

1 SAMUEL

Conversational Version

The Birth of Samuel

¹Elkanah was from Ramathaim-zophim in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham son of Elihu (son of Tohu son of Zuph), an Ephraimite. ²He had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children but Hannah didn't.

³He went up to Shiloh every year to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests there. ⁴When Elkanah sacrificed, he'd give portions to Peninnah and her sons and daughters; ⁵but he'd give Hannah a double portion because he loved her. But the LORD had closed her womb, ⁶and her rival would bully her mercilessly about it ⁷year after year. As often as she went up to the LORD's Tabernacle, *Peninnah* would torment her. She'd cry and wouldn't eat. ⁸Elkanah asked her, *"Hannah, why are you crying and not eating? Why are you sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"*

1 Sam 1:1-8

⁹Hannah got up after the meal, while Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the LORD's Tabernacle. ¹⁰She was distressed, and prayed and cried bitterly. ¹¹She took a vow,

"LORD of Hosts, if you'll look on my grief and give me a son, I'll give him to you all his life. He'll never shave his head."

¹²Eli was watching her mouth as she prayed. ¹³Her lips were moving, but she wasn't making any sound. Eli thought she was drunk.

¹⁴*"How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away."*

¹⁵*"No, my lord, I'm depressed. I haven't drunk wine or alcohol. I'm pouring out my heart to the LORD. ¹⁶Don't consider me some worthless woman. I've been speaking out of my great anguish and distress."*

¹⁷*"May God grant your petition."*

¹⁸*"Be gracious to me."* So she went away and ate and wasn't sad anymore.

¹⁹They got up early and worshiped in the LORD's presence and went back to Ramah. Elkanah had relations with Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰In due time, she had a son and named him Samuel, *"Because I've 'asked' the LORD for him."*

1 Sam 1:9-20

Hannah Dedicates Samuel

²¹Elkanah went up with his whole family to offer the yearly sacrifice and pay his vow.

²²But Hannah wouldn't go, *"I won't go till I've weaned him. Then I'll present him to the LORD to stay there."*

²³Elkanah said, *"Do what you think's best. Wait till you've weaned him. May the LORD confirm his word."*

She stayed and nursed him till she weaned him. ²⁴Then she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, 1.1 bushel ¹ ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She took him to the *LORD*'s Tabernacle in Shiloh even though the child was so young. ²⁵They butchered the bull and took the boy to Eli. ²⁶She said,

*"As sure as you're alive, Sir, I'm the woman that stood here beside you, praying to the *LORD*. ²⁷I prayed for this boy, and the *LORD* gave me what I asked for. ²⁸I've dedicated him to the *LORD* for as long as he lives."*

He worshipped the *LORD* there.

1 Sam 1:21-28

Hannah's Prayer

2:1Then Hannah prayed,

*"My heart celebrates in the *LORD*;
you've honored me.
I speak boldly against my adversaries
because I celebrate over your salvation.
²There's no one holy like the *LORD*;
indeed, there's no one besides you at all.
There's no rock like our God.*

*³Don't brag anymore with such pride,
because the *LORD* is a God who knows;
he weighs what we do.*

*⁴The bows of the strong are shattered,
but the feeble increase strength.*

*⁵Those who were full are hiring themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are now full.*

*⁶The *LORD* kills and makes live;
he takes down to Sheol and raises up.*

*⁷He makes people poor and rich;
he brings them low and honors them.*

*⁸He lifts the poor up out of the dust;
he raises the needy off the trash pile
to seat them with nobles,
to inherit places of honor.*

*The pillars of the earth belong to him;
he's set the world on them.*

*⁹He protects his holy people,
but silences the sinful in darkness
because people don't prevail by their own power.*

10 *The LORD shatters those who contend with him,
and thunders in the sky against them.
He'll judge the whole earth;
he'll give strength to his king
and elevate the one he's anointed."*

11 Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy served the LORD in Eli's presence.

1 Sam 2:1-11

Eli's Wicked Sons

12 Eli's sons were worthless men that didn't know the LORD **13** or the custom of priests with the people. When anybody was offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork while the meat was boiling. **14** He'd thrust it into the pan or kettle, caldron, or pot. Everything the fork brought up, the priests would take. They did that to all the Israelites that came to Shiloh. **15** Before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would say, "*Give the priest meat for roasting. He won't accept boiled meat from you, only raw.*" **16** If the man said, "*They have to burn the fat first, and then take as much as you want,*" he'd say, "*Give it to me now, or I'll take it by force.*" **17** The young men were sinning greatly because they didn't respect the LORD's offering.

1 Sam 2:12-17

18 Samuel was serving the LORD as a boy wearing a linen ephod. **19** His mother would make him a small robe and bring it to him each year when she came up with her husband to offer the sacrifice. **20** Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, "*May the LORD give you children from this woman to replace the one she dedicated to him.*" They went home, **21** and the LORD visited Hannah; she had three *more* sons and two daughters. Samuel grew up in the LORD's presence.

22 Eli was old. He heard what his sons were doing—lying with the women that served at the doorway of the Tent of Meeting. **23** He said,

*"Why do you do the sinful things I'm hearing? **24** Sons, the report is not good that I hear the LORD's people spreading around. **25** If one man sins against another, God can intercede for him; but if a man sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?"*

But they ignored him in keeping with the fact that the LORD wanted to put them to death. **26** The boy Samuel was growing in height and favor with the LORD and the people. **1 Sam 2:18-26**

Warning About Eli's Family

27 Then a man of God came to Eli,

*"The LORD says, 'I revealed myself to your ancestor's house when they were in bondage to Pharaoh. **28** I chose them from Israel's tribes to be my priests: to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod in front of me. I gave your ancestor the fire offerings of Israel. **29** Why are you greedy about the sacrifices and*

offerings I've commanded? Why are you honoring your sons more than me by making yourselves fat with the best of every offering my people make?'

30 "So the LORD God of Israel says, 'I did say that your house and your father's would follow me forever, but I'm certainly not going to carry through on that now. I'll honor the ones that honor me, and care less about the ones that despise me. **31** The time's coming when I'll get rid of your strength and the strength of your ancestor's house. There'll never be an old man in your family. **32** In distress you'll see the prosperity I'll put on Israel. **33** But I won't remove every man of yours from my altar and make your eyes fail from crying, make you grieve, make the added number in your house die in their prime. **34** This will be the sign about your sons Hophni and Phinehas: they'll die the same day. **35** But I'll raise up a faithful priest to do what's in my heart and soul. I'll build him a lasting lineage, and he'll follow my anointed ways. **36** Everybody that's left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and say, "Please assign me to one of the priest's offices so I'll have something to eat. ""

1 Sam 2:27-36

The Call of Samuel

3:1 The boy Samuel continued to serve the LORD with Eli. A message from the LORD rarely came at that time; visions weren't frequent. **2** Eli was lying down. (His eyesight had gotten bad.) **3** The LORD's lamp hadn't gone out yet, and Samuel was lying down in the Tabernacle where the Ark of God was. **4** The LORD called out to him. He said, "Yes?" **5** He ran to Eli and said, "You called." But he said, "I didn't call; lie back down." So he went and lay down. **6** The LORD called out again, "Samuel." He got up and went to Eli, "You called." But he answered, "I didn't call you, son; lie back down." **7** Samuel didn't know the LORD yet, and the LORD hadn't revealed a message to him before. **8** The LORD called out to him the third time. He got up and went to Eli, "You called." Eli surmised that the LORD was calling the boy. **9** He told him, "Go lie down. If he calls you, say, 'Yes, LORD; I'm listening.' " So he went and lay down.

1 Sam 3:1-9

10 The LORD came and stood and called out like before, "Samuel!"

He said, "Yes, LORD, I'm listening."

11 He said,

"I'm about to do something in Israel that will make everybody's ears ring.

***12** I'll carry out against Eli everything I've said about his house from beginning to*

end. **13** I told him I'm about to condemn his house forever for the sin he knew about.

His sons have brought a curse on themselves, and he didn't restrain them. **14** I've sworn to his house that sacrifice and offering won't atone for its great sin."

15 Samuel lay down till morning. He opened the doors of the LORD's Tabernacle, but he was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

¹⁶Then Eli called him.

¹⁷“What did he say? Don’t hold it back from me. God do so to you and more if you keep back anything he said.”

¹⁸Samuel told him everything.

“It’s the LORD. Let him do what he thinks is right.”

¹⁹Samuel grew, the LORD was with him, and didn’t let any of his message fail. ²⁰Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew he was confirmed as a prophet for the LORD. ^{21[4:1]}The LORD appeared again at Shiloh and revealed himself to Samuel in a message.

1 Sam 3:10-21

The Philistines Capture the Ark

^{4:1}Samuel’s word went out to all Israel.

^[4:1]Israel had gone out to meet the Philistines in battle and camped beside Ebenezer. The Philistines camped in Aphek ²and drew up in formation against Israel. When the battle spread, the Philistines defeated Israel and killed about 4,000. ³When the troops came to camp, Israel’s elders said,

“Why has the LORD routed us in front of the Philistines? Let’s bring the Ark of the Covenant from Shiloh so he can come among us and save us from our enemies.”

⁴The people sent to Shiloh and brought the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of Hosts Enthroned Above the Cherubs. Hophni and Phinehas were there with it.

1 Sam 4:1-4

⁵When the Ark came into camp, Israel shouted so loud the earth shook. ⁶The Philistines heard it, “What does that loud shouting mean in the Hebrews’ camp?” When they learned that the Ark of the LORD had come into camp, ⁷they were afraid,

“God has come into the camp. Nothing like this has ever happened before.

⁸Who can deliver us from these powerful gods? They’re the ones that struck the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues. ⁹Take courage, Philistines, so you won’t become slaves to the Hebrews like they’ve been to you. Be men and fight!”

¹⁰They fought and defeated Israel, and every man fled home. There was a great massacre; 30,000 of Israel’s foot soldiers fell. ¹¹The Philistines captured God’s Ark and killed Eli’s two sons.

1 Sam 4:5-11

The Death of Eli

¹²A man from Benjamin ran to Shiloh the same day with his clothes torn and dust on his head. ¹³Eli was sitting on his seat by the road watching because he was worried about the Ark. When the man came into the town with the news, the whole town cried out. ¹⁴Eli heard the outcry and asked what it was about. The man hurried over to tell him. ¹⁵He was 98 and couldn’t see.

¹⁶The man told him, “I fled from the battle today.”

“How’d it go?”

17 “*Israel fled. The Philistines have slain a great number, including your two sons, and they've captured the Ark.*”

18 When he mentioned the Ark, **Eli** fell backward off his seat by the gate, broke his neck, and died. He was old and heavy. He'd judged Israel for 40 years. **1 Sam 4:12-18**

19 His daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was pregnant. When she heard that the Ark had been captured and that her father-in-law and husband were dead, she went into labor, kneeled, and gave birth. **20** About the time she died, the women attending her said, “*Don't be afraid; you've had a son.*” But she didn't respond. **21** She named him Ichabod, “*The 'glory is gone' from Israel because they've captured God's Ark,*” and because her father-in-law and husband had died. **[22]**

1 Sam 4:19-22

The Philistines and the Ark

5:1 The Philistines carried the Ark from Ebenezer to Ashdod **2** to Dagon's temple and set it up beside him. **3** When people got up early the next morning, Dagon had fallen face down on the ground in front of the Ark of the LORD. They put Dagon back in place. **4** But when they got up early the next day, he'd fallen face down on the ground in front of the Ark of the LORD, and his head and hands were lying cut off on the threshold. Only his trunk was left. **5** That's why Dagon's priests and everybody that goes in his temple still don't step on his threshold in Ashdod.

1 Sam 5:1-5

6 The LORD heavily oppressed the people in Ashdod and around. He terrified *them* by striking them with tumors. **7** When the men in Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, “*The Ark of Israel's God must not stay here. He's heavily oppressing us and our god Dagon.*” **8** They gathered the Philistine lords, “*What can we do with it?*”

“*Take it to Gath.*”

So they did, **9** but the LORD oppressed the city and caused a panic. He struck the people, young and old, with tumors. **10** They sent it to Ekron. The people there cried out, “*They've brought the Ark here to kill us.*” **11** They gathered the lords of the Philistines, “*Send it back where it belongs so it won't kill us.*” A deathly panic gripped the city. God heavily oppressed it. **12** People that didn't die developed tumors, and the outcry from the city rose to the sky. **1 Sam 5:6-12**

The Ark Returns to Israel

6:1 The LORD's Ark was in Philistine territory for seven months. **2** They called for the priests and fortunetellers, “*What should we do with it? Tell us how to send it back.*”

3 “*Send it back with a guilt offering to Israel's God. You'll be healed, and you'll find out why he keeps working against you.*”

4 “*What guilt offering should we send him?*”

“*Five gold tumors and five gold mice, to match the number of Philistine lords. The same plague has struck you and your lords.*” **5** *So make images of your*

tumors and the mice that are ravaging the land and honor Israel's God. Maybe he'll lighten his oppression on you, your gods, and your land. ⁶Why harden your hearts like Pharaoh and the Egyptians did? After he'd mocked them, didn't they end up letting the people go? ⁷Build a new cart and take two milk cows that have never worn a yoke. Yoke them to the cart but take their calves away from them. ⁸Put the Ark on the cart. In a box beside it put the gold figurines you're returning to him as a guilt offering. Send it off, and ⁹watch it. If it goes on the road to Beth-shemesh in its own land, he's the one that has done us this great harm. If not, we'll know it happened by chance."

1 Sam 6:1-9

¹⁰They yoked two milk cows to the cart, shut up their calves at home, ¹¹and put the Ark on the cart along with a box containing the gold mice and the images of their tumors. ¹²The cows went straight toward Beth-shemesh along one road without veering off, bawling as they went. The lords of the Philistines followed them as far as the outskirts of Beth-shemesh. ¹³The people there were harvesting wheat in the valley. When they looked up and saw the Ark, they were overjoyed. ¹⁴It came and stopped in a field that belonged to Joshua of Beth-shemesh. There was a large rock there. They split up the wood from the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹⁵Levites took down the Ark and the box and set them on the large rock. The men of Beth-shemesh offered sacrifices and burnt offerings that day. ¹⁶The five lords of the Philistines saw it and went back to Ekron.

¹⁷As a guilt offering to the LORD, the Philistines returned one gold tumor each for Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. ¹⁸The gold mice matched the number of fortified towns and unwalled villages that belonged to the five Philistine lords. The large rock they set the Ark by is still a witness in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

1 Sam 6:10-18

¹⁹The LORD killed 70 men from Beth-shemesh because they looked in the Ark. The people mourned because he'd killed so many. ²⁰Then the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who can stand against this holy God? Who will go up when he leaves us?" ²¹They sent messengers to Kiriath-jearim, "The Philistines have brought back the Ark of the LORD. Come down and get it." ^{7:1}The men came and took it to Abinadab's house on the hill. They consecrated his son Eleazar to take charge of it. ²It was there some 20 years, and Israel mourned after the LORD.

1 Sam 6:19-7:2

Samuel Judges Israel

³Then Samuel told Israel, "If you're coming back to the LORD with all your heart, put away the foreign gods and the images of Ashtoreth. Direct your heart to serve him only, and he'll deliver you from the Philistines." ⁴Israel got rid of the images of Baal and Ashtoreth and served the LORD only.

⁵Samuel said, “*Gather Israel to Mizpah, and I’ll pray to the LORD for you.*” ⁶They gathered there, drew water, and poured it out to the LORD. They fasted that day and said, “*We’ve sinned against the LORD.*” **Samuel** judged Israel at Mizpah.

⁷When the Philistines heard that Israel had gathered at Mizpah, they went up to attack them. The people heard about it and were afraid. ⁸They told Samuel, “*Don’t stop calling out to the LORD our God for us to save us from the Philistines.*” ⁹He offered up a suckling lamb as a whole burnt offering. He appealed to the LORD for Israel, and he answered him. ¹⁰As he was offering it, the Philistines came to attack; but the LORD thundered with a loud noise that threw them into a panic. ¹¹Israel chased them and kept striking them down as far as below Beth-car. 1 Sam 7:3-11

¹²Then Samuel set up a “rock” between Mizpah and Shen. He called it Ebenezer because the LORD had ‘helped’ them that far. ¹³The Philistines didn’t invade Israel again. The LORD opposed them Samuel’s whole life. ¹⁴The towns they’d taken reverted to Israel from Ekron to Gath. Israel rescued its territory from them. Israel and the Amorites were at peace too.

¹⁵Samuel judged Israel his whole life ¹⁶on a circuit each year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah. ¹⁷Then he’d come back to his house in Ramah. He administered justice there as well and built an altar to the LORD. 1 Sam 7:12-17

Israel Demands a King

8:1When Samuel was getting older, he made his sons judges over Israel: ²**Joel** his firstborn and **Abijah**. They judged in Beersheba, ³but they didn’t follow *Samuel’s* ways. They pursued dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

⁴Israel’s elders gathered to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵“*You’re getting old, and your sons don’t follow your ways. Appoint a king to govern us like the other nations.*” ⁶That displeased Samuel. He prayed to the LORD, ⁷and the LORD said,

“Listen to them. They’re not rejecting you as much as rejecting me from being their king. ⁸As they’ve done ever since I brought them out of Egypt—leaving me and serving other gods—so they’re doing to you. ⁹Give in to them but warn them solemnly how kings will rule.” 1 Sam 8:1-9

Samuel Warns About Having Kings

¹⁰Samuel told the people everything the LORD said.

¹¹“*Be aware that this is how a king will rule. He’ll take your sons and appoint them to his chariots, to be his cavalry, to run ahead of his chariots. ¹²He’ll appoint commanders of thousands and fifties, and some to plow his ground, reap his harvest, and make weapons and equipment for his chariots. ¹³He’ll take your daughters for perfumers, cooks, and bakers. ¹⁴He’ll take your best fields, vineyards,*

and olive orchards and give them to his officials. ¹⁵He'll take a tenth of your grain and your vineyards, and give it to his attendants. ¹⁶He'll take your male and female servants and the best of your livestock and donkeys and put them to his work. ¹⁷He'll take a tenth of your flocks, and you'll be his slaves. ¹⁸You'll cry out because you've chosen a king, but the LORD won't answer you on the matter."

The LORD Grants Israel 's Request

¹⁹But the people wouldn't listen. They said, "We want a king ²⁰so we'll be like other nations. He can govern us and lead us in battle."

²¹When Samuel heard what they said, he repeated it to the LORD.

²²The LORD said, "Give in to them and appoint a king."

Samuel told Israel, "Every one of you, go home."

1 Sam 8:10-22

Saul Chosen as King

⁹¹A wealthy man in Benjamin named Kish son of Abiel (son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah) ²had a son named Saul, a handsome young man. There wasn't a man in Israel more handsome than he was. He was head and shoulders taller than everybody.

³Kish's donkeys were lost so he told Saul to take a servant and look for them. ⁴They went through the hill country of Ephraim, through the territory around Shalishah, Shaalim, and Benjamin, but couldn't find them.

⁵When they came to the area around Zuph, Saul told his servant, "Let's go back so my father doesn't stop caring about the donkeys and start worrying about us."

⁶But the servant said, "There's a man of God in this town that people regard highly. Everything he says comes true. Let's go there; maybe he can tell us about the trip we're on."

⁷Saul said, "If we go, what can we take him? We don't have any bread left in our sacks; we don't have a present. What do we have?"

⁸The servant answered, "I have a tenth of an oz ^{a fourth of a shekel} of silver. I'll give it to him to tell us where to go." ⁹Earlier in Israel, when someone went to ask God, they'd say, "Let's go to the seer." What they call a prophet they used to call a seer.)

*¹⁰Saul said, "All right." They went to the town where the man of God was. **1 Sam 9:1-10***

¹¹As they went up the hill to the town, they met some young women coming out to draw water and asked them if the seer was there.

¹²"Yes, he's up ahead of you. Hurry; he just now got here for a sacrifice the people have on the high place today. ¹³As soon as you go into town, you'll find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people won't eat till he comes to bless the sacrifice. Afterwards the ones that are invited will eat. Go up; you'll meet him right away."

¹⁴They went up to the town. As they were going in, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way to the high place.

¹⁵The day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed to Samuel,

¹⁶*About this time tomorrow I'll send you a man from Benjamin. Anoint him to rule over my people. He'll save them from the Philistines. I've seen my people's suffering; their outcry has come to me."*

¹⁷When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "He's the man I told you about."

1 Sam 9:11-17

¹⁸He approached Samuel in the gate, "Where's the seer's house?"

¹⁹Samuel answered him,

"I'm the seer. Go on up ahead of me to the high place and eat with me. In the morning I'll let you go and tell you everything that's on your mind. ²⁰Don't worry about the donkeys you lost three days ago. They've been found. Who is to receive everything that's desirable in Israel? Isn't it you and your father's family?"

²¹Saul answered, "Am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe in Israel? Isn't my family the least important one in the tribe? Why did you say that?"

1 Sam 9:18-21

²²Samuel took him and his servant to the hall and put them at the head of the guests, about 30 people. ²³Samuel told the cook, "Bring the portion I gave you to put aside." ²⁴The cook picked up the leg and upper portion and put them in front of Saul. Samuel said, "See what I kept back for you till the appointed time so you could eat with the guests." Saul ate with Samuel that day.

²⁵When they came down from the high place into town, a bed was unrolled for Saul on the roof, and he lay down to sleep. ²⁶At dawn Samuel called to him, "Get up so I can send you off." Saul got up, and he and Samuel went out into the street.

²⁷As they were going down to the outskirts of town, Samuel told Saul, "Have the servant go on ahead. When he's past, stop a minute so I can tell you God's message."

1 Sam 9:22-27

Saul Anointed as King

^{10:1}Samuel took a vial of oil, poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him,

"Hasn't the LORD anointed you to rule his people? You'll save Israel from their enemies round about. This will be the sign that the LORD has anointed you ruler over his heritage. ²When you leave me today, you'll meet two men by Rachel's tomb in Benjamin at Zelzah. They'll say, 'The donkeys you went to look for they've found. Now your father has stopped caring about them and is worrying about you, 'What am I going to do about my son?'" ³You'll go on to the Oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. ⁴They'll greet you and give you two loaves of bread; accept them. ⁵After that, you'll come to Gibeah-elohim, where the Philistine outpost is. As you come to the town, you'll

meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place, prophesying behind a harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre. ⁶The Spirit of the LORD will come on you powerfully, and you'll prophesy with them and become another man. ⁷When these signs meet you, do whatever you find to do, because God is with you. ⁸Go down to Gilgal ahead of me. I'll come to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings. Wait for a week till I come and show you what to do."

1 Sam 10:1-8

⁹When he turned to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart, and those signs happened that day. ¹⁰When they got to Gibeah, a band of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God stirred him powerfully, and he prophesied with them. ¹¹When everybody that knew him before saw how he prophesied with them, they said to one another, "*What has come over Kish's son? Is Saul among the prophets too?*" ¹²A man at that place answered, "*Who is their father?*" It became a saying, "*Is Saul among the prophets too?*" ¹³When he finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

¹⁴Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "*Where'd you go?*"

"To look for the donkeys. When we couldn't find them, we went to Samuel."

¹⁵*"What did he tell you?"*

¹⁶*"That they'd been found."* He didn't tell him anything Samuel said about the kingdom.

1 Sam 10:9-16

¹⁷Samuel called the people to the LORD at Mizpah ¹⁸and told them,

"The LORD God of Israel, says, 'I brought you out of Egypt and delivered you from the Egyptians and the kingdoms that oppressed you.' ¹⁹But today you've rejected the God who saved you from your calamities and distresses. You've said, 'No, install a king over us.' Present yourselves to the LORD by tribes and by thousands."

²⁰Samuel brought the tribes forward, and Benjamin was taken by lot. ²¹He brought Benjamin forward by families, and the Matrite family was taken by lot. Finally, he brought the Matrite family forward one by one, and Saul son of Kish was taken by lot. But they couldn't find him. ²²They asked the LORD again, "*Did the man come here?*" The LORD said, "*He hid in the baggage.*" ²³They ran and got him. When he stood among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them.

²⁴Samuel said to the people, "*See who the LORD has chosen? There's none like him among you.*"

The people shouted, "*Long live the king!*"

²⁵Samuel told them the rights and duties of kings. He wrote them in a scroll and laid it up in the LORD's presence and sent everyone home. ²⁶Saul went to his home in Gibeah, and brave men whose hearts God had touched went with him. ²⁷But some worthless fellows said, "*How can this fellow save us?*" They scorned him and wouldn't bring him a gift, but he didn't react to them.

1 Sam 10:17-27

Saul Defeats the Amonites

11:1 Nahash the Ammonite went up to lay siege to Jabesh-gilead. The men there said to him, “*Make a treaty with us, and we'll serve you.*”

2 But he said, “*I'll make one with you on this condition: I'll gouge out your right eyes so you'll be a disgrace in Israel.*”

3 The elders at Jabesh said, “*Give us a week so we can send messengers all over Israel. If there's nobody to deliver us, we'll come out to you.*” **4** The messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and gave that message for the people; they cried out loud.

5 Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen and wondered why the people were crying. When they told him what the men from Jabesh had said, **6** the Spirit of God came on him powerfully, and he became angry. **7** He cut the yoke of oxen in pieces and sent them all over Israel by messengers, “*Whoever doesn't come out after Saul and Samuel will have this happen to his oxen.*” Dread from the LORD fell on the people, and they came out united. **8** He counted them in Bezek: 300,000 from Israel, 30,000 from Judah. **9** They told the messengers, “*Tell the people in Jabesh-gilead they'll be delivered by the time the sun's hot tomorrow.*” The messengers went to tell them; they were relieved. **10** They told Nahash, “*We'll come out to you tomorrow; you can do to us whatever you want to.*” **11** The next morning Saul put the people in three companies. They attacked the camp during the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites till the heat of the day. The survivors scattered till no two were together.

1 Sam 11:1-11

The Kingdom Is Renewed

12 Then the people said to Samuel, “*Who said, 'Will Saul rule us?' Bring them here so we can execute them.*”

13 But Saul said, “*We won't execute anybody today. The LORD delivered Israel today.*”

14 Samuel told the people, “*Let's go to Gilgal and set up the new kingdom.*” **15** They went and made Saul king in the LORD's presence. They offered peace offerings, and Saul celebrated with the people.

1 Sam 11:12-15

Samuel's Farewell Address

12:1 Then Samuel told Israel,

“*I've listened to you and appointed a king. 2 Now here's the king living among you, but I'm getting old and gray; my sons are with you. I've lived among you since I was young. 3 Here I am. Accuse me in the presence of the LORD and his anointed. Whose ox or donkey have I taken? Who've I defrauded or oppressed? Who've I taken a bribe from to blind me? I'll return it to you.*”

4 They said, “*You haven't defrauded or oppressed us, or taken anything from anybody.*”

5 He said, “*The LORD and his anointed are witnesses that you haven't found anything in my possession.*”

They said, “*They’re witnesses.*”

1 Sam 12:1-5

6Samuel told the people,

“*The LORD appointed Moses and Aaron to bring your ancestors up from Egypt.* **7**Now, stand so I can remind you in his presence about the good things he did for you and your ancestors. **8**When Jacob went to Egypt and your ancestors appealed to the LORD, he sent Moses and Aaron to settle them here. **9**But they forgot him. So he sold them to Sisera, commander of Hazor’s army, to the Philistines, to the king of Moab, and they fought them. **10**They appealed to the LORD, ‘We’ve sinned by leaving you and worshiping the images of Baal and Ashtoreth. But deliver us now from our enemies, and we’ll serve you.’ **11**He sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and me to deliver you from enemies in every direction; so you’ve lived in security. **12**When you saw Nahash threatening, you told me you wanted a king—although the LORD your God was your king. **13**Here’s the king you asked for and chose, and the LORD has put over you. **14**If you’ll respect, serve him, and regard his command, you and the king will be following him. **15**If you disregard his command, he’ll oppose you like he did your ancestors. **16**Take your stand right now and see this great thing he’ll do to you. **17**Isn’t today wheat harvest? I’ll call out to him to send thunder and rain. You’ll see that he considered asking for a king a bad thing.” **1 Sam 12:6-17**

18Samuel called out to the LORD, and he sent thunder and rain that day. The people feared him and Samuel.

19They told Samuel, “*Pray for us so we won’t die. We’ve added to our sins by asking for a king.*”

20Samuel said,

“*Don’t be afraid. You have done the wrong thing, but don’t turn aside from serving the LORD with all your heart.* **21**You’d be going after pointless things that can’t save. **22**Because of his great name, the LORD won’t abandon you. It pleased him to make you his people. **23**I’ll never sin against him by not continuing to pray for you. I’ll instruct you in the right way. **24**Just respect him and serve him sincerely. Think about the great things he’s done for you. **25**If you still act sinfully, he’ll sweep away you and your king.” **1 Sam 12:18-25**

Saul Fights the Philistines

13:1Saul was 40 when he began to rule and ruled for 32 years. **2**He chose 3,000 men from Israel, 2,000 to be with him in Michmash and the hill country around Bethel and 1,000 to be with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. He sent the rest home. **3**Jonathan struck the Philistine garrison in Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul blew the ram’s horn all over the land and said,

“Hebrews, listen.” ⁴All Israel heard that Saul had struck the garrison and that Israel had become repulsive to the Philistines. So Saul called the people to Gilgal. **1 Sam 13:1-4**

⁵The Philistines came together to fight Israel with 3,000^{LXX} chariots, 6,000 cavalry, and people like sand on a shore. They camped in Michmash east of Beth-aven. ⁶Israel saw they were in a predicament. (The people were hard-pressed.) They hid in caves, thickets, cliffs, cellars, cisterns. ⁷Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to Gad in Gilead. Saul stayed in Gilgal, and the people followed him trembling.

Saul’s Ill-Advised Sacrifice

⁸He waited for the week Samuel appointed, but Samuel didn’t come, and the people started leaving. ⁹So he told them to bring him the burnt offering and peace offerings. He offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰No sooner had he finished offering it than Samuel came. Saul went out to greet him, ¹¹but Samuel said, *“What have you done?”* **1 Sam 13:5-11a**

Saul said,

“The people were leaving, you didn’t come by the appointed time, and the Philistines were assembling at Michmash. ¹²I said the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I haven’t asked for the LORD’s blessing. I went ahead and offered the burnt offering.”

¹³Samuel told Saul,

“You’ve done something foolish. You haven’t kept the commandment the LORD gave you. He would’ve made your kingdom secure permanently, ¹⁴but not now. He has looked for a man after his own heart to appoint as ruler over his people, because you haven’t done what he told you.” **1 Sam 13:11b-14**

¹⁵Then Samuel went up from Gilgal to Gibeah. Saul counted the people with him, about 600 men. ¹⁶He, his son Jonathan, and the people with them were staying at Geba in Benjamin while the Philistines camped at Michmash. ¹⁷Three raiding parties went out from the Philistines’: one toward Ophrah in the area around Shual, ¹⁸another toward Beth-horon, and the other toward the borderland that overlooks the Valley of Zeboim near open country.

¹⁹There weren’t any blacksmiths in Israel, so the Hebrews couldn’t make swords or spears. ²⁰They had to go down to the Philistines to sharpen their forks, plowshares, picks, axes, and goads, and to fix their goad points. ²¹They charged the Israelites $\frac{1}{4}$ oz two-thirds of a shekel of silver for sharpening plowshares and picks and $\frac{1}{8}$ oz a third of a shekel for sharpening forks, axes, and goads. ²²The day of the battle, none of the people with Saul and Jonathan had swords or spears, just Saul and Jonathan. ²³A Philistine contingent went out to secure the pass by Michmash. **1 Sam 13:15-23**

Jonathan Defeats the Philistines

14:1One day Jonathan said to his young armor bearer, “*Let’s go over to the Philistine outpost on the other side.*” He didn’t tell his father, ²who was staying with about 600 men on the outskirts of Gibeah around the pomegranate tree in Migron. ³Among Saul’s men was Ahijah wearing an ephod—son of Ahitub (Ichabod’s brother) son of Phinehas son of Eli the LORD’s priest at Shiloh. The people didn’t know Jonathan had gone. ⁴Between the passes Jonathan was planning to use to cross over to the Philistines’ outpost, there were steep cliffs on two sides named Bozez and Seneh. ⁵One went up to the north toward Michmash, the other one on the south toward Geba.

1 Sam 14:1-5

6Jonathan said to his armor bearer, “*Let’s go over to those uncircumcised Philistines. Maybe the LORD will work for us. He’s not limited to saving by many or few.*”

7“*Do what you want. I’m with you.*”

8Jonathan said,

“*We’ll go let them know we’re here. 9If they say, ‘Wait till we come to you,’ we’ll stay put. 10If they say, ‘Come on up,’ we’ll go up. The LORD will deliver them to us. That will be our sign.*”

11When they let the outpost know they were there, the Philistines said, “*The Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they’ve been hiding.*” **12**The men in the outpost shouted, “*Come on up! We’ll show you a thing or two!*” Jonathan told his armor bearer, “*Come on; the LORD will deliver them to Israel.*” **13**Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet with his armor bearer behind him, and they fell to Jonathan. His armor bearer killed some behind him. **14**That first slaughter was about 20 men on a half-acre. **15**There was panic in the camp, in the field, and among the people. Even the garrison and raiding parties trembled, and the ground shook.

1 Sam 14:6-15

16Saul’s watchmen in Gibeah saw the camp scattering, running here and there. **17**Saul told the people with him, “*Count and see who’s not here.*” They counted, and Jonathan and his armor bearer were missing. **18**Saul said to Ahijah, “*Bring God’s Ark here.*” At that time, it was with the people in Israel. **19**While he was talking to the priest, the commotion in the Philistine camp grew, so Saul told the priest not to worry about it then. **20**Saul and his people rallied and joined the battle. The Philistines were killing one another in total chaos. **21**The Hebrews that had been going around with the Philistine camp joined the people with Saul and Jonathan. **22**When people hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they also chased them in the battle. **23**The LORD delivered Israel that day, and the battle spread past Beth-aven.

1 Sam 14:16-23

Saul’s Rash Vow

24The men in Israel were totally exhausted because Saul had put them under oath, “*Accursed is the man that eats before evening, until I’ve avenged myself of my enemies.*” So nobody had eaten anything. **25-26**When they went into the forest, they’d found honeycomb on the ground, but nobody put any in his mouth out of respect for the oath. **27**But Jonathan hadn’t heard

about his father's oath. He dipped the end of his staff in the honeycomb, and put some in his mouth, and he was refreshed. ²⁸One of the people said, "Your father strictly put the people under oath, 'The man that eats today is under a curse.'" The people were exhausted. ²⁹Jonathan said,

"My father has created a problem. See how I've been refreshed because I tasted a little of this honey. ³⁰How much more if the people had eaten freely from the spoils! As it is, the slaughter among the Philistines wasn't that great."

1 Sam 14:24-30

³¹They struck the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon, and the people were completely exhausted. ³²After dark, they rushed ravenously on the spoil, butchered sheep, cattle, and calves on the ground, and ate them with the blood. ³³People told Saul, "They're sinning against the LORD by eating meat with the blood."

He said,

"You've acted deviously. Roll a large rock to me. ³⁴Go out among the people and tell them to bring their ox or sheep, butcher it here and eat. Don't sin by eating the meat with the blood."

The people that night brought their cattle or sheep and butchered them there. ³⁵Saul built an altar to the LORD, his first.

1 Sam 14:31-35

³⁶Then Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines at night and take spoil till daylight. Don't leave one survivor."

They said, "Do what you like."

So the priests said, "Let's draw near to God here."

³⁷Saul asked God, "Should we go down after the Philistines? Will you give them to Israel?"

But he didn't answer him that day.

³⁸Saul said,

"Come here, you chiefs of the people, and find out how this sin happened today. ³⁹As sure as the LORD lives who delivers Israel, even if it's Jonathan, he'll die."

But none of the people answered.

⁴⁰Then he said to them, "You're on one side; Jonathan and I are on the other."

The people said, "Do what you like."

⁴¹Saul told the LORD, "Give a clear answer." The lot fell on Jonathan and Saul.

⁴²Saul said, "Cast lots between me and Jonathan." The lot fell on Jonathan.

⁴³He said to Jonathan, "What did you do?"

Jonathan told him, "I tasted some honey with the end of my staff. So kill me!"

⁴⁴Saul said, "God do this to me and more also because you'll surely die, Jonathan."

⁴⁵But the people said to Saul,

“Does Jonathan have to die who brought about this great deliverance? Far from it! As sure as the LORD lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground; he’s worked with God today.”

The people rescued him. ⁴⁶Saul quit chasing the Philistines, and the Philistines went home.

1 Sam 14:36-46

Saul Fights Israel’s Enemies

⁴⁷When Saul took over the kingship, he fought Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. He inflicted punishment wherever he went. ⁴⁸He acted bravely and defeated the Amalekites and delivered Israel from plunderers.

⁴⁹Saul’s sons were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua.

His daughters were Merab, the firstborn, and Michal.

⁵⁰His wife was Ahinoam, daughter of Ahimaaz.

The general of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul’s uncle.

⁵¹His father was Kish;

Ner was son of Abiel.

⁵²During Saul’s whole life, he was constantly at war with the Philistines. Whenever he saw a strong or brave man, he’d attach him to his staff.

1 Sam 14:47-52

The LORD Rejects Saul

15:1Then Samuel told Saul,

“The LORD of Hosts sent me to anoint you king over his people. ²He says, ‘I’m going to settle up Amalek for opposing Israel on their way up from Egypt.

³Strike him and destroy everything he has. Don’t spare him. Put to death man, woman, child, infant, ox, sheep, camel, and donkey.’”

⁴Saul called in the people and counted them at Telaim—200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. ⁵He came to Amalek’s city and set up an ambush in the valley. ⁶He told the Kenites, “Get away from the Amalekites so I won’t be destroying you with them. You were kind to Israel when they came up from Egypt.”

The Kenites left.

1 Sam 15:1-6

⁷Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, east of Egypt. ⁸He captured Agag the king and destroyed the people with the sword. ⁹But he and the people spared Agag and the best sheep, cattle, grain-fed animals, lambs, and everything that was good. They didn’t want to destroy them completely, just everything despised and worthless.

¹⁰A message from the LORD came to Samuel, ¹¹“I’ve changed my mind about having Saul as king. He’s not been doing what I’ve told him.”

Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. ¹²He got up early to meet Saul. He heard that *Saul had gone to Carmel to set up a monument to himself and then went on down to Gilgal.*

1 Sam 15:7-12

¹³Samuel came and Saul said to him, “*The LORD’s blessed you! I’ve done what you’ve said.*”

¹⁴But Samuel asked, “*What’s this bleating and bawling?*”

¹⁵“*They’ve brought them from the Amalekites. The people spared the best sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the LORD your God. The rest we’ve destroyed.*”

¹⁶“*Wait, let me tell you what the LORD told me last night.*”

“*Tell me.*”

¹⁷“*Isn’t it true, though you felt inadequate, the LORD made you the head over Israel? He anointed you king* ¹⁸*and sent you to kill off the Amalekites completely.* ¹⁹*Why didn’t you obey him, but rushed on the spoil and did what he considered sin?*”

²⁰“*I did obey him; I went on his mission and brought back Agag the king and destroyed the Amalekites.* ²¹*But the people took some of the spoil—sheep and cattle, the best things devoted to destruction—to sacrifice to the LORD at Gilgal.*”

1 Sam 15:13-21

²²Samuel said,

“*Does the LORD delight as much in burnt offerings and sacrifices as he does in obedience?*

*Obedience is better than sacrifice,
listening than the fat of rams.*

²³*Rebellion is like fortunetelling;
insubordination is like iniquity and idolatry.*

*Because you’ve refused to do what the LORD said,
he’s rejected you from being king.*”

²⁴Saul said, “*I’ve sinned against his command and what you’ve said. I was afraid of the people and listened to them.* ²⁵*Pardon my sin and go back with me so I can worship the LORD.*”

²⁶“*I won’t go back with you. You’ve rejected the LORD’s message, and he’s rejected you from being king.*”

1 Sam 15:22-26

²⁷As Samuel turned to go, Saul grabbed the hem of his robe, and it tore. ²⁸Samuel said,

“*The LORD has torn the kingdom from you today and given it someone better than you.* ²⁹*The Glory of Israel doesn’t lie or change his mind. He’s not a mortal that he’d do that.*”

³⁰“*I’ve sinned, but please honor me in front of the elders and my people. Go back with me so I can worship the LORD your God.*”

³¹Samuel followed him back, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

³²Then Samuel said, “*Bring me Agag.*” Agag came to him relieved, “*Bitter death must be past.*”

³³But Samuel said, “As your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless.” He cut Agag to pieces in the LORD’s presence at Gilgal.

³⁴Then he went to Ramah, but Saul went home to Gibeah. ³⁵Samuel never saw him again; he grieved over him. The LORD changed his mind about having him be king. 1 Sam 15:27-35

David Anointed King

16:1The LORD said to Samuel,

“How long are you going to grieve over Saul? I’ve set him aside from being king. Fill your horn with olive oil and go to Jesse of Bethlehem. I’ve selected a king from his sons.”

²Samuel said, “How can I go there? When Saul hears about it, he’ll kill me.”

“Take a heifer with you and say you’ve come to sacrifice to the LORD. ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I’ll show you what to do. Anoint the one I specify.”

⁴Samuel went to Bethlehem. The city elders came trembling, “Are you coming in peace?”

⁵“Yes, I’ve come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and go with me to the sacrifice.” He consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. 1 Sam 16:1-5

⁶When they came in, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely that’s the LORD’s anointed.”

⁷But the LORD said, “Don’t look at his height or appearance. I haven’t chosen him. I don’t see like people do. They look at appearance; I look at hearts.”

⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel.

He said, “The LORD hasn’t chosen this one either.”

⁹Next, Jesse presented Shammah.

He said, “The LORD hasn’t chosen this one either.”

¹⁰Jesse presented seven of his sons, but Samuel told Jesse, “The LORD hasn’t chosen any of these. ¹¹Are they all your young men?”

“There’s still the youngest. He’s tending sheep.”

“Send for him; we won’t sit down till he gets here.”

¹²He sent and brought him in, a barefaced young man with bright eyes and handsome features.

The LORD said, “Anoint him; he’s the one.”

¹³Samuel took the horn of olive oil and anointed David in front of his brothers, and the Spirit of the LORD stirred him powerfully from then on. Samuel went to Ramah. 1 Sam 16:6-13

David in Saul’s Service

¹⁴The Spirit of the LORD left Saul, and a tormenting spirit from the LORD started coming on him. ¹⁵His servants told him. “A tormenting spirit from God is coming on you. ¹⁶Have us look for a man that’s good at playing a harp so you’ll feel better.”

¹⁷So Saul said, “Bring me a man like that.”

¹⁸One young man answered, “I’ve seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite that’s a good musician, as well as a brave man, a soldier, prudent in speech, and a handsome fellow. The LORD is with him.”

¹⁹Saul sent messengers to Jesse, “Send me your son David that tends your flock.”

²⁰Jesse took a young goat, a donkey loaded with bread, and a jug of wine, and sent them to Saul with David. ²¹He went to Saul and became his attendant. Saul liked him and made him his armor bearer.

²²Saul sent to Jesse, “Let David remain with me. I like him.” ²³Whenever an evil spirit from God came over Saul, David would take his harp and play it. Saul would be refreshed and feel better. The tormenting spirit would go away.

1 Sam 16:14-23

David and Goliath

17:1The Philistines gathered their army for battle at Socoh in Judah. They camped between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. ²Saul and Israel came together, camped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle formation to meet them. ³The Philistines stood on the hill on one side of the valley, and Israel stood on the hill on the other side. ⁴A champion from Gath named Goliath came out from the Philistine camp. He was 9ft 9⁶ cubits and a span, ⁵and wore a bronze helmet and scale armor that weighed 125 lbs ^{5,000} shekels. ⁶He had bronze greaves on his shins and a bronze javelin *slung* between his shoulders. ⁷His spear shaft was like a weaver’s beam; its spearhead weighed 15 lbs ⁶⁰⁰ shekels of iron. His shield bearer walked ahead of him. ⁸He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel,

“Why do you come out to draw up in battle formation? Am I not the Philistine and you’re Saul’s servants? Choose a man and have him come down to me. ⁹If he can fight me and kill me, we’ll become your slaves. If I kill him, you’ll become our slaves. ¹⁰I defy the ranks of Israel. Give me a man, and we’ll fight.”

¹¹When Saul and Israel heard him, they were really intimidated.

1 Sam 17:1-11

¹²David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse in Bethlehem named Jesse. He had eight sons. Jesse was an old man in Saul’s day. ¹³His three oldest sons had followed Saul to battle: Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab, and Shammah. ¹⁴David, the youngest, ¹⁵went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s flock at Bethlehem. ¹⁶The Philistine came forward morning and evening for 40 days and took his stand.

¹⁷Jesse told David,

“Take 1.1 bushels ¹ ephah of this roasted grain and these 10 loaves and run to your brothers in camp. ¹⁸Take these 10 cuts of cheese to the commander of their

thousand. Look into the welfare of your brothers and bring back news about them.

19 *Saul, your brothers, and Israel's army are fighting the Philistines in the Valley of Elah.*”

1 Sam 17:12-19

20 David got up early and left the flock with a keeper, took the supplies, and went like Jesse said. He got to the camp as the army was moving out into battle formation, raising the battle cry. **21** Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle formation, army against army. **22** David left his things with the baggage keeper and ran to the battle line to greet his brothers. **23** As he was talking to them, Goliath came up from the Philistines and said the same thing as before, and David heard it. **24** When the Israelites saw him, they drew back, afraid.

1 Sam 17:20-24

25 They said,

“Have you seen this man that keeps coming up to defy Israel? The king will greatly enrich the man that kills him. He'll give him his daughter and exempt his father's family from paying taxes in Israel.”

26 David asked the men standing by him,

“What will the king do for the man that kills this Philistine and takes disgrace away from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should taunt the armies of the living God?”

27 They repeated their answer, “That's what he'll get.”

28 Eliab heard him talking to the men, and his anger flared at David,

“What are you doing here? Who did you leave that little bunch of sheep with in the countryside? I know your insolence. You've come down to watch the battle.”

29 But David said, “What have I done now? I just asked a question!” **30** Then he turned to someone else and asked the same thing and got the same answer.

1 Sam 17:25-30

31 When what David said was heard, they told Saul, and he sent for him. **32** David told him, “Nobody's heart should fail over this Philistine. I'll fight him.”

33 “You can't fight him; you're just a boy. He's been a soldier since he was your age.”

34 “I've tended my father's sheep. When a lion or bear came and took a lamb from the flock, **35** I went after it and struck it and rescued the lamb from its mouth.

*When it attacked me, I grabbed its jaw and struck it and killed it. **36** I've killed a lion and a bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them because he has taunted the armies of the living God. **37** The LORD that delivered me from a lion and a bear, will deliver me from this Philistine.”*

“Go on. The LORD be with you.”

1 Sam 17:31-37

38 Saul dressed David in his clothes, put a bronze helmet on his head, and put his armor on him. **39** David bound his sword over his armor and tried to walk because he wasn't used to them. He told Saul, “I can't go with these on. I'm not used to them.” He took them off. **40** He took his

staff and chose five smooth stones from the wadi and put them in his shepherd's pouch. With his sling in hand, he went toward the Philistine.

⁴¹The Philistine came toward David behind his shield bearer. ⁴²When he looked up and saw David, he sneered. He was just a handsome barefaced boy. 1 Sam 17:38-42

⁴³The Philistine said, *"Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?"* He cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴*"Come here; I'll give your body to the birds from the sky and the animals in the field."*

⁴⁵David told the Philistine,

"You're coming to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I'm coming to you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel that you've taunted. ⁴⁶He will deliver you to me today. I'll strike you down and take off your head. I'll give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds and wild animals so the whole world will know there's a God in Israel. ⁴⁷This whole assembly will know that he doesn't deliver by sword or spear. The battle is the LORD's. He'll give you^{pl} to us."

⁴⁸When the Philistine came to meet him, David ran fast toward the battle line to meet him. ⁴⁹He put his hand in his bag and took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine in the forehead. The stone penetrated his forehead, and he fell on his face. 1 Sam 17:43-49

⁵⁰David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. He struck him and killed him, but David didn't have a sword. ⁵¹He ran and stood over the Philistine, drew his sword out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. ⁵²Israel and Judah rose up and raised the battle cry. They chased the Philistines to the mouth of the valley and the gates of Ekron. Slain Philistines lay along the road to Shaaraim, all the way to Gath and Ekron. ⁵³Israel came back from chasing them and plundered their camps. ⁵⁴David picked up the Philistine's head and took it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent.

1 Sam 17:50-54

⁵⁵When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he asked Abner, his general, *"Whose son is he?"*

"By your life, king, I don't know."

⁵⁶*"Find out."*

⁵⁷So when David came back from killing the Philistine, Abner took him to Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand.

⁵⁸Saul asked him, *"Whose son are you, young man?"*

"The son of Jesse from Bethlehem."

1 Sam 17:55-58

Saul's Jealousy of David

^{18:1}When he'd finished talking to Saul, Jonathan was drawn to David and loved him as himself. ²Saul took him that day and didn't let him go back home. ³Jonathan made a pact with him because he loved him as himself. ⁴Jonathan took off his robe and gave it to him, along with

his armor, sword, bow, and belt. ⁵So David went out wherever Saul sent him and was successful. Saul set him over the fighting men. The people and Saul liked that arrangement.

⁶When David came back from killing the Philistine, the women came out of the towns, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul with tambourines, celebration, and musical instruments. ⁷They sang as they played,

“Saul has slain his thousands,
David his ten thousands.”

⁸It made Saul mad. “*They’ve attributed ten thousands to David, but thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingdom?*” ⁹He was suspicious of David after that. 1 Sam 18:1-9

¹⁰The next day a tormenting spirit from God came powerfully over Saul, and he raved in the house while David was playing the harp as usual. Saul had a spear in his hand ¹¹and threw it, thinking he’d pin *David* to the wall, but he dodged him twice. ¹²Saul was afraid of him, because the LORD was with him, but he’d left Saul. ¹³So Saul put him out away from him and appointed him as commander of a thousand. *David* came and went with the people. [¹⁴⁻¹⁵] ¹⁶All Israel and Judah loved him.

David Marries Saul’s Daughter

¹⁷Then Saul told David, “*Here is my older daughter Merab. I’ll give her to you as a wife. Just be brave for me and fight the LORD’s battles.*” Saul was thinking, “*I won’t be against him; the Philistines will.*” ¹⁸David said, “*Who am I and what is my life or my father’s family in Israel, that I should be the king’s son-in-law?*” ¹⁹At the time she would have been given to David, she was given to Adrie of Meholah. 1 Sam 18:10-19

²⁰Now Saul’s daughter Michal was in love with David. They told Saul, and he liked that. ²¹He thought, “*I’ll give her to him as a snare. The Philistines will oppose him.*” Saul told David a second time, “*You can be my son-in-law today.*” ²²He told his men, “*Tell David privately, ‘The king likes you, and we do too. Go ahead and become his son-in-law.’*” ²³When Saul’s men told David that privately, he said, “*Does it seem trivial to you to become the king’s son-in-law? I’m a poor man with no reputation.*” ²⁴Saul’s men reported what David said. ²⁵Saul said, “*Tell him the only dowry I want is 100 Philistine foreskins to avenge me of my enemies.*” Saul thought he’d get David killed by the Philistines. ²⁶When his men told David, he was glad to be the king’s son-in-law. Before the deadline, ²⁷David along with his men went and killed 200 Philistines and brought their foreskins to the king. So Saul gave him Michal. ²⁸But when Saul saw that the LORD was with him and all Israel loved him, ²⁹he was more afraid of him and became his constant enemy.

³⁰The commanders of the Philistines kept attacking. As often as they did, David had more success than any other officer Saul had; so he was greatly respected. 1 Sam 18:20-30

Saul Tries to Kill David

19:1Saul told Jonathan and his servants to put David to death. But Jonathan really delighted in David. **2**He told David,

*“My father is trying to get you killed. Be on guard in the morning. Hide in a private place. **3**I’ll go out and stand beside him in the field where you are and talk about you. If I find out anything out, I’ll tell you.”*

4Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul,

*“Don’t sin against David. He hasn’t sinned against you; what he’s done has benefited you. **5**He took his life in his hands and struck the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great deliverance for Israel. You saw it and were happy. Why sin against innocent blood by putting him to death?”*

6Saul listened and swore, “As surely the LORD lives, I won’t do it.”

7Then Jonathan called David and told him. He brought David to Saul, and he was with him like before.

8When war arose again, David went out and massacred the Philistines. They fled from him.

1 Sam 19:1-8

9A tormenting spirit from the LORD came on Saul as he was sitting at home with his spear in hand. David was playing his harp. **10**Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he dodged and the spear stuck in the wall. David ran away and escaped that night.

11Saul sent troops to David’s house to watch him and put him to death in the morning. But David’s wife Michal told him, “*If you don’t save your life tonight, you’ll be killed tomorrow.*”

12She let David down through the window, and he got away. **13**She took the household idol and laid it on the bed; she put a pillow of goats’ hair at its head and covered it with blankets. **14**When Saul sent troops arrived, she said, “*He’s sick.*” **15**Saul sent troops back, saying, “*Bring him to me on his bed so I can put him to death.*” **16**When they went in, the household idol was on the bed with the pillow of goats’ hair under its head. **17**Saul asked Michal, “*Why did you lie to me and let my enemy escape?*” Michal said, “*He told me, ‘Let me go! Why should I kill you?’*” **1 Sam 19:9-17**

18David escaped to Samuel at Ramah and told him what Saul had done to him. He and Samuel went to stay in Naioth. **19**Saul heard that David was at Naioth in Ramah. **20**He sent troops to take him, but when they saw the company of prophets prophesying and Samuel standing and presiding over them, the Spirit of God came on them and they prophesied too. **21**When Saul learned about it, he sent some other troops, and they prophesied. He sent troops a third time, and they prophesied. **22**Then Saul went to Ramah himself. He came to the big well in Secu and asked where Samuel and David were. One person said, “*They’re at Naioth in Ramah.*” **23**He went on to Naioth, and the Spirit of God came on him. As he went, he kept prophesied till he got to Naioth. **24**He, too, took off his clothes and prophesied in Samuel’s presence; he lay naked all day and all night. That’s why people say, “*Is Saul among the prophets too?*”

1 Sam 19:18-24

Jonathan Warns David

20:1 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came to Jonathan, “*What have I done? What am I guilty of? What sin did I commit to make your father try to kill me?*”

2 He said,

“*Far from it! You’re not going to die. My father doesn’t do anything big or small without letting me know. Why would he keep that from me? It’s not so.*”

3 But David answered,

“*Your father knows we’re friends and thinks, ‘Don’t let Jonathan find this out so it won’t grieve him.’ But as sure as the LORD lives and you live, there’s just a step between me and death.*”

4 Jonathan said, “*I’ll do for you whatever you say.*”

1 Sam 20:1-4

5 David said,

“*Tomorrow is the new moon, and I should sit at table with the king, but let me go so I can hide in the field till the evening of the third day. 6 If he misses me, say, ‘David earnestly asked my permission to run to Bethlehem, his town; there’s a yearly sacrifice there for the whole family.’ 7 If he says, ‘Good!’ it’ll be well with me. But if he’s angry, then know that he intends to do something bad. 8 Deal graciously with me; you’ve brought me into a sacred pact with you. But if I’ve done anything wrong, kill me yourself. Why take me to your father?*”

9 Jonathan said, “*I’d never do that! If I knew that he’s determined to harm you, wouldn’t I tell you?*”

10 David asked, “*How will I know if your father is angry?*”

1 Sam 20:5-10

11 Jonathan said, “*Let’s go out to the field.*”

12 Jonathan told David,

“*The LORD God of Israel is witness! When I’ve sounded out my father about this time tomorrow or the third day, if he’s well disposed toward you, won’t I send and let you know? 13 But if he wants to harm you, the LORD do so to me and more if I don’t let you know so you can get away. The LORD be with you as he’s been with my father. 14 If I’m still alive, show me the LORD’s enduring love so I won’t die.*

15 *Don’t remove your loyalty from my house permanently. When the LORD gets rid of every enemy of yours, 16 don’t remove my name from your house. May the LORD take vengeance on your enemies.*”

1 Sam 20:11-16

17 Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

18 Then Jonathan told him,

“Tomorrow is a new moon. He’ll miss you because your seat will be empty.

19 *On the third day, he’ll miss you for sure. Then go to where you hid when the matter was in hand and stay beside that rock pile over there.* **20** *I’ll shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I was shooting at a target.* **21** *I’ll send the boy, and say, ‘Go find the arrows.’ If I tell him, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you, get them,’ then come because, as sure as the LORD lives, it’s safe.* **22** *But if I tell him, ‘Look, the arrows are on past you,’ then go, because the LORD has sent you away.* **23** *On the promises we’ve made, the LORD stands with you and me permanently.”*

1 Sam 20:17-23

24 David hid in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat. **25** He sat by the wall as usual. Jonathan sat across from him, and Abner sat beside Saul, but David’s place was empty.

26 Saul didn’t say anything that day because he thought, “*Something’s happened. He’s not clean; surely that’s it.*” **27** But the second day, the day after the new moon, David’s place was empty. Saul asked Jonathan, “*Why hasn’t Jesse’s son come to the meal yesterday or today?*”

1 Sam 20:24-27

28 Jonathan answered him,

“David earnestly asked me to let him go to Bethlehem. **29** *He said, ‘Our family is holding a sacrifice in the town, and my brother insisted that I be there. If I’m pleasing to you, let me get away to see my brothers.’ That’s why he’s not at the king’s table.”*

30 Saul’s anger flared at Jonathan,

“You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, don’t I know you’ve chosen Jesse’s son to your own shame and the shame of your mother’s nakedness? **31** *As long as he’s alive, you and your kingdom will neither one be secure. Send and bring him to me. He has to die.”*

32 Then Jonathan answered Saul, “*Why put him to death? What’s he done?*”

33 Saul threw his spear at him. So Jonathan knew he was determined to kill David.

34 Jonathan got up from the table mad and didn’t eat anything the second day of the month because he grieved for David. His father had put him down.

1 Sam 20:28-34

35 The next morning, Jonathan and a boy went out to the field to the appointment with David. **36** He told the boy, “*Run and find the arrows that I shoot.*” As the boy ran, Jonathan shot an arrow past him. **37** When the boy came to where Jonathan had shot the arrow, he called after the boy, “*Isn’t the arrow on past you?*” **38** Jonathan called after the boy, “*Hurry.*” So he gathered up the arrows and came back to him. **39** But he didn’t know anything; only Jonathan and David knew. **40** Jonathan gave the boy his weapons and told him to take them into town. **41** As soon as he’d gone,

David got up from beside the rock pile and fell on his face and bowed three times. They kissed one another and cried till David composed himself. ⁴²Then Jonathan said,

“Goodbye. We’ve sworn loyalty to one another in the LORD’s name, ‘He will always be with you and me, with my descendants and yours.’”

He got up and left, and Jonathan went into town.

1 Sam 20:35-42

David and the Bread of the Presence

21:¹Then David went to Nob to Ahimelech the priest. He came cringing to meet David, “*Why are you by yourself?*”

2David told Ahimelech, “*The king commissioned me with a matter, ‘Don’t let anybody know about it. I’ve directed my young men where to meet me later.’*” **3***What do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread or whatever you can find.”*

4The priest answered him, “*There’s no ordinary bread here; there’s consecrated bread if the young men have not been with women.”*

5David answered,

“Women have certainly not been with us; that’s always the case on an expedition. The young men are holy even on an ordinary journey, much less today.”

6The priest gave him the Bread of the Presence, which is removed from the LORD’s presence and replaced with fresh bread the same day. **1 Sam 21:1-6**

7Saul’s chief shepherd was there that day, detained in the LORD’s presence: Doeg the Edomite.

8David asked Ahimelech, “*Is there a spear or sword here? I didn’t bring either; the king’s matter was urgent.”*

9The priest said,

“The sword of Goliath that you killed in the Valley of Elah is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want to, take that. It’s the only one here.”

David said, “*There’s none like that one. Let me have it.”*

1 Sam 21:7-9

10David fled that day from Saul to Achish, king of Gath. **11**His officers asked him, “*Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Didn’t they sing about him in dances.*

“Saul has slain his thousands,

David his ten thousands!”?

12David took those comments to heart and was afraid of Achish. **13**So he acted like he was crazy. He made marks on the doors of the gate, and let spit run down his beard. **14**Achish told his men, “*You can tell the man’s crazy. Why did you bring him to me?*” **15***Am I short on crazy people? Will he come into my house?”* **1 Sam 21:10-15**

David at the Case of Adullam

22:1David left and got to the cave near Adullam. When his brothers and father's family heard, they came down. **2**Everybody in distress, in debt, or disheartened gathered to him till became the captain of about 400 men.

3He went from there to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king, “*Please let my parents stay with you till I know what God will do for me.*” **4**He left them with the king; they stayed with him the whole time David was in the fortress. **5**The prophet Gad told David, “*Don't stay in the fortress. Go to Judah.*” So David went to the Forest of Hereth.

1 Sam 22:1-5

Saul Kills the Priests at Nob

6Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the hill with spear in hand and his officers standing about him. **7**He told them,

“*Listen, you Benjamites. Will Jesse's son give you fields and vineyards? Will he make you commanders of thousands and hundreds that you've plotted against me? Nobody lets me know when my son teams up with Jesse's son. None of you sympathize with me or let me know that my son has stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait, like now.*”

1 Sam 22:6-8

9Doeg, who was standing by Saul's servants, said, “*I saw Jesse's son going to Nob, to Ahimelech son of Ahitub.*” **10***He inquired from the LORD for him, and gave him provisions and Goliath's sword.*”

11The king sent for Ahimelech the priest and all his father's family, the priests at Nob. They came to him.

12Saul said, “*Son of Ahitub, 13why have you and Jesse's son plotted against me by giving him bread and a sword, and inquiring from God for him, so that he has risen against me to lie in wait today?*”

14Ahimelech answered,

“*Who among your servants is as faithful as David, your son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard, honored in your family? 15Is today the first time I've asked God for him? No! You need not accuse me or my father's family of anything. I didn't know anything about this.*”

1 Sam 22:9-15

16The king said, “*You and your father's family have to die.*” **17**He told the guard standing around him, “*Kill the LORD's priests; their hand is with David. They knew he fled and didn't let me know.*”

But his men wouldn't do it. **18**So he told Doeg to fall on them. He killed 85 men that day who wore the linen ephod. **19**He put Nob, the city of priests, to the sword—men and women, children and infants, cattle, donkeys, and sheep.

20But one of Ahimelech's sons named Abiathar escaped to David **21**and told him what Saul had done to the LORD's priests. **22**David said,

“The day Doeg was there I figured he’d tell Saul. I’ve occasioned the death of everybody in your father’s family. ²³*Stay with me; don’t be afraid. The one that wants to kill you wants to kill me. You’ll be safe here.”*

1 Sam 22:16-23

David Saves the Town of Keilah

23:1 People told David, “*The Philistines are attacking Keilah and robbing the threshing floors.*”

2 David asked the LORD, “*Should I attack these Philistines?*”

“*Yes, save Keilah.*”

3 But David’s men said, “*We’re afraid here in Judah. How much more at Keilah against the Philistines!*”

4 David asked the LORD again.

“*Go down to Keilah. I’ll deliver the Philistines to you.*” **5** David and his men went down and fought them, brought away their livestock, and killed a great number of them. So he delivered the people in Keilah.

1 Sam 23:1-5

6 When Abiathar fled to David at Keilah, he brought an ephod with him. **7** Saul heard that David had gone there and said, “*God has delivered him to me. He has shut himself in by entering a town with gates and bars.*” **8** Saul called the people to war, to go down to Keilah and lay siege to David and his men. **9** David found out about his plot and told Abiathar to bring him the ephod.

10 David said,

“*LORD God of Israel, I’ve heard that Saul intends to come to destroy the town because of me.* **11** *Please tell me if he’ll come down.*”

“*He will.*”

12 “*Will the men in Keilah surrender me and my men to him?*”

“*Yes.*”

1 Sam 23:6-12

13 David and his 600 men left and went wherever they could. When Saul found out he’d escaped from Keilah, he gave up the chase. **14** David stayed in the strongholds and in the hill country in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul looked for him every day, but God didn’t deliver David to him.

Saul Pursues David

15 David learned that Saul had come out to try to kill him while he was in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. **16** Jonathan went to David and encouraged him in God: **17** “*Don’t worry; my father won’t find you. He knows you’ll be king, and I’ll be next to you.*” **18** They made a pact in the LORD’s presence. David stayed at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

1 Sam 23:13-18

19 People came up from Ziph to Saul at Gibeah and said,

“Isn’t David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh on the Hill of Hachilah south of Jeshimon? ²⁰Come down and do whatever you want to. We’ll surrender him to you.”

²¹Saul said,

“The LORD bless you for having mercy on me. ²²Go make sure where his haunt is and who has seen him there. I’m told he’s awfully cunning. ²³Learn where his hiding places are, come back with exact information, and I’ll go with you. If he’s in the land, I’ll search him out among the thousands in Judah.”

²⁴They went to Ziph ahead of Saul. David and his men had moved into the Wilderness of Maon in the Arabah south of Jeshimon. ²⁵When Saul and his men went to look for him, people had told David, and he’d gone down to the rock and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. ²⁶Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other side. He was hurrying to get away from Saul, because Saul and his men were surrounding him and his men to capture them. ²⁷But a messenger came to Saul, saying, *“Come quick; the Philistines are raiding the land.”* ²⁸Saul quit chasing David and went to meet the Philistines. So they called the place The Rock of Escape [Sela Hammachleqot]. ²⁹David went and stayed in the strongholds at En-gedi. Sam 23:19-29

David Spares Saul’s Life

^{24:1}When Saul came back from chasing the Philistines, he heard that David was in the Wilderness of En-gedi. ²Saul took 3,000 chosen men from all over Israel and went to look for him and his men at the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave, and went in to relieve himself. David and his men were hiding in the recesses of the cave. ⁴David’s men said, *“This is the day the LORD told you he’d deliver your enemy to you.”* David got up and cut off the edge of Saul’s robe secretly. ⁵Afterward, his conscience bothered him over it. ⁶He told his men, *“The LORD forbid that I should reach out against his anointed.”* ⁷He dissuaded them with that comment and didn’t let them attack Saul. Saul got up and left the cave.

1 Sam 24:1-7

⁸Afterward David went out and called, *“My lord the king!”* When Saul looked back, David bowed to the ground and prostrated himself. ⁹He said,

“Why listen to people that say I’m trying to harm you? ¹⁰You’ve seen that the LORD delivered you to me today. Some said to kill you, but I took pity on you and wouldn’t reach out against the LORD’s anointed. ¹¹Now, father, look at the hem of your robe in my hand! Since I cut off its edge and didn’t kill you, know that I’m not leading a rebellion. I haven’t sinned against you even though you’re lying in wait to kill me. ¹²The LORD decide between us. May he avenge me on you, but I won’t oppose you. ¹³As the ancient proverb says, ‘Sinfulness comes from the sinful.’”

I won't oppose you. ¹⁴What did you come out against? A dead dog? A single flea?

¹⁵Let the LORD decide between us. May he argue my case and deliver me from you."

¹⁶When David finished, Saul said,

"Is that you, David my son? ¹⁷You're better than I am. You've been good to me while I've been bad to you. ¹⁸You've declared that you've done good to me, that the LORD delivered me to you, but you didn't kill me. ¹⁹If someone finds his enemy, will he let him get away? May the LORD reward you with good for what you've done today. ²⁰I know you'll be king, and the kingdom will be firmly under your rule.

²¹Swear to me by the LORD that you won't kill my descendants or destroy my name from my father's family."

²²David swore to him, and he went home. David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1 Sam 24:8-22

The Death of Samuel

25:1Samuel died and Israel gathered to mourn for him. They buried him at his home in Ramah.

David and Abigail

David went down to the Wilderness of Paran. **2a**A man named Nabal in Maon had a business in Carmel. He was really rich with 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. **3**(His wife Abigail was intelligent and beautiful, but he was harsh and rude in his dealings, a descendant of Caleb.) **2b**While he was shearing his sheep in Carmel, **4**David heard about it in the open country. **5**He sent ten young men, and told them,

"Go to Carmel, visit Nabal, and greet him in my name. ⁶Say, 'Have a long life, peace to you, your household, and everybody you have. ⁷I've heard you have shearers. Your shepherds have been with us, and we've not insulted them or taken anything from them the whole time they were in Carmel. ⁸Ask your young men and they'll tell you. So be gracious to my young men; we've come on a festive day. Whatever you have on hand please give to them and to me.'"

1 Sam 25:1-8

9When David's young men came, they told Nabal everything in David's name, and waited.

10But Nabal answered them,

"Who's David? Who's Jesse's son? Lots of servants are breaking away from their masters these days. ¹¹Am I supposed to take my bread, water, and meat that I've butchered for my shearers, and give it to men I don't know?"

12David's young men retraced their steps and told him what Nabal said. **13**David told them to put on their swords. David put on his sword, and about 400 men went up behind him while 200 stayed with the baggage.

1 Sam 25:9-13

14One of the young men told Abigail,

“David sent messengers from the countryside to greet our master, and he scorned them. ¹⁵Yet the men were good to us. They didn’t insult us or take anything as we went around with them on the open range. ¹⁶They were a wall to us day and night the whole time we tended sheep together. ¹⁷Think what you should do; David’s planning to do something bad to our master and his household. Nabal is such a worthless fellow nobody can talk to him.”

1 Sam 25:14-17

¹⁸Abigail hurried and loaded donkeys with 200 loaves of bread, 2 wineskins of wine, 5 sheep already fixed, a bushel of roasted grain, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of figs. ¹⁹She told her young men, “Go on ahead; I’ll follow.” She didn’t tell her husband. ²⁰As she was riding her donkey down under cover of the mountain, she met David and his men. ²¹David had said,

“For nothing I’ve guarded everything this man has on the open range so that he hasn’t missed anything. He’s paid me bad for good. ²²God do so to me and more if by morning I leave him one male alive.”

1 Sam 25:18-22

²³⁻²⁴When Abigail saw him, she hurried and dismounted. She fell on her face at his feet, bowed to the ground, and said,

“Put the blame on me, my lord. Please let me speak to you. ²⁵Don’t pay any attention to this worthless fellow; he’s like his name Nabal, ‘a foolish man.’ I didn’t see the young men you sent. ²⁶As sure as the LORD lives and you live, since he’s restrained you from shedding blood to avenge yourself, may your enemies be like Nabal. ²⁷Give this gift to the young men. ²⁸Please forgive my sin. The LORD will certainly make an enduring dynasty for you because you’re fighting his battles. There won’t be anything bad in you your whole life. ²⁹If anybody attacks you, you’ll be in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God. He’ll throw out the lives of your enemies as from the cup in a sling. ³⁰When he keeps his promise and appoints you ruler over Israel, ³¹what’s happened won’t cause you grief for having shed blood unnecessarily to avenge yourself. When the LORD deals well with you, remember me.”

1 Sam 25:23-31

³²David told Abigail,

“Bless the LORD God of Israel, who sent you. ³³Bless you for your discretion. You’ve kept me from shedding blood to avenge myself. ³⁴Nevertheless, as sure as the LORD lives, who kept me from harming you, if you hadn’t come so soon, I wouldn’t have left Nabal one male by morning.”

³⁵David accepted what she’d brought. “Go home on good terms. I’ve done what you asked.”

1 Sam 25:32-35

³⁶She went to Nabal. He was holding a feast in his house, celebrating like a king. He was half drunk, so she didn’t tell him anything till morning. ³⁷When he’d sobered up, she told him

everything. His heart died; he became like a stone. ³⁸Some ten days later, the LORD struck him, and he died.

³⁹When David heard Nabal was dead, he said,

“Bless the LORD, who pleaded the cause of his insult to me, and kept me from doing something bad. The LORD has brought his wrongdoing back on him.”

Then David sent a proposal to Abigail to be his wife. ⁴⁰When his servants came to her at Carmel, they said, *“David has sent us to you to take you as his wife.”* ⁴¹She got up and bowed to the ground, *“I’ll wash his servants’ feet.”* ⁴²She got up quick and rode a donkey with her five maids attending her. She followed David’s messengers and became his wife. ⁴³David had also taken Ahinoam of Jezreel; they both became his wives. ⁴⁴Saul had given his daughter Michal, David’s wife, to Palti son of Laish from Gallim.

1 Sam 25:36-44

David Spares Saul’s Life Again

^{26:1}The people of Ziph came to Saul at Gibeah and said, *“Isn’t David hiding on the Hill of Hachilah east of Jeshimon?”* ²Saul went down to the Wilderness of Ziph with 3,000 chosen men to look for him. ³He camped on the Hill of Hachilah beside the road east of Jeshimon. David was staying in the open country. When he saw that Saul had come after him, ⁴he sent out spies to make sure that Saul was coming. ⁵He went to where Saul and his men had camped and saw where he lay beside Abner son of Ner, his general. The army was asleep around him.

⁶David said to 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’ll go.”* ⁷They went down at night. Saul was sleeping inside the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head.

1 Sam 26:1-7

⁸Abishai told David, *“God has delivered your enemy to you. Let me strike him with the spear to the ground with one stroke. I won’t strike him a second time.”*

⁹But David said,

“Don’t destroy him. Who can kill the LORD’s anointed and not be guilty?”

¹⁰As sure as the LORD lives, he’ll strike him, or he’ll die, or he’ll go down in battle.

¹¹The LORD forbid that I should kill him. Take the spear by his head and the jug of water, and let’s go.”

¹²David left with the spear and jug. Nobody saw or knew anything. Nobody woke up. A sound sleep from the LORD had fallen on them all.

1 Sam 26:8-12

¹³David crossed back over to the other side and stood on top of the hill a good way off.

¹⁴He shouted to the army and to Abner, *“Won’t you answer, Abner?”*

Abner said, *“Who are you, shouting to the king?”*

¹⁵David asked him,

“Aren’t you a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why not protect the king?”

“Someone came over to destroy him. ¹⁶What you’ve done isn’t good. As sure as the

LORD lives, you all need to die; you didn't protect the LORD's anointed. See the king's spear and the jug of water that was by his head."

1 Sam 26:13-16

17Saul recognized David's voice, "Is that you, my son?"

David said,

"It's me, my lord the king. **18**Why are you chasing me? What have I done?

19If the LORD has stirred you up against me, let him accept an offering. But if it's people, they're accursed by the LORD, because they've driven me out from the LORD's inheritance and told me to go serve other gods. **20**Don't let my blood fall to the ground away from the LORD's presence. You've come out to look for a single flea, like somebody hunting a partridge in the hills."

21Saul said, "I've sinned. Go on back home. I won't try to harm you again because you've valued my life today. I've played the fool and made a serious mistake."

22David answered,

"The king's spear! Have one of the young men come and get it. **23**The LORD will repay each man for his goodness and faithfulness. He delivered you to me, and I refused to reach out against you. **24**As I highly valued your life today, so may the LORD highly value my life and deliver me from all distress."

25Saul said, "You're blessed, son. You'll accomplish a lot and certainly end up winning."

David went on his way, and Saul went home.

1 Sam 26:17-25

David Flees to the Philistines

27:1David said to himself, "Someday Saul is going to kill me. All I can do is escape to the Philistines. He'll get tired of looking for me in Israel, and I'll get away from him." **2**David and his 600 men crossed over to Achish son of Maoch, king of Gath. **3**They lived with Achish, each with his family and David with his two wives Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. **4**Saul heard that David had fled to Gath, so he quit looking for him.

5Then David told Achish, "If I'm pleasing to you, have them give me a place in a town out in the country. Why should I live in the royal city with you?" **6**Achish gave him Ziklag. It still belongs to Judah's kings. **7**He lived among the Philistines for a year and four months. **1 Sam 27:1-7**

8David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; because they had lived in the land from ancient times, toward Shur all the way to Egypt. **9**He attacked the land and didn't leave a man or woman alive. He brought back to Achish the sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing. **10**Achish asked, "Where did you raid today?" David said, "In the Negev of Judah, the Jerahmeelites, and the Kenites." **11**David didn't leave anyone alive to bring to Gath and said, "So they won't say about us, 'That's been David's practice ever since he

lived among the Philistines. ’’’ ¹²Achish believed David, “*He has surely made himself repulsive to his people; he ’ll serve me from now on.*”

1 Sam 27:8-12

Saul Consults the Medium at En-dor

^{28:1}At that time, the Philistines gathered their armed camps to fight Israel. Achish told David, “*You can be sure that you and your men will go out with me in the camp.*”

²“*All right, you ’ll find out what I can do.*”

“*I ’ll make you my bodyguard for life.*”

³Samuel was dead, and Israel had mourned him and buried him in Ramah, his own town. Saul had removed the mediums and spiritists from the land. ⁴The Philistines gathered and camped in Shunem, and Saul gathered Israel and camped at Gilboa. ⁵When Saul saw the Philistine camp, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. ⁶When he asked the LORD, he didn’t answer him by dreams, Urim, or prophets. ⁷Saul told his advisors, “*Find a medium so I can go ask through her.*” They told him, “*There ’s a woman in En-dor.*”

1 Sam 28:1-7

⁸Saul disguised himself in different clothes and went to her with two men at night and said, “*Conjure up for me and bring up the one I name.*”

⁹“*Surely you know Saul has expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why lay a trap to get me killed?*”

¹⁰Saul swore by the LORD, “*As sure as the LORD lives, you won ’t be punished.*”

¹¹“*Who do you want me to bring up?*”

“*Samuel.*”

¹²When she saw Samuel, she cried out, “*Why have you misled me? You ’re Saul.*”

¹³“*Don ’t be afraid; what do you see?*”

“*A god coming out of the ground.*”

¹⁴“*What ’s he look like?*”

“*An old man, wearing a robe.*”

Saul knew it was Samuel and bowed to the ground in homage.

1 Sam 28:8-14

¹⁵Samuel said, “*Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?*”

“*I ’m greatly distressed. The Philistines are waging war against me. God has left me and doesn ’t answer me anymore by prophets or dreams. I ’ve called you to tell me what I should do.*”

¹⁶“*Why ask me since the LORD has become your adversary? 17He ’s done what he said through me: he ’s torn the kingdom from you and given it to David.*

¹⁸As you didn ’t carry out his fierce anger on Amalek, so he has done this to you today. ¹⁹He ’ll deliver you and Israel ’s army to the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me!”

1 Sam 28:15-19

²⁰Saul fell headlong on the floor terrified. There wasn't any strength in him; he hadn't eaten anything all day and all night. ²¹The woman came and saw he was terrified. She said,

"I've done what you asked. I've taken my life in my hands and listened to you. ²²Let me fix you some bread so you can have strength when you leave."

²³*"I'll don't want anything."*

But she and his advisors kept urging him, so he gave in, got up off the floor, and sat on the bed.

²⁴The woman had a grain-fed calf in the house. She hurried and butchered it, kneaded flour, and baked bread without yeast. ²⁵She brought it to Saul and his men to eat. He got up and left.

1 Sam 28:20-25

The Philistines Reject David

^{29:1}The Philistines gathered their forces to Aphek while the Israelites were camping by the spring in Jezreel. ²The Philistine lords were moving forward by hundreds and thousands; David and his men were moving forward in the rear with Achish. ³The commanders of the Philistines said, *"What are these Hebrews doing here?"* Achish said, *"Isn't this David, Saul's servant, that's been with me these days, or years? I haven't found a fault in him from the day he deserted to me till now."* ⁴But the commanders were mad,

"Make him go back to where you've assigned him. Don't let him go down to battle with us and become our adversary during the fight. For how could he make himself acceptable to his lord? Wouldn't it be with the heads of these men? ⁵Isn't this David they sang about in the dances,

*'Saul has slain his thousands,
David his ten thousands!'?"*

1 Sam 29:1-5

⁶Achish called David,

"As sure as the LORD lives, you've been upright. Your conduct with me in the army is fine. I haven't found anything bad in you since you came, but the other Philistine lords don't want you here. ⁷Go back quietly so you won't upset them."

⁸David asked him, *"What have I done? What have you found in me since I came to you, that I can't go and fight my king's enemies?"*

⁹You're pleasing to me, like an angel of God, but the commanders have said you can't go into battle with us. ¹⁰Get up early with your men and leave as soon as it gets daylight."

¹¹David and his men got up early to go back to the land of the Philistines. Then the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

1 Sam 29:6-11

David's Wives Are Captured

^{30:1}When David and his men got *home* to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev, attacked Ziklag, and burned it. ²They took the women captive and

everybody in it, big and small, but didn't kill anybody. ³When David and his men got there, it had been burned, and their wives, sons, and daughters had been captured. ⁴They cried till they couldn't cry anymore. ⁵David's two wives had been taken, Ahinoam and Abigail. ⁶In addition, David was distressed because the people were talking about stoning him. They were bitter over *losing* their sons and daughters, but David took courage in the LORD his God.

⁷He told Abiathar the priest, son of Ahimelech, to bring him the ephod. ⁸He asked the LORD, "Should I chase this band? Will I overtake them?"

"Yes, you'll overtake them and rescue everyone."

⁹He and his 600 men went to the Brook Besor, where the ones left behind remained. ¹⁰But David and 400 men pursued on. 200 stayed behind too exhausted to cross Brook Besor.

1 Sam 30:1-10

¹¹They found an Egyptian in the countryside and brought him to David. They gave him bread and water, ¹²a piece of fig cake and two clusters of raisins. He ate them and revived. He hadn't eaten or drunk for three days. ¹³David asked him, "Who do you belong to? Where are you from?"

"I'm a young man from Egypt, an Amalekite's slave. My master left me behind when I got sick three days ago. ¹⁴We raided the Negev of the Cherethites that belongs to Judah, and the Negev of Caleb. We burned Ziklag."

¹⁵David said, "Will you bring me down to this band?"

He said, "Swear to me by God that you won't kill me or turn me over to my master, and I'll take you down to them."

1 Sam 30:11-15

David Defeats the Amalekites

¹⁶When he'd taken him down; they found them spread out all over the ground eating and drinking and dancing because of the large amount of spoil they'd taken from the Philistines and Judah. ¹⁷David slaughtered them from twilight till evening the next day. Not a man escaped, except for 400 young men that fled on camels. ¹⁸He recovered everything the Amalekites had taken and rescued his two wives. ¹⁹Nothing was missing, big or little, sons or daughters. He brought it all back. ²⁰He'd captured the sheep and cattle the people drove ahead of the other livestock. They said, "This is David's spoil."

1 Sam 30:16-20

²¹David came to the 200 men at Brook Besor who were too exhausted to go with him. They went out to meet him and the people that were with him, and he greeted them. ²²Then some ruffians among David's men said, "They didn't go with us. We're not going to give them any of the spoil we've recovered. Every man can take his wife and children."

²³David said, "Brothers, don't do that with what the LORD's given us. He protected us and delivered to us the band that attacked us. ²⁴Who'd listen to you on this? The one that guards the luggage gets the same share as the one that goes to battle."

²⁵He made it an ordinance in Israel ever since.

1 Sam 30:21-25

²⁶When David got to Ziklag, he sent some spoil to the elders in Judah, his friends, and said, “*A gift from the spoils of the LORD’s enemies,*” ²⁷and to the people in Bethel, Ramoth of the Negev, Jattir, ²⁸Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, ²⁹Racal, the towns of the Jerahmeelites, Kenites, ³⁰Hormah, Bor-ashan, Athach, ³¹Hebron—everywhere he and his men circulated.

1 Sam 30:26-31

The Death of Saul

31:1The Philistines attacked Israel, and Israel fled and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons, and killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malci-shua. ³The battle pressed Saul hard, and the archers seriously wounded him. ⁴He told his armor bearer, “*Draw your sword and run me through so these uncircumcised Philistines won’t come and run me through and torture me.*” But his armor bearer was afraid to do it. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵When he saw that Saul was dead, he fell on his sword too and died with him. ⁶Saul died with his three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men that day. ⁷When the men of Israel on the other side of the valley and beyond the Jordan, saw that Israel had fled and Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned the towns and fled. The Philistines came and lived in them.

1 Sam 31:1-7

⁸The next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his sons on Mount Gilboa. ⁹They cut off his head, stripped off his weapons, and sent them all over Philistine territory to carry the good news to the temple of their idols and to the people. ¹⁰They put his weapons in the temple that held Ashtoreth’s images and fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. ¹¹When the people in Jabesh-gilead heard about it, ¹²brave men walked all night and took down the bodies of Saul and his sons. They went to Jabesh and burned them, ¹³buried their bones under the tamarisk tree, and fasted a week.

1 Sam 31:8-13

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