against him?”

<sup>62</sup> Literally: “be growing in both good and good.”

<sup>63</sup> This passage is thought by some scholars to be a later interpolation.

<sup>64</sup> This ephod was different from the one the boy Samuel wore. To wear this ephod said that the wearer was ready to receive the Lord’s oracles.

<sup>65</sup> This phrase might be translated: “why do you look so grudgingly at the sacrifices.” “Treat with scorn” might be considered to be a more accurate translation of the Hebrew. The verse is slightly emended in the translation, based on the LXX.

<sup>66</sup> The Hebrew is obscure.

Then with distress you will look enviously at all the prosperity which will be granted by the Lord, but there will never be any persons who attain old age in your family. <sup>33</sup> Any one who is spared as a priest will wail, <sup>67</sup> being grieved to his innermost being, and all who are to be born into your family will be put to death with the sword. <sup>68</sup> <sup>34</sup> Concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, they will both die on the same day. (This is a sign for you!) <sup>35</sup> I will provide <sup>69</sup> a faithful priest for myself who will do things in accordance with the desires of my heart and mind, and I will build him a house in which he will go in and out as he ministers before my anointed forever. <sup>36</sup> However, if there is anyone left in your family, he will come and grovel before this new priest for a piece of silver or for a loaf of bread, and will say, ‘I beg of you, appoint me to some priestly position so I might receive a bite to eat and a room in which I can eat it!’” <sup>70</sup>

<CHAPTER 3>

*e. The Call of Samuel 3:1 – 4:1b*

<sup>1</sup> The boy Samuel ministered to the Lord under the direction of Eli. The word of the Lord was rarely <sup>71</sup> received in those days and visions were infrequent. <sup>72</sup>

<sup>2</sup> At that time the eyesight of Eli was failing to the point that he could barely see, and he was lying down in his usual place. <sup>3</sup> The lamp of God had not yet gone out, <sup>73</sup> and Samuel was lying within the house of the Lord <sup>74</sup> where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> It was then that the Lord called, “Samuel, Samuel.” Samuel replied, “I’m here.” <sup>5</sup> and ran to Eli, saying, “I’m here. You called me.” But Eli replied, “I didn’t call, lie down again.” So Samuel went back and lay down. <sup>6</sup> The Lord called again: “Samuel.” Samuel got up and ran to Eli, saying: “I’m here. You called me.” Eli again replied, “I didn’t call, lie down again.” <sup>7</sup> (Now Samuel had not yet experienced the Lord and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup> The Lord called Samuel the third time. Samuel again got up and ran to Eli, saying, “I’m here. You called me.” It was then that Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy.) <sup>9</sup> Eli told Samuel, “Go lie down and if you hear that call again say, “Speak Lord, your servant hears.” <sup>75</sup> Then Samuel went back and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord came and was in his house and called exactly as he had done previously. <sup>76</sup> “Samuel, Samuel” and Samuel replied, “Speak for your servant hears.” <sup>11</sup> It was then that the Lord said, “Be assured that I am about to do something in Israel which will stun everyone who hears of it. <sup>12</sup> When that happens I will fulfill <sup>77</sup> all that I have

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<sup>67</sup> Literally: “weep out his eyes.”

<sup>68</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew is unclear.

<sup>69</sup> Literally: “raise up.”

<sup>70</sup> NASB: “please assign me to one of the priestly offices so that I might eat a piece of bread.”

<sup>71</sup> Literally: “precious.” “Uncommon” might be a suitable translation.

<sup>72</sup> Literally: “no vision spread abroad frequently.”

<sup>73</sup> This ‘lamp of God’ was filled with sufficient oil that it would burn until dawn so this must have occurred toward morning. LXX: “the lamp of the burning before it was trimmed.”

<sup>74</sup> Literally: “temple.” The temple had not yet been built. The building was still officially the ‘Tabernacle.’

<sup>75</sup> There is no hint as to how old Samuel was. The Hebrew word for “boy” can mean a person up to the age of 40 years, but in this instance he was still a lad. Josephus in Antiquities V 10 4 says Samuel was 12 years old when he received the call of God.

<sup>76</sup> LXX: “once and once.”

<sup>77</sup> Cf.: I Samuel 2:27 – 36.



spoken against Eli concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup> I will tell him <sup>78</sup> that I am about to punish his family for ever for the evils of which he was aware, because of his sons who were contemptible (*or, blasphemous*) toward God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup> Because of this I hereby vow that Eli, because of the evils of his sons, will be punished and no sacrifice or offering will ever provide expiation.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel lay until morning <sup>79</sup> and upon rising opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was fearful about telling Eli about the vision. <sup>16</sup> Eli called to Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son,” and Samuel replied, “Here I am.” <sup>17</sup> Eli asked, “What did the Lord tell you? Do not keep anything from me. May God do so and even more <sup>80</sup> if you hide even a small portion of what the Lord had said from me.” <sup>18</sup> Then Samuel revealed everything the Lord had said and did not hide anything from Eli. Eli said, “It is the Lord! He can do whatever he deems is good.”

<sup>19</sup> Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and none of the predictions was unfulfilled. <sup>81</sup> <sup>20</sup> The entire nation of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba realized that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> The Lord appeared again in Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh speaking the word of the Lord. **4** <sup>1</sup> The word of the Lord was revealed to all of Israel through Samuel.

#### <CHAPTER 4>

### *II. The Capture and Return of the Ark 4:1b – 7”1*

#### *A. Capture of the Ark 4:1b - 22*

Now <sup>82</sup> Israel mustered for war against the Philistines and encamped at Ebenezer, <sup>83</sup> and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. <sup>84</sup> <sup>2</sup> The Philistines formed their battle line against Israel and as the battle raged <sup>85</sup> Israel was defeated by the Philistines who killed almost four thousand men of Israel in the battle. <sup>3</sup> When the troops returned to their camp the elders of Israel said, “Why has the Lord caused us to flee before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Shiloh so that the Lord might come into our midst and save us from the power of our enemy.” <sup>4</sup> So the people sent word to Shiloh and the ark of the covenant of the Lord was brought, enthroned on the cherubim, <sup>86</sup> for the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas accompanied the ark, at the command of God.

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<sup>78</sup> One ancient translation has: “I have already told him.”

<sup>79</sup> LXX adds: “and he rose early in the morning.”

<sup>80</sup> This was the common formula of an oath in Samuel and Kings.

<sup>81</sup> Literally: “fell to the ground.”

<sup>82</sup> LXX adds: “in those days.”

<sup>83</sup> TAN: “Israel marched out to engage the Philistines in battle.” The Hebrew can also be read as: “The Philistines marched out...” Either is grammatically correct. The Philistines were not of Semitic origin. Scholars seem to feel they were a sea-faring people whose original homeland was Cyprus. They were often called “uncircumcised” thus referring to their non-Semitic origin. They apparently tried in ca. 120 BCE to invade Egypt but were repulsed and then settled on the area of land we now know as the Gaza Strip. They had advanced to the early stages of the “iron age” while the Hebrew people were still in the “bronze age.” This made warfare between the Hebrews and the Philistines quite difficult because of the difference in the instruments of warfare that were possessed. LXX: “And it came to pass that the Philistines gathered for war against Israel and Israel went out against them in battle.”

<sup>84</sup> The location of “Aphek” is unknown.

<sup>85</sup> LXX: “the battle turned against them.”

<sup>86</sup> So: LXX.

5 When the ark of the covenant of the Lord arrived in the camp all the people within the camp gave a tremendous shout <sup>87</sup> that resounded across the entire landscape. <sup>88</sup>  
6 When the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting they said, “What is the reason for such great shouting in the camp of the Israelites? What does it mean?” When they learned that the ark of the covenant of the Lord had come into the camp, <sup>7</sup> the Philistines were fearful, saying, “The gods have come into the camp.” <sup>89</sup> They also said, “Woe to us, <sup>90</sup> for nothing like this has ever happened before. <sup>8</sup> Woe to us! Who is able to deliver us from the power of their mighty gods! <sup>91</sup> These are the gods that struck the Egyptians with all sorts of plagues in the wilderness. <sup>9</sup> Take courage! Be manly, O Philistines, for if you are not bold you will become slaves of the Hebrews just as they have been our slaves. Be manly! Fight! <sup>92</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The Philistines fought and Israel was routed. Every man fled, going to his home, and there was a great slaughter. Thirty thousand infantry were killed. <sup>93</sup> <sup>11</sup> The ark of God was captured and Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli were killed.

<sup>12</sup> A man from Benjamin <sup>94</sup> broke ranks and ran from the battle. His clothing was torn and he had dirt on his head. <sup>95</sup> <sup>13</sup> When he arrived Eli was sitting on his seat at a spot where the road could be seen (*though his eyesight had failed*) for he was deeply upset because of the ark of God. When the man arrived at the city, telling the news of the battle the entire city wailed. <sup>14</sup> Upon hearing the wailing Eli asked, “What is this uproar?” The man then hurried to Eli and reported. <sup>15</sup> [Eli was ninety-eight years old, <sup>96</sup> and his eyesight had failed.] <sup>97</sup> <sup>16</sup> The man informed Eli, saying: “I am the one who has come from the battle. <sup>98</sup> I fled from the battle today (*to report*).” Eli said, “How did it go, my son?” <sup>17</sup> The messenger replied saying, “Israel has fled, having been routed by the Philistines and there has been a tremendous loss of life. Your sons, Hophni and Phinehas both have been killed. The ark of God has been captured.” <sup>18</sup> When the messenger mentioned the ark of God Eli fell backward off his seat which was located beside the gate; <sup>99</sup> and the fall broke his neck, resulting in his death. He was an old and very obese man. He had judged Israel <sup>100</sup> for forty years.

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<sup>87</sup> After all: reinforcements had arrived in the form of the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

<sup>88</sup> This was apparently the first time that the ark was taken into battle.

<sup>89</sup> LXX: “και ειτιον ουτοι οι θεοι ηκασιν .”

<sup>90</sup> LXX adds: “εξελου ημας κυριε.”

<sup>91</sup> The Philistines were polytheists and therefore used the word “god” in the plural form. CB: “these majestic gods.”

<sup>92</sup> LXX verses 8 & 9: <sup>8</sup>“Woe to us. O deliver us today for such a thing has never happened to us in the past. Who will assist us in escaping the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that struck the Egyptians in the wilderness with every plague. <sup>9</sup> Strengthen yourselves and behave like men, O Philistines, that you might not serve the Hebrews in the same way they have served us. Be men and fight.”

<sup>93</sup> Hopefully the number of those who were killed in these two battles were somewhat exaggerated.

<sup>94</sup> Rabbinic tradition says this man was Saul.

<sup>95</sup> These are signs of lament.

<sup>96</sup> LXX: “a son of ninety years.”

<sup>97</sup> Some scholars feel this is an explanatory gloss. Other scholars feel it is also a later interpolation.

<sup>98</sup> LXX: “παρεμβολης.”

<sup>99</sup> LXX: “εχορευεσ.” CB: “he fell backward through the gate opening.” NAB: “he fell backward from his chair into the gateway.”

<sup>100</sup> TAN: “the chieftain of Israel.”

19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas was pregnant, and was about to give birth to a child. When she heard that the ark of God was captured, that her father-in-law and her husband had died she doubled over <sup>101</sup> and gave birth, for her contractions had begun. <sup>20</sup> At the time when she was dying the women who were attending her said, “Do not be afraid! You have given birth to a son,” but she did not respond. <sup>102</sup> <sup>21</sup> [She named the child Ichabod, <sup>103</sup> saying: “The glory has departed from Israel,” because the ark of God had been captured and because of the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. <sup>22</sup> She said, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.] <sup>104</sup>

<CHAPTER 5>

*b. The Ark Among the Philistines 3:1 - 12*

<sup>1</sup> When the Philistines captured the ark of God they moved it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. <sup>105</sup> <sup>2</sup> Having captured the ark of God it was brought to the house (*or, temple*) of Dagon, <sup>106</sup> and placed alongside Dagon. <sup>3</sup> When the people of Ashdod returned to the house of Dagon in the morning they discovered that Dagon had fallen, face forward, in the presence of (*or, before*) <sup>107</sup> the ark of God. They therefore took Dagon and again placed it where it had been. <sup>108</sup> <sup>4</sup> Upon rising early the next morning they discovered that Dagon had again fallen face downward, <sup>109</sup> this time striking the threshold and his head and hands were severed, but the torso of Dagon was intact. <sup>110</sup> <sup>5</sup> (It is for this reason that everyone who enters the house (*or, temple*) of Dagon does not step on the threshold, not even now.) <sup>111</sup> <sup>6</sup> The hand of the Lord was heavy against the people of Ashdod and they became terrified. <sup>112</sup> The people of Ashdod were also afflicted with swollen places on their bodies. <sup>113</sup> <sup>7</sup> When the citizens of Ashdod realized these conditions they said, “The ark of the Lord must not remain with us. The hand of the Lord is heavy not only on us but

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<sup>101</sup> NASB: “she knelt down.” BV: “she collapsed and gave birth.”

<sup>102</sup> The text of verses 20 – 22 seem to be in disorder. If she was already unconscious she would be unable to name the child. There seem to be duplicate explanations of the naming of the child. Translators have tried to reconcile this in a variety of ways.

<sup>103</sup> The name means “no glory.” NEB: “then they named the boy Ichabod.”

<sup>104</sup> Some scholars feel verses 21 – 22 are a later interpolation.

<sup>105</sup> This is modern Esdod. It was located on the main road half way between Joppa and Gaza. It was perhaps the most important of the Philistine cities.

<sup>106</sup> In the past Dagon was considered to be a fish god. More recent studies find that Dagon was a vegetation deity. This is based on the Ras Shamra tablets which makes it clear that the root word means “grass.”

<sup>107</sup> LXX: “επε προσωπεν.”

<sup>108</sup> The LXX adds: “and the hand of the Lord was heavy on the Ashdodites and he attacked them in their secret parts.”

<sup>109</sup> Vulgate: “super faciem.”

<sup>110</sup> Hebrew unclear. NEB: “with his head and his hands broken off beside the platform. Only Dagon’s body remained on it.” JB: “only the trunk of Dagon was in its place.”

<sup>111</sup> There is a reference to “jumping over the threshold” in Zephaniah 1:9.

<sup>112</sup> Literally: “brought to desolation.”

<sup>113</sup> CEV in a footnote: “He struck them with bubonic plague.” The KJV translates the word as “hemorrhoids.” The swelling was the mark of having bubonic plague. Swollen areas first appear in the groin area and at the armpits as well as at the sides of the neck. The LXX also makes mention of an invasion of rats (*or mice, vermin*). LXX adds: “He brought evil upon them that broke out...and mice (*or, rats*) suddenly were plentiful in their country and there were many deaths in the city.” NEB: “their territory swarmed with rats. There was death and destruction all though the city.”

also on our god, Dagon.”<sup>8</sup> They summoned all the kings (*of the Philistian cities*)<sup>114</sup> and all the lords of the Philistines, and said, “What can we do with this ark of the Lord, the God of Israel?” The answer was: “Let the ark of the Lord the God of Israel be brought to Gath.”<sup>115</sup> The result was that the ark of the Lord, the god of Israel was brought to Gath.<sup>9</sup> Upon the arrival of the ark in the city of Gath the hand of the Lord was heavy against the city and young and old were inflicted with great pain and swellings appeared.<sup>116</sup><sup>10</sup> This resulted in the people of Gath sending the ark of the Lord, to Ekron. The people of Ekron shouted: “They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us to kill us and to kill the entire population.”<sup>11</sup> Word was sent out to all the lords of the Philistines demanding that they come together and they decided, “Send the ark of the God of Israel that it might return to its rightful place so it will not kill any more of our people.” The panic<sup>117</sup> of death broke out in the cities and countryside. The hand of the Lord was truly very heavy on the people.<sup>12</sup> Even those who did not die were stricken with swelling and the people were all crying out to heaven (*to their gods*).

#### <CHAPTER 6>

##### *c. Return of the Ark 6:1 – 7:1*

<sup>1</sup> The ark of the Lord remained in the land<sup>118</sup> of the Philistines for seven months.<sup>119</sup><sup>2</sup> The Philistines called for their priests and diviners (*or, fortune tellers, soothsayers*) and asked, “What are we to do with the ark of the Lord?”<sup>120</sup> Tell us how we are to send it back to where it should be.”<sup>3</sup> They responded, “If you send the ark of the God of Israel away by all means do not send it empty for it must be returned with an indemnity (*or, guilt offering*)<sup>121</sup> for it is only then that you will be restored<sup>122</sup> to favor and will no longer need to fear but will be assured that his hand will not continue to be against you.”<sup>123</sup><sup>4</sup> The reply was, “What is the indemnity (*or, guilt offering*) which should be paid to him?” They answered, “Five golden models of the tumors<sup>124</sup> and five golden rats, in accordance with the number of lords of the Philistines since the plague has been the same in each of the regions of the land.<sup>5</sup> Therefore you must make images of your tumors (*or, swellings*)<sup>125</sup> and of the rats that ravaged the countryside and give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel.<sup>126</sup> Possibly he will ease his hand against you and your people, your gods and your land.<sup>6</sup> Why should you harden your hearts as Pharaoh did after he had spoken to them? He did not let them go, yet they departed.<sup>7</sup> Now then: prepare a new cart and get two first calf heifers (*i.e. who have just had their first calves*) that have never been

<sup>114</sup> MFT: “tyrants.”

<sup>115</sup> Gath is modern Tell-es-Sahyed. It was located about 12 miles from Ashdod. In the Dead Sea Scroll this sentence begins with “He said to me.”

<sup>116</sup> The LXX adds: “in their secret parts and the Gathites made images of these swellings which they had.”

<sup>117</sup> JB: “a mortal panic.”

<sup>118</sup> Literally: “field.”

<sup>119</sup> The LXX adds: “and their land was invaded by swarms of rats.” This is also found in verses 4, 5 & 18

<sup>120</sup> MFT: “what is the reparation we must make to him?”

<sup>121</sup> REB: “by way of compensation.” NEB: “by way of indemnity.”

<sup>122</sup> So: Dead Sea Scroll. Hebrew literally: “it will be known to you.”

<sup>123</sup> Hebrew uncertain. TAN footnote: “and you will know why his hand would not turn from you.”

<sup>124</sup> The swellings that take place with bubonic plague.

<sup>125</sup> LXX: “καὶ μύς χρυσσοῦς ἀμοιβῶν.”

<sup>126</sup> To admit to the power of the Lord, God of Israel is equivalent to a confession of sin.

yoked, but remove their calves from them, penning them in a nearby barn. <sup>8</sup> Then place the ark of the Lord on the cart, and place a box next to the ark, <sup>127</sup> which contains the golden figures which you are sending as an indemnity (*or, guilt offering*) and send it away. Let it go. <sup>9</sup> Watch to see if it will go toward its own land, to Beth-shemesh, for if that happens we will know that it is he who has caused us to experience great harm. However, if it does not go directly toward Israel we will know that this harm we have experienced was not from his hand but simply something that happened by chance.”

<sup>10</sup> The men did as they were told. They selected two first calf heifers, yoked them, and meanwhile took their calves from them and placed them in their stall. <sup>11</sup> They placed the ark of the Lord on the cart along with the golden figures of the rats and the tumors. <sup>12</sup> The cows went straight along the road toward Beth-shemesh, lowing as they went. They did not veer to the right or to the left. The Philistines followed them as far as the border near Beth-shemesh. <sup>13</sup> The people of Beth-shemesh were harvesting wheat <sup>128</sup> in the valley and when they looked up they saw the ark and rejoiced to see it. <sup>129</sup> <sup>14</sup> The cart went into the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh and stopped there next to a huge stone (*that could be used as an altar*) and the people split up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering <sup>130</sup> to the Lord. <sup>15</sup> [The Levites had taken the ark of the Lord from the cart along with the box in which were the golden figures and set these on the great stone. The men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to the Lord on that day.] <sup>131</sup> <sup>16</sup> When the five lords of the Philistines had witnessed this they returned to Ekron.

<sup>17</sup> [These are the golden tumors which were sent by the Philistines as an indemnity (*or, guilt offering*) to the Lord: one from Ashdod; one from Gaza; one from Ashkelon; one from Gath] and one from Ekron. <sup>18</sup> In addition there were the golden rats according to the number of cities of the Philistines that were ruled by the five lords: both fortified as well as open settlements.] <sup>132</sup> The great stone beside which the ark of the Lord was placed has been a witness to this day of what had taken place in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh. <sup>19</sup> [*The Lord*] put some of the people of Beth-shemesh to death because they looked <sup>133</sup> into the ark of the Lord <sup>134</sup> and seventy people, [*five thousand men*] were killed. <sup>135</sup> The people mourned because the Lord had made a great slaughter among the people. <sup>20</sup> The men of Beth-shemesh said, “Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? Who can care for him (*i.e. the ark*)?” <sup>21</sup> They sent a messenger to the people who lived in Kereath –Jearum saying, “The Philistines have returned the ark of the Lord. Come and get it.” **7** <sup>1</sup> The men of Kireath-jearim came and took the ark of the Lord and

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<sup>127</sup> The Hebrew has a word that is not known nor understood. It is translated here as “box.”

<sup>128</sup> This implies that the time was May / June.

<sup>129</sup> The LXX has: “they went to meet it.”

<sup>130</sup> The cart had been used for a sacred purpose. It was now ready for sacred use, as wood to be used for the fire for a burnt offering.

<sup>131</sup> Some scholars feel this verse is a later interpolation and possibly an explanatory gloss.

<sup>132</sup> Scholars feel this is a later interpolation. The verse implies that there were more than 5 rats, as had been stated earlier in the chapter.

<sup>133</sup> The LXX has: “greeted.”

<sup>134</sup> Literally: “He killed some of the people of Beth-shemesh because they looked into the ark of the Lord and he killed 70 men: fifty thousand.” LXX: “the sons of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the men of Beth-shemesh when they looked upon the ark of the Lord and he killed 70 men there.”

<sup>135</sup> The Hebrew is obviously not clear.

brought it to the house of Abimelech, located on a hill, and they consecrated his son, Eleazar<sup>136</sup> to have charge of the ark of the Lord.

<CHAPTER 7>

iii. *The Institution of the Monarchy 7:2 – 12:25*

<sup>2</sup> From that time on the ark remained at Kiriath-jearim. [A long time passed --- some twenty years,]<sup>137</sup> and all of Israel longed to follow the Lord.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>3</sup> (Then Samuel spoke to the entire house of Israel: “If you turn to the Lord successfully you will banish all the foreign gods and the Asherah<sup>139</sup> from your midst and solely serve the Lord with your whole heart, he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.” <sup>4</sup> This resulted in Israel putting away the worship of Ba’al and the Asherah and they only served the Lord.)

<sup>5</sup> Then Samuel said, “Gather all the people of Israel at Mizpah<sup>140</sup> and I will pray to the Lord on your behalf.” <sup>6</sup> They gathered at Mizpah and Samuel drew some water [from a well] and poured it out before the Lord,<sup>141</sup> saying: “We have sinned against the Lord.” (It was here in Mizpah that Samuel judged the people of Israel.) <sup>7</sup> When the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines advanced their armies against Israel. The people of Israel, learning of this advancement of the Philistine army were filled with fear. <sup>8</sup> The people of Israel said to Samuel, “Do not stop praying<sup>142</sup> to the Lord our God on our behalf. Pray that he might save us from the hand of the Philistines.” <sup>9</sup> Samuel took an un-weaned lamb. Offering it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord, Samuel called out [*in prayer*] to the God of Israel. The Lord answered Samuel! <sup>10</sup> While Samuel was offering up the burnt offering the Philistines moved near enough to attack Israel but the Lord thundered with a powerful voice against the Philistines at that moment resulting in the Philistines becoming totally confused and the loud noise induced panic on the part of the Philistines and their army was routed by the Israelites.<sup>143</sup> <sup>11</sup> The men of Israel sallied forth from Mizpah and pursued them, harrying them until they were beyond Beth-car. <sup>12</sup> Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Jeshanah<sup>144</sup> and called its name Ebenezer<sup>145</sup> for he said, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”<sup>146</sup> <sup>13</sup> The Philistines were subdued and did not

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<sup>136</sup> Eleazar was consecrated which apparently protected him from any possible danger as he carried out his duties with the ark of the Lord which was a ‘holy object’. He apparently was not of the priestly / Levitic order but had a special dispensation to care for the ark.

<sup>137</sup> Scholars feel this is a later explanatory gloss.

<sup>138</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. TAN: “yearned after the Lord.” MFT: “turned after the Eternal.” REB: “There was a movement throughout Israel to follow the Lord.”

<sup>139</sup> Some scholars feel “and the Asherah” is a later interpolation. Ba’al and Asherah were the dominant gods that were followed when the people of Israel were not faithful to the Lord.

<sup>140</sup> The modern name of Mizpah is Nebr-Samuil which is about 5 miles north of Jerusalem.

<sup>141</sup> This was a symbolic act of penitence. This is the only reference to pouring out water in the Hebrew scriptures. David poured out water during his time of warfare with Saul but the significance was different.

<sup>142</sup> Literally: “crying out.”

<sup>143</sup> This circumstance is generally described as a “theophany.” Cf.: II Samuel 22:14 – 15. These theophanies seem to appear when attacks in battle are about to take place. Cf. Judges 4:15; 5:20 – 21; Joshua 10:11 – 14.

<sup>144</sup> TAN: “Shen.” LXX: “της παλαιδς.”

<sup>145</sup> The name means, “stone of help.”

<sup>146</sup> A slight emendation would read, “This is a witness that the Lord has helped us.”

attempt invading the territory of Israel. The Lord dealt severely with the Philistines during the reign of Saul. <sup>14</sup> The cities that had been taken by the Philistines were restored to Israel, these ranging from Ekron to Gath and Israel reestablished freedom in the territory that had been ruled by the Philistines. (There also was peace between Israel and the Amorites.)

<sup>15</sup> Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. <sup>147</sup> <sup>16</sup> He traveled a circuit year after year from Bethel to Gilgal and to Mizpah <sup>148</sup> and he judged Israel in all these locations. <sup>149</sup> <sup>17</sup> He would then return to Ramah for his house was located there. He also administered justice to Israel there. Samuel also built an altar to the Lord at Ramah.

## <CHAPTER 8>

### *b. Demand for a King 8:1 – 22*

<sup>1</sup> When Samuel became old he appointed his sons to be the judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup> His oldest son was Joel, his second son was Abijah. These became judges <sup>150</sup> in Beer-sheba. <sup>3</sup> His sons were not like their father for they were intent on obtaining illicit gain, <sup>151</sup> accepting bribes and thereby perverting justice.

<sup>4</sup> At that point the elders (*or, family leaders*) of Israel gathered and came to Samuel at Ramah, <sup>5</sup> to tell him, “Let it be known to you that your sons do not carry out their responsibilities as you had done. We now demand that you appoint a king for us so we can be ruled as all the other nations are.” <sup>6</sup> This greatly displeased Samuel when they said, ‘We now demand that you appoint a king to rule’ so Samuel prayed to the Lord. <sup>7</sup> The Lord told Samuel, “Pay attention to the voice of the people in everything that they demand of you for they have not rejected you, they have rejected me from ruling over them with their demand for a king. <sup>8</sup> Recall all the deeds they have done to me <sup>152</sup> from the time I brought them up out of the land of Egypt to this day, by forsaking me and serving other gods as they do now. <sup>9</sup> Listen to them! Consider their demand but solemnly warn <sup>153</sup> them by describing what having a king will entail.” <sup>154</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Then Samuel reported to the people, who were demanding that he provide them with a king, all that the Lord had said. <sup>11</sup> He said, “This will be the sort of king who will rule over you! The custom <sup>155</sup> of the king who will rule over you will include: He will require forced labor from your sons, select people as rulers over you, conscript men for military service: as charioteers and cavalry, along with appointing some as personal bodyguards. <sup>156</sup> <sup>12</sup> He will seize your best fields for himself, designate people as commanders over thousands and commanders over fifties, and demand that others plow

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<sup>147</sup> Samuel is usually considered as the last judge of Israel.

<sup>148</sup> For Samuel to judge in these locations speaks of the wide influence he had over the people during the years of his being a judge.

<sup>149</sup> LXX: “τοις ηγιασμενοις.”

<sup>150</sup> The Hebrew word could be translated as “arm commander” or “religious leader” as well as “judge.”

<sup>151</sup> TAN: “were bent on gain.” TEV: “they were interested in making money, so they accepted bribes and did not decide cases honestly.” CB: “grasping for gain by methods of violence, receiving bribes, and perverting justice.”

<sup>152</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew omits “to me.”

<sup>153</sup> The Hebrew word could properly be translated as “terrify them.”

<sup>154</sup> LXX: “report to them the judgment of the king.” Some scholars insert 10:17 – 19 here.

<sup>155</sup> The Hebrew word “*mispat*” describes the constitutional right of the king. The same word is used to describe ceremonies or appropriate worship.

<sup>156</sup> Literally: “to run before his chariot.”

his ground,<sup>157</sup> reap his harvests, make his implements of war, and the gear for his chariots. <sup>13</sup> He will conscript your daughters to be his perfumers, cooks and bakers. <sup>14</sup> He will take your best fields, vineyards and olive groves, giving them to his courtiers. <sup>158</sup> <sup>15</sup> He will requisition one tenth of your grain harvest and your vintage, giving it to his officers and courtiers. <sup>16</sup> He will take your male and female servants for himself, the best of your cattle,<sup>159</sup> and your donkeys and will use them for his work. <sup>160</sup> <sup>17</sup> He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you will become enslaved. <sup>18</sup> When that takes place you will cry out because of the king you have chosen to rule over you. Remember: on the day you cry out, the Lord will not answer you.”

<sup>19</sup> The people refused to listen to Samuel’s words and said, “No! <sup>161</sup> We want to have a king over us. <sup>20</sup> Then we will be like our neighbors and our king will govern <sup>162</sup> us and lead the attack when there is war.” <sup>21</sup> When Samuel heard what the people had said, he repeated this to the Lord. <sup>22</sup> The Lord told Samuel, “Heed their demands and crown a king for them.” <sup>163</sup> Samuel then spoke to the assembled people of Israel, “Each of you return to your own city.” <sup>164</sup>

#### <CHAPTER 9>

##### *C. The Anointing of Samuel 9:1 - 10:16*

<sup>1</sup> There was a man from the tribe of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah: a Benjaminite, a wealthy man, <sup>165</sup> <sup>2</sup> who had a son <sup>166</sup> whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was no one among all the people of Israel who was more handsome than he and he was head and shoulders taller than anyone else. <sup>167</sup> <sup>3</sup> The donkeys that were owned by Kish, Saul’s father, had strayed and Kish told his son, “Take one of the servants with you and look for the donkeys.” <sup>4</sup> They <sup>168</sup> searched the hill country of Ephraim and the land of Shalishah but did not find them. They then looked in the land of Shaalim <sup>169</sup> and in the land of Benjamin but did not find them.

<sup>5</sup> When they came to the land of Zuph <sup>170</sup> Saul told his servant. “Let’s go back. I am afraid that my father has become more concerned about us by this time than he is about the donkeys.” <sup>6</sup> The servant, however, said, “Consider this: there is a man of God in this city. He is held in high esteem in Israel for everything that he says comes true. Let us

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<sup>157</sup> Literally: “to plow his plowing.”

<sup>158</sup> NEB: “lackeys.”

<sup>159</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew says: “young men.”

<sup>160</sup> LXX.; “και αποδεκατωσει.”

<sup>161</sup> LXX: “αυτω ουχι.”

<sup>162</sup> The Hebrew word is often translated as “judge.”

<sup>163</sup> Literally: “cause a king to reign for them.”

<sup>164</sup> Some scholars insert 10:19 – 24; 12:1 – 25; 19:25 – 27 here.

<sup>165</sup> TAN: “a man of substance.” NASB: “a mighty man of valor.”

<sup>166</sup> The Hebrew word used here, “*bahar*” might be translated as “a man in the prime of life” or, “not a young person.” As long as his father, Kish, was living Saul would be considered to be a young person.

<sup>167</sup> Literally: “who was tall from the shoulders up.” MFT: “He was a head taller.” LXX adds: “than the people of the land.”

<sup>168</sup> Literally in Hebrew: “he.”

<sup>169</sup> The lands of Shalishah and Shaalim are unknown. These were possibly local names.

<sup>170</sup> This was the original home of the father of Samuel.



go to him. It is possible that he already knows where the donkeys are.”<sup>171</sup> 7 Saul responded, “But, if we go to see the seer, what can we bring him? Our bread which we carried in our sacks is all eaten, we have nothing to present to the seer. What do we have that we might give him?”<sup>172</sup> 8 His servant then said, “I have brought along my quarter shekel,<sup>173</sup> which can be given to the seer to tell us our way.” 9 (In the past in Israel when a person went to make an inquiry of God it would be said, “Come, let us go to the seer,” for in those days the prophet was called a seer.)<sup>174</sup> 10 Saul replied, “Well said! Let’s go see the seer,” so they entered into the city where the man of God lived.

11 As they entered the city, going up the hill,<sup>175</sup> they met several young girls who were coming out to draw water, and they asked, “Is the seer here?” 12 The girls<sup>176</sup> answered, “Yes he is, in fact, he is just ahead of you.”<sup>177</sup> He has just come back into the city<sup>178</sup> because he is making a sacrifice today at the high place (*or, the place where sacrifices were made*). 13 As soon as you enter the city you will be able to find him before he goes to the high place to eat<sup>179</sup> for the people will not go up ahead of him since he must bless the sacrifice. After that those who are invited will eat. Now go, for you must meet him immediately.” 14 They went up into the city and just as they were entering the city they saw Samuel coming toward them on his way to the high place.

15 On the previous day the Lord had revealed to Samuel,<sup>16</sup> “Tomorrow at this time I will send you man from the land of Benjamin and you will anoint him for he will deliver my people Israel, saving them from the Philistines, for I have seen<sup>180</sup> the affliction of my people<sup>181</sup> because their cry has reached me.” 17 When Samuel saw Saul the Lord told him, “Here is the man of whom I had spoken to you! He is the one who is to rule over my people.” 18 Saul then approached<sup>182</sup> Samuel at the gate and said, “Tell me, where is the house of the seer?” 19 Samuel answered Saul, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place for today you will eat with me, and in the morning I will tell you about everything you have on your mind. 20 Now concerning the donkeys that were lost, have no concern about them, they have been found. For whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for your entire parental family?”<sup>183</sup> 21 Saul answered, “Out of

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<sup>171</sup> Literally: “tell us about the journey on which we have set out.”

<sup>172</sup> That the man of God would expect payment is highly improbable. Saul no doubt was not thinking of paying but rather of expressing his appreciation with a gift.

<sup>173</sup> The amount would be 1/10<sup>th</sup> of an ounce of silver. The servant would not have been a slave but a servant who earned a wage since he was in possession of silver.

<sup>174</sup> This is surely an explanatory gloss. LXX: “εκαλει ο λαος.”

<sup>175</sup> This would be the place where the people of the city would gather.

<sup>176</sup> LXX: “virgins.”

<sup>177</sup> LXX: “κατα πρωτον δρων.”

<sup>178</sup> An emendation would read: “Hurry for he has just reached the gate.”

<sup>179</sup> At least portions of sacrifices were distributed to the people as food.

<sup>180</sup> The LXX adds: “την ταπεινοσιν.”

<sup>181</sup> LXX & Targum: “the plight of my people.” TAN: “their misery had come to me.” Cf: ANET p. 446b.

<sup>182</sup> LXX: “brought him near.”

<sup>183</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. Perhaps it is intentional as a reference to the promise of grandeur. Literally: “for you and all your father’s house.”

all of the tribes of Israel Benjamin is the least. My family is among the least of the clans (or, families)<sup>184</sup> of Benjamin. What causes you to speak to me in this way?”

<sup>22</sup> Then Samuel was accompanied by Saul and his servant, and he brought them to the hill and he gave Saul a place [of honor] at the head of the table of those who were invited. (These numbered about thirty persons.) <sup>23</sup> Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion I gave you and told you, ‘Put it aside.’” <sup>24</sup> The cook brought the leg and the upper portion<sup>185</sup> and placed this before Saul, and Samuel said, “See, what has been set aside is given to you. Eat because it was set aside for you.<sup>186</sup> so that you might eat with the priests.”

On that day Saul ate with the priests. <sup>25</sup> When they came down from the high place<sup>187</sup> they went into the city. [A bed was laid out for Saul<sup>188</sup> that he might sleep.]<sup>189</sup> <sup>26</sup> Then just as the day dawned<sup>190</sup> Samuel called to Saul who was sleeping on the roof, “Time to get up and I will send you on your way.” Then Saul got up and he and Samuel went out into the street together.

<sup>27</sup> As they were going toward the edge of the city Samuel said to Saul, “Tell your servant to go ahead, leading the way and when he has passed here we will pause for a while for there is something I must tell you for it is a message that has been decreed by God.”

#### <CHAPTER 10>

<sup>1</sup> Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on the head of Saul,<sup>191</sup> kissed him,<sup>192</sup> and said, “The Lord has anointed you to rule over the people of Israel, the people of the Lord, and you will<sup>193</sup> save them from the hands of their enemies who surround them. This will be an assuring sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be ruler over his heritage. <sup>2</sup> When you leave my presence today you will meet two men near Rachel’s tomb<sup>194</sup> in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah,<sup>195</sup> and they will tell you, “The donkeys you have been looking for have been found. Now your father is no longer concerned about the

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<sup>184</sup> LXX: “του μικπιστα ου σκηπτρου φυλης.” In Hebrew the word translated “clans” is plural.

<sup>185</sup> The Hebrew is obscure. The LXX has “the cook had boiled the shoulder.” TAN: “the thigh and what was on it.” Emended it could be: “the broad tail.” REB: “The whole haunch and leg and put it before Saul.”

<sup>186</sup> LXX: “given in preference of the bit you would otherwise have received.” The portion Saul received was the ‘priestly portion’ which was only given to highly honored people or the most important priests if there was no honored person present.

<sup>187</sup> LXX: “when morning dawned.”

<sup>188</sup> So: versions. Hebrew: “spoke with Saul.”

<sup>189</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>190</sup> So: versions.

<sup>191</sup> The LXX text is longer and seems generally to be preferred by translators. The addition includes: “I anoint you as ruler of his people, Israel, and you will govern the people of the Lord and deliver them from the hands of their foes round about. This is the sign that the Lord anoints you.” By omitting this from v. 1 you find the basic Hebrew text.

<sup>192</sup> In those days a kiss was generally given members of the family. This is to be understood as a ‘ceremonial’ kiss.

<sup>193</sup> MFT: “must.”

<sup>194</sup> This is not the “Rachel’s Tomb” which is between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The reference is concerning an older tomb which was near Bethel. The tomb near Bethlehem is based on a later gloss of a passage in Genesis.

<sup>195</sup> The exact location is unknown. Some scholars feel it is a corrupt text. The meaning is uncertain.

donkeys but is concerned about you, saying, ‘What will I do about my son?’”<sup>196</sup> <sup>3</sup> As you go further you will arrive at the oak trees (*or, terebinth*)<sup>197</sup> of Tabor. Then as you go further you will see three men who are on their way (*or, making a pilgrimage*) to worship God at Bethel. You will meet these three, one of whom is carrying three young [*goat*] kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and the third carrying a skin of wine. <sup>4</sup> They will greet you and present you with two loaves of bread which you must accept. <sup>5</sup> After that you will arrive at Gibeath-elohim<sup>198</sup> where there is a garrison<sup>199</sup> of Philistines and as you get near the city you will meet a band of prophets who are coming down from the high place (*or, the place of sacrificial worship*),<sup>200</sup> who are coming down [*making music*] with harp, tambourine, flute and lyre while they are prophesying.<sup>201</sup> <sup>6</sup> Then the spirit of the Lord will grip<sup>202</sup> you mightily and you will speak in ecstasy and there will be a change in your personality.<sup>203</sup> <sup>7</sup> When this occurs do everything you feel moved to do<sup>204</sup> for God is with you. <sup>8</sup> [You must go down to Gilgal before me and be assured that I will come to you as you offer burnt offerings along with sacrificial peace offerings. You must wait seven days at which time I will come to you and show you what you are to do.”]<sup>205</sup>

<sup>9</sup> When [*Saul*]<sup>206</sup> turned to leave Samuel God gave Saul a different outlook (*or attitude*)<sup>207</sup> and all the signs that had been given him were fulfilled. <sup>10</sup> When they came to Gibeah (*or, the hill*) there really was a band of prophets (*or, dervishes*) who met them and the spirit of God came on Saul in a powerful manner and he spun in ecstasy, having been filled with prophetic rapture in their presence. <sup>11</sup> When all those who had known him prior to this saw him prophesying among these prophets they said to one another, “What has happened<sup>208</sup> to the son of Kish? Is Saul one of the prophets?” <sup>12</sup> A person who lived there said, “Who is their father?” Because of this a proverb was spoken, saying, “Is Saul among the prophets?”<sup>209</sup> <sup>13</sup> When the ecstatic prophecy had passed he came to the high place.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Literally: “Your father has abandoned the matter of the donkeys.”

<sup>197</sup> NIV: “the great trees of Tabor.”

<sup>198</sup> The name means: “the hill of God.”

<sup>199</sup> Some scholars feel the word translated as “garrison” should be transliterated, for it is a name.

“Nashib,” but the meaning of which and location thereof would be meaningless. Most recent scholarship supports the translation: “garrison.” JB: “the Philistine pillar.” REB: “the hill of God where the Philistine governor lives.” TEV: “where there is a Philistine camp.”

<sup>200</sup> LXX: “the place of justice.”

<sup>201</sup> REB: “filled with prophetic rapture.” TAN: “speaking in ecstasy.” TEV: “dancing and shouting.”

<sup>202</sup> Literally: “pile up on you” or “inspire you.” CEV: “the spirit of the Lord will take control of you. You will become a different person and you will shout prophecies right along with them.”

<sup>203</sup> Literally: “be a different person.” LB: “and you will feel and act as a different person.”

<sup>204</sup> CB: “do as the occasion demands.”

<sup>205</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>206</sup> Literally: “he.”

<sup>207</sup> Literally: “heart.”

<sup>208</sup> Literally: “come over.”

<sup>209</sup> CEV: “Why not? One of them answered, ‘Saul has as much right to be a prophet as anyone else.’

That’s why everyone started saying, ‘How can Saul be a prophet?’ For practical purposes the adage was saying: ‘Isn’t Saul like a fish out of water in the company of the prophets?’ However, as time went on it seems to have taken on the meaning: ‘God came mightily on Saul and he too was able to prophecy among them.’

<sup>210</sup> Literally: “he came to the shrine.” NRSV: “when his prophetic frenzy ended he went home.” LXX: “εις τον βουονον.”

14 Saul's uncle said, "Where did you go?" Saul replied, "To look for the donkeys, and when we realized that we were unable to find them we went to Samuel." 15 Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what Samuel told you." 16 Saul then told his uncle, "He told us emphatically that the donkeys had been found." (He, however, did not say anything about what Samuel had said to him about the matter of the kingdom.)

*D. Election of Saul by Lort 10:17 - 27*

17 Samuel called the people together in the presence of the Lord at Mizpah. 211 18 Samuel told the people of Israel "The Lord, the God of Israel declares: I brought Israel out of Egypt and thus I delivered you from the power of the Egyptians 212 and from their land as well as from all those who were oppressing you. 19 Today you have rejected your God who saves (*or, has saved*) you from all your calamities and distresses and yet you have said, 'No! 213 Establish a king to rule over us.' Now therefore – present yourselves before the Lord, tribe by tribe, and clan by clan." 214

20 Then Samuel brought all the tribes before him and the tribe of Benjamin was selected by lot. 21 He then brought the tribe of Benjamin before him by family (*or, clan*) and the family (*or, clan*) of the Matrites 215 was selected by lot. Finally Saul, the son of Kish was selected. but when they looked for him he was not found. 22 As a result they again inquired of the Lord, "Did that man even come?" and the Lord said, "Just look! He has hidden himself in the midst of the baggage." 216 23 Then they ran to the baggage to find Saul and bring him to the people. He stood head and shoulders taller than anyone else. 24 Samuel spoke to the people, saying: "You see before you the one chosen by the Lord There is no one who can be compared with him among the populace." All the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

25 Samuel explained all the rights and duties of a king to the people, and recorded this information on a scroll (*or, book*) 217 and laid the scroll before the Lord (*or, placed in in the house of the Lord*). Then Samuel and all the people returned to their own homes. 218 26 Saul also went to his home at Gibeah and some outstanding men who could be trusted accompanied him. 27 There were some scoundrels 219 who said, "How can this fellow save us?" These despised Saul and did not bring him any gift, but Saul was silent concerning this.

*The following is found in the LXX but not in the Hebrew text.*

[Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites had been grievously oppressing the Gadites and the Reubenites. He gouged out the right eye of each of them and would not allow Israel to have a leader but subdued them. No one was left of the Israelites on the other side of the Jordan who had not had his right eye gouged out by Nahash, king of the

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211 Many scholars have attempted to reconcile what seems to be an early and a later source to have the story flow smoothly, not having the events of the passage out of historical order. There has been no agreement on this which is universally acceptable. An example of such an attempt is: inserting verses 17 - 19 after 8:6.

212 LXX: "φύραω βασιλευς."

213 Several Hebrew Mss have "to him" in place of "No."

214 Some scholars insert the verses 19 – 24 after 8:22.

215 LXX: "man by man."

216 Verses 22 – 24 are fraught with difficulties concerning the progression of the events.

217 An alternate translation might be: "the nature of the kingdom and entered it all on a scroll." JB: the royal constitution to the people." Some scholars insert verses 22 – 25 after 12:25.

218 Cf.: ANET p. 446d.

219 Literally: "sons of Belial."

Ammonites. However, there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the power of the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead.] <sup>220</sup>

<CHAPTER 11>

E. The Relief of Jebesh-gilead 11:1 - 15

<sup>1</sup> Then Nahash the Ammonite moved his army to besiege Jabesh-gilead, and the men of Jabesh sent a message to Nahash: “Make a treaty with us and we will be your servants.” <sup>2</sup> Nahash the Ammonite replied, “This is the condition on which I will make a treaty with you: I will gouge out the right eye of everyone, thus putting disgrace on (or, causing humiliation for) Israel.” <sup>221</sup><sup>3</sup> The elders of Jabish replied, “Give us seven days of grace that we might send messages through out the territory of Israel. Then if there is no one willing to provide help for us we will surrender to you.” <sup>4</sup> When the messenger came to Gibeah, where Saul lived, the matter was reported <sup>222</sup> and all the people lamented loudly.

<sup>5</sup> Saul was just returning from the field behind the oxen <sup>223</sup> and he said, “What is the matter that the people are constantly weeping?” <sup>224</sup> He was told about the message that had come from the people of Jabesh. <sup>6</sup> The spirit of the Lord came over Saul in a powerful manner when he learned of the message that had been received and his wrath flared up. <sup>225</sup> <sup>7</sup> He took a yoke of oxen and hacked them into pieces and sent these pieces into the entire territory of Israel with the message: “Whoever does not come out, joining Saul and Samuel, will have happen to him exactly what has happened to these oxen.” It was then that the terror from the Lord fell on the people and they became totally unified. <sup>226</sup> <sup>8</sup> When he mustered the men of Israel at Bezek, <sup>227</sup> there were three hundred thousand <sup>228</sup> from Israel and thirty thousand <sup>229</sup> from Judah. <sup>9</sup> They informed the messengers who had arrived, “Tell the people of Jabesh-gilead, ‘By this time tomorrow there will be a victory which will take place before the heat of the day comes. You will obtain deliverance from the power of Nahash the Ammonite.’” The messengers returned and reported to the men of Jabesh-gilead who were truly elated. <sup>10</sup> As a result the men of Jabesh-gilead told Nahash that in the morning they would surrender to him and he would be free to do with them what ever he might desire. <sup>11</sup> That morning Saul formed his army into three divisions<sup>230</sup> and they made their way into the midst of the enemy camp at night

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<sup>220</sup> This paragraph is found in the manuscript of the Dead Sea Scroll. A virtually identical passage is found in Josephus *Antiquities* VI, 68–71. It is omitted in the MT.

<sup>221</sup> The intention of Nahash was not plunder but ridicule. He knew how to insult! This would be inescapable evidence that Israel was insulted by Nahash, should the right eyes of the people of Jabesh were gouged out. REB: “On one condition only shall I grant you a treaty: that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you and thereby bring disgrace on all Israel.”

<sup>222</sup> LXX: “the messenger came to Gibeah, to Saul, and told the words of Nahash to the people. They cried out and wept.”

<sup>223</sup> TAN: “driving the oxen.” LXX: “παντα το πρωι.” Vulgate: “post boves.”

<sup>224</sup> LXX: “Saul came out from the field in the early morning, asking why the people wept.”

<sup>225</sup> CB: “he became violently enraged.”

<sup>226</sup> LXX: “και εβοησαν.”

<sup>227</sup> Bezek is modern Hozig. This was an ideal location to rally the men of Israel.

<sup>228</sup> The number varies in manuscripts. Some say 600,000. This causes one to be a bit wary of the number that is in the text.

<sup>229</sup> LXX: 70,000.

<sup>230</sup> REB: “three columns.”

so at the time of the morning watch they massacred the Ammonites, continuing until the day became hot; and those who survived were scattered to the point that no two Ammonite soldiers were left together.<sup>231</sup>

12 [Then the people said to Samuel, “Who was it who questioned whether Saul would be able to reign over us? Hand them over that we may put them to death.”<sup>232</sup> 13 Saul, however, said, “No one will be executed today! Today the Lord has brought about a victory in Israel.” 14 Then Samuel spoke to the people: “Come! Let us go to Gilgal and there inaugurate the monarchy.”]<sup>233</sup> 15 Then the people went to Gilgal and there, before the Lord, he was officially proclaimed<sup>234</sup> to be the king. They offered [*peace offerings*]<sup>235</sup> before the Lord, and Saul and all the men of Israel greatly rejoiced.

<CHAPTER 12>

*F. Samuel’s Farewell 12:1 – 24*<sup>236</sup>

1 Samuel spoke to Israel, saying: “Be assured that I have listened to the words you have spoken to me and I have designated<sup>237</sup> a king to rule over you. 2 Be assured, the king leads you<sup>238</sup> but I on the other hand am old and grey. Be assured that my sons are with you,<sup>239</sup> and I have led a life of public service from my youth until this moment. 3 Here I am, testify against me to the Lord and before his anointed! Have I ever taken someone’s ox? Have I ever seized someone’s donkey? Have I ever defrauded anyone? Have I ever maltreated anyone? From who have I accepted a bribe<sup>240</sup> to subvert justice?<sup>241</sup> Testify against me!<sup>242</sup> I will repay you!” 4 The people replied, “You have never defrauded us or maltreated us, nor have you accepted bribes from the hand of anyone.” 5 Samuel then said, “The Lord witnesses against you and his anointed also witnesses against you for on this day you have admitted that you have not found me to be guilty.”<sup>243</sup> The people replied, “He is the witness.”

6 Samuel then continued speaking. “The Lord who is the witness<sup>244</sup> is the one who appointed Moses and Aaron who brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt. 7 Now then: stand before me that I might recount to you<sup>245</sup> that I might recount for you before the Lord, concerning those occasions when the Lord provided his saving power on your behalf and on your ancestors. 8 When Jacob went into Egypt the Egyptians

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<sup>231</sup> The murder of the Ammonites apparently began stealthily while it was still dark and became open warfare when the day dawned.

<sup>232</sup> Verses 12 – 14 seem to seek to reconcile the various accounts that were used when I Samuel was compiled.

<sup>233</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>234</sup> REB: “invested.”

<sup>235</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation. In the past there was a question concerning the meaning of the Hebrew wording. In recent years the translation “peace offerings” has become more readily accepted. JB: “communion.” TAN: “well being.”

<sup>236</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>237</sup> REB: “installed a king to rule over you.”

<sup>238</sup> Literally: “walks before you.” MFT: “the new king marches in front of you, but as for me...”

<sup>239</sup> This is not a commendation of Samuel’s sons (I Samuel 8:3) but a simple reminder of his old age.

<sup>240</sup> The Hebrew word “*kopher*” means “price of life” or “blood money.”

<sup>241</sup> Literally: “blind my eyes.”

<sup>242</sup> Omitted by the LXX.

<sup>243</sup> Literally: “not found anything in my hand.”

<sup>244</sup> So: LXX. Omitted in Hebrew.

<sup>245</sup> CB: “Now therefore take your stand that I may enter into court with you before the Lord.”

oppressed them. <sup>246</sup> Then your ancestors beseeched the Lord and the Lord sent Moses and Aaron who led your ancestors out of Egypt and brought them to this place where they were to live. <sup>9</sup> They forgot the Lord your God, and he delivered (*or, sold*) them into the hands of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin <sup>247</sup> of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab and they were engaged in battle. <sup>10</sup> They cried out to the Lord and said, ‘We have sinned! We have forsaken the Lord! We have served the Ba’als and the Aseroth, but now deliver us from the power of our enemies and we will serve you. <sup>248</sup> <sup>11</sup> The Lord sent Jerubbaal, <sup>249</sup> Barak, <sup>250</sup> Jotham, <sup>251</sup> and Samuel, <sup>252</sup> who delivered you from the power of your enemies that threatened on every side, and you were able to live in safety. <sup>12</sup> When you saw that Nahash the Ammonite moved to attack you, you requested of me: ‘We want a king who will reign over us, although the Lord your God was your king.’ <sup>253</sup> <sup>13</sup> Now you have a king whom you have chosen and for whom you asked. Realize that the Lord has established a king to rule over you. <sup>14</sup> If you will serve the Lord and be attentive to his voice and not rebel against the Lord: and if both you and the king who reigns over you will be obedient to the Lord your God all will be well. <sup>15</sup> However: if you are not attentive the voice of the Lord, but rebel against his commandments the mighty power of the Lord will be used against you and your king. <sup>254</sup> <sup>16</sup> Now therefore: stand before me and see this great thing which the Lord your God will do in your presence. <sup>255</sup> <sup>17</sup> Is not today the time for the wheat harvest? <sup>256</sup> I will call upon the Lord that he will send thunder and rain. This will be the sign that will cause you to realize that what you are witnessing is great, for you are witnessing it in the sight of the Lord that you have asked for a king.” <sup>18</sup> Then Samuel called on the Lord and the Lord sent both thunder and rain on that day and all the people were in total awe of Samuel having his words fulfilled.

<sup>19</sup> The people said to Samuel: “Plead to the Lord your God for your servants that we will not die. We have added to all our sins for we realize that it was evil of us to ask for a king.” <sup>20</sup> Samuel informed the people: “Fear not! Even though you have done all this evil, yet do not swerve from your faithfulness to the Lord and search for other gods and thus forsake the Lord. <sup>257</sup> Serve the Lord with your entire being. <sup>21</sup> Do not turn aside to pursue things that have no value and thus are not profitable for the pursuit of these is in

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<sup>246</sup> So: LXX.

<sup>247</sup> So: LXX.

<sup>248</sup> This verse is almost identical to Judges 10:10.

<sup>249</sup> Cf.: Judges 6:31 -32. He was also called Gideon. His father renamed him since the name Jerubbaal means “against Ba’al.”

<sup>250</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew: “Bedan.” Syriac: “Barak.”

<sup>251</sup> Cf. Judges 11:1.

<sup>252</sup> LXX: “Samson.”

<sup>253</sup> The history of verses 7 – 12 is almost identical to Judges 2:11 – 19. To Samuel the desire for and the choice of a king was superfluous. Possibly this was a gloss.

<sup>254</sup> So: versions. Hebrew: “fathers.”

<sup>255</sup> NAB: “to witness this great marvel of the Lord which the Lord is about to accomplish.”

<sup>256</sup> The wheat harvest would take place between Passover and Pentecost, immediately following the barley harvest. The harvest normally would take place following the latter rains. During this time there would seldom be a thunderstorm. It was generally assumed that such storms would not occur at this time.

<sup>257</sup> NASB: “for then you would go after futile things which cannot profit or deliver because they are futile.”

vain. <sup>22</sup> The Lord will not forsake <sup>258</sup> his people because of his greatness (*or, great name*) for it has pleased the Lord to establish you (*or, make you*) to be his special people. <sup>23</sup> Furthermore far be it for me that I should sin against the Lord by no longer interceding in prayer for you, <sup>259</sup> and I will provide instruction that you might do good and live in the right way. <sup>24</sup> However, be in awe and revere the Lord, serve him whole heartedly, and always bear in mind what great things he has done for you. <sup>25</sup> Now on the other hand: if you still continue to deal wickedly you will be swept away --- both you and your king! <sup>260</sup>

<CHAPTER 13>

iv. *The War of Independence 13:1 - 14:52*

A. *Preparation for War 13:1 - 23*

<sup>1</sup> [*Saul was ...years old*] <sup>261</sup> when he began his reign and he reigned for [...] <sup>262</sup> years.

<sup>2</sup> Saul selected three thousand men from Israel two thousand, of which were with him at Michmash <sup>263</sup> in the hill country of Bethel and a thousand were with Jonathan [*Saul's son*] at Gibeah in Benjamin. All others who were not selected were sent home, each to his own house. <sup>264</sup> <sup>3</sup> Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines which had been at Geba <sup>265</sup> and the Philistines learned <sup>266</sup> that the Israelites had reason to revolt. Saul had his messengers blow the ram's horn (*or, trumpet*) through the entire land with the announcement: "Let the Hebrews <sup>267</sup> hear!"

<sup>4</sup> When all the people of Israel heard [*the ram's horn*] they said "Samuel <sup>268</sup> has defeated the Philistine garrison and even the mountain of the Lord [*or, Israel*] has become offensive to the Philistines. The people were recruited to join Saul at Gilead. <sup>269</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Philistines were conscripted to fight against the Israel. Thirty thousand <sup>270</sup> chariots and six thousand horse[*men*] <sup>271</sup> and infantry, as numerous as the sand on the sea shore in numbers, advanced and encamped at Michmash, to the east of Bethaven. <sup>6</sup> The men of Israel were in an untenable position (for the people were hard pressed) <sup>272</sup> by the Philistines. They hid themselves in caves, holes in the rocks, and tombs and cisterns, <sup>7</sup> or

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<sup>258</sup> Literally: "throw away."

<sup>259</sup> LXX adds: "and serve you."

<sup>260</sup> LXX: "if you continue to do evil you and your king will be consumed." Though Samuel was old he remained as the intercessor and instructor. Some scholars follow this chapter with 10:25 – 27 and then 9:1 - 24.

<sup>261</sup> The MT text has a gap concerning the age of Saul. Translators have varied in their report concerning Saul's age. They vary from 22 – 40 while others simply say, "he was a young man." The LXX apparently used an Old Latin Mss as its source and simply omitted verse 1.

<sup>262</sup> There is again a gap in the Mss. Cf. Acts 13;21.

<sup>263</sup> The oldest Hebrew Ms has "Michmah."

<sup>264</sup> JB inserts: "Jonathan smashed the Philistine pillar which was at Gibeah" here and in v. 4.

<sup>265</sup> The LXX has "Ρουβφ" which presumably is the same place.

<sup>266</sup> TEV: "Jonathan killed the Philistine commander at Gibeah and all the Philistines heard of it." Literally: "let the Hebrews hear of it through the land."

<sup>267</sup> This name was usually only used by foreigners. LXX: "foreigners."

<sup>268</sup> LXX: "Saul."

<sup>269</sup> LXX adds: "Israel had been put to shame by the Philistines and the children of Israel joined Saul at Gilgal."

<sup>270</sup> LXX: "three thousand."

<sup>271</sup> Literally: "horse."

<sup>272</sup> LXX: "they could not advance in battle."



<sup>273</sup> crossed over the river Jordan to the territory of Gad and Gilead. [Saul remained in Gilgal along with all his loyal troops but these were at the point of desertion.

8 He waited seven days, the time that had been agreed on for a meeting with Samuel but Samuel did not appear in Gilgal. His troops were beginning to desert. 9 Because of that Saul said, “Bring the burnt offering here <sup>274</sup> along with the peace offering.” <sup>275</sup> Saul then offered the burnt offering. 10 Just as Saul had concluded the burnt offering Samuel came and went to greet (*or, bless*) him. 11 Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul responded: “When I realized that the people were drifting away from me and that you did not come within the time period that had been agreed upon, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, 12 I felt this was the time when the Philistines would strike me at Gilgal, and I had not implored the Lord for his favor. Therefore I felt compelled to personally offer the burnt offering.” 13 Samuel then spoke: “Your action was senseless! You have not abided by the commandment of the Lord your God which he had commanded you to keep! Had you kept the Lord your God’s commandment he would have established your dynasty forever. <sup>276</sup> 14 Now the rule over this kingdom will not endure as your dynasty for the Lord will seek (*or, has sought*) another to be the ruler following you [*i.e. David*] and the Lord will appoint him to rule over the people since you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God which had been given to you.” <sup>277</sup> 15 Samuel stood and departed from Gilgal, going to Gibeah of Benjamin, <sup>278</sup> [*The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army. They went up from Gilgal toward Gibeah of Benjamin.*] <sup>279</sup>

Saul counted the men and there were six hundred.] <sup>280</sup> 16 Saul’s son Jonathan and the entire army remained encamped <sup>281</sup> at Geba. The Philistines were encamped at Michmash. 17 The Philistine raiding party came out of the camp in three directions: one company moved toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18 another turned toward Beth-horon, and the third went toward the hill that overlooks the Valley of Zeboim <sup>282</sup> and the region farther beyond.

19 [There was no blacksmith in the entire land of Israel, for the Philistines were determined to prevent this, saying, “Let the Hebrews make their own swords and spears.” <sup>283</sup> 20 (All of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to have them sharpen their plow-

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<sup>273</sup> LXX inserts: “the Hebrews.”

<sup>274</sup> LXX: “the victim.”

<sup>275</sup> REV: “shared offering.” TAN: “sacrifice of well being.” JB: “communion sacrifice.”

<sup>276</sup> An emendation would read: “You acted foolishly! If you had kept the commandment of the Lord your God laid on you...”

<sup>277</sup> It is possible that the uneasiness of Saul when Samuel did not arrive, when Saul expected him, might have been prompted by a tremendous loss of warriors by defection.

<sup>278</sup> LXX: “Samuel rose and left Gilgal and went his way. The rest of the people followed Saul to meet the soldiers and they went to Gilgal.”

<sup>279</sup> Some versions have this in place of v. 15 as shown above.

<sup>280</sup> Some scholars feel verses 7 – 15 are a later interpolation.

<sup>281</sup> Literally: “were found.” LXX: “Saul and his son Jonathan were found for they had halted at Gibeah of Benjamin and they wept.”

<sup>282</sup> JB: “the Valley of the Hyenas.”

<sup>283</sup> The people of Israel were still in the Bronze Age whereas the Philistines were in the Iron Age. Scholars feel the Philistines originally came from the Island of Cyprus where they had already advanced to the Iron Age. It was for this reason that the people of Israel had such difficulty in overcoming the Philistines in this period of history.

points, their mattocks, axes, and sickles. <sup>284</sup> <sup>21</sup> The cost of sharpening was a pim <sup>285</sup> for each implement: plow-shares, mattocks, pitch forks, axes and cattle prods (*or, goads*).] <sup>286</sup> <sup>22</sup> When war broke out the army of Israel had no swords or spears on hand to distribute to the warriors. Only Saul and Jonathan possessed these. <sup>23</sup> The garrison of the Philistines was posted at the pass at Michmash.

<CHAPTER 14>

B. The Exploit of Jonathan 14:1 - 16

<sup>1</sup> One day <sup>287</sup> Jonathan, Saul's son, told the young man who was his squire (*or, armor bearer*), "Come! Let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the opposite side [*of the pass*]" Jonathan, however, did not report this to his father. <sup>2</sup> Saul was encamped outside the city of Gibeah, <sup>288</sup> under the pomegranate tree which is in Migron. <sup>289</sup> The troops, with him, numbered six-hundred men. <sup>3</sup> (The priest who was robed, wearing the ephod <sup>290</sup> was Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest at Shiloh.) The people were not aware that Jonathan had gone. <sup>4-5</sup> Jonathan made his way, going over the pass, between the jagged cliffs on either side (i.e. the north and south sides), (one being named Bozez and the other named Seneh, and approached the Philistine camp.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan said to his young squire (*or, armor bearer*), "Join me and we will go to the garrison of the uncircumcised Philistines. It is probable that the Lord will provide for us that nothing can deter the Lord from providing victory whether it be by many or by few. <sup>7</sup> His squire (*or, armor bearer*) said, "Do whatever you are inclined to do <sup>291</sup> for I am with you and I will do whatever you desire." <sup>8</sup> Jonathan then said, "This is what we will do: we will cross over toward them so we can be seen by them. <sup>292</sup> <sup>9</sup> If they say, 'Wait there for we will come to you' <sup>293</sup> we will await them here. <sup>10</sup> If they say, 'Come up to us' we will go up for the Lord will cause them to surrender to us. <sup>294</sup> This will be [*the Lord's*] sign to us." <sup>11</sup> Then they both showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines and the Philistines said, "Look! Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have been hiding." <sup>295</sup> <sup>12</sup> The men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his squire (*or, armor bearer*) saying, "Come to us and we will teach you a thing or two!" Jonathan told his squire (*or, armor bearer*), "Come up after them for they have given a sign from the Lord that we will be victorious." <sup>13</sup> Then they scrambled up, using hands and feet to climb, Jonathan in the lead and the squire (*or, armor bearer*) following, and as they attacked the

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<sup>284</sup> So: LXX. The MT repeats "plow shares."

<sup>285</sup> A "pim" was thought to be 2/3 of a shekel.

<sup>286</sup> The Hebrew is obscure since the meaning of the words in Hebrew, for the items to be sharpened are uncertain. Some scholars omit the verse in their translation.

<sup>287</sup> LXX: "when a certain day arrived."

<sup>288</sup> Gibeah was also called Geba.

<sup>289</sup> The location is unknown. Emended it would read, "the threshing floor."

<sup>290</sup> REB: "the ephod was carried." Hebrew: "carried."

<sup>291</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew: "whatever is in your mind."

<sup>292</sup> LXX: "we will invade suddenly."

<sup>293</sup> LXX: "απαγγειλωμεν."

<sup>294</sup> Literally: "give them into our hand."

<sup>295</sup> MFT: "Look at the mice creeping out of their holes."

Philistines. They fell because of Jonathan's attack and the squire (*or, armor bearer*)<sup>296</sup> made certain that they were dead.<sup>297</sup> 14 In that first attack made by Jonathan and his squire (*or, armor bearer*) twenty men were killed in the time it would take to plow a furrow half way across a field.<sup>298</sup> 15 Terror spread in the camp to the point that the entire garrison panicked for the earth quaked<sup>299</sup> and the panic became even greater.

16 In Gibeah of Benjamin the watchmen saw that the multitude of Philistines in their camp were surging about in apparent desperation. 17 Saul told his advising officers, "Call the roll! See who is absent!" When that was completed they reported to Saul that Jonathan and his squire (*or, armor bearer*) were missing. 18 (At that time Ahijah was wearing the ephod.)<sup>300</sup> 19 While Saul was talking with his advisors the confusion in the camp of the Philistines escalated and Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand."<sup>301</sup> 20 Then Saul and his advisors yelled loudly as the army went into battle, every man's sword was drawn for there was great confusion. 21 Those Hebrews who had sided with the Philistines<sup>302</sup> prior to this<sup>303</sup> and had begun to battle with the Philistines hastily changed sides<sup>304</sup> and fought with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. 22 Additionally, when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim learned that the Philistines were fleeing they joined in close pursuit of the Philistines who were fleeing. 23 It was in this manner that the Lord provided freedom for Israel on that day. The battle continued beyond Bethaven.<sup>305</sup>

24 The men of Israel were at the point of exhaustion on the day of this pursuit and Saul issued a warning to the people, saying: "Any one who eats food prior my being avenged and having defeated my enemies by this evening will be cursed." 25 As a result all the people did not eat any food but when they came into the forest there was honey on the ground.<sup>306</sup> 26 Even with the honey dripping, no one put his hand into the honey and to his mouth for the people were fearful of the oath that had been made by Saul.<sup>307</sup> 27 Jonathan had not heard his father's interdict to the army, so he put the tip of his staff into

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<sup>296</sup> It is assumed that the armor bearer was not old enough to be a warrior, thus serving Jonathan as a squire.

<sup>297</sup> CB: "they (*the Philistines*) turned back at the approach of Jonathan and he attacked them, and his armor bearer dispatched the wounded."

<sup>298</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. LXX: "with darts and slings hurling pebbles from the field."

<sup>299</sup> Literally: "a great trembling of God."

<sup>300</sup> The alternate reading is: "Saul said to Ahijah, 'Bring the Ark of God here.'" At that time the Ark of God was at Kirjath Jearim. The Hebrew text includes an explanatory gloss: "At that time the Ark of God went with the people."

<sup>301</sup> Saul felt it was not necessary under the circumstances to inquire of the Lord.

<sup>302</sup> These Hebrews might also have been slaves of the Philistines and forced into military service.

<sup>303</sup> LXX: "yesterday and the third day."

<sup>304</sup> So: LXX, Syriac, Targum & Vugate. Hebrew: "round about, they also to be with."

<sup>305</sup> LXX: "all the troops, about ten-thousand men who, with Saul, pursued the Philistines and the battle was disbursed into every city in the hill country of Ephraim."

<sup>306</sup> Hebrew uncertain. LXX: "abounding in a swarm of bees on the face of the ground. The people went in the place of the bees."

<sup>307</sup> Some translators add: "even though the bees had gone." A possible reconstruction of the verses 24 – 26 might be: "All the people with Saul were about 10,000 men. The fighting spread all over the hill country of Ephraim. Saul vowed a vow that day and laid an oath on the people, saying: 'Cursed be the man who eats food until evening, and until I have avenged on my enemies.; So none of the people tasted food. There was a honeycomb on the face of the ground, and when the people came to the honeycomb, beyond, the bees had gone, but no man put his hand to his mouth; for the people feared the oath.'"

the honeycomb and tasted the honey. Then his eyes became bright (*or, his strength revived*).<sup>28</sup> One of the people said, “Your father was very strict when he told us with an oath, saying, “Cursed be anyone who eats food today!” The people, however, had become faint.<sup>308</sup> 29 Jonathan then said, “My father has done a disservice to the people<sup>309</sup> for you see how my eyes have brightened (*or, my strength has revived*) because I tasted a bit of honey. 30 It would have been much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoils which were left by the enemy, for the slaughter of the Philistines has not been as great as it might have been.”

31 Many Philistine were killed that day as the battle ranged from Michmash to Aijalon though the people had become very faint. 32 The people claimed<sup>310</sup> the spoils, taking sheep, oxen and calves, killing them on the ground and eating the bloody meat.<sup>311</sup> 33 Saul was informed by the message: “Look! The people are sinning against the Lord by eating meat with blood in it.” Saul replied, “This is treasonous behavior! Roll a huge stone here before me.”<sup>312</sup> 34 Saul then ordered: “Spread out among the people and say, ‘Let everyone bring his ox or sheep here and kill it here, being careful not to sin against the Lord by eating meat with blood.’” Then everyone brought their animals there and they were butchered there. 35 Saul built an altar to the Lord. This was the first altar he built.

36 Then Saul said, “Let us pursue the Philistines tonight and harass<sup>313</sup> them until none remain – until there is no male Philistine left.” The people replied, “Do whatever you feel is best.” The priest, however, said, “Let us inquire of God.” 37 Saul then inquired of the Lord, saying: “Should I pursue the Philistines? Will you cause them to surrender?” Saul, however, did not pursue the Philistines at that time. 38 Saul said, “Present yourselves here, O leaders of the people,<sup>314</sup> and observe how this sin has arisen today. 39 As surely as God who saves is alive, even though it is my own son Jonathan, he will certainly be put to death.” But there was not one man among all the people present who would answer him. 40 Then Saul said to all of Israel: “You will be on one side<sup>315</sup> and my son Jonathan and I will be on the other side.” Then the people said, “Do what you feel is best.” 41 Then Saul said, “O Lord, God of Israel, grant the right answer<sup>316</sup> for your servant today. If the guilt is in me or is in my son Jonathan, O Lord, God of Israel, grant me Urim, but if the guilt is on your people, give Thummim,”<sup>317</sup> and Jonathan and Saul were selected and the people escaped judgment. 42 Then Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan.” Jonathan was indited.

43 Saul then said to Jonathan: “Tell me what you did.” Jonathan said, “I tasted a bit of honey from the tip of the staff that I was holding. Must I now die? [*or, Here I am. I*

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<sup>308</sup> An emendation would read: “The people accepted the oath.”

<sup>309</sup> LXX: “destroyed.” This is possibly a misreading of a Hebrew word. The only difference in the two words is a serif.

<sup>310</sup> Literally: “flew upon.”

<sup>311</sup> The rules of cleanliness and being certain that all the blood had drained from the meat were not observed at this time in their desire for food.

<sup>312</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew: “here today.”

<sup>313</sup> LXX: “plunder.”

<sup>314</sup> MFT: “chieftains.” LXX: “corners.”

<sup>315</sup> LXX: “you will become slaves if proven guilty.”

<sup>316</sup> LXX: “δηλους.”

<sup>317</sup> Urim and Thummim were two objects contained in the ephod which comprised the sacred lot which was used to ascertain alternative answers. Cf.: ANET p. 111a.

will die.]<sup>318</sup> 44 Saul said, “May God do the same to me also! You will be executed.” 45 Then the people said to Saul, “Will the one be executed who brought such a great victory in Israel? Never! Just as certainly as God is alive not a single hair of his head will fall to the ground for what he has done today he has done with (*or, for*) God!” It was in this way that the people ransomed<sup>319</sup> Jonathan and he was not executed. 46 Then Saul halted the pursuit of the Philistines who then went into their own territory.

*C. Concluding Notice of Samuel 24:47 - 52*

47 [After Saul had established his reign over Israel he fought against enemies who surrounded his kingdom. These were: Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings<sup>320</sup> of Zobah and the Philistines and established freedom from any nation that contended with Israel with the intention to plunder. 48 He waged war valiantly and freed Israel from invaders.

49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi,<sup>321</sup> and Malchishua, and the names of his two daughters were Merah, who was his first born, and Michal, who was the younger daughter. 50 His wife’s name was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. His commander’s name was Abner, the son of Ner who was Saul’s uncle. 51 Saul’s father’s name was Kish and Ner was the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.]<sup>322</sup>

52 During Saul’s reign the wars were unrelenting when waged against the Philistines. Whenever Saul saw any man who was strong and valiant he gathered to himself.<sup>323</sup>

<CHAPTER 15>

*V. The Rise of David 15:1 – 18:30*

*A. The Rejection of Saul 15:1 - 35*

1 Samuel said to Saul: “I am the one the Lord had sent to you to anoint you<sup>324</sup> as the king over the people of Israel. Now! You are to be attentive<sup>325</sup> to the word of the Lord. 2 The Lord of hosts declares,<sup>326</sup> ‘I will punish<sup>327</sup> what Amalek<sup>328</sup> did to Israel by waging war when the people were coming out of Egypt. 3 You are now to attack Amalek and destroy all that they possess.<sup>329</sup> Do not spare them: make sure you kill men and women, children and those who are nursing, oxen, sheep, camels and donkeys.”

4 Saul summoned all the people to gather and he mustered<sup>330</sup> his army at Telaim,<sup>331</sup> The army consisted of two-hundred thousand infantry<sup>332</sup> and ten-thousand<sup>333</sup> men

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<sup>318</sup> Either statement would be a correct translation of the Hebrew: a statement or a question.

<sup>319</sup> The Hebrew word is the same one used in Exodus 13:13ff for the redemption of the first born

<sup>320</sup> So: Dead Sea Scroll, & LXX.

<sup>321</sup> He was also called Ichabod. Cf.: II Samuel 3:8.

<sup>322</sup> Some scholars feel this was a later interpolation.

<sup>323</sup> This marked the beginning of a professional army.

<sup>324</sup> TAN: “I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you.”

<sup>325</sup> Literally: “the sound of the words.”

<sup>326</sup> REB: “This is the very word of the Lord. of hosts.”

<sup>327</sup> Literally: “visit.”

<sup>328</sup> The Amalekites were Bedouin who lived in the Negeb (*the southern desert area of Israel*) They were a constant threat to the people of Israel. Cf.: Judges 7:12. NAB: “he is under the ban,” i.e extermination is in order.”

<sup>329</sup> An example of total warfare! LXX translates this as a name.

<sup>330</sup> LXX: “numbered.”

<sup>331</sup> This is possibly the same location as “Telem” in Joshua 15:24.

<sup>332</sup> LXX: “400,000 regular troops.” The numbers hardly seem realistic.

from Judah. 5 Saul came to the city of Amalek, destroying it, <sup>334</sup> and hurling the rubble into the valley (*or, set an ambush in the ravine*). 6 Saul told the Kenites, <sup>335</sup> “Go. Move away. Leave the Amalekite territory for if you remain you might be involved in the warfare against Amalek. After all, you did show kindness to the people of Israel when they traveled from Egypt.” The Kenites then moved away from the land of the Amalekites. 7 Saul destroyed the Amalekites from Haulah as far as Shur which is located east of Egypt. <sup>336</sup> 8 He took Agag, king of the Amalekites prisoner but the general population was totally destroyed. 9 Saul and his army spared Agag and the best sheep, oxen, fat cattle, <sup>337</sup> and lambs. Everything that was exceptionally good and had value was not destroyed. All that was despised and considered worthless <sup>338</sup> was utterly destroyed.

10 The word of the Lord came to Samuel. 11 I rue that I have made Saul king for he has refused to accept my direction and has not been willing to do my commandments.” Samuel was angry and cried out to God all night. 12 In the morning Samuel went to meet Saul and it was reported to Samuel that Saul <sup>339</sup> had gone to Carmel and had raised up a memorial to himself and then bypassed Samuel and went to Gilgal. 13 Samuel came to Saul who said to Samuel: “Blessed be you to the Lord. I have performed all the commandments of the Lord.” 14 Samuel then responded, “What is this bleating <sup>340</sup> of sheep that I hear and the bawling of oxen I also hear?” 15 Saul said, “They have been brought from the Amalekites because the troops wanted to spare these sheep and oxen that they might be used for sacrifices to the Lord your God, but all the rest we have destroyed.” 16 Then Samuel declared: “Stop! I will tell you what the Lord told me during the night!” Saul replied, “Speak the message.”

17 “Though you once felt yourself greatly insignificant in your own sight, you are the leader <sup>341</sup> of the tribe of Israel, aren’t you? 18 The Lord anointed you to responsible leadership, and said, ‘Go! Destroy the Amalekites who did evil to the Israelites as they passed through their territory on the way from Egypt. Why did you disobey the voice of the Lord and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord?’” 20 Saul told Samuel, “I have obeyed he voice of the Lord. I went on a mission given to me by the Lord. I have Agag, king of the Amalekites as a prisoner, and have exterminated all the rest of the people. 21 The troops, however, seized the sheep and oxen as spoils of war, as the first fruits of victory which will be destroyed through sacrifices to the Lord your God in Gilead.” 22 Samuel declared:

“Does the Lord have as much delight  
in burnt offerings and sacrifices

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<sup>333</sup> LXX: “30,000 regular troops.”

<sup>334</sup> Hebrew uncertain. JB: “laid on Amalek in the river bed.”

<sup>335</sup> The Kenites were another tribe of Bedouin, one of whom became the wife of Moses. Judges 1:16; 4:11. They rejected living in houses, did not drink wine and were careful to follow the example of their ancestor, Hobab. The Amalekites considered them a ‘sub-tribe’ but they apparently never fit into Amalekite society. They finally gave in to living in houses and after this point in history were absorbed into the Hebrew population. There was always a rather high regard on the part of the Hebrew people for the values that were held as important by the Kenites.

<sup>336</sup> Cf. Genesis 25:10. This was the area of the Ishmaelites.

<sup>337</sup> Literally: “second born.”

<sup>338</sup> TEV: “useless and worthless.”

<sup>339</sup> Several LXX codices are in error and have “Samuel.”

<sup>340</sup> LXX: “voice.”

<sup>341</sup> LXX: “staff of the tribe” which is recorded twice.

or in obedience to the voice of the Lord?  
Be certain that it is better to obey than to sacrifice;  
to listen to him than burning the fat of rams!”<sup>342</sup>  
23 Rebellion is the sin of witchcraft  
and arrogance is as sinful as idolatry.  
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,  
he has also rejected you as king.”

24 Saul’s reply to Samuel was, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment<sup>343</sup> of the Lord and the words you spoke to me. I was fearful of the people and obeyed their wishes.”<sup>344</sup> 25 Because of this my prayer is: Pardon my sin and return to me, that I may truly worship the Lord.” 26 Samuel said to Saul: “I will not return with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as the king of Israel.” 27 Just as Samuel turned to leave Saul caught hold of the skirt of Samuel’s robe<sup>345</sup> and tore it. 28 Samuel then said, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors who is better than you. 29 The Glory of Israel<sup>346</sup> will not recant<sup>347</sup> nor change his mind for he is not a mortal, that he would change his mind.” 30 Then Saul said, “I have sinned, yet --- show me respect in the presence of the leaders of my people and all of Israel. Return with me that I might worship the Lord your God.” 31 Samuel then turned back and joined Saul as they worshiped the Lord.

32 It was then that Samuel said, “Bring Agag the king of the Amalekites.” Agag came cheerfully,<sup>348</sup> saying: “The bitterness of death has surely passed.”<sup>349</sup> 33 Samuel said,

“Your sword has caused women to become childless,  
and in the same way your mother will become childless among women.”

Samuel then hewed Agag into pieces before the Lord at Gilgal.<sup>350</sup>

34 After that Samuel went to Ramah while Saul went to his home in Gibeah of Saul. 35 Samuel never again saw Saul during the last years of his life but Samuel grieved over Saul. The Lord rued that he had made Saul the king of Israel.

## <CHAPTER 16>

### *B. The Anointing of David 16:1 – 13*<sup>351</sup>

1 The Lord said to Samuel: “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have renounced him as king of Israel? Fill up your horn (*or, vial*)<sup>352</sup> with [*olive*] oil and go. I

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<sup>342</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 417d. Samuel is apparently not disapproving of the sacrificial system but that the sacrifice had no meaning beyond mere external acts of duty.

<sup>343</sup> Literally: “the mouth of the Lord.”

<sup>344</sup> Verses 24 – 31 seem out of place here. Some scholars have chosen to insert them in II Samuel.

<sup>345</sup> LXX: “mantle.”

<sup>346</sup> Hebrew uncertain. Literally: “eminence of Israel.” KJV: “strength of Israel.” LXX: “Israel will be divided into two.”

<sup>347</sup> So: Dead Sea Scroll, LXX. Hebrew: “deceive.” REB: “does not deceive nor does he change his mind.”

<sup>348</sup> Hebrew uncertain. LXX: “with faltering steps.”

<sup>349</sup> Dead Sea Scroll and LXX: “Is death this bitter?” TAN: “Agag said, ‘Ah, bitter death is at hand.’”

<sup>350</sup> The Hebrew is obscure. Cf.: ANET p. 248a.

<sup>351</sup> Some scholars feel this passage is very well written, but a much later addition by an editor.

<sup>352</sup> Small containers were sometimes made of horn. The horn was hollowed out and a wooden plug was fashioned so it could be used to contain oil, as was the case here.

will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite,<sup>353</sup> for I, myself, have chosen one of his sons to become king.”<sup>2</sup> Samuel said, “How am I able to go? If Saul is informed about it he will kill me!” The Lord replied, “Take a heifer along and say, ‘I am going to make a sacrifice.’<sup>354</sup> I, myself will reveal to you what you are to do, for you will anoint the one I designate.”<sup>355</sup> <sup>4</sup> Samuel obeyed the Lord’s command and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city were in terror<sup>356</sup> as they came to meet him and asked, “Why have you come? Have you come on a peaceful mission?”<sup>5</sup> He said, “Peaceful. I have come to sacrifice. The Lord expects you to consecrate yourselves<sup>357</sup> and join me in the sacrifice.” He consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to take part in the sacrifice.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>6</sup> When they arrived he looked at Eliab and thought ‘Surely the Lord’s anointed one is standing in my presence.’<sup>359</sup> <sup>7</sup> The Lord, however, told Samuel, “Do not pay attention to appearance, height or stature for I have rejected him. The Lord looks at people differently from mortals<sup>360</sup> who only see what is visible. The Lord looks into the heart.”<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel and the Lord informed Samuel, “The Lord has not chosen him.”<sup>9</sup> Then Jesse presented Shammah and the Lord said, “I have not chosen him either.”<sup>10</sup> Jesse presented each of his seven sons to Samuel and each time the Lord said, “I have not chosen him either.”<sup>11</sup> It was then that Samuel asked Jesse, “Is this all the sons you have?”<sup>361</sup> Jesse replied, “There is one more, the youngest, but he is a shepherd.” Samuel then said to Jesse, “Send for him,<sup>362</sup> and bring him here for we will not sit down for the sacrificial meal<sup>363</sup> until he is present.”<sup>12</sup> The son who had been absent was sent for. He had a ruddy<sup>364</sup> complexion, bright eyes, and was handsome.<sup>365</sup> The Lord said, “Stand and anoint him. This is the one!”<sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil<sup>366</sup> and anointed him in the midst of all his brothers and the spirit of the Lord came on<sup>367</sup> David in a mighty fashion, remaining with him from that day on. Samuel then stood up and went to Ramah.

### C. David at the Court of Saul 16:14 - 23

<sup>14</sup> [*In direct contrast*] the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul and an injurious spirit<sup>368</sup> from the Lord that tormented him. Saul’s servants said to him, “An injurious spirit from God is terrifying you. <sup>16</sup> Give a command to your servants who are in your presence that they look for a man who is skilled in playing the lyre and when this

<sup>353</sup> Bethlehem is located about 5 miles south of Jerusalem.

<sup>354</sup> This kind of sacrifice involved a dinner using a portion of the animal that was being sacrificed.

<sup>355</sup> Literally: “say to you.”

<sup>356</sup> LXX: “The people of the city were amazed at seeing him.”

<sup>357</sup> Consecration meant removal of ritual defilement by lustration (*or, cleansing*). It was a purification rite that was a preparation to partaking in a sacrifice.

<sup>358</sup> Interestingly all those who participated were already cleansed by a rite of purification with the exception of David who was in the field, tending the flocks.

<sup>359</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 446b, 448b.

<sup>360</sup> Literally: “sees not what man sees.”

<sup>361</sup> LXX: “are there no more sons?”

<sup>362</sup> Literally: “take him.”

<sup>363</sup> REB: “we will not gather round.”

<sup>364</sup> The Hebrew meaning is unclear. JB: “a fresh complexion with fine eyes and a pleasant bearing.”

<sup>365</sup> LXX: “goodly in the sight of the Lord.”

<sup>366</sup> Cf.: footnote 352.

<sup>367</sup> LXX: “leaped on.”

<sup>368</sup> Literally: “evil spirit.” So: here & in vss. 25, 16, & 23. The problem has been described as “a typical example of recurrent paroxysmal mania rather than melancholia.”



injurious spirit from God assails you he will play the lyre and you will be well.”<sup>17</sup> Saul told his servants: “Provide me with such a man who can play the lyre and bring him into my presence.”<sup>18</sup> One of the young men replied, “I know of a young man, the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skilled<sup>369</sup> in playing. He is a man of valor, a good soldier, prudent in his speech, having a good presence and the Lord is with him.”<sup>370</sup><sup>19</sup> Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse saying, “Send me your son David who is a shepherd.”<sup>20</sup> Jesse took a donkey, loaded it with bread,<sup>371</sup> a skin of wine, and a goat along with his son David.<sup>21</sup> David arrived in Saul’s presence and entered into the service of Saul. Saul dearly loved him,<sup>372</sup> and he became<sup>373</sup> his armor bearer.<sup>22</sup> Saul sent word to Jesse saying, “Let David remain in my service for he has found favor and I am pleased with him.”<sup>23</sup> Whenever the injurious spirit sent from God attacked Saul, David took his lyre in his hand and played, which refreshed Saul, and he was restored to health and the injurious spirit departed from him.

#### <CHAPTER 17>

##### *D. David and the Philistine Champion 17:1 – 18:5*

<sup>1</sup> The Philistines assembled<sup>374</sup> the forces at Soco,<sup>375</sup> which was in the territory of Judah, and made camp between Soco and Azekah in Ephes-dammim.<sup>376</sup> <sup>2</sup> Saul and the army of Israel assembled their camp in the region of Elah,<sup>377</sup> and established their battle lines against the Philistines. <sup>3</sup> The Philistines established their battle line on the hill on one side of the valley while the battle line of the Israelites was on the hill on the opposite side, with the valley between them. <sup>4</sup> One of the champion warriors of the Philistine camp<sup>378</sup> named Goliath of Gath came forward. His height was six cubits and a span (*or, nine feet six inches*) tall.<sup>379</sup> <sup>5</sup> (He wore a bronze helmet and a breast plate made of scaled armor, the weight of which was five thousand shekels of bronze (*or, one hundred twenty five pounds*). <sup>6</sup> He had greaves (*or, shin guards*) on his legs, and a javelin<sup>380</sup> slung from a baldric between his shoulders. <sup>7</sup> The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam<sup>381</sup> and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron (*or, 36 ½ pounds*). His shield bearer preceded him.) <sup>8</sup> He stood, shouting to ranks of the Israel army, “Why have you come out to engage in battle? I am a champion in the Philistine army and you are mere

<sup>369</sup> LXX: “understanding.”

<sup>370</sup> This description seems to be an obvious exaggeration since David had only been a shepherd. TAN: “a stalwart fellow and warrior.” CB: “who is skillful in playing, a man having unusual power, a warrior, judicious in speech, a distinguished looking man and the Lord is with him.”

<sup>371</sup> The Hebrew is unclear. Some translators say “five loaves” or “ten loaves.”

<sup>372</sup> TAN: “took a strong liking to him.”

<sup>373</sup> MFT: “one of his.”

<sup>374</sup> LXX: present tense. “assemble.”

<sup>375</sup> Modern Shuweiken, located west of Bethlehem.

<sup>376</sup> LXX: “εν Εφερμαετι.”

<sup>377</sup> There was a tree in this valley which was considered to be sacred, hence it was thought to be a safe place for the army. TAN: “Elah.”

<sup>378</sup> Literally: “a champion of the Philistines.” JB: “one of the shock troops stepped out from the Philistine ranks.”

<sup>379</sup> The LXX has ‘four cubits and a span.’ This would make Goliath six feet, six inches tall.

<sup>380</sup> LXX: “target.” NAB: “a bronze scimitar.” The Hebrew word is in question. Recent scholarship feels it might mean a type of sword.

<sup>381</sup> A weaver’s beam is a part of the framework of the loom. Some scholars feel the reference is to the heddle bar which would be equally as long but not as heavy as a weaver’s beam.

servants of Saul. <sup>382</sup> Select <sup>383</sup> a man from your army and have him approach me. <sup>9</sup> If he is able to fight me and kill me --- then we will be your servants. However, if I overcome him and kill him you will become our servants.” <sup>10</sup> The Philistine said, “I defy you to produce a man from your ranks today; give me a man that we might fight together.” <sup>11</sup> When Saul and the warriors of Israel heard the words of the Philistine they were discouraged and terrified.

<sup>12</sup> [David was the son of an Ephraimite from Bethlehem <sup>384</sup> in Judah named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul Jesse was already old <sup>385</sup> <sup>13</sup> Jesse’s three oldest sons followed Saul and were in the army and prepared to do battle. Their names were Eliab who was the oldest, next to him, Abinadab, and the third was Shammah. <sup>14</sup> David was the youngest son. Only the three oldest were in the army. <sup>15</sup> David went back and forth attending to Saul [*by playing the lute when the injurious spirit afflicted him*] and being a shepherd for his father’s flocks in Bethlehem. <sup>16</sup> The Philistine came near, shouting and issuing his challenge morning and evening.

<sup>17</sup> Jesse told his son David, “Bring your brothers an ephah (*or, ¾ bushel*) of parched (*or, roasted*) grain and ten loaves. Do this as quickly as you can. <sup>386</sup> <sup>18</sup> Take these ten cheeses <sup>387</sup> to their commander and check to see how your brothers are getting along but be sure to bring home some evidence <sup>388</sup> that they are well.

<sup>19</sup> Saul and all the men of Israel, including David’s brothers were along the valley of Elath to fight against the Philistines. <sup>20</sup> David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and taking the provisions he went as he had been ordered by Jesse, and came to the encampment of the army of Israel. The army had gone to battle, shouting a loud war cry. <sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines had drawn up for battle, one army facing the other army. <sup>22</sup> David left the things he had brought with the officer in charge of the baggage and ran to the ranks and found his brothers, greeting them. <sup>23</sup> While he was with his brothers the champion of the Philistines, the Philistine from Gath, Goliath, came out of the ranks <sup>389</sup> of the Philistines and called out as he had done in the past. David heard his boast.

<sup>24</sup> When they saw the man all of the men of Israel fled from his presence for they were terrified. <sup>25</sup> The men of Israel said, “Have you ever seen such a man who has come up against us? He has surely come up to defy Israel and the king will reward anyone who kills him. He will even give him his own daughter and he will make the home of the one who kills this Philistine exempt from conscripted labor. <sup>390</sup> <sup>26</sup> David said to the men who were near by, “What will be done for the man who kills the Philistine and thereby remove the reproach on Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he dare defy the armies

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<sup>382</sup> LXX: “Hebrews” which was taken, at that time in Israel as a derogatory term.

<sup>383</sup> The Hebrew word is questionable as to meaning.

<sup>384</sup> Some scholars feel verses 12 – 31 are an alternative account which is included here. Others say 12 – 14 and 17 – 31 comprise this alternative account. In the LXX these verses are only found in Codex A.

<sup>385</sup> The Hebrew is unclear. This translation is based on the LXX and Syriac versions.

<sup>386</sup> Some scholars feel this verse is totally out of place.

<sup>387</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>388</sup> The Hebrew is unclear. It may mean, “their pledge” “Assurance” might be most suitable as a translation.

<sup>389</sup> LXX: “ο αμοσατος.”

<sup>390</sup> This was tantamount to being nobility.

of the living God? <sup>27</sup> The answer of the people was the same as the answer he had previously heard, telling him what would be done for the one who killed the Philistine.

<sup>28</sup> Eliab, David's oldest brother, overheard what David had been saying and Eliab burned with anger toward David, and said, "Why did you come down here? Who is tending those few sheep? Did you just leave them in the wilderness? I know your impudence, <sup>391</sup> and I can see the evil that you have in mind! You just came down so you could see the battle." <sup>29</sup> David answered: "What have I done now? Can't I just ask a question?" <sup>392</sup> <sup>30</sup> He turned away from his brother and continued the same conversation and each time the answer was the same as before.

<sup>31</sup> The words which David had spoken were repeated until they were told to Saul. Saul then requested that David be brought to him.] <sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, "No one should lose heart <sup>393</sup> because of him. I, your servant, will fight against the Philistine." <sup>33</sup> Saul replied, "You are surely not able to fight against this Philistine. You are but an adolescent, and he has been a man of war all his life." <sup>394</sup> David replied to Saul, "Your servant used to be a shepherd, taking care of the flocks. When a lion or a bear took a sheep from the flock <sup>35</sup> I went after it and I killed it and took the lamb out of its mouth and if it attacked me, I caught it by its beard and struck it, killing it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, for he has defied the army of the living God." <sup>37</sup> David added. "The Lord who delivered me from the claws <sup>395</sup> of the lion and bear will provide that I will not be destroyed by the clutches of this Philistine!" Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!" <sup>38</sup> Then Saul clothed David in his armor; placing a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him in a breastplate of scaled armor. <sup>39</sup> David girded himself with a sword over his armor but when he tried to walk it was impossible for him to do so <sup>396</sup> for he was not used to wearing the armor. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these. I am not used to them." Then David took them off. <sup>397</sup> <sup>40</sup> Then David took his staff in his hand, and selected five smooth stones from the wadi (*or, stream*), placing them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag. <sup>398</sup> He held his sling <sup>399</sup> in his hand as he approached the Philistine.

<sup>41</sup> [The Philistine came, drawing near to David with his shield bearer ahead of him.] <sup>400</sup> <sup>42</sup> When the Philistine looked, seeing David, he was filled with scorn since David was just a youth with a ruddy but pleasant expression. <sup>43</sup> The Philistine said to

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<sup>391</sup> TEV: "you smart aleck you."

<sup>392</sup> It was not easy for David's older brothers to see that David received preference, as the one who played the lute for the king. This would surely be difficult for David's oldest brother who surely felt that the preference shown his youngest brother was humiliating to him.

<sup>393</sup> Hebrew: "let no man's heart fail him." LXX: "Let not my lord's heart fail him." NIV: "let no one lose heart on account of the Philistine. Your servant will go and fight him."

<sup>394</sup> Literally: "from his youth."

<sup>395</sup> Literally: "paw."

<sup>396</sup> LXX: "was unable to walk."

<sup>397</sup> Hebrew: "from himself." LXX: "και αφαιραουσιν αυτα."

<sup>398</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. LXX: "εις συλλαγην."

<sup>399</sup> A sling was a primitive weapon made of two leather thongs fastened a small leather pocket in which a stone would be placed. One thong was fastened to the wrist, the other held in the hand. This would be twirled around rapidly and let go, the stone then flying toward its intended mark. Skill was needed. The great example of the use of a sling is found in Judges 20:16.

<sup>400</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

David, “Am I a dog that you come after me with sticks?”<sup>401</sup> The Philistine cursed David, using the names of his gods. <sup>44</sup> The Philistine said to David, “Come near me and I will make your flesh carrion for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”<sup>45</sup> Then David said to the Philistine: “You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.. <sup>46</sup> Today the Lord will give you over into my hand <sup>402</sup> and I will strike you down and I will cut off your head, and I will give your dead body as carrion for the birds of the air and the animals of the field, and all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel! <sup>47</sup> Furthermore everyone who is assembled here will learn that the Lord does not save with the sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord’s and he will deliver you into my hand.”

<sup>48</sup> When the Philistine stood and came near to meet David, David ran toward him quickly to meet the Philistine. <sup>49</sup> David put his hand into his bag and taking out a stone slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead, the stone penetrating deeply into it. The Philistine fell face down, --- to the ground.

<sup>50</sup> [Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking the Philistine and killing him. David had no sword in his possession.]<sup>403</sup> <sup>51</sup> Then David ran and, standing over the Philistine he drew out the Philistine’s sword from its sheath and killed him, cutting off his head with the Philistine’s sword.<sup>404</sup> When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead they began to flee. <sup>52</sup> The people of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath<sup>405</sup> and to the gate of Ekron,<sup>406</sup> so that the wounded Philistines lay along the way from Sha-araim to as far as Gath and Ekron. <sup>53</sup> When Israelites returned from pursuing the Philistines they plundered their camp. <sup>54</sup> David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem,<sup>407</sup> but he placed the armor in his tent.

<sup>55</sup> [When Saul saw David going against the Philistines he asked Abner, the commander of the army, “Abner, whose son is that young man?” Abner replied, “Just as certainly as you are alive, O king, I do not know.” <sup>56</sup> The king said, “Ask who the stripling is.” <sup>57</sup> When David returned from the slaughter of the Philistines Abner brought him to Saul holding the head of the Philistine in his hand. <sup>58</sup> David said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” David replied, “I am the son of your servant, Jesse the Bethlehemite.”<sup>408</sup>

#### <CHAPTER 18>

<sup>1</sup> When David had finished speaking with Saul, the soul of Jonathan was immediately bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved David as dearly as he loved

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<sup>401</sup> The LXX adds in some Mss, “David said, ‘No, worse than a dog.’”

<sup>402</sup> LXX: “shut you up.”

<sup>403</sup> Some scholars feel this verse is a later interpolation, possibly as an explanatory gloss. In II Samuel 21:14 we are told that Elnathan killed Goliath. This is possibly based on the misreading of the Hebrew which would be translated, “Valley of Elah” or, in Hebrew: “Elnathan.” In Hebrew it can also easily be read as “the gift of Elah.” It is either that or there were two Goliaths. Scholars do not agree.

<sup>404</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 20c.

<sup>405</sup> Hebrew: “Gat.”

<sup>406</sup> LXX: “Ashkelon.”

<sup>407</sup> Since Jerusalem was not yet in the hands of the Israelites, but still ruled by the Jebusites, this is surely a later interpolation.

<sup>408</sup> Some scholars feel the verses 55 – 59 are a later interpolation.

himself. <sup>409</sup> <sup>2</sup> Saul took David [*into his service*] on that day and did not permit him to return to his parental home. <sup>3</sup> Jonathan made a pact <sup>410</sup> with David, (because he loved David as he loved his own soul).<sup>411</sup> <sup>4</sup> Jonathan divested himself of the robe he had been wearing and gave it to David along with his military clothing (*or, armor*) <sup>412</sup> including his sword, bow, and belt. <sup>5</sup> David went out [*with the troops*] and was successful. Whenever Saul sent him into battle he was the victor over the enemy warriors. This success was very pleasing to Saul and in the sight of all the population, including the servants on Saul's staff.]<sup>413</sup>

*E/ David's Marriage to Michal; 18:6 - 30*

<sup>6</sup> As they were returning home, David having killed the Philistine, {*Goliath*}, the women came out of the cities of Judah, <sup>414</sup> dancing to meet King Saul with timbrels, songs of joy and instrumental music. <sup>415</sup> <sup>7</sup> The women sang as they danced, chanting:

“Saul has struck down his thousand,  
but David has struck down his ten-thousand.”<sup>416</sup>

<sup>8</sup> These words made Saul furious for they were not to his liking. <sup>417</sup> He said, “They have ascribed ten-thousand to David while to me they have only ascribed a thousand. What more can be ascribed to him other than crowning him to be king?”<sup>418</sup> <sup>9</sup> From that moment on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

<sup>10</sup> [On the following day a spirit from God rested on Saul, and he fell into a frenzy <sup>419</sup> within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand. <sup>11</sup> Saul threw <sup>420</sup> his spear, thinking, ‘I am going to pin David to the wall.’ David eluded <sup>421</sup> [*the spear*] twice.]

<sup>12</sup> Saul feared David because the Lord was with David and had departed from Saul. <sup>13</sup> Saul then had David removed from his presence, making him the commander of a thousand warriors, to march at the head of his troops. <sup>422</sup> <sup>14</sup> David had success in

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<sup>409</sup> NAB: “By the time David had finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan was bound to David as if his life depended on it and he loved him as he loved himself.” TAN: “bound up.” BV: “in unison with.” Some scholars feel verses 1 – 5 are a later interpolation.

<sup>410</sup> REB: “a solemn compact.”

<sup>411</sup> REB: “for he saw that Jonathan had given his heart to David.”

<sup>412</sup> While the Hebrew word is usually translated as “clothing” the leading Hebrew – English Lexicon suggests that in this context and one other in the Hebrew Scriptures it should be translated as “armor.” A number of translators use the word “tunic.” The exchange of armor and/or clothing was a way of sealing a friendship. Cf. Homer *Iliad* III. 230.

<sup>413</sup> This concludes the possible interpolation 27:55 – 18:5. Verses 1 – 5 are omitted in the LXX with the exception of Codex Alexandrinus.

<sup>414</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. The LXX has: “dancing women from all the towns of Israel came out to meet David.”

<sup>415</sup> The Hebrew is not clear. A footnote in TAN has: “triangles and three stringed instruments.” Cf.: ANET p. 246c.

<sup>416</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 85c.

<sup>417</sup> Literally: “were evil in his eye.”

<sup>418</sup> TAN: “All that he lacks is kingship.” Verses 8, 10 – 12 are omitted in the LXX but are found in the Alexandrian text.

<sup>419</sup> NEB: footnote: “fell into a prophetic rapture.” Verse 11 hardly suggests that it is a ‘prophetic rapture’. Some scholars feel verses 10 – 11 are a later interpolation.

<sup>420</sup> With other vocalization (i.e. different vowel points) it would read: “raised.”

<sup>421</sup> Literally: “turned about.”

<sup>422</sup> Literally: “he went out and came before his troops.”

everything that was his responsibility for the Lord was with him. <sup>15</sup> When Saul realized the success of David he was awed by him. <sup>16</sup> Everyone in Israel and Judah loved David for he was among the people, going out and coming in to them.

<sup>17</sup> [Then Saul said to David, <sup>423</sup> “Here is my oldest daughter, Merab. I will give her to you to be your wife. In lieu of a dowry you must be valiant and fight battles for the Lord.” (Saul thought, ‘in that way the Philistines will kill him. Then I won’t need to do it myself, but the Philistines will receive the blame.’) <sup>424</sup> <sup>18</sup> David’s response to Saul was, “Who am I, and who are my ancestors, my parents, my family who live in Israel, that I should become the so-in-law of the king?” <sup>19</sup> However, when the time came that Saul’s daughter was to be given to David, she had already been given to Adriel, the Meholathite and she was his wife.]

<sup>20</sup> Saul’s daughter Michal had fallen in love with David and Saul was informed about it. He was pleased. <sup>425</sup> <sup>21</sup> (Saul thought, ‘I will give her to him for I am able to manipulate her to act as a snare to him and the power of the Philistines will be opposed to him (*or, kill him*).’ <sup>426</sup> Therefore for the second time Saul said to David, “You can become my son-in-law even though this is your second opportunity.” <sup>427</sup> <sup>22</sup> Saul convinced his courtiers to speak to David in private, saying, “You can be certain that the king is very fond of you, and all the courtiers love you. You really should become the king’s son-in-law.” <sup>23</sup> Saul’s courtiers spoke these words to David. <sup>428</sup> They also said, “Does it seem trivial to you to have the opportunity of being the son-in-law of the king? <sup>429</sup> <sup>24</sup> Saul’s courtiers told Saul some things David had said. <sup>25</sup> Saul then gave instructions as to what should be said. “The king does not want to receive a dowry of silver or gold. All he desires is that his enemies, the Philistines, are avenged by receiving, from you, one hundred fore-skins of his Philistine enemies.” (Saul’s idea was that in doing that David would be killed by the Philistines, thus saving face for Saul on the occasion of David’s being killed.) <sup>26</sup> When David received this word from the courtiers he agreed to it for thereby he could become the king’s son-in-law. Before the deadline set by Saul <sup>430</sup> <sup>27</sup> David went with his men and killed two-hundred <sup>431</sup> Philistines and gathered the foreskins which were brought to the king and were carefully counted in the presence of the king in order that this might be accepted by the king and David could become the king’s son-in-law. Saul then gave his daughter Michal to David as his wife. <sup>28</sup> Saul realized that the Lord and all of Israel loved David. <sup>29</sup> When Saul realized that Michal

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<sup>423</sup> Some scholars feel verses 17 – 19 are a later interpolation.

<sup>424</sup> Cf.: 17:25.

<sup>425</sup> Literally: “it was agreeable in his sight.”

<sup>426</sup> REB: “Let her be the bait that lures him to his death at the hands of the Philistines.”

<sup>427</sup> The Hebrew is very unclear.

<sup>428</sup> Literally: “spoke to his ears.”

<sup>429</sup> The reference is not clear in Hebrew. This might be translated as words spoken by David: “Do you think that marrying the daughter of a king is a matter of such little consequence that a poor man like myself is suitable?” David would have insufficient dowry to give to Saul for the hand of his daughter Michal. It was customary that the man would give his father-in-law a dowry that fit the position of the father-in-law prior to having the marriage take place.

<sup>430</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. Literally: “and the days had not expired.”

<sup>431</sup> Cf.: II Samuel 3:14 which says 100. Possibly the number is not an exaggeration. Possibly David mistrusted the word of Saul and felt Saul could not ‘back out’ if he had double the required number.

loved David and understood that the Lord was with him, he feared David even more. [Saul became David's constant enemy.<sup>432</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The commander of the Philistine army came out to do battle with David time and again. Each time David had increased success in these battles. Thus even the courtiers of Saul had great esteem for David.]

<CHAPTER 19>

VI. *The Rivalry Between David and Saul 19:1 – 20:11*

A. *An Attempt in Reconciliation 19:1 – 10*<sup>433</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Saul spoke to his son Jonathan and to all his courtiers that David should be put to death.<sup>434</sup> <sup>2</sup> Jonathan told David, "My father, Saul, wants to kill you, so be very careful that nothing will happen today. Go to a secret hiding place and stay there. <sup>3</sup> I will stand alongside my father, in the field where you are, and I will talk about you with my father. If I learn anything I will tell you!" <sup>4</sup> Jonathan spoke kindly about David to his father, Saul, saying: "You, O king, have no reason to be fearful of your servant David, for he has not sinned against you, and because his achievements have been a great benefit to you. <sup>5</sup> He was willing to risk his own life when he killed the Philistine and thereby provided a great victory for the entire country of Israel. You saw it and you rejoiced. Why do you wrong an innocent man, by killing David without any cause?" <sup>6</sup> Saul heeded Jonathan's plea and vowed: "As certainly as God is alive, I will not kill him!" <sup>7</sup> Jonathan called to David and brought David to Saul, telling David what had taken place, and David was restored to the position he had with Saul in the past.

<sup>8</sup> When warlike hostility again broke out David went to fight against the Philistines, and defeated them in a great slaughter and they were routed, fleeing before the army of Israel. <sup>9</sup> It was then that an evil spirit from<sup>435</sup> the Lord came on Saul as he was sitting<sup>436</sup> in his house, with his spear in his hand, while David was playing the lute. <sup>10</sup> Saul tried to pin David to the wall with his spear<sup>437</sup> but David eluded Saul's spear which stuck in the wall. David escaped in full flight.

<sup>11</sup> That night Saul sent a secret agent to David's house to spy on him that he might be killed in the morning but Michal sent a message to David, telling him, "If you do not save your life tonight you will be killed tomorrow."<sup>438</sup> <sup>12</sup> Michal let David down through a window and he fled, making his escape.<sup>439</sup> <sup>13</sup> Then Michal took an image<sup>440</sup> and laid it

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<sup>432</sup> Some scholars feel verses 29 - 30 are a later interpolation. The line could be translated, "Saul continued to be hostile to David."

<sup>433</sup> This passage reveals why, in spite of the attacks by Saul, David remained in Saul's court.

<sup>434</sup> REB: "Saul incited Jonathan, his son, and all his household to kill David."

<sup>435</sup> LXX: "of."

<sup>436</sup> LXX: "sleeping."

<sup>437</sup> Literally: "strike David to the wall." LXX: "to sink the spear into David."

<sup>438</sup> Some scholars feel this took place on the night of the marriage of David and Michal. Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation that really belongs after I Samuel 18:29.

<sup>439</sup> This implies that one wall of the house in which David & Michal lived was also the city wall and he then could be let down outside the city wall to make his escape.

<sup>440</sup> The Targum describes it as a "teraphim." A teraphim was a household god. The teraphim must still have played a part in the Hebrew religious experience at this time. It must have been sizable to give the impression that David was asleep in his bed.

on the bed, placing a pillow of goat hair <sup>441</sup>at the head and covered it all with his clothes. <sup>14</sup> When Saul sent one of his body guards (*or, agents*) to remove David all Michal said was, “He is sick.” <sup>15</sup> Saul then sent another guard (*or, agent*) to see David, saying: “Bring him to me, in his bed that I may kill him.” <sup>16</sup> When the guard (*or, agent*) came, discovering the image in bed with the pillow of goat hair, <sup>17</sup> Saul said to Michal, “Why have you deceived me in this manner? Why have you let my enemy escape?” Michal replied, “He said he would kill me if I did not help him escape.” <sup>442</sup>

*C. Saul at Ramah 19:18 – 24* <sup>443</sup>

<sup>18</sup> [David fled, and escaped, going to Samuel at Ramah, and informed him of all that Saul had done to him and he and Samuel then went to live in Naioth.<sup>444</sup> <sup>19</sup> Saul was informed that David was at Naioth. <sup>20</sup> Saul then sent guards (*or, agents*) to capture David but when they saw the assembled prophets speaking prophecies (*or, speaking in ecstasy*), and Samuel standing there, and when they heard what was happening, the spirit of God came on the guards (*or, agents*) and they also began to speak prophecies. <sup>21</sup> When this was told to Saul, he sent other guards (*or, agents*) and they also prophesied. Saul then sent a third group of guards (*or, agents*) and they joined in prophesying. <sup>22</sup> Finally Saul went to Ramah himself and came to the large well (*or, cistern*) at Seco <sup>445</sup> and he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?” Someone replied, “They are at Naioth in Ramah.” <sup>23</sup> He went on to Naioth in Ramah and the spirit of God also came upon him, and as he was going he was also prophesying. This continued until he arrived at Naioth in Ramah. <sup>24</sup> He also took off his clothes and prophesied in the presence of Samuel, and then lay <sup>446</sup> naked, the entire day and night. (This is how the saying began: “Is Saul also one of the prophets?”)

*<CHAPTER 20>* <sup>447</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Then [David fled Naioth in Ramah] <sup>448</sup> and came into the presence of Jonathan and said, “What have I done? What is my crime? Of what am I guilty? What has been done to your father that he is trying to kill me?” <sup>2</sup> Jonathan replied, “None at all! <sup>449</sup> You will not die! Be assured of this --- my father doesn’t do anything without disclosing it to me. <sup>450</sup> Why should my father hide anything from me?” <sup>3</sup> David replied, “Your father is well aware that I have found favor with you and he assumes, ‘Jonathan dare not know this for he would be truly grieved.’ As surely as God is alive and you are alive, there is but one step between me and death.” <sup>4</sup> Then Jonathan told David, “Whatever you desire <sup>451</sup> I will do.” <sup>5</sup> David responded, “Remember: tomorrow is the new moon <sup>452</sup> and I will

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<sup>441</sup> The Hebrew is questionable. Possibly it means: “placing goat hair as a disguise on the teraphim.” LXX: “the liver of a goat.” NRSV: “a net of goat’s hair.” NASB: “a quilt of goat hair.”

<sup>442</sup> Michal evaded her father’s question.

<sup>443</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>444</sup> The meaning of Naioth is unclear. There does not seem to be any place with that name. Possibly it was a camp of the prophets. Other scholars feel it is the name of an area in the city of Ramah.

<sup>445</sup> LXX: “the cistern of the threshing floor on the bare height.”

<sup>446</sup> Literally: “fell.”

<sup>447</sup> Some scholars feel this chapter should follow 19:8 - 10

<sup>448</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>449</sup> Literally: “forbid.”

<sup>450</sup> LXX: “and will not uncover my ear without discussing it with me.”

<sup>451</sup> Literally: “your soul says.”

<sup>452</sup> This celebration was commonly related to the Sabbath.



be expected to be seated at the table with your father, the king, without fail. However, let me hide myself in the field until the evening of the third day. <sup>6</sup> If your father misses me at all, say, ‘David earnestly asked permission of me to run to his city, Bethlehem, for there is to be a community <sup>453</sup> sacrifice there for his entire family.’ <sup>454</sup> <sup>7</sup> If he says ‘Good’ we will know that it is well with me, but if he is angry we will understand that he wants to kill me. <sup>8</sup> In the light of this be kind in dealing with me, <sup>455</sup> for we have united in a sacred covenant. <sup>456</sup> But: if there is guilt --- kill me yourself! Why should I be brought to your father to be killed?’ <sup>9</sup> Jonathan said, “Don’t even think such thoughts! If I knew that my father was determined to kill you, I would tell you, wouldn’t I?” <sup>10</sup> David then said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father speaks roughly about me?” <sup>11</sup> [Jonathan replied, <sup>457</sup> “Come with me. We will go out into the field.”

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan then told David, “The Lord, the God of Israel, is our witness: <sup>458</sup> when I have discovered my father’s feelings, (that will be at about this time tomorrow or on the third day) be assured that if he has a good reaction toward you, I will surely report this to you! <sup>459</sup> <sup>13</sup> However, if it is evident that my father seeks to harm you, let the Lord do the same to me, if I do not inform you immediately so that you can flee safely. May the Lord be with you, just as he has been with my father. <sup>14</sup> If I am still alive show me the faithfulness of the Lord that I might not die. <sup>15</sup> Do not sever your loyalty with me <sup>460</sup> when the Lord cuts off all the enemies of David from the face of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Do not let the name ‘Jonathan’ be severed from David. <sup>461</sup> May the Lord provide that David is able to take vengeance on his enemies.” <sup>17</sup> Jonathan then renewed his pledge with <sup>462</sup> David because of his love for David, for he loved him as he loved himself. <sup>18</sup> Jonathan then said, “Tomorrow is the new moon and you will be missed since your seat will remain empty.] <sup>19</sup> On the third day you will be missed even more. At that time go to the place where you have hidden in the past, <sup>463</sup> and remain hidden there, behind the rock pile. <sup>464</sup> <sup>20</sup> I will come and shoot three arrows to the side, as if I was shooting at a target. <sup>465</sup> <sup>21</sup> Then I will tell the lad who accompanies me, ‘Go. Find the arrows.’ <sup>466</sup> If I then say to him: ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you. Take them,’ then you can come out of hiding for you can be reassured that it is safe and there is no danger. <sup>467</sup> <sup>22</sup> But if I say to the youth, ‘Look, the arrows are behind you’ --- then you must leave, for the Lord has sent you

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<sup>453</sup> LXX: “sacrifice of days.”

<sup>454</sup> David’s proposal is a deliberate breach of etiquette.

<sup>455</sup> This phrase has a difficult word to translate. Possibly, “Keep the faith” would be a suitable translation.

<sup>456</sup> Literally: “a covenant of the Lord.”

<sup>457</sup> Verses 11 – 18 are considered by some scholars to be a later interpolation.

<sup>458</sup> “Witness” is omitted in Hebrew.

<sup>459</sup> The Hebrew in verses 12 – 16 is rather uncertain.

<sup>460</sup> The Hebrew is very unclear. Possibly it says: “do not sever the loyalty with my father’s house.”

<sup>461</sup> So: LXX. The Hebrew is obscure. Literally: “from the earth. Then Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David.”

<sup>462</sup> LXX: “ομυσι τω.” Vulgate: “deperare.”

<sup>463</sup> Both the Hebrew and LXX are obscure.

<sup>464</sup> Hebrew: “the stone Ezel.”

<sup>465</sup> The Hebrew sentence construction is unclear.

<sup>466</sup> LXX: “η οχιζα.”

<sup>467</sup> Literally: “there is nothing.”

away. <sup>23</sup> Now concerning the matter about which we have spoken, be assured that the love between us is for ever.”

<sup>24</sup> [*At the appropriate time*] <sup>468</sup> David hid himself in the field when the king sat down to eat. <sup>25</sup> The king sat on his usual seat, the one by the wall, Jonathan sitting opposite the king, <sup>469</sup> Abner [*the commander of the armies of Israel*] was seated beside the king.

<sup>26</sup> On [*the first*] occasion Saul made no comment about David’s absence. He assumed that something had occurred which made him ceremonially unclean. <sup>470</sup> <sup>27</sup> On the second day, however, (the day after the new moon) David’s place was again empty. Saul said to Jonathan, “Why is the son of Jesse <sup>471</sup> not here for the meal? He was also not here yesterday.” <sup>28</sup> Jonathan replied, “David earnestly asked permission to be excused that he might go to Bethlehem. <sup>29</sup> He said, ‘Let me go <sup>472</sup> to Bethlehem for my family is holding a sacrifice and my brother has commanded me to be there. If I have found favor in your sight permit me to go away and be with my brothers.’ <sup>473</sup> It is for this reason that he is not now at the royal table.” <sup>30</sup> Then Saul’s anger flared up <sup>474</sup> against Jonathan and he said, “You son of a perverse and rebellious woman. <sup>475</sup> I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse, and doing so brings shame on yourself as well as bringing shame on the mother who bore you. <sup>476</sup> <sup>31</sup> As long as the son of Jesse is alive <sup>477</sup> you will not become the king, nor will your kingdom be established. Now! Go out and get him for he will surely be put to death!” <sup>32</sup> Jonathan then answered his father, Saul, saying: “Why do you want to put him to death? What has he done?” <sup>33</sup> Saul hurled <sup>478</sup> his spear at Jonathan, intending to kill him. Then Jonathan was convinced that his father wanted to put David to death. <sup>34</sup> Jonathan rose from the table filled with fierce anger, and he ate no food on the second day of the month because he was grieved for David and because his father had disgraced him.

<sup>35</sup> In the morning Jonathan went out to the field to the appointed place where David was hidden. The lad was with him. <sup>36</sup> He told the lad, “Run and find the arrows I am about to shoot.” As the boy ran he shot arrows far beyond him. <sup>37</sup> When the youth came near the place where Jonathan had shot the arrows he called out to him, “Didn’t the arrows fly further than where you are?” <sup>38</sup> Jonathan then shouted to the lad, “Hurry!

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<sup>468</sup> Literally: “When the new moon came.”

<sup>469</sup> So: Versions. Hebrew: “stood up.” LXX: “και προειφθασεν.”

<sup>470</sup> Since this was to be a religious feast those who participated were to be ceremonially clean. This meant, among other things that there had been no sexual relations preceding the feast. A rite of purification would be needed to be able to partake.

<sup>471</sup> Saul’s hatred for David is so great that he will not even speak his name.

<sup>472</sup> Literally: “send me away.”

<sup>473</sup> Assuming that this was not a ploy: since David’s brother would be in charge apparently the father, Jesse, was no longer living. The REV explains the situation in this manner: “Let me slip away and see my brothers.”

<sup>474</sup> LXX: “σφυδρα.”

<sup>475</sup> REB: “You son of a crooked and rebellious mother! I know perfectly well that you have made a friend of the son of Jesse only to bring shame on yourself and dishonor on your mother.” NEB: “you son of a crooked and unfaithful mother.” LB: “you son of a bitch.”

<sup>476</sup> Literally: “shame on her nakedness.” To shame a person by way of his mother is a common method of abuse.

<sup>477</sup> Literally: “all the days which...”

<sup>478</sup> LXX: “και επηρεν.”

Don't dawdle!" When the lad had gathered the arrows he returned to his master. <sup>39</sup> (The lad didn't realize anything else was taking place. Only David and Jonathan were aware of the plan.) <sup>40</sup> [Jonathan gave his weapons to the lad and told him, "Bring these back into the city." <sup>479</sup> <sup>41</sup> As soon as the lad had gone David rose from his hiding place behind <sup>480</sup> the stone pile and bowed low (*or, prayed*) as he wept and Jonathan joined in the weeping. <sup>481</sup> <sup>42</sup> [H. 21:1] Then Jonathan said to David: "Go in peace for we both have vowed in the name of the Lord, saying: 'The Lord will be with <sup>482</sup> you and me, and with your and my descendants.'" ] Then David left and Jonathan went into the city.

<CHAPTER 21>

VII. The Civil War between Saul and David 21:1 – 26:25 <sup>483</sup>

A. David at Nob 21:1 - 10

<sup>1</sup> [H. 2] Then David came to Nob <sup>484</sup> to Ahimelek the [*chief*] priest, <sup>485</sup> and Ahimelek came to meet David, trembling <sup>486</sup> as he asked, "Why are you here alone? Is there no one with you?" <sup>2</sup> David told the priest, Ahimelek, "The king has made me responsible for a matter, telling me, 'Tell no one about your mission and the instructions which you have received, which I have ordered you to carry out, and having given you this commission you will meet at a specific location.' <sup>487</sup> <sup>3</sup> Now then --- what have you on hand [*i.e. food*]? Give me five loaves of bread or whatever supply you have." <sup>4</sup> The priest told David, "I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread (*usually called showbread, or, the bread of the Presence*) <sup>488</sup> provided that the young men have kept themselves from women." <sup>5</sup> David replied, "Assuredly women have been kept away (*or, segregated*) from us even it is a simple expedition. The young men have had no sexual relations and are ceremonially clean. <sup>489</sup> <sup>6</sup> Then the priest gave David the holy bread of the Presence which was removed from the presence of the Lord, to be replaced with hot bread when the old bread was removed.

<sup>479</sup> Some scholars feel that 40 - 42a are a later interpolation.

<sup>480</sup> Literally: "from beside the south."

<sup>481</sup> JB: "till David could weep no more." Others have "wept profusely but David wept the most" or some variant thereof.

<sup>482</sup> Literally: "between."

<sup>483</sup> Some scholars feel this chapter should follow 19:17 and that David fled to Nob on his wedding night. This is based on the Talmud.

<sup>484</sup> The location of Nob is in the tribal area of Benjamin, not far from Gibeah.

<sup>485</sup> Ahimelech served as the chief priest of the sanctuary, and had a sizable number of priests under him.

<sup>486</sup> TAN: "in alarm."

<sup>487</sup> LXX: "διαμεγαρτυρημαι σ συνεψολανην." LXX literally: "have charged my servants to be in the place called the truthfulness of God (*or, Phallani Maemoni*)" Another possible translation might be: "The king gave me a faithful word" at the beginning of the sentence. The Hebrew is unclear.

<sup>488</sup> This bread was placed in the tabernacle when it just came out of the oven. It was replaced regularly with fresh hot bread. The older loaves could then be eaten by the priests. Those who ate the bread had to be ceremonially clean to participate.

<sup>489</sup> David insists that sex is taboo for his soldiers. The word which has been translated as "ceremoniously clean" in Hebrew literally says "vessels." The precise meaning is in question. BV: "The young men's kits have been consecrated. Although this is a secular mission their kits will render it set apart." Other translators imply that the meaning is that of a male body part.

7 (Now a certain servant of Saul's observed this, being present, having gone before the Lord in the house of worship. His name was Doeg, the Edomite, who was in charge of David's herdsmen.)<sup>490</sup>

8 David said to Ahimelech, "Don't you have a spear or two on hand here? I have not taken a spear with me, or any weapon, because it was extremely urgent that I leave in a hurry." 9 The priest said, "The sword of the Philistine Goliath, whom you killed in the valley of Elah is here, wrapped in a cloth and is behind the ephod."<sup>491</sup> If you want it you can take it. However, there is no other weapon, only that one." David said, "There is no weapon that compares with it. Give it to me."

*B. David at Gath 21:10 – 15*<sup>492</sup>

10 [David rose and was even able to escape from Saul. He went to Achiah, the king of Gath. 11 The courtiers of Achish asked Achish, "Isn't this David, the king of Israel? Didn't the people say to one another, 'Saul has killed thousands and David has killed ten-thousands.'" 12 The significance of these words was clearly understood by David and he became exceedingly fearful of Achish, the king of Gath. 13 Because of this, when in the presence of Philistines,<sup>493</sup> he changed his behavior and scribbled (*or, carved marks*) on the double doors<sup>494</sup> of the city gate. He also drooled, having his saliva run down his beard.<sup>495</sup> 14 Achish then told his courtiers, "Don't you see that this man is mad? Why did you bring him to me? 15 Do I have a shortage of those who are demented? Is that why you brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Is it necessary for me to provide a safe haven for this fellow?"

<CHAPTER 22>

*C. Massacre of the Priests of Nob 22:1 - 25*

1 David left there and escaped to the land of [*or, the cave of*] Adullam,<sup>496</sup> and when his brothers and his paternal extended family heard it, they went down there to be with him. 2 All those people who were in debt and those who were despondent<sup>497</sup> were drawn to him and he became their captain. There were about four-hundred men who joined him.<sup>498</sup>

3 David went from there to Mizpeh in Moab and spoke to the king of Moab, saying, "Please let my parents stay with you until I know what God will do to me."<sup>499</sup> 4 (He then left them<sup>500</sup> with the king of Moab and they remained with him during the

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<sup>490</sup> Doeg later betrays David.

<sup>491</sup> "Ephod" is omitted in the LXX.

<sup>492</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

<sup>493</sup> JB: "when their eyes were upon him he played the madman."

<sup>494</sup> LXX: "he pounded on the doors, made extravagant gestures with his hands and fell against the gate."

<sup>495</sup> Madmen (lunatics) were regarded with special awe because they were possessed by spirits.

<sup>496</sup> The name means "stronghold." It is sometimes identified as Adema, about 12 miles south of Bethlehem, at the edge of the Shephelah (the foot hills between the Philistine plain and the Judean Highland).

<sup>497</sup> Literally: "bitter in soul." TEV: "oppressed, in debt, and dissatisfied." JB: "anyone who had a grievance gathered around him."

<sup>498</sup> LXX literally: "those who gathered around David were all those who were in distress, those who were in debt, and all those whose spirits were turbulent. He was there with four hundred men."

<sup>499</sup> Verses 3 – 5 interrupt the narrative. David had a Moabite great grand-mother. Cf.: The Book of Ruth. This, however, was a weak claim to be the basis for requesting a favor from the king of Moab.

<sup>500</sup> LXX: "ο λεθετο αυτους."

entire time that David was at the stronghold.) <sup>5</sup> The prophet Gad said to David, “Do not remain in the stronghold! Leave and go to the land of Judah.” David therefore departed, going to the forest of Horath.

<sup>6</sup> (Saul learned where David was located and the number of men who were with him. Saul was sitting under a tamarisk tree in the highlands of Gibeah, spear in hand, with his officers around him.) <sup>7</sup> Saul said to his courtiers who surrounded him, “Listen to me, you men of Benjamin: Will the son of Jesse give each of you fields and vineyards? Will he make each one of you a commander of thousands or a commander of hundreds? <sup>8</sup> Is that why each one of you has conspired against me (*or, no one cares about me*)? Do you all want to be with him today? <sup>501</sup> No one discloses to me when my son and the son of Jesse together prepare an ambush for me and is lying in wait <sup>502</sup> for me today.” <sup>9</sup> Then Doeg the Edomite <sup>503</sup> said to Saul, “I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub. <sup>10</sup> Ahimelech inquired of the Lord for him. <sup>504</sup> He also gave him provisions and the Philistine Goliath’s sword. “

<sup>11</sup> Then the king summoned Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his ancestral family --- the priests who were at Nob, they also all came into the presence of the king. <sup>12</sup> Saul said, “Now listen, you son of Ahitub!” He replied, “At your service, my Lord.” <sup>13</sup> Saul then said, “Why have you conspired against me? You and the son of Jesse, for you gave him bread, a sword, and have inquired of God concerning him so that he might ambush me. <sup>505</sup> That is the situation today!” <sup>14</sup> Then Ahimelech replied to the king: “Who among all who are present here has continuously been as faithful to you as David, your son-in-law. Who has been obedient to all of your orders as your army officer and body guard, one who is highly regarded within the realm? <sup>15</sup> [*Do you think that*] today is the first time that I have inquired of the Lord concerning him? <sup>506</sup> No! Do not impute anything, O king, to me, your servant, nor to my ancestral house, for I know nothing about this --- whether it be important or unimportant. I know nothing about it!” <sup>507</sup> <sup>16</sup> The king answered: “Ahimelech: you will die --- you and your ancestral family!” <sup>17</sup> The king then spoke to a body guard <sup>508</sup> who was standing near by: “Kill the priests of the Lord because they are also loyal to David and know that he has fled and did not inform me.” The body guard, however, refused to kill the priests of the Lord. <sup>18</sup> The king then spoke to Doeg, “You are to kill the priests!” Doeg the Edomite then turned and began to assassinate the priests. On that day he assassinated eighty-five priests who were qualified to wear the ephod. <sup>509</sup> <sup>19</sup> [He also destroyed the citizens of the city of Nob:

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<sup>501</sup> Saul’s message is based on two ploys: 1. Boasting about his concern for his courtiers. 2. Calling for sympathy for him-self.

<sup>502</sup> LXX: “εις εχθρον.”

<sup>503</sup> NRSV inserts an explanatory gloss: “who was in charge of Saul’s servants.”

<sup>504</sup> Chapter 21 makes no mention of this. David simply asks for bread and a sword.

<sup>505</sup> So: LXX. Hebrew: “he has risen against me.”

<sup>506</sup> An alternative translation could be: “Have I just begun today to inquire of God for him?” or “Have I inquired of God for him today?”

<sup>507</sup> Ahimelech is claiming that whatever he did was done in good faith.

<sup>508</sup> Literally: “runner.” It was the duty of the body guards to run ahead of the king’s chariot to make sure it was safe for the king to pass, thus that title for a royal body guard in Hebrew.

<sup>509</sup> LXX: “bearers of the ephod.” The ephod was sometimes called “the sacred apron.”

assassinating men, women, young children and nursing babies, oxen, donkeys and sheep. All were killed!] <sup>510</sup>

<sup>20</sup> One of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, whose name was Abiathar escaped, fleeing to David. <sup>21</sup> Abiathar told David that Saul had assassinated the priests of the Lord. <sup>22</sup> David replied to Abiathar, “I knew, when Doeg the Edomite saw me, that he would tell Saul. I am responsible <sup>511</sup> for the death of all the persons in your father’s house. <sup>512</sup> <sup>23</sup> Stay with me, do not fear, for the one who seeks to assassinate me has also attempted to assassinate you. <sup>513</sup> You will find safety in my presence!”

### <CHAPTER 23>

#### 2. *The Relief of Keilah 25:1 - 13*

<sup>1</sup> David was informed that the Philistines were at war with Keilah: “Take note! The Philistines have begun an assault on Keilah, <sup>514</sup> and were robbing the threshing floor.” <sup>515</sup> <sup>2</sup> Because of this David inquired of the Lord: “Should I go to attack the Philistines?” The Lord’s reply to David was: “Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” <sup>3</sup> David’s men, however, said to him, “Be aware --- we are afraid just being here in Judah. We would be much more fearful if we were to go to Keilah to engage in battle against the Philistines.” <sup>516</sup> <sup>4</sup> David again inquired of the Lord, and the Lord’s answer was: “Go down to Keilah, and attack, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.” <sup>5</sup> David and his army then went down to Keilah, waging war against the Philistines <sup>517</sup> and confiscated their cattle and made a great slaughter [*of the Philistine army*], thus rescuing <sup>518</sup> the inhabitants of Keilah. <sup>519</sup>

<sup>6</sup> When Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David in Keilah, he brought with him the ephod. <sup>520</sup> <sup>7</sup> When Saul was informed that David had gone to Keilah Saul said: “God has placed David under my power. <sup>521</sup> He has trapped himself in a walled town with fortified gates.” <sup>8</sup> Saul mustered all his people for war. They were to besiege Keilah and thereby be enabled to capture David. <sup>9</sup> David was aware that Saul had been plotting

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<sup>510</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation. Saul had cut off relations with Samuel. They had quarreled and he attempted to destroy the priesthood who had sought to be faithful. His downfall was imminent.

<sup>511</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. LXX: “εἰμι αἰνῶς.”

<sup>512</sup> David realized that day that what had been witnessed would be used against him and be used by Doeg to establish a better position among the advisors of Saul.

<sup>513</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>514</sup> Keilah was modern day Kirbet Qba, about 3 miles east of Adullam.

<sup>515</sup> The Philistines, as was often done in those days, waged war just as the harvest was being completed. To rob a threshing floor involved taking the newly threshed grain, thus causing the enemy great loss of grain for people and animals. The enemy was reduced in power by starvation. LXX: “rob and trample the threshing floor.”

<sup>516</sup> LXX: “go after the spoils of the Philistines.”

<sup>517</sup> LXX adds: “and they (*the Philistines*) fled.”

<sup>518</sup> So: LXX.

<sup>519</sup> REB: “inflicted a heavy defeat on them, and relieved the inhabitants of Keilah.”

<sup>520</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. This last phrase is thought by some scholars to be an explanatory gloss which later came to be included in the Hebrew text but possibly not in the best place. Verse 2 would have been a better place to insert this explanatory gloss.

<sup>521</sup> Literally: “made a stranger of him” or, “alienated him.” NAB: “God has put him in my grasp.”

LXX: “πεπρακεν, ο εξειδωμεν.” Vulgate: “tradidit.”

<sup>522</sup> evil against him and said to the priest, Abiathar, “Bring the ephod.” <sup>523</sup> <sup>10</sup> David then said, “O Lord, God of Israel, I, who am your servant, have become aware that Saul is planning to come to Keilah in order to destroy the city because of me. <sup>11</sup> Will the people of Keilah turn me over to Saul’s power? <sup>524</sup> O Lord, God of Israel, I beg you to inform your servant!” The Lord replied, “He will come down.” <sup>12</sup> David then asked, “Will the people of Keilah betray me, handing me over to Saul’s power?” The Lord replied, “They will betray you.” <sup>13</sup> Then David and his men who numbered about six-hundred, <sup>525</sup> left Keilah and disbanded, each one going where he pleased. Saul was informed that David had escaped from Keilah and he halted his pursuit. <sup>526</sup>

*E. The Treachery of the Ziphites 23:14 – 24:22* <sup>527</sup>

<sup>14</sup> David remained in his desert stronghold in the hill country of Ziph. <sup>528</sup> and was pursued by Saul every day but the Lord did not permit David to succumb to Saul’s power. <sup>529</sup>

<sup>15</sup> David was fearful that because he had fled from Keilah Saul had come to kill him there in the desert stronghold of Ziph at a site called Horesh. <sup>16</sup> It was then that Jonathan, Saul’s son, went to meet David at Horesh and to encourage David, for he was under the protection of God. <sup>17</sup> Jonathan said, “Do not be afraid for my father. Saul’s power will not overcome you. You will become the king over Israel and I will be at your side. Be assured: My father is aware of that!” <sup>18</sup> The two of them pledged <sup>530</sup> in the presence of the Lord. David remained in Horesh but Jonathan went back home. <sup>19</sup> The Ziphites then came to Saul at Gibeah, and said, “David is now hiding among the fortresses of Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, south of Jeshimon! <sup>531</sup> <sup>20</sup> Come down, O king, when-ever you want and we will personally give him into your hand. <sup>21</sup> Saul said, “May God grant that you are blessed for you have had compassion on me. <sup>22</sup> Go to make double sure exactly where he is and who has seen him there, for I have learned that he is crafty enough to outwit me. <sup>23</sup> Be sure to locate all the places where he hides out and return to me with all the information. Then I will join you and if he is in this land I will find him even if I need to go through all of the towns of Judah, one at a time.” <sup>24</sup> They left, going in advance of Saul.

David and his men were in the wilderness (*or, desert*) of Maon, in the Arabah that is to the south of Jeshimon. <sup>532</sup> <sup>25</sup> Saul and his raiders went to find David. David,

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<sup>522</sup> LXX: “was not silent about.”

<sup>523</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 448d.

<sup>524</sup> Scholars feel that the ephod could only answer one question at a time, answering only “Yes” or “No.” The LXX, in one mss has: “will the place be besieged? The Lord replied, “It will be besieged.” The translation above is based on the MT. LXX has: “Will the place be besieged? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard?”

<sup>525</sup> LXX: “four hundred.”

<sup>526</sup> Verse 13 is omitted in the LXX.

<sup>527</sup> This section is a repeat of chapter 26 which is more vivid in its explanation and is assumed to be the earlier version by scholars.

<sup>528</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>529</sup> LXX: “David perceived that Saul went out to hunt for him. David was in the dry mountain area of New Ziph.” “New” is perhaps a misreading of the Hebrew word “**Xrh.**”

<sup>530</sup> NAB: “made a joint agreement.”

<sup>531</sup> There are many uncertainties in verses 19 – 28.

<sup>532</sup> It is not clear to scholars where David was. The two locations that are mentioned are quite a distance apart.

however, was warned and he went down to the wilderness (*or, desert*) of Maon. When Saul learned that he pursued David in the region of Maon. <sup>26</sup> Saul and his troops were on one side of the mountain and David and his men on the opposite side, hurrying to get away from Saul who was trying to outflank David. <sup>533</sup> <sup>27</sup> Just at that time a runner came to Saul, saying; “Hurry! The Philistines have made a raid on (*or, invasion of*) the land.” <sup>28</sup> As a result Saul gave up pursuing David and went to oppose the Philistines. Because of this the site is known as “The Rock of Escape (*or, the Rock of Division*).” <sup>534</sup> <sup>29</sup> [H. 24:1] David went up from there and lived in the stronghold of En-Gedi, (*or, fountain of the kid*). <sup>535</sup>

<CHAPTER 24>

<sup>1</sup> [H. 2] When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines he was informed: “Be advised, David is in the wilderness of En-Gedi. <sup>2</sup> [H. 3] Then Saul took three-thousand men selected from all of Israel, and went to hunt out David and his men in the crags of the Wild Goat Rocks. <sup>536</sup> <sup>3</sup> [H. 4] Beside the road was a sheep fold <sup>537</sup> and a cave near by. Saul entered the cave to relieve himself. <sup>538</sup> David and his men were concealed, sitting in the innermost recesses of the cave. <sup>4</sup> [H. 5] The men with David said, “This is the day about which the Lord spoke to you when he said, ‘Be aware, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you will do to him what seems proper to you.’” Unobserved, David rose and stealthily cut off the corner of the skirt of Saul’s robe. <sup>539</sup> <sup>5</sup> [H. 6] Later David was filled with remorse because he had cut off the corner of Saul’s skirt. <sup>6</sup> [H. 7] He spoke to his men, saying: “I have done what is forbidden by the Lord for I have cut off the corner of the skirt of my Lord’s anointed, thus showing antagonism toward him.” <sup>7</sup> [H. 8] Through these words David persuaded <sup>540</sup> the men that they should not attack Saul. Saul had stood up and left the cave, going his way.

<sup>8</sup> [H. 9] Later David also stood up and left the cave, calling to Saul: “My lord the king!” When Saul looked back, David bowed lowly, <sup>541</sup> doing obeisance. <sup>9</sup> [H. 10] David said to Saul, “Why do you pay attention to the words of those men who keep saying, ‘David intends to harm you?’” <sup>10</sup> [H. 11] Today you will become aware that the Lord goes with you for, today, in the cave, I was urged to kill you, <sup>542</sup> but I <sup>543</sup> spared <sup>544</sup> you, for I

<sup>533</sup> CB: “David and his men were on one side of the mountain; and David was in desperate straits to escape from Saul, for Saul and his men were at the point of surrounding David and his men to seize them.”

<sup>534</sup> LXX: “the divided rock.” The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>535</sup> The modern name is “Am Jidi.” It is located on the steep western slope of the Dead Sea.

<sup>536</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. The site is not known.

<sup>537</sup> LXX: “flocks of sheep.” It is possible that there was a rock wall with a gate in the wall that formed the cave into a sheep fold. Jesus speaks of the shepherd being the “door to the sheep fold” which means the shepherd slept in the doorway, thus being ‘the door.’ Some scholars feel “sheep fold” was a euphemism for a place where one would be able to relieve oneself.

<sup>538</sup> LXX: “prepare himself.” Hebrew: “cover his feet.”

<sup>539</sup> The text of verses 4 – 7 appear to be damaged. There are several attempts by scholars to make improvements in the readability and understanding of the text but there are no agreements as to a solution. LXX: “took the skirt of his garment secretly.”

<sup>540</sup> LXX: “συνεκαλεσεν.” NRSV: “scolded his men severely.”

<sup>541</sup> LXX: “stooped.”

<sup>542</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>543</sup> Hebrew: “you.” LXX: “και ουκ ηβουληθην.”

<sup>544</sup> Literally: “my eye spared you.” “Showed you pity” would be a good translation.



did not move my hand against you since you are the Lord's anointed. <sup>11</sup> [H. 12] Look, my father! Here is the corner of the skirt of your robe in my hand! By virtue of my simply cutting off the corner of your skirt when I had the opportunity to kill you declares that I am not intending to kill you and to show you that there is no wrong or treason within me even though you hunt me with the intention of killing me! <sup>12</sup> [H.13] May the Lord judge between us --- the Lord will cause this to be dealt with correctly for I will not raise my hand against you!. <sup>13</sup> [H. 14] This is just as the proverb states:

‘Out of wickedness comes wickedness.  
One wrong begets a second wrong.’

However, I will not raise my hand against you. After whose trail is the king of Israel seeking? <sup>14</sup> [H. 15] After whom is the king in hot pursuit? Are you pursuing a dead dog? Are you pursuing a single flea? <sup>15</sup> [H. 16] The Lord will be the judge and his sentence will be correct. He will hear my cause and will deliver me from your hand.”

<sup>16</sup> [H. 17] When David had finished speaking Saul said, “Is that your voice, my son, David?” Saul then began to wail loudly. <sup>17</sup> [H. 18] He then spoke to David, saying: “You are more righteous than I. You have trusted me generously but I have treated you badly. I have repaid you with evil. <sup>545</sup> <sup>18</sup> [H. 19] You have made plain to me today that you have been good to me. You have shown me that you have treated me generously for you did not kill me when the Lord saw fit to put me in your presence. <sup>19</sup> [H. 20] If a man discovers his enemy --- will he let him escape in safety? <sup>546</sup> May the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me to-day. <sup>20</sup> [H. 21] You can be confident that you will become the king and royal succession will be established! <sup>21</sup> [H. 22] Make a vow that you will not cut off my descendants who come after me, and that you will not destroy either my name or that of my father and his ancestors.” <sup>22</sup> [H. 23] David made the desired vow to Saul. Then Saul went to his home and David went up to the wilderness (*or, desert*) stronghold.

## <CHAPTER 25>

### F. The Death of Samuel and the Events that Follow 25:1 – 44

#### A. Samuel's Death 25:1

<sup>1</sup> [Samuel died and all Israel assembled to mourn for him. He was then buried at his home in Ramah.] <sup>547</sup> After that David went down to the wilderness (*or, desert*) of Paran. <sup>548</sup>

#### B. The Narrative of David and Abigail 25:2 - 44

<sup>2</sup> There was a very rich man in Maon who possessed land at Carmel <sup>549</sup> who had three-thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his flock at Carmel. <sup>550</sup> <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> NEB: “Your goodness to me has passed all bounds.”

<sup>546</sup> Literally: “on a good road.”

<sup>547</sup> Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation. LXX: “Armuthaim” by all but one mss which has “Ramah.”

<sup>548</sup> This was the home territory of Ishmael. Genesis 21:21 The location does not fit with ‘The Narrative of David and Abigail’. Scholars feel the word “Maon” would be more appropriate.

<sup>549</sup> David and his followers were making their living in the area of Maon. There was a long standing procedure called “the Law of the Brotherhood” in which groups would guard and keep peace in their ‘territory’ and expect gifts as compensation for their protective services. Since there was no police force in Israel they provided a much needed service. This was, in effect, the basis for the conversation between David’s representatives and Nabal.

<sup>550</sup> Sheep shearing was a festival time, a time when the owners of their flocks were expected to be generous and hospitable.

(The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. She was a person of great intelligence and ravishingly beautiful. Her husband was surly and mean: a Calebite.)<sup>551</sup> 4 While in the wilderness David learned that he was shearing his sheep. 5 David said to the young men, “Go up to Carmel and go to Nabal, greeting him, for me.”<sup>552</sup> 6 Greet him in this manner: “Peace be to you, to your house, and to all your possessions.”<sup>553</sup> 7 We understand that you are shearing sheep. Now: your shepherds have been among us and we did not molest (*or, insult*) them in any way, nor was anything taken from them while they were in the Carmel area. 8 Ask your young men and they will assure you that this is true. Because of this let my young men find favor in your sight for we have come on a feast day.<sup>554</sup> Please make a contribution to these your servants and to your son, David, of whatever you have on hand.”

9 When David’s men arrived they spoke to Nabal in the exact manner in which they had been instructed by David. 10 Nabal’s answer to David’s servants was: “Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many subservient people these days who are breaking away from their masters! 11 Am I to take the bread and meat<sup>555</sup> that I have for my shearers away from them?” 12 Then David’s men retraced their steps and told David what had taken place. 13 David told his men, “Each one of you buckle up your swords!” Every single man buckled up his sword. About four-hundred men followed David while two-hundred remained with the baggage.

14 One of Nabal’s young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife,<sup>556</sup> “It is important for you to know that David sent messengers from the wilderness to Nabal to greet our master and he loudly rebuffed them.”<sup>557</sup> 15 In spite of this the men were very kind to us and have not molested us in any way, taking nothing from the flock during the entire time we were in the area. 16 They protected us<sup>558</sup> both night and day during the entire time we were pasturing the sheep among them. 17 Now then: consider what should be done for it seems that evil will surely befall our master and also us, --- really all of us --- because he is so ill mannered.<sup>559</sup> It is impossible to reason with him.”<sup>560</sup>

18 Then Abigail wasted no time, taking two-hundred loaves, two full wine-skins, five sheep that were already dressed, five measures<sup>561</sup> of parched grain, a hundred clusters<sup>562</sup> of raisins and two-hundred cakes of dried figs, and had them loaded on pack animals. 19 She told the young man, “Go ahead of me. I will follow you.” (However, she did not tell her husband.) 20 She rode a donkey and came around the mountain which hid

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<sup>551</sup> Caleb accompanied Joshua in the spying of the land during the wilderness wanderings in Exodus. The LXX has: “κυνικος,” The name “Nabal” with slight emendation could be translated: “he behaved like a dog.”

<sup>552</sup> LXX literally: “ask him concerning peace.” The LXX translation could be: “may you have peace and health.”

<sup>553</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>554</sup> REB: “an auspicious day.”

<sup>555</sup> The LXX adds: “and wine.” NAB: “Nowadays there are many servants who run away from their masters. Am I to give (*food prepared for my shearers*) to men who come from I know not where?”

<sup>556</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain.

<sup>557</sup> NAB: “he flew at them, screaming.”

<sup>558</sup> Literally: “a wall to us.”

<sup>559</sup> Literally: “a son of Belial.”

<sup>560</sup> Literally: “speak to him.”

<sup>561</sup> The Hebrew word is “seah.” A seah was 2.175 bushels.

<sup>562</sup> LXX: “an homer.”

her from sight and there she met David and his men who were coming toward her.<sup>563</sup> 21 David had been thinking, ‘In the wilderness I protected this fellow’s goods and chattels, and all that was in vain. I made certain that nothing was taken from them. Now he has repaid us with evil instead of good!’ 22 May God do to me<sup>564</sup> [*what I intend to do to Nabal*] if I do not destroy him and every one of his male servants by morning.’

23 When Abigail saw David she hurriedly dismounted her donkey and fell on her face before him<sup>565</sup> bowing to the ground. 24 Falling at his feet she said, “I accept the guilt in myself, me alone! My lord, it is my guilt. Please let me explain. Please listen to what I have to say.<sup>566</sup> 25 Let me take the blame for this ill natured man! He is, after all, exactly what his name means: ‘a fool’. I had not had the opportunity to meet your young men, my lord! 26 Now then: as certainly as the Lord is alive and as certainly as you are alive, I beg of you not to start a bloody feud and take vengeance on your enemies for in that case you would be just like Nabal. 27 Now, let these gifts (*or, tokens*) to you, by these young men who have accompanied me, my lord, be accepted by you! 28 Please permit me to say more. The Lord will assuredly establish a strong realm for you, my lord, are fighting a battle on behalf of the Lord. You will not do what is evil as long as you live! 29 If there are uprisings to oppose you and attempts to assassinate you, your life will be bound in the bundle of life which is in the care (*or, safe keeping*) of the Lord your God. The lives of your enemies will be hurled aside like a stone being hurled from the hollow of a sling. 30 When the Lord has done all that he has said about you, all the good that he has said about you will be yours in reality, for he has appointed you to rule over Israel. 31 My lord will have no reason to be grieved, no pangs of conscience, because he killed with out a true cause or for he deals with the God of Israel who sent you to me today.” 32 Then David said to Abigail, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today. 33 You are to be praised for your wisdom in keeping me from killing people who are innocent. 34 As certainly as the Lord, the God of Israel is alive, I have been restrained from hurting you when you came to meet me. [*If this had not taken place*] there would not have been a single male,<sup>567</sup> who would have survived within the labor force of Nabal.” 35 Then David received all that Abigail had brought for him and he told her, “Go to your home in peace! Know that I have listened to your words and I am granting every request you have made.”

36 Abigail came to Nabal, and he was holding a feast in his house which was like a royal feast. Nabal was happy for he was very drunk, so she didn’t say anything to him. 37 The next morning, after Nabal had slept off the wine, his wife told him what had taken place and he had a seizure,<sup>568</sup> which paralyzed him.<sup>569</sup> 38 He died ten days later [*because of another seizure*].

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<sup>563</sup> The Hebrew is uncertain. TEV: “She was riding her donkey around a bend on the hillside when suddenly she met David and his men coming toward her.”

<sup>564</sup> Hebrew literally: “the enemies of David.” LXX: “τω Δαυιδ.”

<sup>565</sup> LXX: “ενωπιον Δαυιδ επιε προσωπον αυτης.”

<sup>566</sup> Verses 24 – 31 are a wonderful portrait of a determined woman.

<sup>567</sup> Literally: “persons who urinate against the wall.”

<sup>568</sup> TAN: “and his courage died within him and he became like a stone.” TEV: “he suffered a stroke and became completely paralyzed.”

<sup>569</sup> The drunken Nabal apparently had an apoplectic seizure. Ten days later death came as the result of the seizure.

<sup>39</sup> When David learned that Nabal had died, he said, “Blessed be the Lord who has avenged the insult <sup>570</sup> given me by Nabal, and had restrained me from doing evil. The Lord caused the evil deeds of Nabal to recoil on him.” Then David sent word to Abigail to woo her that she might become his wife. <sup>571</sup> <sup>40</sup> The messengers said, “David has sent us to propose to you on his behalf, that you become his wife.” <sup>41</sup> She rose and bowed her face to the ground, and said, “Realize that your handmaiden is only deserving to wash the feet of his servants.” <sup>572</sup> <sup>42</sup> Abigail hurriedly rose up, mounted her donkey and took five personal servants <sup>573</sup> and followed the messengers of David and she became his wife.

<sup>43</sup> David also took Ahinoum of Jezreel and both she and Abigail became his wives. <sup>44</sup> (Saul had given his daughter Michal, David’s wife, to Palti, the son of Laish, who was from Gallim.) <sup>574</sup>

#### <CHAPTER 26>

##### *G. Davide’s Magnanimity Toward Saul 26:1 - 25*

<sup>1</sup> Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying: “David is hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah <sup>575</sup> which is located at the east end of Jeshimon (*or, the wilderness*), <sup>576</sup> isn’t he?” <sup>2</sup> Saul then went down to the wilderness (*or, desert*) of Ziph, taking three-thousand men with him, intending to find David. <sup>577</sup> <sup>3</sup> Saul set up camp on the hill of Hachilah which is beside the road, opposite Jeshimon (*or, the wilderness*). David had remained in the wilderness (*or, desert*) but saw Saul approaching in pursuit of him. <sup>4</sup> David sent out scouts to determine what the exact situation was. <sup>578</sup> <sup>5</sup> David then went himself to view where Saul had made camp. Saul was lying near Abner the son of Ner, who was the commander of Saul’s army. They were lying within the circle of sleeping troops that surrounded them. <sup>579</sup>

<sup>6</sup> David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, <sup>580</sup> and to Joab’s brother, Abishai the son of Zeruah, <sup>581</sup> “Join me in going down into Saul’s camp.” Abishai immediately replied, “I will join you.” <sup>7</sup> At night David and Abishai went into the camp of Saul who lay sleeping <sup>582</sup> within the lines of the encampment, having his spear thrust in the ground at his head. Abner and the troops were lying near by. <sup>8</sup> Abishai said to David, “Today God

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<sup>570</sup> TAN: “championed my cause.”

<sup>571</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 377d.

<sup>572</sup> That would be the most menial task a servant would be asked to do.

<sup>573</sup> Literally: “who walked at her feet.”

<sup>574</sup> The LXX differs, having the name “Rommo.” One mss has “Gallin.” The site is near Anathoth in Benjamin. Later David sent to get Michal back and at that time she was in Trans-Jordan.

<sup>575</sup> Possibly El Kolah which is six miles east of Ziph on the eastern edge of the wilderness at the point where the terrain drops off at the Dead Sea.

<sup>576</sup> This is the barren area between the Jordan wilderness and the Dead Sea.

<sup>577</sup> The LXX has “taking 3,000 men with him.” That is omitted in the MT.

<sup>578</sup> This Hebrew sentence is incomplete, possibly caused by a corruption of the text. A possible translation of the concept of the text might be: “David sent out scouts to determine if Saul had come.”

<sup>579</sup> The Hebrew is almost impossible. TAN: “barricade.” LXX: “sleeping in his chariot.” REB: “within the line – encamped in the circle round him.”

<sup>580</sup> The Hittites had ruled over an area of Asia Minor. Their origin might have been Cappadocia in central Turkey.

<sup>581</sup> Cf.: I Chronicles 2:16. He was the son of David’s sister, (though not from Jesse). She was a widow when she married Jesse and the relationship was through her first husband. Zeruah was the name of Abishai’s mother. Why the mother’s name was used is not understood. This was done most rarely!

<sup>582</sup> LXX: “lay in his chariot.”

has given your enemy into your hand! Let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of his spear. I won't need a second thrust!" <sup>583</sup> 9 David said, "Don't kill him for who dare kill the Lord's anointed and still feel guilt free?" <sup>584</sup> 10 David then added: "As certainly as God is living, he will strike him. His day will come and he will be struck down in battle and will die. <sup>11</sup> May the Lord forbid that I should kill the Lord's anointed! Take his spear that is at his head and the jar of water that is beside him." <sup>12</sup> Thus David had Saul's spear and water jug removed from his side, and having done that they left. No one witnessed this or realized it, for the Lord had caused them all to sleep very soundly.

<sup>13</sup> Then David returned to the opposite side of the valley and standing on the hillside with a great space between himself and Saul's army <sup>14</sup> and called out loudly to Abner, the son of Ner, [*the commander of Saul's army*], saying: "Won't you answer me, Abner?" Then Abner called out, "Who are you who is calling his royal majesty?" <sup>585</sup> <sup>15</sup> David then called out to Abner: "You are a valiant man, aren't you? Is there anyone who is comparable to you? If that is the case, why haven't you kept watch over my lord, the king? Someone came into the camp to destroy your lord, the king! <sup>16</sup> You have not given a good account of yourself! <sup>586</sup> As surely as God is living, you deserve to die! <sup>587</sup> You have not kept watch. Now look --- where is his spear? Where is his water jug? These were both near his head!"

<sup>17</sup> Saul recognized David's voice and called out, "My son David, is that your voice?" David replied, "It is my voice, my lord, my king." <sup>18</sup> David then added, "Why does my lord, the king pursue me, his servant? What have I done? What conspiracies have I plotted? <sup>588</sup> <sup>19</sup> Now then: let my lord, the king listen to these words from his servant: If it is the Lord who has stirred you up against me, he would surely accept an offering. <sup>589</sup> If it is people <sup>590</sup> who have stirred you up against me before the Lord, <sup>591</sup> and have driven me from my homeland so that I must flee into other territories and lands, thus separating me from my rightful heritage, and separating me from my God, <sup>592</sup> <sup>20</sup> I ask that my blood might not be shed in a land that is distant from the land of the Lord though it is the king of Israel who is seeking to kill me, causing my blood shed in a distant land: hunting me as one might hunt a partridge in a distant land."

<sup>21</sup> Then Saul said, "What I have done is wrong! Come back to me, my son, David. I will never again attempt to harm you, for you looked upon my life as being precious. I have acted like a fool which you have witnessed! I have been gravely mistaken." <sup>22</sup> David called back, "Here is your spear, O king, let one of the young men come to get it. <sup>23</sup> The Lord rewards every person, based on righteousness and faithfulness, for the Lord gave

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<sup>583</sup> LXX: "double the stroke." Hebrew literally: "repeat with repeat to him."

<sup>584</sup> LB: "who can remain innocent after attacking the Lord's chosen?"

<sup>585</sup> This line is omitted in most LXX mss.

<sup>586</sup> NAB: "this is no creditable service you have performed."

<sup>587</sup> LXX: "you are a son of slaughter." Hebrew: "are surely a son of death."

<sup>588</sup> Literally: "What guilt is in my hands?" Another likely translation might be: "Inform me of my guilt!"

<sup>589</sup> Literally: "let him smell an offering."

<sup>590</sup> Literally: "sons of men."

<sup>591</sup> Literally: "in the face of the Lord."

<sup>592</sup> REB: "they have me today from my share of the Lord's possessions and have banished me to serve other gods." The land of Israel where David should have resided, enabled to move about, and worship freely was denied him and he was forced to live in areas where the Lord was not worshiped. The thought of the Lord being a regional god existed in Israel, even after it was understood that God was much more than regional. This is the point, for example, of the book of Jonah.

you into my hand <sup>593</sup> today, but I would not move my hand to destroy you for you are the Lord's anointed. <sup>24</sup> Realize that in my eyes your life was precious. <sup>594</sup> Let it be thus that you might think of my life also as being precious in the sight of the Lord. May the Lord deliver me from every tribulation." <sup>25</sup> Then Saul called out to David, "You are blessed, my son, David. You will accomplish many things and in each you will be successful." After this David went his way and Saul returned to his palace. <sup>595</sup>

<CHAPTER 27>

*VIII. The Philistines War Against Saul 27:1 – 31:13*

*A. David's Vassalage to Achish 27:1 – 28:2*

<sup>1</sup> David said to himself, 'One of these days Saul will kill me. What else can I do? It would be best for me to escape. I will go to the land of the Philistines for then Saul will give up his constant search for me if I am no longer within the boundary of Israel.' <sup>2</sup> David and six hundred men who were his supporters (*or, army*) went to King Achish, the son of Maach, who was the king of Gath. <sup>596</sup> <sup>3</sup> David lived in Gath, along with his men and their families, <sup>597</sup> David lived there with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widows. <sup>4</sup> When Saul was informed that David had fled to Gath he abandoned his pursuit of David.

<sup>5</sup> During this time David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your sight, give me a country town in which I can live. After all, why should I, an unimportant refugee, live in this royal city with you?" <sup>598</sup> <sup>6</sup> That very day Achish gave David Ziklag as his residence. (This is in the territory ruled by the kings of Israel to this very day.) <sup>7</sup> The number of years David lived in the Philistine territory was a year <sup>599</sup> and four months. <sup>8</sup> David and his men would sally forth for raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, the Amelekites, (and all other inhabitants of the region who had resided there in the ancient times,) ranging as far as the border of Egypt. <sup>600</sup> <sup>9</sup> David attacked and killed all the men and women, but took all the flocks, oxen, donkeys, camels and even their apparel, bringing all this back <sup>601</sup> to Achish. <sup>10</sup> When Achish would ask, <sup>602</sup> "Have you made any raids today?" David would reply, "Against the Negeb <sup>603</sup> of Judah," or "Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites," or "Against the Negeb of the Kenites." <sup>11</sup> David killed all the men and women, never bringing any living captives to King Achish for fear that they

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<sup>593</sup> Many mss have the text as translated above. Others have "gave you into the Lord's hand."

<sup>594</sup> LXX: "magnified."

<sup>595</sup> This encounter ends in a partial reconciliation --- more symbolic than real. There is peace for the moment but not reconciliation.

<sup>596</sup> David spent almost three years in Gath.

<sup>597</sup> The LXX seems to imply that they also had their household servants with them in Gath.

<sup>598</sup> CEV: "I am not important enough to live here with you in this royal city."

<sup>599</sup> Omitted in Hebrew. Cf.: 29:3.

<sup>600</sup> NRSV: "these were the landed settlements from Telam on the way to Shur and on to the land of Egypt." There is a question among scholars whether "Telam on the way to Shur" is to be vocalized in that way or possibly, as translated above, not making two words to be names of places. The NRSV translation follows the LXX more closely than the MT.

<sup>601</sup> There is a question about the vocalization. TAN reads it differently, saying: "He returned and came to Achish."

<sup>602</sup> Hebrew uncertain.

<sup>603</sup> The Negeb was the dry region south of Israel, a portion of the Sinai peninsula.

would betray him and his warfare.<sup>604</sup> That was his practice during the entire time that he lived in the Philistine land. <sup>14</sup> Achish had confidence in David, thinking, ‘He has made himself so obnoxious in Israel that he will always be subservient to me.’<sup>605</sup>

#### <CHAPTER 28>

<sup>1</sup> In those days the Philistines amassed their army intending to wage war against Israel. Achish said to David: “Be certain that you and your men are to be united with mine as we wage war.” <sup>2</sup> David answered, “Splendid! You will discover what I, your servant, am able to do.”<sup>606</sup> Achish then said, “Great! I will make you my bodyguard for life.”<sup>607</sup>

#### *B. Saul and the Medium from En-dor 28:3 – 25*<sup>608</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Samuel had died and his dying had been mourned by all of Israel. His body had been brought to his own city, Ramah. Saul had expelled the mediums and necromancers (*or, forbidden recourse with ghosts or family spirits*) within the land. <sup>4</sup> The Philistines had mustered their army and had encamped at Shunem,<sup>609</sup> and Saul had gathered all his troops who encamped at Gilboa.<sup>610</sup> <sup>5</sup> When Saul saw the Philistine army he became filled with terror, and his heart had powerful palpitations. <sup>6</sup> When Saul sought to inquire of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him in any way: not through dreams, Urim or even by the prophets.<sup>611</sup> <sup>7</sup> Following that Saul spoke to his courtiers, “On my behalf look for a woman who is a medium<sup>612</sup> that I might inquire of her.” His courtiers said to him, “There is a medium at En-dor.”<sup>613</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Saul disguised himself, wearing other garments, and went to see her in the company of two men, doing so at night. He said, “Conjure up a spirit for me. Cause the one whom I request to appear. I will give you the name.” <sup>9</sup> The woman said to him, “You must certainly be aware what Saul has done. He has banned contact with mediums and exiled them from the land. Why are you trying to ensnare me for your sake and thereby bring about my death?” <sup>10</sup> Saul made a vow to her in the name of the Lord, “Be certain that as certainly as the Lord lives no punishment will befall you because of this!” <sup>11</sup> The woman then asked, “Who am I to bring up for you?” He said, “Bring me Samuel.” <sup>12</sup> When the woman saw Samuel<sup>614</sup> she shrieked loudly and said to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!” <sup>13</sup> The king told her, “Don’t be afraid! Who do you see?” The woman said, “I see a divine being<sup>615</sup> coming up out of the earth.” <sup>14</sup> He said, “What is his appearance?” She said, “An old man is rising and he is wrapped in a robe.” Saul knew that this was Samuel and bowed with his face to the ground and did obeisance.

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<sup>604</sup> Literally: “report to Gath against us.”

<sup>605</sup> NAB: “I will have him as my vassal forever.”

<sup>606</sup> David’s reply is very ambiguous.

<sup>607</sup> David never intended to fight against his own countrymen. Some scholars feel 29:1 – 11 should be inserted here. The word translated as “bodyguard” literally in Hebrew means “keeper of my head.”

<sup>608</sup> CF.: ANET p. 89d.

<sup>609</sup> Cf.: II Kings 4:25.

<sup>610</sup> The two armies faced each other at the eastern end of the Plain of Esdraelon.

<sup>611</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 111b.

<sup>612</sup> CB: “a woman who has a divining talisman.”

<sup>613</sup> All the legitimate ways of determining the will of God had been tried and failed. Saul knew that he was God-forsaken but tried one additional way in desperation.

<sup>614</sup> LXX mistakenly has “Saul.”

<sup>615</sup> NAB: “a ghostly form.”

15 Then Samuel spoke to Saul. “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul replied, “I am in fearful distress. God has turned away from me and no longer answers my requests --- not by prophets, or dreams. Because of this I have summoned you that you will tell me what I should do.”<sup>616</sup> 16 Then Samuel said, “Why do you inquire of me since the Lord has turned from you and become your adversary?<sup>617</sup> 17 [The Lord has done to you<sup>618</sup> exactly what he had spoken through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand, and he has given it to your neighbor, David.<sup>619</sup> 18 Because you were not obedient to the voice of the Lord, and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek,<sup>620</sup> this is what the Lord has done to you today. 19 Furthermore, the Lord will give you, into the hands of the hands of the Philistines and tomorrow you and your sons will die in battle.<sup>621</sup> The army of Israel will be overcome by the army of the Philistines!]

20 Then Saul suddenly collapsed, falling full length to the ground in terror, because of the words spoken by Samuel, and he was weak for he had not eaten anything since the day before. 21 The woman approached Saul and found that he was absolutely terrified and she said, “Realize, I, your handmaiden, obeyed your request. I risked my life with this! I did exactly what you told me. 22 Because of this it is important that you listen to me! Let me give you a bit of food that your strength might return when you are ready to leave here.” 23 Saul refused, saying, “I will not eat.” His courtiers, however, joined in urging him to eat and he accepted their words.<sup>622</sup> He got up from the floor and sat on the bed. 24 The woman had a stall fattened calf at<sup>623</sup> the house and she killed it (*or, killed it and prepared the meat*), took flour and kneaded it and baked it into unleavened bread. 25 She placed this meal before him and his courtiers and they ate. Then they rose and left during the night.

#### <CHAPTE 29>

##### C. The Dismissal of David 29:1 -11

1 The Philistines assembled their troops at Aphek;<sup>624</sup> while the Israelites encamped at the fountain<sup>625</sup> which is in Jezreel. 2 As the Philistine lords<sup>626</sup> were moving in their forces by regiments and by companies,<sup>627</sup> David and his men were moving at the rear of Achish. 3 The commanders of the Philistines said, “What are these Hebrews doing here?” Achish then told the Philistine commanders, “Isn’t this David? He is a servant of King Saul of Israel. He has been with me for a long time.<sup>628</sup> Since he deserted [*from Saul*] he has given me no reason to question his loyalty during this time.”<sup>629</sup> 4 The

<sup>616</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 418c. This verse can hardly become a proof text for belief in the after-life.

<sup>617</sup> The Hebrew text is uncertain. LXX: “μετα του πληαιον σου.”

<sup>618</sup> Most mss of the MT have “for himself.”

<sup>619</sup> Some scholars feel vss 17 - 19 are a later interpolation.

<sup>620</sup> Cf.: I Samuel 15:3 – 9.

<sup>621</sup> Literally: “will be with me.” LXX: “tomorrow you and your sons will fall.”

<sup>622</sup> Literally: “he listened to their voices.”

<sup>623</sup> Literally: “in.”

<sup>624</sup> The location is unidentified. It is presumed to have been in the Plain of Sharon.

<sup>625</sup> REB: “En-harod.” The site usually is identified as “Ain Jalad,” at the foot of Mount Gilead.

<sup>626</sup> MFT: “tyrants.”

<sup>627</sup> Literally: “by hundreds and by thousands.”

<sup>628</sup> The MT is unclear in its meaning. Literally: “days and years. LXX: “two years.”

<sup>629</sup> Achish had two reasons for trusting David. 1. He rebelled against Saul. 2. He had been loyal to Achish. However: Achish did not know about David’s raids: 27:8 – 12.



Philistine commanders were angry with Achish [*the King of Gath*] and ordered: “Send the men back. They are to return to the place to which you have assigned them. They will not take part in the battle, for it is possible that in the heat of battle they will turn on us, attacking <sup>630</sup> us. This fellow [*David*] could become reconciled with his king. That would result in the losing of the heads of our men here. <sup>631</sup> 5 This is the same David about whom they have sung to one another:

‘Saul has killed his thousands;  
David has killed his ten thousands.’”

<sup>6</sup> Achish then called David to him and said, “Just as surely as the Lord God is alive, you have been completely honest, and dealt properly with me so that it seems right to me that you should march in this campaign, and I see no reason why that should not be the case. However, the Lords <sup>632</sup> do not approve. <sup>7</sup> As a result you must return now. Go in peace so you do not displease the Lords of the Philistines.” <sup>633</sup> <sup>8</sup> David said to Achish, “What have I done? What have you found in me since I became your servant until now that I should not be qualified to fight with you?” <sup>634</sup> <sup>9</sup> Achish replied, “I realize that you are blameless, in my sight you are like an angel from God. <sup>635</sup> Nevertheless, the Philistine commanders have insisted, saying, “He will not go into battle with us!” <sup>10</sup> Now: rise early in the morning and take those who came with you, leaving at daybreak.” <sup>636</sup> <sup>11</sup> Early in the morning David set out with his men and returned to the land of the Philistines. The Philistines, however, went to Jezreel.

#### <CHAPTER 30>

##### *D. The Raid on Ziklag 30:1 - 31*

<sup>1</sup> When David and his men arrived at Ziklag, on the third day, the Amalekites made a raid on the Negeb and on Ziklag. They had stormed Ziklag and set fire to the city. <sup>2</sup> They took all the women and all <sup>637</sup> the other residents captive, young and old, <sup>638</sup> but they did not kill any one. All were taken away as prisoners. <sup>639</sup> <sup>3</sup> When David and his men arrived at the city and found that it had been destroyed by arson, and that their wives, sons and daughters had all been taken captive, <sup>4</sup> David and those who had accompanied him wailed loudly and wept until they had no more strength left to continue crying. <sup>640</sup> <sup>5</sup> (David’s two wives had been taken captive: Ahimam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow <sup>641</sup> of Nabal of Carmel.) <sup>6</sup> David went into a depressed state because his troops, who were

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<sup>630</sup> LXX: literally: “become traitors” or “plot against us.”

<sup>631</sup> The expression is a euphemism.

<sup>632</sup> Cf.: footnote 626.

<sup>633</sup> JB: “so go in peace, rather than outrage the leaders of the Philistines.”

<sup>634</sup> David gave the impression of loyalty, thus concealing his true feelings.

<sup>635</sup> So: MT. LXX omits “angel from God” in all but one mss.

<sup>636</sup> REB: “Now rise early tomorrow with those of your Lord’s subjects who have followed you. Go to the town I have allotted you, harboring no resentment, for I am well satisfied with you.” LXX: “go to the town I gave you and harbor no resentment.” The LXX appears to have a more satisfactory text. A possible variant reading in the LXX could be translated: “let there be light upon you.”

<sup>637</sup> The word for “and all” is missing in Hebrew but found in the LXX.

<sup>638</sup> Literally: “small and great.”

<sup>639</sup> CB: “they went on their way.”

<sup>640</sup> LXX: “David and the men who were with him lifted up their voices and wept until there was no longer any power within them to weep.”

<sup>641</sup> Literally: “wife.”

embittered by the loss of their wives, sons and daughters, threatened to stone him to death.<sup>642</sup> However, David strengthened himself through the help of the Lord his God. 7 It was then that David spoke to the priest Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech,<sup>643</sup> “Bring me the ephod.” When Abiathar brought the ephod to David, 8 he inquired of the Lord “Should I pursue the raiding band? Should I overtake them?” The reply was, “Pursue for you will surely overtake them and will rescue.”<sup>644</sup> David then set out, accompanied by six hundred men<sup>645</sup> and came to the Wadi (*or, brook*) Besor. Here those who were suffering from total fatigue remained behind [*watching over the baggage*]. 10 Two hundred men were left behind who were too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor. 11 Along the way a young Egyptian man was found in the open country and brought to David. They gave him bread and water and he ate and drank. 12 They also gave him a partial cake of figs and two clusters of grapes. Having eaten he revived<sup>646</sup> for he had not eaten nor drunk anything for three days and nights. 13 David spoke to him, saying, “To whom do you belong? Where are you from?” The young man said, “I am a young man from Egypt, a slave of an Amalechite. My master left me behind when I became ill three days ago. 14 We had made a raid on the Negeb of the Cherethites,<sup>647</sup> on an area of land that belonged to the kings of Judah, on the Negeb of Caleb, and destroyed Ziklag by torching it.” 15 David said, “Would you take me to that band of marauders?” His reply was, “Swear that you will not kill me or turn me over to my master and I will take you down to the band of invaders.”

16 When he had led them to the place of their encampment there they were: all spread out over the land, eating, drinking and reveling because of the vast amount of booty they had obtained from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. 17 David made his attack at dusk, killing and fighting through the night and even the next day. No one escaped with the exception of four-hundred young men who escaped by riding camels.<sup>648</sup> 18 David recovered everything that the Amalechites had taken. (He rescued his two wives.) 19 Nothing was missing, nothing at all.<sup>649</sup> Wives, sons, daughters, spoils, all was brought back by David. 20 David also captured all the flocks and herds, which were driven ahead of the people and it was declared “This is David’s booty.”<sup>650</sup>

21 When David came to the two-hundred men who had been too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besore, and had remained there, he saluted them when he met them, inquiring concerning their welfare.<sup>651</sup> 22 It was then that the evil minded and selfish men among those who had gone to fight with David declared: “Because they did not participate in the battle they will not receive anything from the booty. The exception is that each man can get his wife and family and then is to leave.”<sup>652</sup> 23 David, however, said: “My brothers, you must say that! In view of all that the Lord has given us and he

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<sup>642</sup> Moses had the same experience. Cf.: Exodus 17:4.

<sup>643</sup> Some Hebrew and one LXX mss add “and Abiathar brought the ephod to David.”

<sup>644</sup> It is understood by scholars that the ephod could only answer “yes” or “no.” Cf.: ANET p. 448d.

<sup>645</sup> LXX: “superfluous ones.”

<sup>646</sup> Literally: “his spirit returned to him.”

<sup>647</sup> This tribe had some relationship with the Philistines. They were probably of Canaanite origin.

<sup>648</sup> The Hebrew is unclear. The LXX provides little help.

<sup>649</sup> Literally: “neither small nor great.”

<sup>650</sup> The Hebrew text in this verse is difficult. Scholars feel the text is apparently corrupt.

<sup>651</sup> The LXX adds: “and asked them how they were.”

<sup>652</sup> This becomes an example of ‘case law’.

has preserved us, and given us a victory over those who had attacked, <sup>24</sup> who would listen to you in this matter? Just as the ones who were in the battle receive their share, so also those who remained with the baggage will also receive an equal share.” <sup>653</sup> <sup>25</sup> (From that time on he made this a regulation and rule that remains to this day.)

<sup>26</sup> When David came to Ziklag he sent a portion of the booty to the elders of Judah along with a message: “This is a gift <sup>654</sup> for you from the spoils of the enemies of the Lord.” <sup>27</sup> It was for those who lived in Bethel and Ramah, the Negeb and Jattir; <sup>28</sup> for those in Aroer (*or, Ararah*), Siphmoth, and Eshtemoa; <sup>29</sup> for those in Racal (*or, Carmel*), the cities of the Jerahmeelites, the cities of the Kenites; <sup>30</sup> in Hormah, in Borashabm in Athach; <sup>31</sup> in Hebron, --- for all the places where David and his men had wandered. <sup>655</sup>

### <CHAPTER 31>

#### *E. The Battle of Mount Gilboa 31:1 - 7*

<sup>1</sup> The Philistines fought against Israel and the warriors of Israel were routed by the Philistines though many were killed on Mount Gilead as they fled. <sup>656</sup> <sup>2</sup> As the Philistines neared Saul they killed his three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua. <sup>3</sup> The battle raged around Saul and the archers found their mark, wounding Saul critically. <sup>657</sup> <sup>4</sup> Saul said to his armor bearer: “Draw your sword and thrust it through me so that these uncircumcised fiends will not come and gloat over me.” The armor bearer refused for he was terrified. <sup>658</sup> Saul then drew his own sword and fell on it. <sup>5</sup> When the armor bearer realized that Saul was dead he also fell on his sword and died. <sup>6</sup> It was in this way Saul and his armor bearer [*and all his men*] <sup>659</sup> died together on the same day. <sup>7</sup> (The men of Israel who were in the valley, and on the opposite side of the Jordan, <sup>660</sup> fled. When they learned that Saul was dead they deserted the cities which then were taken over by the Philistines.)

<sup>8</sup> The following day the Philistines came to strip the bodies of the dead and found Saul’s body along with the bodies of his three sons on Mount Gilboa. <sup>9</sup> They cut off his head, stripped his body of his armor, sending messengers through all the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to their idols and to their people. <sup>661</sup> <sup>10</sup> The armor was placed in the temple of Astarte and his body was fastened to the wall at Beth-shan. <sup>662</sup> <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>653</sup> LXX: “you must not do so after the Lord has helped and preserved us, and has delivered the band into our hands that attacked.” A translation of the passage might be: “And as to the share for the fighting men, so will be the share for those who protected the baggage.”

<sup>654</sup> Literally: “blessing.”

<sup>655</sup> Some scholars insert 28:3 – 25 here.

<sup>656</sup> This battle took place the morning after Saul had visited the Medium of En-dor. The MT of this chapter is rather corrupt. A better description of the battle is found in I Chronicles 10.

<sup>657</sup> CB: “in the abdomen.” LXX: “wounded under his ribs.”

<sup>658</sup> BV: “but his armor bearer refused, repelled by the horror of it.” It is possible that the armor bearer would not kill Saul because Saul was “the Lord’s anointed.”

<sup>659</sup> These words are included in the LXX, not in Hebrew. Possibly the LXX reference is not to all the soldiers but rather intending to mention that Saul’s sons also died.

<sup>660</sup> “The opposite side of the Jordan” is not mentioned in I Chronicles 10:7. Possibly it is an exaggeration. It would be improbable that the Philistines occupied land on the east side of the Jordan. Their territory was what we now call “The Gaza Strip.”

<sup>661</sup> So: LXX. It is possible that the Hebrew intends to say “sent his armor and head.”

<sup>662</sup> Cf.: ANET p. 248a.

When the residents of Jabesh gilead <sup>663</sup> heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, <sup>12</sup> all the valiant men rose and traveled all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons down from the wall of Beth-shan and brought them to Jebesh gilead. There they cremated their remains. <sup>664</sup> The people of Beth shan then buried his bones under a tamarisk tree in Jabesh gilead. The people fasted for seven days.

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<sup>663</sup> Jabesh gilead was rescued from enemies by Saul. Cf.: I Chronicles 11.

<sup>664</sup> This was not a typical Israelite custom. There are no suggested emendations.