1 Samuel

1 There was a man from Ramathaim-zophim
in the hill country of Ephraim named Elkanah,
son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of
Zuph, an Ephrathite.
2 He had two wives. One was named Hannah,
and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children,
but Hannah had no children.
3 Year after year this man went up from his
city to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of
hosts at Shiloh. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and
Phinehas, were priests of the LORD there.
4 On the day Elkanah offered his sacrifice, he
would give portions to his wife Peninnah and all
her sons and daughters.
5 But to Hannah he would give a double
portion, for he loved Hannah, though the LORD
had closed her womb.
6 Her rival would provoke her bitterly to upset
her, because the LORD had closed her womb.
7 He did this year after year. Whenever she
went up to the house of the LORD, her rival
would provoke her like this, and she would
weep and not eat.
8 Elkanah her husband would say to her,
“Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not
eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not better to
you than ten sons?”

9 After eating and drinking at Shiloh, Hannah
rose. Eli the priest was sitting on his seat beside
the doorpost of the temple of the LORD.
10 She was bitter in soul and prayed to the
LORD, weeping deeply.
11 She made a vow and said, “LORD of hosts, if
you will indeed look on the affliction of your
servant, remember me and not forget your
servant, and give your servant a son, then I will
give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and
no razor will come upon his head.”
12 As she continued praying before the LORD,
Eli was watching her mouth.
13 Hannah was speaking in her heart. Only
her lips were moving, and her voice was not
heard, so Eli thought she was drunk.
14 Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk?
Put your wine away from you.”
15 Hannah answered, “No, my lord. I am a
woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither
wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring
out my soul before the LORD.
16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless
woman, for I have been speaking until now out
of my great distress and grief.”
17 Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God
of Israel grant the request you have made of
him.”
18 She said, “May your servant find favor in
your eyes.” Then the woman went her way and
ate, and her face was no longer sad.
19 They rose early in the morning and
worshiped before the LORD. Then they returned

to their home at Ramah. Elkanah slept with
Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered
her.
20 In due time Hannah conceived and bore a
son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I
asked the LORD for him.”
21 The man Elkanah and all his household
went up to offer the annual sacrifice and his
vow to the LORD.
22 But Hannah did not go up, for she said to
her husband, “When the boy is weaned, I will
bring him, so that he may appear before the
LORD and stay there forever.”
23 Elkanah her husband said to her, “Do what
is good in your eyes. Stay until you have weaned
him. Only may the LORD establish his word.” So
the woman stayed and nursed her son until she
weaned him.
24 When she had weaned him, she took him up
with her, along with three bulls, about twenty
quarts of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought
him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh, and the
boy was still young.
25 They slaughtered the bull and brought the
boy to Eli.
26 She said, “Please, my lord, as you live, my
lord, I am the woman who stood here beside
you praying to the LORD.
27 I prayed for this boy, and the LORD has
granted the request I made of him.
28 So I have also given him over to the LORD.
All the days he lives, he is given over to the
LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.

2

1 Hannah prayed and said,

“My heart exults in the LORD;
my horn is lifted high in the LORD.
My mouth is opened wide against my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.
2 There is none holy like the LORD, for there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.
3 Do not keep speaking so proudly;
let no arrogance come from your mouth.
For the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.
4 The bows of mighty warriors are broken, but those who stumbled have girded themselves with strength.
5 Those who were full hire themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry hunger no more.
The barren woman has borne seven, but she who had many sons has withered.
6 The LORD puts to death and gives life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
7 The LORD makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low and also exalts.
8 He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to seat them with nobles and give them a throne of honor as their inheritance.
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD’s,
and he has set the world upon them.

9 He guards the feet of his faithful ones, but the
wicked are silenced in darkness, for a
man does not prevail by strength.

10 The LORD's adversaries will be shattered;
he will thunder against them from heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.
He will give strength to his king and lift high
the horn of his anointed."

11 Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered to the LORD before Eli the priest.

12 Eli's sons were worthless men; they did not know the LORD.

13 This was the priests' custom with the people: whenever anyone offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand.

14 He would thrust it into the basin, kettle, cauldron, or cooking pot. Whatever the fork brought up, the priest would take for himself. This is what they did to all the Israelites who came there to Shiloh.

15 Even before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man offering the sacrifice, "Give the priest meat to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you, only raw."

16 If the man said to him, "Let them first burn the fat, then take as much as you desire," he would say, "No, you must give it now. If not, I will take it by force."

17 The sin of the young men was very great before the LORD, for the men treated the LORD's offering with contempt.

18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, a
boy wearing a linen ephod.
19 His mother would make him a little robe
and bring it to him year after year when she
went up with her husband to offer the annual
sacrifice.
20 Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and
say, “May the LORD give you offspring by this
woman in place of what was asked of the LORD.”
Then they would go back to their own place.
21 The LORD visited Hannah, and she
conceived and bore three sons and two
daughters. The boy Samuel grew up in the
LORD’s presence.

22 Now Eli was very old. He heard all that his
sons were doing to all Israel, and that they were
sleeping with the women who served at the
entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
23 He said to them, “Why do you do such
things? I hear of your evil deeds from all these
people.
24 No, my sons. The report I hear the LORD’s
people spreading is not good.
25 If a man sins against another, God will
mediate for him. But if a man sins against the
LORD, who will intercede for him?” Yet they did
not listen to their father’s voice, for the LORD
desired to put them to death.
26 The boy Samuel continued to grow in
stature and in favor with both the LORD and
people.

27 A man of God came to Eli and said to him,
“Thus says the LORD: ‘Did I not clearly reveal

myself to your father's house when they were in
Egypt, in Pharaoh's house?
28 I chose him from all the tribes of Israel to be
my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense,
and to wear an ephod before me. I gave your
father's house all the offerings by fire of the
Israelites.
29 Why do you kick at my sacrifice and my
offering, which I commanded for my dwelling?
You honor your sons more than me, fattening
yourselves on the best of every offering of my
people Israel.
30 Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel,
declares: I did indeed say that your house and
your father's house would walk before me
forever. But now the LORD declares: Far be it
from me! I will honor those who honor me, but
those who despise me will be lightly esteemed.
31 The days are coming when I will cut off
your arm and the arm of your father's house, so
that there will be no old man in your house.
32 You will see distress in my dwelling, even
amid all the good done for Israel, and there will
never be an old man in your house.
33 Any man of yours whom I do not cut off
from my altar will be left to wear out your eyes
and grieve your soul, and all the descendants of
your house will die as grown men.
34 This will be the sign for you that will come
upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: both
of them will die on the same day.
35 I will raise up for myself a faithful priest
who will do what is in my heart and in my soul.

I will build him a faithful house, and he will always walk before my anointed.
36 Everyone left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and will say, “Please assign me to one of the priestly duties, so that I may eat a piece of bread.” ’ ”

3

1 The boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.
2 At that time Eli was lying down in his place. His eyes had begun to grow dim, and he could not see.
3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.
4 The LORD called to Samuel, and he said, “Here I am.”
5 He ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call. Go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down.
6 The LORD called again, “Samuel!” Samuel rose, went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” He said, “I did not call, my son. Go back and lie down.”
7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.
8 The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. He rose, went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the boy.

9 Eli said to Samuel, “Go and lie down. If he
calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is
listening.’ ” So Samuel went and lay down in his
place.
10 The LORD came and stood there, calling as
before, “Samuel, Samuel!” Samuel said, “Speak,
for your servant is listening.”
11 The LORD said to Samuel, “I am about to do
something in Israel that will make both ears of
everyone who hears it tingle.
12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I
have spoken concerning his house, from
beginning to end.
13 I have told him that I am judging his house
forever for the iniquity he knew about: his sons
were bringing a curse upon themselves, and he
did not restrain them.
14 Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli
that the iniquity of Eli’s house will never be
atoned for by sacrifice or offering.”
15 Samuel lay down until morning. Then he
opened the doors of the house of the LORD, but
Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision.
16 Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my
son.” He said, “Here I am.”
17 He said, “What did he say to you? Please do
not hide it from me. May God do so to you and
more also if you hide from me a single word of
all that he said to you.”
18 Samuel told him everything and hid nothing
from him. He said, “He is the LORD. Let him do
what is good in his eyes.”
19 Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him

and let none of his words fall to the ground.
20 All Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that
Samuel was established as a prophet of the
LORD.
21 The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, for
the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh
by the word of the LORD.

4

1 Samuel's word came to all Israel. Israel went
out to battle against the Philistines and camped
beside Ebenezer, while the Philistines camped at
Aphek.
2 The Philistines drew up in battle array
against Israel. The battle spread, and Israel was
defeated before the Philistines, who struck
down about four thousand men in the battle line
in the field.
3 When the people came back to camp, the
elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD
defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us
bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here
from Shiloh, so that it may come among us and
save us from the hand of our enemies."
4 The people sent to Shiloh and brought from
there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of
hosts, who is enthroned above the cherubim.
Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there
with the ark of the covenant of God.
5 When the ark of the covenant of the LORD
came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great
shout that the earth resounded.
6 The Philistines heard the sound of the shout
and said, "What is this great shout in the camp

of the Hebrews?" Then they learned that the ark
of the LORD had come into the camp.
7 The Philistines were afraid, for they said,
"God has come into the camp." They said, "Woe
to us! Nothing like this has happened before.
8 Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the
hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods
who struck Egypt with every kind of plague in
the wilderness.
9 Be strong and be men, Philistines, lest you
become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been
slaves to you. Be men and fight!"
10 The Philistines fought, and Israel was
defeated. Each man fled to his tent. The
slaughter was very great: thirty thousand
Israelite foot soldiers fell.
11 The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two
sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died.
12 A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line
and came to Shiloh that same day, with his
clothes torn and dirt on his head.
13 When he arrived, Eli was sitting on his seat
beside the road, watching, for his heart was
trembling for the ark of God. When the man
came into the city and told the news, the whole
city cried out.
14 Eli heard the sound of the outcry and said,
"What is the sound of this commotion?" The man
hurried over and told Eli.
15 Now Eli was ninety-eight years old. His eyes
were fixed, and he could not see.
16 The man said to Eli, "I have come from the
battle line. I fled from the battle line today." He
said, "What happened, my son?"

17 The messenger answered, “Israel has fled
before the Philistines, and there has been a
great slaughter among the people. Your two
sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are also dead, and
the ark of God has been captured.”
18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell
backward from his seat beside the gate. His
neck broke and he died, for he was an old and
heavy man. He had judged Israel for forty years.
19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas,
was pregnant and near delivery. When she
heard the news that the ark of God had been
captured and that her father-in-law and her
husband were dead, she crouched down and
gave birth, for her labor pains came upon her.
20 As she was dying, the women attending her
said, “Do not be afraid, for you have borne a
son.” But she did not answer or pay attention.
21 She named the boy Ichabod, saying, “The
glory has departed from Israel,” because the ark
of God had been captured, and because of her
father-in-law and her husband.
22 She said, “The glory has departed from
Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

5

1 The Philistines took the ark of God and
brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod.
2 The Philistines took the ark of God into the
temple of Dagon and set it beside Dagon.
3 When the people of Ashdod rose early the
next day, Dagon had fallen face down on the
ground before the ark of the LORD. They took
Dagon and put him back in his place.

4 When they rose early the following morning,
Dagon had fallen face down on the ground
before the ark of the LORD. Dagon's head and
both palms of his hands lay cut off on the
threshold. Only Dagon's body was left.
5 That is why, to this day, neither the priests of
Dagon nor anyone entering Dagon's temple at
Ashdod steps on Dagon's threshold.
6 The hand of the LORD was heavy against the
people of Ashdod. He devastated them and
struck them with tumors, both Ashdod and its
territory.
7 When the men of Ashdod saw what was
happening, they said, "The ark of the God of
Israel must not stay with us, for his hand is hard
against us and against Dagon our god."
8 They sent and gathered all the rulers of the
Philistines to them and said, "What shall we do
with the ark of the God of Israel?" They said, "Let
the ark of the God of Israel be moved to Gath."
So they moved the ark of the God of Israel.
9 After they had moved it, the hand of the
LORD was against the city, causing very great
panic. He struck the men of the city, both small
and great, and tumors broke out on them.
10 They sent the ark of God to Ekron. When the
ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron
cried out, "They have brought the ark of the God
of Israel to me to kill me and my people!"
11 They sent and gathered all the rulers of the
Philistines and said, "Send the ark of the God of
Israel away, and let it return to its place, so that
it will not kill me and my people." For there was

deadly panic throughout the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.
12 The men who did not die were struck with tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

6

1 The ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines for seven months.
2 The Philistines called the priests and diviners and said, “What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us what we should send with it when we return it to its place.”
3 They said, “If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty. You must return a guilt offering to him. Then you will be healed, and you will know why his hand has not turned away from you.”
4 They said, “What guilt offering shall we return to him?” They answered, “Five gold tumors and five gold mice, according to the number of the rulers of the Philistines, for the same plague is on them all and on your rulers.
5 Make images of your tumors and of your mice that are destroying the land, and give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lighten his hand upon you, your gods, and your land.
6 Why should you harden your hearts as Egypt and Pharaoh hardened theirs? After he dealt harshly with them, did they not let the people go, and they went?
7 Now prepare a new cart and take two nursing cows that have never been yoked. Hitch

the cows to the cart, and take their calves back
home, away from them.
8 Take the ark of the LORD and put it on the
cart. Place the gold objects you are returning to
him as a guilt offering in a chest beside it. Then
send it away and let it go.
9 Watch: if it goes up the road to its own
territory, toward Beth-shemesh, then he has
brought this great calamity upon us. But if not,
we will know that his hand has not struck us; it
happened to us by chance."
10 The men did so. They took two nursing
cows, hitched them to the cart, and shut their
calves up at home.
11 They put the ark of the LORD on the cart,
along with the chest containing the gold mice
and the images of their tumors.
12 The cows went straight along the road
toward Beth-shemesh. They stayed on one
highway, lowing as they went, and did not turn
aside to the right or the left. The rulers of the
Philistines followed them to the border of
Beth-shemesh.
13 The people of Beth-shemesh were reaping
their wheat harvest in the valley. They lifted
their eyes, saw the ark, and rejoiced at the sight.
14 The cart came to the field of Joshua of
Beth-shemesh and stopped there, where there
was a large stone. They split the wood of the
cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to
the LORD.
15 The Levites took down the ark of the LORD
and the chest beside it, which contained the gold

objects, and set them on the large stone. The men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to the LORD that day.

16 The five rulers of the Philistines saw this and returned to Ekron that same day.

17 These are the gold tumors the Philistines returned to the LORD as a guilt offering: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, and one for Ekron.

18 The gold mice corresponded to the number of all the Philistine cities belonging to the five rulers, from fortified cities to unwalled villages, and as far as Great Abel, on which they set the ark of the LORD. It is there to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

19 He struck the men of Beth-shemesh because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. He struck fifty thousand and seventy men among the people, and the people mourned because the LORD had struck them with a great blow.

20 The men of Beth-shemesh said, “Who can stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom will he go up, away from us?”

21 They sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, “The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and bring it up to you.”

7

1 The men of Kiriath-jearim came and brought up the ark of the LORD. They brought it to Abinadab's house on the hill and consecrated his son Eleazar to guard the ark of the LORD.

2 A long time passed from the day the ark
came to stay at Kiriath-jearim—twenty years.
All the house of Israel lamented, longing for the
LORD.
3 Samuel said to all the house of Israel, “If you
are returning to the LORD with all your heart,
remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from
among you. Set your hearts toward the LORD
and serve him alone, and he will deliver you
from the hand of the Philistines.”
4 The Israelites removed the Baals and the
Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone.
5 Samuel said, “Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and
I will pray to the LORD for you.”
6 They gathered at Mizpah, drew water, and
poured it out before the LORD. They fasted that
day and said there, “We have sinned against the
LORD.” Samuel judged the Israelites at Mizpah.
7 When the Philistines heard that the Israelites
had gathered at Mizpah, the rulers of the
Philistines went up against Israel. The Israelites
heard of it and were afraid of the Philistines.
8 The Israelites said to Samuel, “Do not stop
crying out to the LORD our God for us, so that he
may save us from the hand of the Philistines.”
9 Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it
whole as a burnt offering to the LORD. Samuel
cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD
answered him.
10 While Samuel was offering the burnt
offering, the Philistines drew near to fight
against Israel. That day the LORD thundered
with a great sound against the Philistines and

threw them into confusion, and they were
defeated before Israel.
11 The men of Israel went out from Mizpah,
pursued the Philistines, and struck them down
as far as below Beth-car.
12 Samuel took a stone, set it between Mizpah
and Shen, and named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus
far the LORD has helped us.”
13 The Philistines were subdued and did not
enter the territory of Israel again. The hand of
the LORD was against the Philistines all the days
of Samuel.
14 The cities the Philistines had taken from
Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to
Gath. Israel also delivered their territories from
the hand of the Philistines. There was peace
between Israel and the Amorites.
15 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.
16 Year after year he went on a circuit through
Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, judging Israel in all
these places.
17 Then he would return to Ramah, for his
home was there. There he judged Israel, and
there he built an altar to the LORD.

8

1 When Samuel grew old, he appointed his
sons as judges over Israel.
2 His firstborn son was named Joel, and his
second was named Abijah. They were judges in
Beersheba.
3 But his sons did not walk in his ways. They
turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes,
and perverted justice.

4 All the elders of Israel gathered and came to
Samuel at Ramah.
5 They said to him, “You have grown old, and
your sons do not walk in your ways. Now
appoint a king to judge us, like all the nations.”
6 But it displeased Samuel when they said,
“Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel prayed to
the LORD.

7 The LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice
of the people in all that they say to you, for they
have not rejected you, but they have rejected me
as king over them.
8 Just as they have done from the day I
brought them up from Egypt until this day,
forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are
also doing to you.
9 Now listen to their voice, but solemnly warn
them and tell them how the king who reigns
over them will treat them.”

10 Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the
people who were asking him for a king.

11 He said, “This is how the king who reigns
over you will treat you: he will take your sons
and appoint them to his chariots and his cavalry,
and they will run before his chariot.
12 He will appoint for himself commanders of
thousands and commanders of fifties, and men
to plow his ground, reap his harvest, and make
his weapons of war and equipment for his
chariots.
13 He will take your daughters to be
perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

14 He will take the best of your fields,
vineyards, and olive groves and give them to his
servants.
15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your
vineyards and give it to his officials and his
servants.
16 He will take your male servants, your
female servants, your best young men, and your
donkeys, and put them to his work.
17 He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you
yourselves will be his servants.
18 On that day you will cry out because of the
king you have chosen for yourselves, but the
LORD will not answer you on that day."
19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel's
voice. They said, "No! There will be a king over
us,
20 so that we too may be like all the nations.
Our king will judge us, go out before us, and
fight our battles."
21 Samuel heard all the words of the people
and repeated them in the ears of the LORD.
22 The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their
voice and appoint a king for them." Then
Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go, each man
to his own city."

9

1 There was a man of Benjamin named Kish,
son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of
Aphiah, son of a Benjaminite, a man of wealth
and standing.
2 He had a son named Saul, a handsome young
man. No man among the Israelites was more

handsome than he. From his shoulders upward
he was taller than all the people.
3 The female donkeys of Kish, Saul's father,
were lost. Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of
the servants with you, and go look for the
donkeys."
4 He passed through the hill country of
Ephraim and the land of Shalishah, but they did
not find them. They passed through the land of
Shaalim, but they were not there. He passed
through the land of Benjamin, but they did not
find them.
5 When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul
said to the servant with him, "Come, let us
return, lest my father stop worrying about the
donkeys and become anxious about us."
6 He said to him, "There is a man of God in this
city, and the man is held in honor. Everything he
says surely comes to pass. Let us go there now;
perhaps he will tell us the way we should go."
7 Saul said to his servant, "If we go, what shall
we bring the man? The bread in our bags is
gone, and there is no gift to bring the man of
God. What do we have?"
8 The servant answered Saul again, "I have
about a tenth of an ounce of silver here. I will
give it to the man of God, and he will tell us our
way."
9 Formerly in Israel, when a man went to
inquire of God, he would say, "Come, let us go to
the seer," for the one now called a prophet was
formerly called a seer.
10 Saul said to his servant, "What you say is

good. Come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.
11 As they went up the ascent to the city, they met young women coming out to draw water and said to them, "Is the seer here?"
12 They answered them, "Yes, he is ahead of you. Hurry now, for he has come to the city today, because the people have a sacrifice at the high place today.
13 As soon as you enter the city, you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not eat until he comes, for he blesses the sacrifice; afterward the invited guests eat. Go up now, for you will find him at this time."
14 They went up to the city. As they were entering the city, Samuel was coming out toward them to go up to the high place.

15 The day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed this in Samuel's ear:
16 "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him as ruler over my people Israel, and he will save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen my people, because their cry has come to me."
17 When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, "Here is the man I spoke to you about. He will rule over my people."
18 Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, "Please tell me where the seer's house is."
19 Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, and you will eat

with me today. In the morning I will send you on
your way and tell you all that is in your heart.
20 As for the donkeys you lost three days ago,
do not set your heart on them, for they have
been found. And for whom is all that is
desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all
your father's house?"

21 Saul answered, "Am I not a Benjaminite,
from one of the smallest tribes of Israel? And is
not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe
of Benjamin? Why do you speak to me like this?"

22 Samuel took Saul and his servant and
brought them into the hall. He gave them a
place at the head of the invited guests, who
numbered about thirty men.
23 Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion I
gave you, which I told you to keep aside."
24 The cook lifted up the leg and what was on
it and set it before Saul. He said, "Here is what
was reserved. Set it before you and eat, for it
was kept for you for the appointed time, when I
said I had invited the people." So Saul ate with
Samuel that day.
25 They came down from the high place to the
city, and he spoke with Saul on the roof.
26 They rose early. At dawn Samuel called to
Saul on the roof, saying, "Rise, so that I may send
you on your way." Saul rose, and the two of
them, he and Samuel, went outside.
27 As they were going down to the edge of the
city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go
on ahead of us." He went on ahead. "But you

stand still for a while, so that I may let you hear
the word of God."

10

1 Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it on his
head, kissed him, and said, "Has not the LORD
anointed you as ruler over his inheritance?
2 When you leave me today, you will meet two
men beside Rachel's tomb in the territory of
Benjamin at Zelzah. They will say to you, 'The
donkeys you went to look for have been found.
Your father has stopped concerning himself with
the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying,
"What shall I do about my son?" '
3 Go on from there and come to the oak of
Tabor. There three men going up to God at
Bethel will meet you: one carrying three young
goats, another carrying three loaves of bread,
and another carrying a skin of wine.
4 They will greet you and give you two loaves
of bread, which you are to accept from their
hands.
5 After that you will come to the hill of God,
where the Philistine garrisons are. When you
enter the city there, you will meet a band of
prophets coming down from the high place,
preceded by a harp, a tambourine, a flute, and a
lyre. They will be prophesying.
6 The Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you,
and you will prophesy with them and be
changed into another man.
7 When these signs come to you, do whatever
your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

8 Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will come
down to you to offer burnt offerings and
sacrifice peace offerings. Wait seven days until I
come to you and tell you what you are to do."
9 When he turned his back to leave Samuel,
God gave him another heart, and all these signs
came to pass that day.
10 When they came there to the hill, a band of
prophets met him. The Spirit of God rushed
upon him, and he prophesied among them.
11 When all who had known him before saw
him prophesying with the prophets, the people
said to one another, "What has happened to the
son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"
12 A man from there answered, "And who is
their father?" So it became a proverb: "Is Saul
also among the prophets?"
13 When he finished prophesying, he went to
the high place.
14 Saul's uncle said to him and his servant,
"Where did you go?" He said, "To look for the
donkeys. When we saw that they were nowhere
to be found, we went to Samuel."
15 Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what
Samuel said to you."
16 Saul said to his uncle, "He plainly told us
that the donkeys had been found." But he did
not tell him what Samuel had said about the
kingship.
17 Samuel summoned the people to the LORD
at Mizpah.
18 He said to the Israelites, "Thus says the
LORD, the God of Israel: 'I brought Israel up

from Egypt and delivered you from the hand of
Egypt and from the hand of all the kingdoms
that oppressed you.'
19 But today you have rejected your God, who
saves you from all your calamities and
distresses, and you have said to him, 'Appoint a
king over us.' Now present yourselves before
the LORD by your tribes and your clans."
20 Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near,
and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen.
21 He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its
clans, and the clan of the Matrites was chosen.
Saul son of Kish was chosen, but when they
looked for him, he could not be found.
22 They inquired of the LORD again, "Has the
man come here yet?" The LORD said, "He is
hiding among the baggage."
23 They ran and brought him from there. He
stood among the people, and from his shoulders
upward he was taller than all the people.
24 Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see
the one the LORD has chosen? There is none like
him among all the people." All the people
shouted, "Long live the king!"
25 Samuel told the people the regulations of
kingship, wrote them in a book, and laid it
before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the
people away, each to his own home.
26 Saul also went home to Gibeah, and the
warriors whose hearts God had touched went
with him.
27 But worthless men said, "How can this man
save us?" They despised him and brought him

no gift, but he remained silent.

11

1 Nahash the Ammonite went up and camped
against Jabesh-gilead. All the men of Jabesh said
to Nahash, “Make a covenant with us, and we
will serve you.”
2 Nahash the Ammonite said to them, “On this
condition I will make a covenant with you: that I
gouge out every right eye among you and bring
this reproach on all Israel.”
3 The elders of Jabesh said to him, “Give us
seven days’ respite, so that we may send
messengers throughout the territory of Israel. If
no one saves us, we will come out to you.”
4 The messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and
spoke these words in the ears of the people. All
the people lifted their voices and wept.
5 Saul was coming from the field behind the
oxen. Saul said, “What is wrong with the people,
that they are weeping?” They told him the words
of the men of Jabesh.
6 When Saul heard these words, the Spirit of
God rushed upon him, and his anger burned
greatly.
7 He took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces,
and sent them throughout the territory of Israel
by the messengers, saying, “This is what will be
done to the oxen of anyone who does not come
out after Saul and Samuel.” The dread of the
LORD fell on the people, and they came out as
one man.

8 He mustered them at Bezek. The Israelites
numbered three hundred thousand, and the
men of Judah thirty thousand.
9 They said to the messengers who had come,
“Tell the men of Jabesh-gilead, ‘Tomorrow, when
the sun grows hot, you will have deliverance.’ ”
The messengers came and told the men of
Jabesh, and they rejoiced.
10 The men of Jabesh said, “Tomorrow we will
come out to you, and you may do to us whatever
is good in your eyes.”
11 The next day Saul divided the people into
three companies. They entered the camp during
the morning watch and struck down the
Ammonites until the heat of the day. The
survivors were scattered, so that no two of them
were left together.
12 The people said to Samuel, “Who said, ‘Shall
Saul reign over us?’ Hand the men over, so that
we may put them to death.”
13 But Saul said, “No one shall be put to death
this day, for today the LORD has brought
deliverance to Israel.”
14 Samuel said to the people, “Come, let us go
to Gilgal and renew the kingship there.”
15 All the people went to Gilgal, and there they
made Saul king before the LORD at Gilgal. There
they offered peace offerings before the LORD,
and Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced
greatly.

12

1 Samuel said to all Israel, “I have listened to

your voice in all that you said to me and have appointed a king over you.
2 Now the king walks before you. I am old and gray, and my sons are here with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this day.
3 Here I am. Testify against me before the LORD and his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? I will restore it to you."
4 They said, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us, and you have not taken anything from anyone's hand."
5 He said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have found nothing in my hand." They said, "He is witness."
6 Samuel said to the people, "The LORD is the one who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt.
7 Now stand here, so that I may argue the case with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous acts the LORD has done for you and your fathers.
8 When Jacob came to Egypt and your fathers cried out to the LORD, the LORD sent Moses and Aaron. They brought your fathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place.
9 But they forgot the LORD their God, and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of Hazor's army, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, who

fought against them.
10 They cried out to the LORD and said, ‘We
have sinned, for we have forsaken the LORD
and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. Now
deliver us from the hand of our enemies, and we
will serve you.’
11 The LORD sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah,
and Samuel, and delivered you from the hand of
your enemies on every side, so that you lived in
safety.
12 When you saw that Nahash, king of the
Ammonites, was coming against you, you said to
me, ‘No! A king shall reign over us,’ though the
LORD your God was your king.
13 Now here is the king you have chosen,
whom you asked for. The LORD has appointed a
king over you.
14 If you fear the LORD, serve him, listen to his
voice, and do not rebel against the LORD’s
command, then both you and the king who
reigns over you will follow the LORD your God.
15 But if you do not listen to the LORD’s voice
and rebel against the LORD’s command, the
hand of the LORD will be against you as it was
against your fathers.
16 Now stand here and see this great thing the
LORD is about to do before your eyes.
17 Is it not wheat harvest now? I will call to the
LORD, and he will send thunder and rain. Then
you will know and see how great is the evil you
have done in the LORD’s eyes by asking for a
king.”
18 Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD

sent thunder and rain that day. All the people
greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.
19 All the people said to Samuel, “Pray to the
LORD your God for your servants, so that we
may not die, for we have added to all our sins
this evil of asking for a king.”
20 Samuel said to the people, “Do not be afraid.
You have done all this evil, yet do not turn aside
from following the LORD. Serve the LORD with
all your heart.
21 Do not turn aside after worthless things that
cannot profit or deliver, for they are worthless.
22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for
the sake of his great name, because it has
pleased the LORD to make you his people.
23 As for me, far be it from me to sin against
the LORD by ceasing to pray for you. I will teach
you the good and right way.
24 Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully
with all your heart. Consider what great things
he has done for you.
25 But if you persist in doing evil, both you and
your king will be swept away.”

13

1 Saul was one year old when he became king,
and he reigned over Israel for two years.
2 Saul chose three thousand men from Israel
for himself. Two thousand were with Saul at
Michmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and
a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah of
Benjamin. He sent the rest of the people away,
each to his tent.

3 Jonathan struck the Philistine garrison at
Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Saul
sounded the horn throughout the land, saying,
“Let the Hebrews hear!”
4 All Israel heard it said, “Saul has struck the
Philistine garrison, and Israel has become a
stench to the Philistines.” The people were
summoned to follow Saul to Gilgal.
5 The Philistines gathered to fight against
Israel with thirty thousand chariots, six
thousand horsemen, and people as numerous as
the sand on the seashore. They went up and
camped at Michmash, east of Beth-aven.
6 When the men of Israel saw that they were
in danger, for the people were hard pressed,
they hid in caves, thickets, rocks, underground
chambers, and cisterns.
7 Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to the land
of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal, and
all the people followed him trembling.
8 He waited seven days, until the time Samuel
had appointed. But Samuel did not come to
Gilgal, and the people scattered from him.
9 Saul said, “Bring me the burnt offering and
the peace offerings.” He offered the burnt
offering.
10 As soon as he finished offering the burnt
offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet
him and greet him.
11 Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul
said, “I saw that the people were scattering from
me, that you had not come within the appointed
days, and that the Philistines were gathering at

Michmash.
12 So I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come
down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought
the LORD's favor.’ So I forced myself and offered
the burnt offering.”

13 Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted
foolishly. You have not kept the command the
LORD your God gave you. For then the LORD
would have established your kingdom over
Israel forever.
14 But now your kingdom will not endure. The
LORD has sought for himself a man after his
own heart, and the LORD has appointed him
ruler over his people, because you have not kept
what the LORD commanded you.”

15 Samuel rose and went up from Gilgal to
Gibeah of Benjamin. Saul mustered the people
who were with him, about six hundred men.
16 Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people with
them were staying at Geba of Benjamin, while
the Philistines were camped at Michmash.
17 Raiders went out from the Philistine camp
in three companies. One company turned
toward the road to Ophrah, toward the land of
Shual.
18 Another company turned toward
Beth-horon, and another turned toward the
border road overlooking the Valley of Zeboim
toward the wilderness.

19 No blacksmith could be found throughout
the land of Israel, for the Philistines had said,
“The Hebrews must not make swords or spears.”

20 All Israel would go down to the Philistines
to have each man's plowshare, hoe, ax, and
plow blade sharpened.
21 The charge was about a quarter of an ounce
of silver for sharpening the plow blades, hoes,
three-pronged forks, and axes, and for setting
the points of the goads.
22 So on the day of battle no sword or spear
was found in the hands of any of the people
with Saul and Jonathan. Only Saul and his son
Jonathan had them.
23 The Philistine garrison went out to the pass
at Michmash.

14

1 One day Jonathan son of Saul said to the
young man carrying his armor, "Come, let us
cross over to the Philistine garrison on the other
side." But he did not tell his father.
2 Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah,
under the pomegranate tree at Migron. The
people with him numbered about six hundred
men.
3 Ahijah, son of Ahitub the brother of Ichabod,
son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the LORD's priest at
Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. The people did
not know that Jonathan had gone.
4 Between the passes where Jonathan sought
to cross over to the Philistine garrison, there
was a rocky crag on one side and a rocky crag
on the other. One was named Bozez and the
other Seneh.
5 One crag rose on the north facing Michmash,
and the other on the south facing Geba.

6 Jonathan said to the young man carrying his
armor, “Come, let us cross over to the garrison of
these uncircumcised men. Perhaps the LORD
will act for us, for nothing prevents the LORD
from saving by many or by few.”
7 His armor-bearer said to him, “Do all that is
in your heart. Go ahead; I am with you,
according to your heart.”

8 Jonathan said, “We will cross over to the men
and show ourselves to them.
9 If they say to us, ‘Stay still until we come to
you,’ we will stand where we are and not go up
to them.
10 But if they say, ‘Come up to us,’ we will go
up, for the LORD has given them into our hand.
This will be our sign.”
11 The two of them showed themselves to the
Philistine garrison. The Philistines said, “Look,
Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they
have been hiding!”
12 The men of the garrison called to Jonathan
and his armor-bearer, “Come up to us, and we
will teach you something!” Jonathan said to his
armor-bearer, “Come up after me, for the LORD
has given them into the hand of Israel.”

13 Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet,
with his armor-bearer after him. They fell
before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer put them
to death behind him.
14 In the first attack Jonathan and his
armor-bearer struck down about twenty men in
an area of about half an acre.

15 Panic spread through the camp, the field,
and all the people. The garrison and the raiders
also trembled. The earth shook, and there was a
panic from God.
16 Saul's lookouts at Gibeah of Benjamin saw
that the throng was melting away and moving
this way.

17 Saul said to the people with him, "Take a
count and see who has gone from us." They
counted, and Jonathan and his armor-bearer
were missing.
18 Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God
here," for the ark of God was with the Israelites
at that time.
19 While Saul was speaking to the priest, the
uproar in the Philistine camp grew greater and
greater. Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your
hand."

20 Saul and all the people with him assembled
and went into battle. Every man's sword was
against his fellow, and there was very great
confusion.
21 The Hebrews who had previously been with
the Philistines and had gone up with them into
the camp all around also joined the Israelites
who were with Saul and Jonathan.
22 When all the men of Israel who had been
hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard that
the Philistines had fled, they too pursued them
closely in the battle.
23 The LORD saved Israel that day, and the
battle passed beyond Beth-aven.

24 The men of Israel were hard pressed that
day, for Saul had put the people under an oath,
saying, “Cursed be the man who eats any food
until evening, until I have taken vengeance on
my enemies.” So none of the people tasted any
food.
25 All the people of the land came into the
forest, and there was honey on the ground.
26 When the people entered the forest, honey
was flowing, but no one put his hand to his
mouth, for the people feared the oath.
27 Jonathan had not heard his father put the
people under the oath. He extended the tip of
the staff in his hand, dipped it into the
honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth. His
eyes brightened.
28 One of the people said, “Your father
solemnly put the people under an oath, saying,
‘Cursed be the man who eats any food today.’ ”
The people were faint.
29 Jonathan said, “My father has brought
trouble on the land. See how my eyes have
brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.
30 How much better if the people had eaten
freely today from the spoil they found among
their enemies! Would not the slaughter of the
Philistines have been greater?”
31 That day they struck down the Philistines
from Michmash to Aijalon, and the people were
very faint.
32 The people swooped upon the spoil. They
took sheep, cattle, and calves, slaughtered them
on the ground, and ate with the blood.

33 They told Saul, “The people are sinning
against the LORD by eating with the blood.” He
said, “You have acted treacherously. Roll a large
stone to me today.”
34 Saul said, “Go out among the people and tell
them, ‘Let each man bring me his ox or his
sheep. Slaughter them here and eat. Do not sin
against the LORD by eating with the blood.’ ”
That night all the people brought their oxen
with them, each man his own, and slaughtered
them there.
35 Saul built an altar to the LORD. This was the
first altar he built to the LORD.
36 Saul said, “Let us go down after the
Philistines by night and plunder them until
morning light. Let us not leave a man of them
alive.” They said, “Do whatever is good in your
eyes.” But the priest said, “Let us draw near to
God here.”
37 Saul inquired of God, “Shall I go down after
the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand
of Israel?” But he did not answer him that day.
38 Saul said, “Come here, all you leaders of the
people. Find out and see how this sin has
occurred today.
39 For as the LORD lives, who saves Israel, even
if it is in my son Jonathan, he will surely die.”
But no one among all the people answered him.
40 He said to all Israel, “You stand on one side,
and my son Jonathan and I will stand on the
other.” The people said to Saul, “Do what is good
in your eyes.”
41 Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel,

“Give a true answer.” Jonathan and Saul were
chosen, and the people went free.
42 Saul said, “Cast lots between me and my son
Jonathan.” Jonathan was chosen.
43 Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you
have done.” Jonathan told him, “I did taste a
little honey with the tip of the staff in my hand.
Here I am; I must die.”
44 Saul said, “May God do so to me and more
also, for you will surely die, Jonathan.”
45 But the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan
die, who has brought this great deliverance to
Israel? Far be it! As the LORD lives, not one hair
of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has
worked with God this day.” So the people
rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

46 Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and
the Philistines went back to their own place.
47 Saul took the kingship over Israel and
fought against all his enemies on every side:
Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of
Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned,
he inflicted punishment.
48 He acted valiantly and struck Amalek,
delivering Israel from the hand of its plunderers.

49 Saul’s sons were Jonathan, Ishvi, and
Malchi-shua. The names of his two daughters
were Merab, the firstborn, and Michal, the
younger.
50 Saul’s wife was named Ahinoam, daughter
of Ahimaaz. The commander of his army was
Abner son of Ner, Saul’s uncle.

51 Kish was Saul's father, and Ner, Abner's
father, was the son of Abiel.
52 There was fierce war against the Philistines
all the days of Saul. Whenever Saul saw a
mighty man or a valiant man, he took him into
his service.

15

1 Samuel said to Saul, "The LORD sent me to
anoint you king over his people Israel. Now
listen to the words of the LORD.
2 Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I have taken
account of what Amalek did to Israel, how they
opposed Israel on the way up from Egypt.
3 Now go and strike Amalek, and devote to
destruction all that belongs to him. Do not spare
him, but put to death men and women, children
and nursing infants, oxen and sheep, camels
and donkeys.' "
4 Saul summoned the people and mustered
them at Telaim: two hundred thousand foot
soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah.
5 Saul came to the city of Amalek and lay in
wait in the valley.
6 Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, turn aside and
leave the Amalekites, lest I sweep you away with
them. You showed kindness to all the Israelites
when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites
departed from among Amalek.
7 Saul struck Amalek from Havilah as far as
Shur, which is opposite Egypt.
8 He captured Agag king of Amalek alive, and
he devoted all the people to destruction by the
edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the
best of the sheep and cattle, the fattened
animals, the rams, and all that was good. They
were unwilling to devote them to destruction,
but everything despised and worthless they
devoted to destruction.
10 The word of the LORD came to Samuel:
11 "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has
turned back from following me and has not
carried out my words." Samuel was angry, and
he cried out to the LORD all night.
12 Samuel rose early in the morning to meet
Saul. Samuel was told, "Saul came to Carmel and
set up a monument for himself. Then he turned,
went on, and went down to Gilgal."
13 Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him,
"May you be blessed by the LORD! I have carried
out the word of the LORD."
14 Samuel said, "Then what is this bleating of
sheep in my ears, and this lowing of cattle that I
hear?"
15 Saul said, "They brought them from the
Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the
sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the LORD your
God. The rest we devoted to destruction."
16 Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you
what the LORD said to me last night." He said to
him, "Speak."
17 Samuel said, "Though you are small in your
own eyes, are you not head of the tribes of
Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel.
18 The LORD sent you on a mission and said,
'Go and devote the sinners, Amalek, to

destruction. Fight against them until they are consumed.'
19 Why did you not listen to the LORD's voice?
You swooped upon the spoil and did what was
evil in the LORD's eyes."

20 Saul said to Samuel, "I did listen to the
LORD's voice! I went on the mission the LORD
sent me on. I brought Agag king of Amalek, and
I devoted Amalek to destruction.
21 But the people took sheep and cattle from
the spoil, the best of what was devoted to
destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at
Gilgal."

22 Samuel said,

"Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and
sacrifices as much as in obeying the
LORD's voice?
To obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen
than the fat of rams.
23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and
stubbornness like iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the
LORD, he has rejected you as king."

24 Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I
have transgressed the LORD's command and
your words, because I feared the people and
listened to their voice.
25 Now please forgive my sin and return with
me, so that I may worship the LORD."
26 Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with
you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD,
and the LORD has rejected you from being king
over Israel."

27 As Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge
of Samuel's robe, and it tore.
28 Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the
kingdom of Israel from you today and given it to
a neighbor of yours who is better than you.
29 The Glory of Israel will not lie or relent, for
he is not a human being, that he should relent."
30 He said, "I have sinned. Yet please honor me
now before the elders of my people and before
Israel, and return with me, so that I may
worship the LORD your God."
31 Samuel returned after Saul, and Saul
worshiped the LORD.
32 Samuel said, "Bring Agag king of Amalek to
me." Agag came to him at ease, and Agag said,
"Surely the bitterness of death has passed."
33 Samuel said, "As your sword has made
women childless, so your mother will be
childless among women." Samuel cut Agag in
pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.
34 Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to
his home at Gibeah of Saul.
35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day
of his death, though Samuel mourned for Saul.
The LORD regretted that he had made Saul king
over Israel.

16

1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you
mourn for Saul, when I have rejected him from
reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and
go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I
have chosen a king for myself among his sons."

2 Samuel said, “How can I go? Saul will hear of
it and kill me.” The LORD said, “Take a heifer
with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the
LORD.’
3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice. I will tell you
what to do, and you shall anoint for me the one I
indicate to you.”
4 Samuel did what the LORD said and came to
Bethlehem. The elders of the city came
trembling to meet him and said, “Do you come in
peace?”
5 He said, “In peace. I have come to sacrifice to
the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with
me to the sacrifice.” He consecrated Jesse and
his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.
6 When they came, he saw Eliab and said,
“Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him.”
7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at
his appearance or the height of his stature, for I
have rejected him. For the LORD does not see as
people see: people look at the outward
appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”
8 Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass
before Samuel. He said, “The LORD has not
chosen this one either.”
9 Jesse made Shammah pass by, but he said,
“The LORD has not chosen this one either.”
10 Jesse made seven of his sons pass before
Samuel. Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not
chosen these.”
11 Samuel said to Jesse, “Are these all your
sons?” He said, “The youngest still remains. He is
tending the sheep.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send

for him and bring him, for we will not sit down
until he comes here."
12 He sent for him and brought him in. He was
ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome
appearance. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint
him, for this is he."
13 Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed
him among his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD
rushed upon David from that day onward.
Samuel rose and went to Ramah.
14 Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from
Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD
tormented him.
15 Saul's servants said to him, "An evil spirit
from God is tormenting you.
16 Let our lord command your servants here
before you to seek a man skilled in playing the
lyre. When the evil spirit from God is upon you,
he will play with his hand, and you will be well."
17 Saul said to his servants, "Find me a man
who plays well and bring him to me."
18 One of the young men answered, "I have
seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who is skilled
in playing, a valiant man, a man of war, prudent
in speech, and handsome, and the LORD is with
him."
19 Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said,
"Send me your son David, who is with the sheep."
20 Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a
skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them to
Saul by his son David.
21 David came to Saul and stood before him.
Saul loved him greatly, and he became his
armor-bearer.

22 Saul sent word to Jesse, “Please let David
stand before me, for he has found favor in my
eyes.”
23 Whenever the spirit from God came upon
Saul, David would take the lyre and play with
his hand. Saul would be refreshed and well, and
the evil spirit would depart from him.

17

1 The Philistines gathered their armies for
battle and assembled at Socoh, which belongs to
Judah. They camped between Socoh and
Azekah, at Ephes-dammim.
2 Saul and the men of Israel gathered and
camped in the Valley of Elah. They drew up
their battle lines to meet the Philistines.
3 The Philistines stood on the hill on one side,
and Israel stood on the hill on the other, with the
valley between them.
4 A champion came out from the Philistine
camps, named Goliath, from Gath. He was about
nine feet nine inches tall.
5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and
wore a coat of scale armor. The bronze armor
weighed about one hundred twenty-five pounds.
6 He had bronze guards on his legs and a
bronze javelin between his shoulders.
7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s
beam, and its iron head weighed about fifteen
pounds. His shield-bearer walked before him.
8 He stood and called to the battle lines of
Israel, “Why have you come out to draw up for
battle? Am I not the Philistine, and are you not

Saul's servants? Choose a man for yourselves,
and let him come down to me.
9 If he can fight me and strike me down, we
will be your slaves. But if I prevail over him and
strike him down, you will be our slaves and
serve us."
10 The Philistine said, "I defy the battle lines of
Israel this day! Give me a man, so that we may
fight each other."
11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words
of the Philistine, they were dismayed and
greatly afraid.

12 David was the son of an Ephrathite from
Bethlehem in Judah named Jesse, who had eight
sons. In Saul's days the man was old among the
people.
13 Jesse's three oldest sons had gone after Saul
to the battle. The names of his three sons who
went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn,
Abinadab the second, and Shammah the third.
14 David was the youngest, and the three
oldest had followed Saul.
15 David would go back and forth from Saul to
tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.
16 The Philistine came forward morning and
evening and took his stand for forty days.

17 Jesse said to his son David, "Take about
twenty quarts of this roasted grain and these ten
loaves of bread for your brothers, and run to
your brothers in the camp.
18 Take these ten cheeses to the commander of
their thousand. See how your brothers are
faring and bring back a token from them."

19 Saul, David's brothers, and all the men of
Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting the
Philistines.
20 David rose early in the morning, left the
sheep with a keeper, took the provisions, and
went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to
the camp as the army was going out to the battle
line, raising the battle cry.
21 Israel and the Philistines drew up their
battle lines, line facing line.
22 David left his baggage in the care of the
baggage keeper and ran to the battle line. He
came and asked his brothers how they were.
23 As he was speaking with them, the
champion, Goliath the Philistine from Gath,
came up from the Philistine battle lines and
spoke the same words, and David heard them.
24 When all the men of Israel saw the man,
they fled from him and were greatly afraid.
25 The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this
man coming up? He comes up to defy Israel.
The king will enrich the man who strikes him
down with great riches, give him his daughter,
and make his father's house free in Israel."
26 David said to the men standing with him,
"What will be done for the man who strikes
down this Philistine and removes the reproach
from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised
Philistine, that he should defy the battle lines of
the living God?"
27 The people answered him with the same
words, saying, "This is what will be done for the
man who strikes him down."

28 His oldest brother Eliab heard him speaking
with the men. Eliab's anger burned against
David, and he said, "Why have you come down?
With whom have you left those few sheep in the
wilderness? I know your arrogance and the evil
of your heart, for you have come down to see
the battle."
29 David said, "What have I done now? Was I
not just speaking?"
30 He turned away from him toward another
and spoke the same way, and the people gave
him the same answer as before.
31 When the words David had spoken were
heard, they reported them to Saul, and he sent
for him.
32 David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail
because of him. Your servant will go and fight
this Philistine."
33 Saul said to David, "You cannot go against
this Philistine to fight him, for you are a youth,
and he has been a man of war from his youth."
34 David said to Saul, "Your servant was
tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear
came and carried off a sheep from the flock,
35 I went after it, struck it, and rescued the
sheep from its mouth. When it rose against me, I
seized it by its jaw, struck it, and killed it.
36 Your servant has struck down both lion and
bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like
one of them, for he has defied the battle lines of
the living God."
37 David said, "The LORD who delivered me
from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear
will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

Saul said to David, “Go, and may the LORD be
with you.”

38 Saul clothed David in his own garments, put
a bronze helmet on his head, and clothed him in
armor.
39 David strapped his sword over his garments
and tried to walk, for he had not tested them.
David said to Saul, “I cannot walk in these, for I
have not tested them.” So David took them off.
40 He took his staff in his hand, chose five
smooth stones from the brook, and put them in
his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch. With his sling
in his hand, he approached the Philistine.
41 The Philistine kept advancing toward David,
with his shield-bearer before him.
42 When the Philistine looked and saw David,
he despised him, for he was a youth, ruddy and
handsome.
43 The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog,
that you come against me with sticks?” The
Philistine cursed David by his gods.
44 The Philistine said to David, “Come to me,
and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky
and the beasts of the field!”

45 David said to the Philistine, “You come
against me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin,
but I come against you in the name of the LORD
of hosts, the God of the battle lines of Israel,
whom you have defied.
46 This day the LORD will give you into my
hand. I will strike you down and take your head
from you. This day I will give the corpses of the
Philistine camp to the birds of the sky and the

beasts of the earth, so that all the earth may
know that there is a God in Israel.
47 All this assembly will know that the LORD
does not save by sword or spear, for the battle is
the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."
48 When the Philistine rose and advanced to
meet David, David hurried and ran toward the
battle line to meet the Philistine.
49 David put his hand into his bag, took out a
stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on the
forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and
he fell face down on the ground.
50 David prevailed over the Philistine with a
sling and a stone. He struck the Philistine and
killed him, but David had no sword in his hand.
51 David ran and stood beside the Philistine.
He took his sword, drew it from its sheath, put
him to death, and cut off his head with it. When
the Philistines saw that their champion was
dead, they fled.
52 The men of Israel and Judah rose, shouted,
and pursued the Philistines as far as the valley
and the gates of Ekron. The slain Philistines fell
along the road to Shaaraim, as far as Gath and
Ekron.
53 The Israelites returned from pursuing the
Philistines and plundered their camps.
54 David took the Philistine's head and brought
it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his
tent.
55 When Saul saw David going out to meet the
Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of
the army, "Whose son is this youth, Abner?"
Abner said, "As you live, O king, I do not know."

56 The king said, “Find out whose son the
young man is.”
57 When David returned from striking down
the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him
before Saul, with the Philistine’s head in his
hand.
58 Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young
man?” David said, “I am the son of your servant
Jesse of Bethlehem.”

18

1 When he had finished speaking to Saul,
Jonathan’s soul was bound to David’s soul, and
Jonathan loved him as his own soul.
2 Saul took him that day and would not let him
return to his father’s house.
3 Jonathan and David made a covenant,
because he loved him as his own soul.
4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing
and gave it to David, along with his garments,
his sword, his bow, and his belt.
5 David went out wherever Saul sent him and
was successful. Saul placed him over the men of
war, and this was good in the eyes of all the
people and also of Saul’s servants.
6 As they returned, when David came back
from striking down the Philistine, the women
came out from all the cities of Israel to meet
King Saul, singing and dancing, with
tambourines, joy, and musical instruments.
7 The women sang to one another as they
celebrated, “Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands.”

8 Saul was very angry, and this saying
displeased him. He said, “They have given David
tens of thousands, but to me they have given
thousands. What more can he have but the
kingship?”
9 Saul eyed David with suspicion from that day
onward.
10 The next day an evil spirit from God rushed
upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house.
David was playing with his hand, as he did day
after day, while Saul had a spear in his hand.
11 Saul hurled the spear, saying, “I will pin
David to the wall.” But David turned aside from
him twice.
12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD
was with him and had departed from Saul.
13 So Saul removed him from his presence and
made him commander of a thousand. He went
out and came in before the people.
14 David had success in all his ways, and the
LORD was with him.
15 When Saul saw that he had great success, he
stood in dread of him.
16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he
went out and came in before them.
17 Saul said to David, “Here is my older
daughter Merab. I will give her to you as a wife.
Only be valiant for me and fight the LORD’s
battles.” For Saul said, “Let my hand not be
against him, but let the hand of the Philistines
be against him.”
18 David said to Saul, “Who am I, and what are
my life and my father’s family in Israel, that I
should become the king’s son-in-law?”

19 But when the time came to give Saul's
daughter Merab to David, she was given to
Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.
20 Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. They
told Saul, and this was right in his eyes.
21 Saul said, "I will give her to him, so that she
may be a snare to him and the hand of the
Philistines may be against him." Saul said to
David a second time, "Today you may become
my son-in-law."
22 Saul commanded his servants, "Speak
privately to David and say, 'The king delights in
you, and all his servants love you. Now become
the king's son-in-law.' "
23 Saul's servants spoke these words in David's
ears. David said, "Is it a small thing in your eyes
to become the king's son-in-law? I am a poor
man and lightly esteemed."
24 Saul's servants told him, "This is what David
said."
25 Saul said, "Tell David, 'The king desires no
bride price except a hundred Philistine
foreskins, to take vengeance on the king's
enemies.' " Saul intended to make David fall by
the hand of the Philistines.
26 His servants told David these words, and it
pleased David to become the king's son-in-law.
The days had not yet expired.
27 David rose and went with his men and
struck down two hundred Philistine men. David
brought their foreskins, and they delivered
them in full to the king, so that he might become
the king's son-in-law. Saul gave him his
daughter Michal as a wife.

28 Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with
David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved
him.
29 Saul became still more afraid of David, and
Saul was David's enemy continually.

30 The commanders of the Philistines went
out, and whenever they went out, David had
more success than all Saul's servants. His name
was highly esteemed.

19

1 Saul spoke to his son Jonathan and all his
servants about putting David to death. But
Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted greatly in David.
2 Jonathan told David, "My father Saul is
seeking to put you to death. Be on your guard in
the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide.
3 I will go out and stand beside my father in
the field where you are. I will speak to my
father about you, and when I find out anything,
I will tell you."

4 Jonathan spoke well of David to his father
Saul and said to him, "Let the king not sin against
his servant David, for he has not sinned against
you, and his deeds have been very good for you.
5 He took his life in his hand and struck down
the Philistine, and the LORD brought great
deliverance to all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced.
Why would you sin against innocent blood by
putting David to death without cause?"
6 Saul listened to Jonathan's voice and swore,
"As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."

7 Jonathan called David and told him all these
words. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he
was in his presence as before.
8 There was war again. David went out, fought
the Philistines, and struck them with a great
blow, and they fled before him.
9 An evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul
as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand,
while David was playing with his hand.
10 Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the
spear, but he slipped away from Saul, and the
spear struck the wall. David fled and escaped
that night.
11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to
watch him and put him to death in the morning.
But Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not
escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will
be put to death."
12 Michal let David down through the window,
and he went away, fled, and escaped.
13 Michal took the household idol and laid it
on the bed. She put a goat-hair covering at its
head and covered it with a garment.
14 When Saul sent messengers to take David,
she said, "He is sick."
15 Saul sent the messengers to see David,
saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, so that I
may put him to death."
16 When the messengers came in, there was
the household idol on the bed, with the goat-hair
covering at its head.
17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived
me like this and sent my enemy away, so that he

escaped?" Michal said to Saul, "He said to me,
'Let me go. Why should I kill you?' "
18 David fled and escaped. He came to Samuel
at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to
him. He and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth.
19 Saul was told, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."
20 Saul sent messengers to take David. When
they saw the band of prophets prophesying,
with Samuel standing over them, the Spirit of
God came upon Saul's messengers, and they too
prophesied.
21 They told Saul, and he sent other
messengers, and they too prophesied. Saul sent
messengers a third time, and they too
prophesied.
22 He himself went to Ramah and came to the
great cistern at Secu. He asked, "Where are
Samuel and David?" Someone said, "They are at
Naioth in Ramah."
23 He went there toward Naioth in Ramah, and
the Spirit of God came upon him too. He went
along prophesying until he came to Naioth in
Ramah.
24 He too stripped off his clothes and
prophesied before Samuel. He lay naked all that
day and all that night. That is why they say, "Is
Saul also among the prophets?"

20

1 David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came
to Jonathan. He said, "What have I done? What
is my iniquity? What is my sin before your
father, that he seeks my life?"

2 He said to him, “Far be it! You shall not die.
My father does nothing great or small without
telling me. Why would my father hide this
matter from me? It is not so.”
3 David swore again and said, “Your father
knows very well that I have found favor in your
eyes, and he says, ‘Let Jonathan not know this,
lest he be grieved.’ But as the LORD lives and as
you live, there is only a step between me and
death.”
4 Jonathan said to David, “Whatever you
desire, I will do for you.”
5 David said to Jonathan, “Tomorrow is the
new moon, and I am expected to sit with the
king to eat. Let me go, so that I may hide in the
field until the evening of the third day.
6 If your father notices my absence, say, ‘David
earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem,
his city, for the whole family has its annual
sacrifice there.’
7 If he says, ‘Good,’ your servant will have
peace. But if he is very angry, know that he has
determined to do harm.
8 Show kindness to your servant, for you have
brought your servant into a covenant of the
LORD with you. If there is iniquity in me, put
me to death yourself. Why should you bring me
to your father?”
9 Jonathan said, “Far be it from you! If I knew
for certain that my father had determined to
bring harm upon you, would I not tell you?”
10 David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me?
Or what if your father answers you harshly?”

11 Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out
into the field.” The two of them went out into the
field.
12 Jonathan said to David, “The LORD, the God
of Israel, be witness! When I sound out my
father about this time tomorrow or the third
day, if he is well disposed toward David, will I
not send to you and let you know?
13 May the LORD do so to Jonathan and more
also! If it pleases my father to do you harm, I
will let you know and send you away, so that
you may go in peace. May the LORD be with you
as he has been with my father.
14 And will you not, while I am still alive, show
me the LORD’s kindness, so that I may not die?
15 Never cut off your kindness from my house,
not even when the LORD cuts off every one of
David’s enemies from the face of the earth.”
16 Jonathan made a covenant with David’s
house, saying, “May the LORD require it from
the hand of David’s enemies.”
17 Jonathan again made David swear by his
love for him, for he loved him as his own soul.
18 Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new
moon. You will be missed, for your seat will be
empty.
19 On the third day, go far down to the place
where you hid when the matter was being
handled, and stay beside the stone Ezel.
20 I will shoot three arrows to its side, as
though shooting at a target.
21 Then I will send the boy, saying, ‘Go, find the
arrows.’ If I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are
on this side of you; pick them up,’ then come, for

there is peace for you and no danger, as the
LORD lives.
22 But if I say to the young man, 'Look, the
arrows are beyond you,' go, for the LORD has
sent you away.
23 As for the matter you and I have spoken of,
the LORD is between me and you forever."

24 David hid in the field. When the new moon
came, the king sat down to eat.
25 The king sat in his usual seat by the wall.
Jonathan rose, and Abner sat beside Saul, but
David's place was empty.
26 Saul said nothing that day, for he thought,
"Something has happened to him. He is not
clean; surely he is not clean."

27 The next day, the second day of the month,
David's place was empty. Saul said to his son
Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to
eat, either yesterday or today?"

28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly
asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem.
29 He said, 'Please let me go, for our family has
a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has
commanded me to be there. Now, if I have
found favor in your eyes, please let me get away
and see my brothers.' That is why he has not
come to the king's table."

30 Saul's anger burned against Jonathan, and
he said to him, "Son of a perverse, rebellious
woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the
son of Jesse, to your shame and to the shame of
your mother's nakedness?

31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the
earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be
established. Now send and bring him to me, for
he deserves death."
32 Jonathan answered his father Saul, "Why
should he be put to death? What has he done?"
33 Saul hurled the spear at him to strike him.
Jonathan knew that his father had determined
to put David to death.
34 Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger
and ate no food on the second day of the month.
He was grieved for David, because his father
had shamed him.
35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the
field at the time appointed with David, and a
little boy was with him.
36 He said to his boy, "Run and find the arrows
I shoot." The boy ran, and he shot the arrow
beyond him.
37 When the boy came to the place of the
arrow Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after
the boy, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"
38 Jonathan called after the boy, "Quickly!
Hurry! Do not stop!" Jonathan's boy gathered
the arrows and came to his master.
39 The boy knew nothing of the matter. Only
Jonathan and David knew.
40 Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy with
him and said, "Go, take them to the city."
41 When the boy had gone, David rose from
the south side, fell face down on the ground, and
bowed three times. They kissed one another and
wept together, David weeping the more.

42 Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, for we
have both sworn in the name of the LORD,
saying, ‘The LORD shall be between me and you
and between my offspring and yours forever.’ ”
Then David rose and went away, and Jonathan
entered the city.

21

1 David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest.
Ahimelech came trembling to meet David and
said to him, “Why are you alone, with no one
with you?”
2 David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king
has charged me with a matter and said to me,
‘Let no one know anything about the matter on
which I am sending you or what I have
commanded you.’ I have directed the young
men to a certain place.
3 Now what do you have at hand? Give me five
loaves of bread, or whatever is available.”
4 The priest answered David, “I have no
common bread at hand, only holy bread,
provided the young men have kept themselves
from women.”
5 David answered the priest, “Indeed, women
have been kept from us, as on former occasions
when I set out. The young men’s equipment was
holy even on an ordinary journey. How much
more will the equipment be holy today!”
6 The priest gave him the holy bread, for there
was no bread there except the bread of the
Presence, which had been removed from before

the LORD to be replaced with hot bread on the day it was taken away.

7 Now one of Saul's servants was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds.

8 David said to Ahimelech, "Is there not a spear or sword here at hand? I brought neither my sword nor my weapons, for the king's business was urgent."

9 The priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Elah, is here, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you wish to take it, take it, for there is no other here." David said, "There is none like it. Give it to me."

10 David rose and fled from Saul that day and came to Achish king of Gath.

11 The servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David, the king of the land? Is it not of him that they sing to one another in dances, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his tens of thousands'?"

12 David took these words to heart and was greatly afraid of Achish king of Gath.

13 He changed his behavior before them and pretended to be mad in their hands. He made marks on the doors of the gate and let his saliva run down his beard.

14 Achish said to his servants, "You see that the man is mad. Why have you brought him to me?

15 Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to act madly before me? Shall this man enter my house?"

22

1 David went from there and escaped to the
cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his
father's house heard of it, they went down to
him there.
2 Everyone in distress, everyone in debt, and
everyone bitter in soul gathered to him, and he
became their commander. About four hundred
men were with him.
3 David went from there to Mizpah of Moab
and said to the king of Moab, "Please let my
father and mother stay with you until I know
what God will do for me."
4 He brought them before the king of Moab,
and they stayed with him all the time David was
in the stronghold.

5 The prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay
in the stronghold. Go into the land of Judah." So
David went and came to the forest of Hereth.

6 Saul heard that David and the men with him
had been discovered. Saul was sitting at Gibeah
under the tamarisk on the height, with his spear
in his hand and all his servants standing around
him.
7 Saul said to his servants standing around
him, "Listen, Benjaminites! Will the son of Jesse
also give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he
make all of you commanders of thousands and
commanders of hundreds?
8 Is that why all of you have conspired against
me? No one tells me when my son makes a
covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is
concerned for me or tells me that my son has

stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait,
as he does today."
9 Doeg the Edomite, who was standing over
Saul's servants, answered, "I saw the son of Jesse
come to Nob, to Ahimelech son of Ahitub.
10 He inquired of the LORD for him, gave him
provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath
the Philistine."
11 The king sent to summon Ahimelech son of
Ahitub the priest and all his father's house, the
priests at Nob. They all came to the king.
12 Saul said, "Listen, son of Ahitub." He
answered, "Here I am, my lord."
13 Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired
against me, you and the son of Jesse? You gave
him bread and a sword and inquired of God for
him, so that he might rise against me to lie in
wait, as he does today."
14 Ahimelech answered the king, "Who among
all your servants is as faithful as David, the
king's son-in-law, who obeys your orders and is
honored in your house?
15 Did I begin to inquire of God for him today?
Far be it from me! Let the king charge nothing
against his servant or any of my father's house,
for your servant knew nothing of all this, small
or great."
16 The king said, "You shall surely die,
Ahimelech, you and all your father's house."
17 The king said to the guards standing around
him, "Turn and put the priests of the LORD to
death, for their hand too is with David. They
knew he was fleeing and did not tell me." But

the king's servants were unwilling to put out
their hands to strike the priests of the LORD.
18 The king said to Doeg, "You turn and strike
the priests." Doeg the Edomite turned and struck
the priests. That day he put to death eighty-five
men who wore a linen ephod.
19 He also struck Nob, the city of the priests,
with the edge of the sword: men and women,
children and nursing infants, and oxen,
donkeys, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.
20 But one son of Ahimelech son of Ahitub,
named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David.
21 Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the
priests of the LORD.
22 David said to Abiathar, "I knew that day,
when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he
would surely tell Saul. I have caused the death
of everyone in your father's house.
23 Stay with me; do not be afraid. He who
seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you
will be protected."

23

1 David was told, "The Philistines are attacking
Keilah and plundering the threshing floors."
2 So David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go
and attack these Philistines?" The LORD said to
David, "Go, attack the Philistines and save
Keilah."
3 But David's men said to him, "We are afraid
here in Judah. How much more if we go to
Keilah against the Philistine battle lines!"

4 David inquired of the LORD again, and the
LORD answered him, “Get up and go down to
Keilah, for I am giving the Philistines into your
hand.”
5 David and his men went to Keilah and fought
the Philistines. They drove away their livestock
and struck them with a great slaughter. So David
saved the inhabitants of Keilah.
6 When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled to
David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in
his hand.
7 Saul was told that David had come to Keilah,
and Saul said, “God has delivered him into my
hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a
city with gates and a bar.”
8 Saul summoned all the people for battle, to
go down to Keilah and besiege David and his
men.
9 When David learned that Saul was secretly
plotting evil against him, he said to Abiathar the
priest, “Bring the ephod here.”
10 Then David said, “LORD, God of Israel, your
servant has indeed heard that Saul is seeking to
come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me.
11 Will the men of Keilah hand me over to
him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has
heard? LORD, God of Israel, please tell your
servant.” The LORD said, “He will come down.”
12 David asked, “Will the men of Keilah hand
me and my men over to Saul?” The LORD said,
“They will hand you over.”
13 So David and his men, about six hundred,
got up and left Keilah, going wherever they

could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up going out.
14 David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country of the wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.
15 David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was at Horesh in the wilderness of Ziph.
16 Jonathan son of Saul set out and went to David at Horesh and strengthened his hand in God.
17 He said to him, “Do not be afraid, for the hand of my father Saul will not find you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. My father Saul knows this too.”
18 The two of them made a covenant before the LORD. David stayed at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.
19 Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is David not hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, south of Jeshimon?
20 Now, O king, come down whenever you desire, and we will hand him over to the king.”
21 Saul said, “May you be blessed by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me.
22 Go and make further preparations. Find out and see where he goes and who has seen him there, for I am told that he is very crafty.
23 Find out about all the hiding places where he hides, and come back to me with certain information. Then I will go with you. If he is in

the land, I will search him out among all the clans of Judah."
24 So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah south of Jeshimon.
25 Saul and his men went to look for him. When David was told, he went down to the rock and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. Saul heard about it and pursued David in the wilderness of Maon.
26 Saul went along one side of the mountain, and David and his men along the other. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, while Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them.
27 Then a messenger came to Saul and said, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have raided the land!"
28 So Saul turned back from pursuing David and went to meet the Philistines. That is why they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth.
29 David went up from there and stayed in the strongholds of En-gedi.

24

1 When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En-gedi."
2 So Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to look for David and his men near the rocks of the wild goats.
3 He came to the sheepfolds beside the road, where there was a cave. Saul went in to relieve

himself, while David and his men were sitting in the farthest part of the cave.
4 David's men said to him, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I am giving your enemy into your hand, and you may do to him whatever seems good to you.' " Then David got up and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe.
5 Afterward, David's heart troubled him because he had cut off the corner of Saul's robe.
6 He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, as to raise my hand against him, for he is the LORD's anointed."
7 With these words David restrained his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. Saul got up, left the cave and went on his way.
8 Afterward David got up, came out of the cave and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and paid him homage.
9 David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to people who say, 'David seeks to harm you'?
10 Today your own eyes have seen how the LORD gave you into my hand in the cave. Someone urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not raise my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.'
11 Look, my father, look at the corner of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you. Know and see that there is no evil or rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you hunt me down to take my life.

12 May the LORD judge between you and me,
and may the LORD avenge me on you, but my
hand will not be against you.
13 As the ancient proverb says, 'From the
wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand will not
be against you.
14 After whom has the king of Israel come out?
Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A single
flea?
15 May the LORD be judge and judge between
you and me. May he see, plead my cause and
deliver me from your hand."
16 When David finished saying these things to
Saul, Saul said, "Is that your voice, David my
son?" Then Saul wept aloud.
17 He said to David, "You are more righteous
than I am, for you have done good to me, while I
have done evil to you.
18 Today you have shown the good you have
done to me: the LORD delivered me into your
hand, but you did not kill me.
19 When a man finds his enemy, does he let
him go away unharmed? May the LORD reward
you with good for what you have done to me
today.
20 Now I know that you will surely be king,
and that the kingdom of Israel will be
established in your hand.
21 So swear to me by the LORD that you will
not cut off my descendants after me or destroy
my name from my father's house."
22 David swore this to Saul. Saul went home,
but David and his men went up to the

stronghold.

25

1 Samuel died, and all Israel gathered to
mourn for him. They buried him at his home in
Ramah. Then David set out and went down to
the wilderness of Paran.

2 There was a man in Maon whose property
was in Carmel. He was very wealthy, with three
thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was
shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 The man's name was Nabal, and his wife's
name was Abigail. The woman was discerning
and beautiful, but the man was harsh and evil in
his dealings. He was a Calebite.

4 While David was in the wilderness, he heard
that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

5 So David sent ten young men and told them,
"Go up to Carmel, visit Nabal and greet him in
my name.

6 Say to him, 'Long life to you! Peace to you,
peace to your household and peace to all you
have.

7 I have heard that you have shearers. Your
shepherds have been with us, and we did not
mistreat them. Nothing of theirs went missing
all the time they were in Carmel.

8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you.
Let these young men find favor in your eyes, for
we have come on a festive day. Please give
whatever you have at hand to your servants and
to your son David.' "

9 David's young men came and spoke all these
words to Nabal in David's name. Then they
waited.
10 Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is
David? Who is the son of Jesse? These days
there are many slaves breaking away from their
masters.
11 Shall I take my bread, my water and the
meat I have slaughtered for my shearers and
give them to men when I do not know where
they come from?"
12 David's young men turned around, went
back and reported all these words to him.
13 David said to his men, "Each of you, strap on
your sword!" Each man strapped on his sword,
and David strapped on his as well. About four
hundred men went up after David, while two
hundred stayed with the baggage.
14 One of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's
wife, "David sent messengers from the
wilderness to greet our master, but he hurled
insults at them.
15 Yet the men were very good to us. We were
not mistreated, and nothing went missing all the
time we went about with them in the fields.
16 They were a wall around us both night and
day, the whole time we were with them tending
the sheep.
17 Now consider what you should do, for
disaster is determined against our master and
his entire household. He is such a worthless
man that no one can speak to him."
18 Abigail hurried and took two hundred
loaves of bread, two wineskins of wine, five

prepared sheep, about a bushel of roasted grain,
a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred
fig cakes. She loaded them on donkeys
19 and said to her young men, “Go on ahead of
me. I will follow you.” But she did not tell her
husband Nabal.
20 As she rode her donkey down a hidden part
of the mountain, David and his men were
coming down toward her, and she met them.
21 David had said, “Surely it was in vain that I
guarded everything this man had in the
wilderness, so that nothing of his went missing.
He has repaid me with evil for good.
22 May God do so to David’s enemies, and
more besides, if by morning I leave alive a single
one of his who urinates against a wall.”
23 When Abigail saw David, she hurried and
got down from her donkey. She fell on her face
before David and bowed to the ground.
24 She fell at his feet and said, “On me, my lord,
on me be the guilt. Please let your servant speak
to you, and listen to the words of your servant.
25 Please, my lord, pay no attention to this
worthless man Nabal. He is just like his name:
his name is Nabal, and folly is with him. But I,
your servant, did not see the young men my lord
sent.
26 Now, my lord, as the LORD lives and as you
live, the LORD has kept you from bloodguilt and
from taking vengeance with your own hand.
May your enemies and those who seek harm for
my lord be like Nabal.
27 Let this gift your servant has brought to my

lord be given to the young men who follow my lord.
28 Please forgive your servant's offense. The
LORD will surely establish a lasting house for my
lord, because my lord fights the LORD's battles.
May no evil be found in you all your days.
29 Though someone rises to pursue you and
seek your life, my lord's life will be bound in the
bundle of the living with the LORD your God.
But the lives of your enemies he will sling away
from the pocket of a sling.
30 When the LORD has done for my lord all the
good he has spoken concerning you and has
appointed you ruler over Israel,
31 this will not bring my lord anguish or a
troubled heart over having shed blood without
cause or taken vengeance for himself. When the
LORD does good to my lord, remember your
servant."
32 David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD,
the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me
today!
33 Blessed be your discernment, and blessed
be you, who have kept me today from bloodguilt
and from taking vengeance with my own hand.
34 Indeed, as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives,
who has kept me from harming you, if you had
not hurried to meet me, by morning light not a
single one who urinates against a wall would
have been left to Nabal."
35 David accepted from her hand what she had
brought him and said to her, "Go up to your
home in peace. See, I have listened to you and

granted your request."
36 When Abigail came to Nabal, he was
holding a feast in his house like a king's feast.
Nabal was merry and very drunk, so she told
him nothing at all until morning light.
37 In the morning, when Nabal had sobered
up, his wife told him these things. His heart died
within him, and he became like a stone.
38 About ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal,
and he died.
39 When David heard that Nabal was dead, he
said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has pleaded my
cause against Nabal's insult and kept his servant
from evil! The LORD has brought Nabal's evil
back on his own head." Then David sent word to
Abigail to take her as his wife.
40 When David's servants came to Abigail at
Carmel, they said to her, "David has sent us to
you to take you to him as his wife."
41 She got up, bowed with her face to the
ground and said, "Here is your servant, ready to
serve and wash the feet of my lord's servants."
42 Abigail hurriedly got up and rode on a
donkey, with five of her young women following
her. She went after David's messengers and
became his wife.
43 David had also taken Ahinoam of Jezreel,
and both of them became his wives.
44 But Saul had given his daughter Michal,
David's wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was from
Gallim.

26

1 The Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said,

“Is David not hiding on the hill of Hachilah,
facing Jeshimon?”
2 So Saul set out and went down to the
wilderness of Ziph with three thousand chosen
men of Israel to look for David in the wilderness
of Ziph.
3 Saul camped on the hill of Hachilah, facing
Jeshimon, beside the road. David was staying in
the wilderness, and he saw that Saul had come
after him there.
4 David sent out spies and learned for certain
that Saul had come.
5 Then David got up and came to the place
where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and
Abner son of Ner, the commander of his army,
were lying. Saul was lying in the middle of the
camp, with the troops camped around him.
6 David asked Ahimelech the Hittite and
Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will
go down with me to Saul in the camp?” Abishai
said, “I will go down with you.”
7 So David and Abishai went to the troops at
night. Saul was lying asleep in the middle of the
camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his
head. Abner and the troops were lying around
him.
8 Abishai said to David, “Today God has
delivered your enemy into your hand. Now let
me pin him to the ground with the spear in one
stroke. I will not need a second.”
9 But David said to Abishai, “Do not kill him,
for who can raise his hand against the LORD’s
anointed and be guiltless?”
10 David added, “As the LORD lives, the LORD

himself will strike him, or his day will come and
he will die, or he will go down into battle and
perish.
11 The LORD forbid that I should raise my
hand against the LORD's anointed! Now take the
spear by his head and the water jar, and let us
go."
12 So David took the spear and the water jar
from beside Saul's head, and they went away.
No one saw, no one knew and no one woke up.
They were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the
LORD had fallen on them.
13 David crossed to the other side and stood on
top of the mountain far away, with a great
distance between them.
14 David called to the troops and to Abner son
of Ner, "Will you not answer, Abner?" Abner
answered, "Who are you, calling to the king?"
15 David said to Abner, "Are you not a brave
man? Who is like you in Israel? Why have you
not guarded your lord the king? Someone came
in to kill your lord the king.
16 What you have done is not good. As the
LORD lives, you all deserve to die, because you
have not guarded your lord, the LORD's
anointed. Now look! Where are the king's spear
and the water jar that were beside his head?"
17 Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is
that your voice, David my son?" David
answered, "It is my voice, my lord the king."
18 He added, "Why is my lord pursuing his
servant? What have I done? What evil is in my
hand?

19 Now please let my lord the king listen to his
servant's words. If the LORD has stirred you up
against me, let him accept an offering. But if it is
people, may they be cursed before the LORD, for
today they have driven me out from sharing in
the LORD's inheritance, saying, 'Go, serve other
gods.'
20 Now do not let my blood fall to the ground
away from the LORD's presence. The king of
Israel has come out to seek a single flea, as one
hunts a partridge in the mountains."
21 Saul said, "I have sinned. Come back, David
my son, for I will not harm you again, because
my life was precious in your eyes today. I have
acted foolishly and have gone very far astray."
22 David answered, "Here is the king's spear!
Let one of the young men come over and get it.
23 May the LORD repay each man for his
righteousness and faithfulness. Today the LORD
gave you into my hand, but I would not raise my
hand against the LORD's anointed.
24 Just as your life was precious in my eyes
today, so may my life be precious in the LORD's
eyes, and may he deliver me from every
distress."
25 Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, David
my son! You will surely accomplish much and
surely prevail." Then David went on his way,
and Saul returned to his place.

27

1 David said in his heart, "One day I will perish
by Saul's hand. There is nothing better for me

than to escape to the land of the Philistines.
Then Saul will give up searching for me
throughout Israel's territory, and I will escape
from his hand."
2 So David set out and crossed over with the
six hundred men who were with him to Achish
son of Maoch, king of Gath.
3 David and his men stayed with Achish at
Gath, each with his household. David had his
two wives with him: Ahinoam of Jezreel and
Abigail of Carmel, who had been Nabal's wife.
4 When Saul was told that David had fled to
Gath, he stopped looking for him.

5 David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in
your eyes, let me be given a place in one of the
country towns to live in. Why should your
servant live with you in the royal city?"
6 That day Achish gave him Ziklag. That is why
Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this
day.

7 David lived in Philistine territory for a year
and four months.
8 David and his men would go up and raid the
Geshurites, the Gizrites and the Amalekites.
These peoples had inhabited the land from
ancient times, toward Shur and as far as the
land of Egypt.
9 When David struck the land, he left neither
man nor woman alive. He took sheep, cattle,
donkeys, camels and clothing, then returned to
Achish.
10 Achish would ask, "Did you not raid today?"
David would answer, "Against the Negev of

Judah, the Negev of the Jerahmeelites and the
Negev of the Kenites."
11 David left neither man nor woman alive to
bring to Gath, for he said, "They might report on
us, saying, 'This is what David has done.' " This
was his practice all the time he lived in
Philistine territory.
12 Achish trusted David, saying, "He has made
himself utterly hated by his people Israel, so he
will be my servant forever."

28

1 In those days the Philistines gathered their
forces for war against Israel. Achish said to
David, "Know for certain that you and your men
will go out with me in the army."
2 David said to Achish, "Then you will know
what your servant will do." Achish said to David,
"Then I will make you my bodyguard for life."
3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had
mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his
own city. Saul had removed the mediums and
spiritists from the land.
4 The Philistines gathered and came to camp at
Shunem. Saul gathered all Israel, and they
camped at Gilboa.
5 When Saul saw the Philistine camp, he was
afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
6 Saul inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did
not answer him by dreams, by Urim or by
prophets.
7 So Saul said to his servants, "Find me a
woman who is a medium, so that I may go to her

and inquire of her." His servants said to him,
“There is a woman who is a medium at En-dor.”
8 Saul disguised himself, put on other clothes
and went with two men. They came to the
woman at night, and he said, “Please divine for
me through a spirit, and bring up for me the one
I name to you.”
9 The woman said to him, “You know what
Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums
and spiritists from the land. Why are you setting
a trap for my life to have me put to death?”
10 Saul swore to her by the LORD, “As the
LORD lives, no punishment will come upon you
for this.”
11 Then the woman asked, “Whom shall I bring
up for you?” He said, “Bring up Samuel for me.”
12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out
with a loud voice and said to Saul, “Why have
you deceived me? You are Saul!”
13 The king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What
have you seen?” The woman said to Saul, “I have
seen gods coming up out of the earth.”
14 He asked her, “What does he look like?” She
said, “An old man is coming up, wrapped in a
robe.” Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed
with his face to the ground and paid homage.

15 Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you
disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul
answered, “I am in great distress. The Philistines
are fighting against me, and God has turned
away from me. He no longer answers me
through prophets or dreams. So I have called
you to tell me what I should do.”

16 Samuel said, “Why do you ask me, since the
LORD has turned away from you and become
your adversary?
17 The LORD has done for himself what he
spoke through me. The LORD has torn the
kingdom from your hand and given it to your
neighbor, to David.
18 Because you did not obey the LORD’s voice
or carry out his fierce anger against Amalek, the
LORD has done this to you today.
19 The LORD will also deliver Israel along with
you into the hand of the Philistines. Tomorrow
you and your sons will be with me. The LORD
will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand
of the Philistines.”
20 At once Saul fell full length on the ground,
greatly afraid because of Samuel’s words. He
also had no strength, for he had eaten no food
all that day and all that night.
21 The woman came to Saul and saw that he
was greatly terrified. She said to him, “Your
servant has obeyed your voice. I put my life in
my hand and listened to the words you spoke to
me.
22 Now please listen to your servant’s voice as
well. Let me set a little bread before you, and
eat, so that you will have strength when you go
on your way.”
23 He refused and said, “I will not eat.” But his
servants and the woman urged him, and he
listened to them. He got up from the ground and
sat on the bed.
24 The woman had a fattened calf in the house,
and she hurried to slaughter it. She took flour,

kneaded it and baked unleavened bread.
25 She served it to Saul and his servants, and
they ate. Then they got up and went away that
night.

29

1 The Philistines gathered all their forces at
Aphek, while Israel camped by the spring in
Jezreel.
2 The Philistine rulers marched past with their
troops in hundreds and thousands, while David
and his men marched at the rear with Achish.
3 The Philistine commanders asked, "What are
these Hebrews doing here?" Achish said to the
Philistine commanders, "Is this not David, the
servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with
me these days or these years? I have found no
fault in him from the day he came over to me
until today."
4 But the Philistine commanders were angry
with him and said, "Send the man back to the
place you assigned him. He must not go down
into battle with us, or he may become our
adversary in battle. How could he regain his
master's favor? Would it not be with the heads
of these men?
5 Is this not David, of whom they sang to one
another in dances, 'Saul has struck down his
thousands, and David his tens of thousands'?"
6 So Achish called David and said to him, "As
the LORD lives, you have been upright, and I am
pleased to have you go out and come in with me
in the army. I have found no evil in you from

the day you came to me until today. But the
rulers do not favor you.
7 Now go back and leave in peace, so that you
do not displease the Philistine rulers."
8 David said to Achish, "But what have I done?
What have you found in your servant from the
day I came before you until today, that I may not
go and fight against the enemies of my lord the
king?"
9 Achish answered David, "I know. In my eyes
you are as good as an angel of God. But the
Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not
go up into battle with us.'
10 So rise early in the morning, you and your
master's servants who came with you. Rise early
in the morning and leave as soon as it is light."
11 David and his men rose early in the
morning to leave and return to the land of the
Philistines. The Philistines went up to Jezreel.

30

1 When David and his men came to Ziklag on
the third day, the Amalekites had raided the
Negev and Ziklag. They had struck Ziklag and
burned it with fire.
2 They had taken captive the women in it,
from the least to the greatest, without killing
anyone. They had carried them away and gone
on their way.
3 When David and his men came to the city,
they found it burned with fire, and their wives,
sons and daughters taken captive.

4 David and the people with him wept aloud
until they had no strength left to weep.
5 David's two wives had also been taken
captive: Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, who
had been the wife of Nabal of Carmel.
6 David was in great distress, for the people
spoke of stoning him. All the people were bitter
in soul, each over his sons and daughters. But
David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

7 David said to Abiathar the priest, son of
Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So
Abiathar brought the ephod to David.
8 David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I pursue
this raiding band? Will I overtake them?" He
answered him, "Pursue them, for you will surely
overtake them and surely rescue the captives."
9 So David set out with the six hundred men
who were with him. They came to the Besor
ravine, where those left behind stayed.
10 David continued the pursuit with four
hundred men. Two hundred men stayed behind,
too exhausted to cross the Besor ravine.
11 They found an Egyptian in the open country
and brought him to David. They gave him bread
to eat and water to drink.
12 They also gave him a piece of fig cake and
two clusters of raisins. He ate, and his spirit
revived, for he had eaten no food and drunk no
water for three days and three nights.

13 David asked him, "To whom do you belong,
and where are you from?" He answered, "I am
an Egyptian young man, a slave of an Amalekite.

My master abandoned me because I fell sick
three days ago.
14 We raided the Negev of the Cherethites, the
territory belonging to Judah and the Negev of
Caleb. We burned Ziklag with fire."
15 David asked him, "Will you bring me down
to this raiding band?" He said, "Swear to me by
God that you will not kill me or hand me over to
my master, and I will bring you down to this
raiding band."
16 He brought him down, and there they were,
scattered over the whole area, eating, drinking
and celebrating because of all the great plunder
they had taken from the land of the Philistines
and the land of Judah.
17 David struck them from twilight until
evening the next day. Not one of them escaped
except four hundred young men who mounted
camels and fled.
18 David recovered everything the Amalekites
had taken, and David rescued his two wives.
19 Nothing of theirs was missing, small or
great, sons or daughters, plunder or anything
that had been taken from them. David brought
it all back.
20 David took all the sheep and cattle. They
drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying,
"This is David's plunder."
21 David came to the two hundred men who
had been too exhausted to follow him and had
been left at the Besor ravine. They came out to
meet David and the people with him. David
approached them and greeted them.

22 Every evil and worthless man among those
who had gone with David spoke up, “Since they
did not go with me, we will give them none of
the plunder we recovered, except each man’s
wife and children. Let them take them and
leave.”
23 But David said, “You must not do this, my
brothers, with what the LORD has given us. He
protected us and delivered into our hand the
raiding band that came against us.
24 Who would listen to you in this matter? The
share of the one who goes down into battle will
be the same as the share of the one who stays
with the baggage. They will share alike.”
25 From that day onward, he made this a
statute and an ordinance for Israel, as it remains
to this day.
26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of
the plunder to the elders of Judah, his friends,
saying, “Here is a gift for you from the plunder
of the LORD’s enemies.”
27 He sent it to those in Bethel, those in
Ramoth of the Negev and those in Jattir;
28 to those in Aroer, those in Siphmoth and
those in Eshtemoa;
29 to those in Racal, those in the towns of the
Jerahmeelites and those in the towns of the
Kenites;
30 to those in Hormah, those in Bor-ashan and
those in Athach;
31 to those in Hebron and to all the places
where David and his men had gone about.

31

1 The Philistines fought against Israel. The
men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell
slain on Mount Gilboa.
2 The Philistines pressed hard after Saul and
his sons, and they struck down Jonathan,
Abinadab and Malchi-shua, Saul's sons.
3 The battle grew fierce around Saul. The
archers found him, and he trembled greatly
because of the archers.
4 Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your
sword and thrust me through with it, or these
uncircumcised men will come, thrust me
through and abuse me." But his armor-bearer
refused, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took
the sword and fell on it.
5 When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was
dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him.
6 So Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer and
all his men died together that day.
7 When the Israelites across the valley and
across the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had
fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they
abandoned their cities and fled. The Philistines
came and settled in them.
8 The next day, when the Philistines came to
strip the slain, they found Saul and his three
sons fallen on Mount Gilboa.
9 They cut off his head, stripped off his armor
and sent messengers throughout the land of the
Philistines to announce the news in the house of
their idols and among the people.
10 They put his armor in the temple of
Ashtaroth and fastened his body to the wall of

Beth-shan.
11 When the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead
heard what the Philistines had done to Saul,
12 all the valiant men set out and walked all
night. They took the body of Saul and the bodies
of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, brought
them to Jabesh and burned them there.
13 Then they took their bones and buried them
under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they
fasted seven days.

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