**The First of Samuel**

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1 Now there was a man of Ramathaʹim-zoʹphim of the mountainous region of Eʹphraim whose name was Elkaʹnah, the son of Jeroʹham, the son of Eliʹhu, the son of Toʹhu, the son of Zuph, an Eʹphraimite. 2 He had two wives; one was named Hanʹnah, and the other was named Peninʹnah. Peninʹnah had children, but Hanʹnah had no children. 3 That man went up from his city year after year to worship and to sacrifice to Jehovah of armies in Shiʹloh. That is where the two sons of Eʹli, Hophʹni and Phinʹehas, served as priests to Jehovah.

4 One day when Elkaʹnah offered a sacrifice, he gave portions to his wife Peninʹnah as well as to all her sons and her daughters, 5 but to Hanʹnah he gave a special portion, because Hanʹnah was the one he loved; but Jehovah had not given her children. 6 Moreover, her rival wife taunted her relentlessly in order to upset her because Jehovah had not given her children. 7 That is what she would do year after year; whenever Hanʹnah went up to the house of Jehovah, her rival would taunt her so much that she would weep and not eat. 8 But her husband Elkaʹnah said to her: “Hanʹnah, why do you weep, and why do you not eat, and why are you so sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”

9 Then Hanʹnah got up after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiʹloh. At the time, Eʹli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of Jehovah. 10 Hanʹnah was extremely bitter, and she began to pray to Jehovah and to weep uncontrollably. 11 And she made this vow: “O Jehovah of armies, if you look upon the affliction of your servant and remember me and you do not forget your servant and give to your servant a male child, I will give him to Jehovah all the days of his life, and no razor will touch his head.”

12 While she prayed for a long time before Jehovah, Eʹli was watching her mouth. 13 Hanʹnah was speaking in her heart, only her lips were trembling, but her voice was not heard. So Eʹli thought she was drunk. 14 Eʹli said to her: “How long will you stay drunk? Stop drinking your wine.” 15 At this Hanʹnah answered: “No, my lord! I am a woman under great stress; I have not drunk wine or anything alcoholic, but I am pouring out my soul before Jehovah. 16 Do not take your servant for a worthless woman, for I have been speaking until now out of my great anguish and distress.” 17 Then Eʹli answered: “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of him.” 18 To this she said: “Let your servant find favor in your eyes.” And the woman went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer downcast.

19 Then they got up early in the morning and bowed before Jehovah, after which they returned to their house in Raʹmah. Elkaʹnah had sexual relations with his wife Hanʹnah, and Jehovah gave attention to her. 20 Within a year Hanʹnah became pregnant and gave birth to a son and named him Samuel, because, as she said, “it is from Jehovah that I have asked him.”

21 In time Elkaʹnah went up with all his household to offer the yearly sacrifice to Jehovah and to present his vow offering. 22 But Hanʹnah did not go up, for she said to her husband: “As soon as the boy is weaned, I will bring him; then he will appear before Jehovah and remain there from then on.” 23 Elkaʹnah her husband then said to her: “Do what you think is best. Stay at home until you wean him. May Jehovah carry out what you have said.” So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she weaned him.

24 As soon as she had weaned him, she took him up to Shiʹloh, along with a three year old bull, one eʹphah of flour, and a large jar of wine, and she came to the house of Jehovah in Shiʹloh and brought the young boy with her. 25 Then they slaughtered the bull and brought the boy to Eʹli. 26 With that she said: “Pardon me, my lord! As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing with you in this place to pray to Jehovah. 27 It was for this boy that I prayed, and Jehovah granted my petition that I asked of him. 28 I, in turn, now lend him to Jehovah. For all his days, he is lent to Jehovah.”

And he bowed down there to Jehovah.

**Chapter 2**

1 Then Hanʹnah said in prayer:

“My heart rejoices in Jehovah;

My horn is exalted by Jehovah.

My mouth is opened wide against my enemies,

For I rejoice in your acts of salvation.

2 There is no one holy like Jehovah,

There is no one but you,

And there is no rock like our God.

3 Do not keep speaking with haughtiness;

Let nothing arrogant come from your mouth,

For Jehovah is a God of knowledge,

And by him deeds are rightly evaluated.

4 The bows of mighty men are shattered,

But those who are stumbling are given strength.

5 The well-fed must hire themselves out for bread,

But the hungry hunger no more.

The barren has given birth to seven,

But she who had many sons has become desolate.

6 Jehovah kills, and he preserves life;

He brings down to the Grave, and he raises up.

7 Jehovah impoverishes, and he enriches;

He abases, and he exalts.

8 He raises the lowly one from the dust;

He lifts up the poor from the ash heap,

To make them sit with princes,

Giving them a seat of honor.

To Jehovah belong earth’s supports,

And he places the productive land upon them.

9 He guards the steps of his loyal ones,

But the wicked will be silenced in darkness,

For not by power does a man prevail.

10 Jehovah will shatter those fighting against him;

He will thunder against them from the heavens.

Jehovah will judge to the ends of the earth,

He will give power to his king

And exalt the horn of his anointed one.”

11 Then Elkaʹnah went to his house in Raʹmah, but the boy became a minister of Jehovah before Eʹli the priest.

12 Now the sons of Eʹli were wicked men; they had no regard for Jehovah. 13 This is what they did with the due right of the priests from the people: Whenever any man was offering a sacrifice, an attendant of the priest came with a three-pronged fork in his hand when the meat was boiling, 14 and he would thrust it into the basin, the two-handled cooking pot, the cauldron, or the one-handled cooking pot. Whatever the fork brought up, the priest would take for himself. That is what they would do in Shiʹloh to all the Israelites coming there. 15 Also, even before the man sacrificing could make the fat smoke, an attendant of the priest would come and say to him: “Give the priest meat to roast. He will not take boiled meat from you, only raw meat.” 16 When the man would say to him: “Let them first be sure to make the fat smoke, then take for yourself whatever you desire,” he would say: “No, give it to me now; if not, I will take it by force!” 17 Thus the sin of the attendants came to be very great before Jehovah, for the men treated the offering of Jehovah with disrespect.

18 Now Samuel was ministering before Jehovah, wearing a linen ephʹod, though he was just a boy. 19 Also, his mother would make for him a little sleeveless coat, and she brought it up to him year after year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eʹli blessed Elkaʹnah and his wife and said: “May Jehovah grant you a child from this wife in place of the one who was lent to Jehovah.” And they went back home. 21 Jehovah turned his attention to Hanʹnah, so that she could conceive; and she gave birth to three more sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel continued growing up before Jehovah.

22 Now Eʹli was very old, but he had heard about everything that his sons were doing to all Israel and how they would lie down with the women who served at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 23 He used to say to them: “Why do you keep doing things like these? For the things I am hearing about you from all the people are bad. 24 No, my sons, the report that I hear circulating among the people of Jehovah is not good. 25 If a man should sin against another man, someone may appeal to Jehovah for him; but if a man should sin against Jehovah, who can pray for him?” But they refused to listen to their father, for Jehovah had determined to put them to death. 26 Meanwhile, the boy Samuel kept growing in stature and in favor both with Jehovah and with the people.

27 A man of God came to Eʹli and said to him: “This is what Jehovah says: ‘Did I not plainly reveal myself to your father’s house while they were in Egypt as slaves to the house of Pharʹaoh? 28 And he was chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to serve as my priest and to go up on my altar to make sacrifices, to offer incense, and to bear an ephʹod before me; and I gave to the house of your forefather all the offerings made by fire of the Israelites. 29 Why do you men scorn my sacrifice and my offering that I have commanded in my place of dwelling? Why do you keep honoring your sons more than me by fattening yourselves from the best portions of every offering of my people Israel?

30 “‘That is why the word of Jehovah the God of Israel is: “I did indeed say that your house and the house of your forefather would always walk before me.” But now Jehovah declares: “It is unthinkable, on my part, because those honoring me I will honor, but those despising me will be treated with contempt.” 31 Look! Days are coming when I will cut off your strength and that of your father’s house, so that no man in your house will live to old age. 32 And you will look upon a rival in my dwelling amid all the good that is done to Israel, and never again will there be an old man in your house. 33 The man of yours whom I do not cut off from serving at my altar will cause your eyes to fail and will bring you grief, but the greater number of your house will die by the sword of men. 34 And what happens to your two sons, Hophʹni and Phinʹehas, will be the sign for you: On one day both of them will die. 35 Then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest. He will act in harmony with what is my heart’s desire; and I will build for him a lasting house, and he will walk before my anointed one always. 36 Anyone who remains in your house will come and bow down to him for the payment of money and a loaf of bread, and will say: “Assign me, please, to one of the priestly offices to eat a piece of bread.”’”

**Chapter 3**

1 Meanwhile, the boy Samuel was ministering to Jehovah before Eʹli, but word from Jehovah had become rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

2 One day Eʹli was lying down in his usual place, and his eyes had grown dim; he was not able to see. 3 The lamp of God had not yet been extinguished, and Samuel was lying in the temple of Jehovah, where the Ark of God was. 4 Jehovah then called Samuel. He answered: “Here I am.” 5 He ran to Eʹli and said: “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said: “I did not call. Lie down again.” So he went and lay down. 6 Jehovah called once again: “Samuel!” At this Samuel got up and went to Eʹli and said: “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said: “I did not call, my son. Lie down again.” 7 (Now Samuel had not yet come to know Jehovah, and the word of Jehovah had not yet been revealed to him.) 8 So Jehovah called again, a third time: “Samuel!” At that he got up and went to Eʹli and said: “Here I am, for you called me.”

Eʹli then realized that it was Jehovah who was calling the boy. 9 So Eʹli said to Samuel: “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you should say, ‘Speak, Jehovah, for your servant is listening.’” And Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 Jehovah came and stood there, and he called as at the other times: “Samuel, Samuel!” At this Samuel said: “Speak, for your servant is listening.” 11 Jehovah said to Samuel: “Look! I am doing something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears about it tingle. 12 On that day I will carry out toward Eʹli all that I said about his house, from start to finish. 13 You must tell him that I am bringing a lasting judgment on his house for the error that he has known about, for his sons are cursing God, but he has not rebuked them. 14 That is why I have sworn to the house of Eʹli that the error of the house of Eʹli will never be atoned for by sacrifices or by offerings.”

15 Samuel lay down until the morning; then he opened the doors of Jehovah’s house. Samuel was afraid to tell Eʹli of the vision. 16 But Eʹli called for Samuel: “Samuel, my son!” At this he said: “Here I am.” 17 He asked: “What message did he speak to you? Please, do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and add to it if you hide from me a single word of all that he said to you.” 18 So Samuel told him everything, and he did not hide anything from him. Eʹli said: “It is Jehovah. Let him do what is good in his eyes.”

19 Samuel continued growing up, and Jehovah himself was with him and did not let any of all his words go unfulfilled. 20 All Israel from Dan to Beʹer-sheʹba became aware that Samuel had been confirmed as Jehovah’s prophet. 21 And Jehovah continued to appear in Shiʹloh, for Jehovah revealed himself to Samuel in Shiʹloh by the word of Jehovah.

**Chapter 4**

1 And the word of Samuel went out to all Israel.

Then Israel went out to meet the Philisʹtines in battle; they camped beside Ebeneʹzer, and the Philisʹtines were encamped at Aʹphek. 2 The Philisʹtines drew up in battle formation to meet Israel, but the battle went badly and Israel was defeated by the Philisʹtines, who struck down about 4,000 men from the battle line in the field. 3 When the people returned to the camp, the elders of Israel said: “Why did Jehovah allow us to be defeated today by the Philisʹtines? Let us take the ark of Jehovah’s covenant with us from Shiʹloh, so that it may be with us and save us from the hand of our enemies.” 4 So the people sent men to Shiʹloh, and they carried from there the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of armies, who sits enthroned above the cherubs. The two sons of Eʹli, Hophʹni and Phinʹehas, were also there with the ark of the covenant of the true God.

5 As soon as the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came into the camp, all the Israelites broke out into loud shouting, so that the earth shook. 6 When the Philisʹtines heard the sound of the shouting, they said: “Why is there such loud shouting in the camp of the Hebrews?” Finally they learned that the Ark of Jehovah had come into the camp. 7 The Philisʹtines became afraid, for they said: “God has come into the camp!” So they said: “Too bad for us, for nothing like this has ever happened before! 8 Too bad for us! Who will save us from the hand of this majestic God? This is the God who struck Egypt with every sort of slaughter in the wilderness. 9 Be courageous and act like men, you Philisʹtines, so that you may not serve the Hebrews just as they have served you. Act like men and fight!” 10 So the Philisʹtines fought and Israel was defeated, and each one fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; on Israel’s side, 30,000 foot soldiers fell. 11 Moreover, the Ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eʹli, Hophʹni and Phinʹehas, died.

12 A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and arrived at Shiʹloh on that day with his garments ripped apart and dirt on his head. 13 When the man arrived, Eʹli was sitting on the seat by the roadside watching, because his heart was trembling over the Ark of the true God. The man went into the city to report the news, and the whole city began crying out. 14 When Eʹli heard the sound of the outcry, he asked: “What does the sound of this turmoil mean?” The same man hurried in and reported the news to Eʹli. 15 (Now Eʹli was 98 years old, and his eyes stared straight ahead, and he could not see.) 16 Then the man said to Eʹli: “I am the one who came from the battle line! Just today I fled from the battle line.” At this he asked: “What happened, my son?” 17 So the bearer of the news related: “Israel has fled from the Philisʹtines, and there was a great defeat among the people; also your own two sons, Hophʹni and Phinʹehas, have died, and the Ark of the true God has been captured.”

18 At the moment he mentioned the Ark of the true God, Eʹli fell backward from his seat beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for 40 years. 19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinʹehas, was pregnant and close to giving birth. When she heard the report that the Ark of the true God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband had died, she doubled over and unexpectedly went into labor and gave birth. 20 As she was dying, the women standing by her said: “Do not be afraid, for you have given birth to a son.” She did not answer and did not pay attention to it. 21 But she named the boy Ichʹabod, saying: “Glory has gone away from Israel into exile,” referring to the capture of the Ark of the true God and what happened to her father-in-law and her husband. 22 She said: “Glory has gone away from Israel into exile, because the Ark of the true God has been captured.”

**Chapter 5**

1 When the Philisʹtines captured the Ark of the true God, they brought it from Ebeneʹzer to Ashʹdod. 2 The Philisʹtines took the Ark of the true God and brought it into the house of Daʹgon and set it beside Daʹgon. 3 When the Ashʹdodites got up early the next day, there was Daʹgon fallen facedown on the ground before the Ark of Jehovah. So they took Daʹgon and returned him to his place. 4 When they got up early in the morning on the following day, there was Daʹgon fallen facedown on the ground before the Ark of Jehovah. The head of Daʹgon and the palms of both his hands were cut off and were lying on the threshold. Only the fish part had been left intact. 5 That is why to this day, the priests of Daʹgon and all those who enter the house of Daʹgon do not walk on the threshold of Daʹgon in Ashʹdod.

6 The hand of Jehovah was heavy against the Ashʹdodites, and he devastated them by striking Ashʹdod and its territories with piles. 7 When the men of Ashʹdod saw what was happening, they said: “Do not let the Ark of the God of Israel remain with us, for his hand has dealt harshly with us and our god Daʹgon.” 8 So they sent for and gathered all the lords of the Philisʹtines and asked them: “What should we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?” They replied: “Let the Ark of the God of Israel be moved to Gath.” So they moved the Ark of the God of Israel there.

9 After they moved it there, the hand of Jehovah came against the city, bringing great panic. He struck the men of the city, from small to great, and piles broke out on them. 10 So they sent the Ark of the true God to Ekʹron, but as soon as the Ark of the true God came to Ekʹron, the Ekʹronites began to cry out: “They have brought the Ark of the God of Israel to us to put us and our people to death!” 11 Then they sent for and gathered all the lords of the Philisʹtines and said: “Send the Ark of the God of Israel away; let it return to its place so that we and our people may not be put to death.” For the terror of death had spread through the whole city; the hand of the true God had been very heavy there, 12 and the men who did not die had been struck with piles. And the city’s cry for help ascended to the heavens.

**Chapter 6**

1 The Ark of Jehovah was in Philisʹtine territory for seven months. 2 The Philisʹtines called the priests and the diviners and asked: “What should we do with the Ark of Jehovah? Let us know how we should send it back to its place.” 3 They replied: “If you send the ark of the covenant of Jehovah the God of Israel away, do not send it back without an offering. You should by all means return to him a guilt offering. Only then will you be healed, and it will be made known to you why his hand has not turned away from you.” 4 So they asked: “What guilt offering should we send to him?” They said: “According to the number of the lords of the Philisʹtines, send five golden piles and five golden mice, for the same scourge has afflicted every one of you and your lords. 5 You should make images of your piles and images of your mice that are bringing the land to ruin, and you should honor the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lighten the weight of his hand that is on you and your god and your land. 6 Why should you harden your heart as Egypt and Pharʹaoh hardened their hearts? When He dealt harshly with them, they had to send Israel away, and they departed. 7 Now prepare a new wagon and two cows that have calves and have never been under a yoke. Then hitch the cows to the wagon, but take their calves back home, away from them. 8 Take the Ark of Jehovah and place it on the wagon, and put the golden articles that you are sending to him as a guilt offering in a box next to it. Then send it on its way 9 and watch: If it goes up the road to Beth-sheʹmesh, to its own territory, then he is the one who has done this great evil to us. But if not, we will know that it was not his hand that struck us; it happened to us by coincidence.”

10 The men did accordingly. They took two cows that had calves and hitched them to the wagon, and the calves they penned up at home. 11 Then they put the Ark of Jehovah on the wagon, as well as the box containing the golden mice and the images of their piles. 12 And the cows went straight ahead on the road to Beth-sheʹmesh. They stayed on the one highway, mooing as they went; they did not turn either to the right or to the left. All the while the lords of the Philisʹtines were walking behind them as far as the boundary of Beth-sheʹmesh. 13 The people of Beth-sheʹmesh were reaping the wheat harvest in the valley plain. When they raised their eyes and saw the Ark, they were overjoyed at seeing it. 14 The wagon came into the field of Joshua the Beth-sheʹmite and stopped there near a large stone. So they chopped up the wood of the wagon, and they offered the cows as a burnt offering to Jehovah.

15 The Levites took down the Ark of Jehovah and the box that was with it, which contained the golden articles, and they put them on the large stone. The men of Beth-sheʹmesh offered up burnt offerings and made sacrifices on that day to Jehovah.

16 When the five lords of the Philisʹtines saw it, they returned to Ekʹron on that day. 17 Now these are the golden piles that the Philisʹtines sent as a guilt offering to Jehovah: one for Ashʹdod, one for Gazʹa, one for Ashʹkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekʹron. 18 And the number of the golden mice corresponded to the number of all the cities of the Philisʹtines that belonged to the five lords—both the fortified cities and the villages in the open country.

And the large stone upon which they rested the Ark of Jehovah serves as a witness down to this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-sheʹmite. 19 But God struck down the men of Beth-sheʹmesh, because they had looked upon the Ark of Jehovah. He struck down 50,070 among the people, and the people began mourning because Jehovah had struck them down with a great slaughter. 20 So the men of Beth-sheʹmesh asked: “Who will be able to stand before Jehovah, this holy God, and to whom will he go away from us?” 21 So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirʹiath-jeʹarim, saying: “The Philisʹtines have returned the Ark of Jehovah. Come down and take it up with you.”

**Chapter 7**

1 So the men of Kirʹiath-jeʹarim came and took the Ark of Jehovah up into the house of Abinʹadab on the hill, and they sanctified his son Eleaʹzar to guard the Ark of Jehovah.

2 A long time elapsed, 20 years in all, from the day of the Ark’s coming to Kirʹiath-jeʹarim, and all the house of Israel began to seek after Jehovah. 3 Samuel then said to all the house of Israel: “If you are returning to Jehovah with all your heart, put away the foreign gods and the Ashʹtoreth images from among you, and direct your heart unswervingly to Jehovah and serve only him, and he will rescue you from the hand of the Philisʹtines.” 4 At that the Israelites got rid of the Baʹals and the Ashʹtoreth images and served only Jehovah.

5 Then Samuel said: “Gather all Israel together at Mizʹpah, and I will pray to Jehovah in your behalf.” 6 So they gathered together at Mizʹpah, and they drew water and poured it out before Jehovah and kept a fast on that day. There they said: “We have sinned against Jehovah.” And Samuel began serving as judge over the Israelites in Mizʹpah.

7 When the Philisʹtines heard that the Israelites had gathered together at Mizʹpah, the lords of the Philisʹtines went up against Israel. When the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philisʹtines. 8 So the Israelites said to Samuel: “Do not stop calling to Jehovah our God to help us and to save us from the hand of the Philisʹtines.” 9 Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt offering to Jehovah; and Samuel called to Jehovah for help in behalf of Israel, and Jehovah answered him. 10 As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philisʹtines advanced for battle against Israel. Jehovah now caused it to thunder loudly on that day against the Philisʹtines, and He threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. 11 At that the men of Israel went out from Mizʹpah and pursued the Philisʹtines, striking them down as far as south of Beth-car. 12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizʹpah and Jeshʹanah and named it Ebeneʹzer, for he said: “Until now Jehovah has helped us.” 13 Thus the Philisʹtines were subdued, and they did not come again into the territory of Israel; and the hand of Jehovah continued against the Philisʹtines all the days of Samuel. 14 Also, the cities that the Philisʹtines had taken from Israel were returned to Israel, from Ekʹron to Gath, and Israel recovered their territory from the hand of the Philisʹtines.

There was also peace between Israel and the Amʹorites.

15 Samuel kept on judging Israel throughout his life. 16 Each year he traveled in a circuit to Bethʹel, Gilʹgal, and Mizʹpah, and he judged Israel in all these places. 17 But he would return to Raʹmah, because his house was there, and there he also judged Israel. He built an altar there to Jehovah.

**Chapter 8**

1 When Samuel had grown old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abiʹjah; they were judges in Beʹer-sheʹba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they were inclined to pursue dishonest profit, they accepted bribes, and they perverted justice.

4 In time all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Raʹmah. 5 They said to him: “Look! You have grown old, but your sons are not walking in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the other nations.” 6 But it displeased Samuel when they said: “Give us a king to judge us.” Then Samuel prayed to Jehovah, 7 and Jehovah said to Samuel: “Listen to everything the people say to you; for it is not you whom they have rejected, but it is I whom they have rejected as their king. 8 They are doing just as they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day; they keep forsaking me and serving other gods, and that is what they are doing to you. 9 Now listen to them. However, you should solemnly warn them; tell them what the king who rules over them will have the right to demand.”

10 So Samuel told the people who were asking him for a king all the words of Jehovah. 11 He said: “This is what the king who rules over you will have the right to demand: He will take your sons and put them in his chariots and make them his horsemen, and some will have to run before his chariots. 12 And he will appoint for himself chiefs over thousands and chiefs over fifties, and some will do his plowing, reap his harvest, and make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 He will take your daughters to be ointment mixers, cooks, and bakers. 14 He will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and he will give them to his servants. 15 He will take the tenth of your grainfields and your vineyards, and he will give it to his court officials and his servants. 16 And he will take your male and female servants, your best herds, and your donkeys, and he will use them for his work. 17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you will become his servants. 18 The day will come when you will cry out because of the king you have chosen for yourselves, but Jehovah will not answer you in that day.”

19 However, the people refused to listen to what Samuel told them, and they said: “No, we are determined to have a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations, and our king will judge us and lead us and fight our battles.” 21 After Samuel heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the hearing of Jehovah. 22 Jehovah said to Samuel: “Listen to them, and appoint a king to reign over them.” Samuel then said to the men of Israel: “Each of you should return to his city.”

**Chapter 9**

1 There was a man of Benjamin named Kish, the son of Abiʹel, the son of Zeʹror son of Becoʹrath son of Aphiʹah, a Benʹjaminite and a very wealthy man. 2 He had a son named Saul, who was young and handsome—there was no man among the Israelites more handsome than he—and he stood head and shoulders taller than all the people.

3 When the donkeys belonging to Saul’s father Kish got lost, Kish said to his son Saul: “Please take with you one of the attendants and go look for the donkeys.” 4 They passed through the mountainous region of Eʹphraim and through the land of Shalʹishah, and they did not find them. They traveled through the land of Shaʹalim, but the donkeys were not there. They passed through the entire land of the Benʹjaminites, and they did not find them.

5 They came into the land of Zuph, and Saul said to his attendant who was with him: “Come, let us return, so that my father does not start worrying about us rather than the donkeys.” 6 But the attendant replied: “Look, there is a man of God in this city, a man who is held in honor. All that he says is sure to come true. Let us go there now. Perhaps he can tell us which way to go.” 7 At this Saul said to his attendant: “If we go, what can we take to the man? There is no bread in our bags; there is nothing to take as a gift to the man of the true God. What do we have?” 8 So the attendant answered Saul again: “Look! There is a quarter of a shekel of silver in my hand. I will give it to the man of the true God, and he will tell us which way to go.” 9 (In former times in Israel, this was what a man would say when going to seek God: “Come, and let us go to the seer.” For the prophet of today used to be called a seer in former times.) 10 Then Saul said to his attendant: “What you said is good. Let us go.” So they went to the city where the man of the true God was.

11 While they were going up the ascent to the city, they met girls going out to draw water. So they said to them: “Is the seer in this place?” 12 They answered: “He is. Look, he is just ahead of you. Hurry now, for today he has come to the city, because the people are making a sacrifice today on the high place. 13 As soon as you come into the city, you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not eat until he comes, for he is the one who blesses the sacrifice. Once that is done, those who are invited may eat. So now go up right away, and you will find him.” 14 So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the middle of the city, there was Samuel coming out to meet them to go up to the high place.

15 The day before Saul came, Jehovah had told Samuel: 16 “Tomorrow about this time, I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin. You must anoint him as leader over my people Israel, and he will save my people from the hand of the Philisʹtines. For I have seen the affliction of my people, and their outcry has reached me.” 17 When Samuel saw Saul, Jehovah told him: “Here is the man of whom I said to you, ‘This is the one who will govern my people.’”

18 Then Saul approached Samuel in the middle of the gate and said: “Tell me, please, where is the house of the seer?” 19 Samuel answered Saul: “I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, and you will eat with me today. I will send you away in the morning, and I will tell you all that you want to know. 20 As for the donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not worry about them, for they have been found. And to whom does all that is desirable of Israel belong? Is it not to you and to the whole house of your father?” 21 At this Saul answered: “Am I not a Benʹjaminite of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the most insignificant of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? So why have you spoken to me in this way?”

22 Then Samuel took Saul and his attendant and brought them to the dining hall and gave them a place at the head of those invited; there were about 30 men. 23 Samuel said to the cook: “Bring the portion that I gave you and told you, ‘Set it aside.’” 24 At that the cook lifted up the leg and what was on it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said: “What has been reserved has been set before you. Eat, because they have reserved it for you for this occasion. For I told them, ‘I invited guests.’” So Saul ate with Samuel on that day. 25 Then they went down from the high place to the city, and he continued to speak with Saul on the housetop. 26 They rose early, and at daybreak Samuel called to Saul on the housetop, saying: “Get ready, so that I may send you away.” So Saul got ready and both he and Samuel went outside. 27 While they were descending toward the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul: “Tell the attendant to go on ahead of us,” so he went on ahead. “But you, stand still now, so that I may let you hear the word of God.”

**Chapter 10**

1 Samuel then took the flask of oil and poured it out on Saul’s head. He kissed him and said: “Has not Jehovah anointed you as a leader over his inheritance? 2 When you leave me today, you will find two men near the tomb of Rachel in the territory of Benjamin at Zelʹzah, and they will say to you, ‘The donkeys that you went to look for have been found, but now your father has forgotten about the donkeys and is worried about you. He is saying: “What should I do about my son?”’ 3 Go on from there until you come to the big tree of Taʹbor, where you will meet three men going up to the true God at Bethʹel, one carrying three young goats, one carrying three loaves of bread, and one carrying a large jar of wine. 4 They will ask about your welfare and give you two loaves, and you must accept the loaves from them. 5 After that you will come to the hill of the true God, where there is a garrison of the Philisʹtines. When you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place, and a stringed instrument and tambourine and flute and harp will be played ahead of them while they are prophesying. 6 The spirit of Jehovah will empower you, and you will prophesy along with them and be changed into a different person. 7 When these signs have taken place, do whatever your hand finds possible, because the true God is with you. 8 Then go down ahead of me to Gilʹgal, and I will go down to you there to offer up burnt sacrifices and communion sacrifices. You should wait for seven days until I come to you. Then I will let you know what you should do.”

9 As soon as Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God began changing his heart to be like that of someone else, and all these signs came true on that day. 10 So they went from there to the hill, and a group of prophets met him. At once the spirit of God empowered him, and he began to prophesy among them. 11 When all those who previously knew him saw him prophesying with the prophets, they said to one another: “What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” 12 Then a man from there said: “But who is their father?” So it became a saying: “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

13 When he finished prophesying, he came to the high place. 14 The brother of Saul’s father later said to him and to his attendant: “Where did you go?” At that he said: “To look for the donkeys, but we saw that they were not there, so we went to Samuel.” 15 Saul’s uncle asked: “Please tell me, what did Samuel say to you?” 16 Saul replied to his uncle: “He told us that the donkeys had already been found.” But Saul did not tell him what Samuel said about the matter of the kingship.

17 Samuel then called the people together to Jehovah at Mizʹpah 18 and said to the Israelites: “This is what Jehovah the God of Israel says: ‘It was I who brought Israel up out of Egypt and who rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you. 19 But today you have rejected your God who was your Savior out of all your evils and distresses, and you said: “No, you should appoint a king over us.” Now take your stand before Jehovah by your tribes and by your thousands.’”

20 So Samuel had all the tribes of Israel draw near, and the tribe of Benjamin was selected. 21 Then he had the tribe of Benjamin draw near by its families, and the family of the Matʹrites was selected. Finally Saul the son of Kish was selected. But when they went to look for him, he was nowhere to be found. 22 So they inquired of Jehovah: “Has the man come here yet?” Jehovah answered: “There he is hiding himself among the luggage.” 23 So they ran and brought him from there. When he stood in the middle of the people, he was head and shoulders taller than all the other people. 24 Samuel said to all the people: “Do you see the one whom Jehovah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?” And all the people began to shout: “Long live the king!”

25 Samuel spoke to the people about the rightful due of kings and wrote it in a book and deposited it before Jehovah. Then Samuel sent all the people away, everyone to his house. 26 Saul also went to his home in Gibʹeah, accompanied by the warriors whose hearts Jehovah had touched. 27 But some worthless men said: “How will this one save us?” So they despised him, and they did not bring any gift to him. But he said nothing about it.

**Chapter 11**

1 Then Naʹhash the Amʹmonite came up and camped against Jaʹbesh in Gilʹead. All the men of Jaʹbesh said to Naʹhash: “Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you.” 2 Naʹhash the Amʹmonite said to them: “I will make it with you on this condition: that all your right eyes be bored out. I will do this to humiliate all Israel.” 3 The elders of Jaʹbesh replied to him: “Give us seven days’ time so that we can send messengers into all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to rescue us, we will surrender to you.” 4 In time the messengers came to Gibʹeah of Saul and spoke these words in the hearing of the people, and all the people wept at the top of their voice.

5 But Saul was coming from the field behind the herd, and Saul said: “What is the matter with the people? Why are they weeping?” So they related to him the words of the men of Jaʹbesh. 6 The spirit of God empowered Saul when he heard these words, and he burned with anger. 7 So he took a pair of bulls and cut them into pieces, and he sent these into all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, who said: “Whoever does not follow Saul and Samuel should expect this to be done to his cattle!” And the fear of Jehovah fell upon the people, so that they came out with one accord. 8 Then he counted them in Beʹzek, and there were 300,000 Israelites and 30,000 men of Judah. 9 They now said to the messengers who had come: “This is what you should say to the men of Jaʹbesh in Gilʹead, ‘Tomorrow when the sun gets hot, you will be saved.’” With that the messengers came and told the men of Jaʹbesh, and they were overjoyed. 10 So the men of Jaʹbesh said: “Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you.”

11 On the next day, Saul divided the people into three bands, and they made their way into the middle of the camp during the morning watch and struck down the Amʹmonites until the day grew hot. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together. 12 Then the people said to Samuel: “Who was saying, ‘Is Saul to be king over us?’ Hand the men over, and we will put them to death.” 13 However, Saul said: “Not a man should be put to death on this day, for today Jehovah has rescued Israel.”

14 Samuel later said to the people: “Come and let us go to Gilʹgal to reconfirm the kingship.” 15 So all the people went to Gilʹgal, and in Gilʹgal they made Saul king before Jehovah. Then they offered communion sacrifices there before Jehovah, and Saul and all the men of Israel celebrated with great joy.

**Chapter 12**

1 Finally Samuel said to all Israel: “Here I have done all that you asked of me, and I appointed a king to reign over you. 2 Now here is the king who is leading you! As for me, I have grown old and gray, and my sons are here with you, and I have led you from my youth until this day. 3 Here I am. Testify against me before Jehovah and before his anointed one: Whose bull or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded or crushed? From whose hand have I accepted a bribe to make me look the other way? If I have, I will restore it to you.” 4 To this they said: “You have not defrauded us or crushed us or accepted anything at all from anyone’s hand.” 5 So he said to them: “Jehovah is a witness against you, and his anointed one is a witness this day that you have found nothing to accuse me of.” To this they said: “He is a witness.”

6 So Samuel said to the people: “Jehovah, who used Moses and Aaron and who brought your forefathers up out of the land of Egypt, is a witness. 7 And now take your positions, and I will judge you before Jehovah in view of all the righteous acts that Jehovah has done for you and for your forefathers.

8 “As soon as Jacob had come into Egypt and your forefathers began calling to Jehovah for help, Jehovah sent Moses and Aaron to lead your forefathers out of Egypt and to cause them to dwell in this place. 9 But they forgot Jehovah their God, and he sold them into the hand of Sisʹera the chief of the army of Haʹzor and into the hand of the Philisʹtines and into the hand of the king of Moʹab, and they fought against them. 10 And they called to Jehovah for help and said, ‘We have sinned, for we have left Jehovah to serve the Baʹals and the Ashʹtoreth images; now rescue us out of the hand of our enemies so that we may serve you.’ 11 Then Jehovah sent Jerubbaʹal and Beʹdan and Jephʹthah and Samuel and rescued you from the hand of the enemies all around you, so that you could live in security. 12 When you saw that Naʹhash, the king of the Amʹmonites, had come against you, you kept saying to me, ‘No, we are determined to have a king over us!’ even though Jehovah your God is your King. 13 Now here is the king whom you have chosen, the one you asked for. Look! Jehovah has appointed a king over you. 14 If you fear Jehovah and serve him and obey his voice and you do not rebel against the order of Jehovah, and both you and the king who reigns over you follow Jehovah your God, fine. 15 But if you do not obey the voice of Jehovah and you rebel against the order of Jehovah, the hand of Jehovah will be against you and your fathers. 16 Now take your positions and see this great thing that Jehovah is doing before your eyes. 17 Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call on Jehovah to make it thunder and rain; then know and understand what an evil thing you have done in the eyes of Jehovah in asking for a king for yourselves.”

18 At that Samuel called to Jehovah, and Jehovah made it thunder and rain on that day, so that all the people were greatly in fear of Jehovah and of Samuel. 19 And all the people said to Samuel: “Pray to Jehovah your God for your servants, as we do not want to die, for we have added to all our sins another evil by asking for a king.”

20 So Samuel said to the people: “Do not be afraid. You have indeed done all this evil. Only do not turn away from following Jehovah, and serve Jehovah with all your heart. 21 Do not turn away to follow the empty things, which are of no benefit and cannot rescue, because they are empty. 22 For the sake of his great name, Jehovah will not abandon his people, for Jehovah has taken it upon himself to make you his people. 23 As for me, it is unthinkable for me to sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray in your behalf, and I will continue to instruct you in the good and right way. 24 Only fear Jehovah, and serve him faithfully with all your heart, for see what great things he has done for you. 25 But if you flagrantly do what is bad, you will be swept away, both you and your king.”

**Chapter 13**

1 Saul was ... years old when he became king, and for two years he reigned over Israel. 2 Saul chose 3,000 men out of Israel; 2,000 of these were with Saul at Michʹmash and in the mountainous region of Bethʹel and 1,000 were with Jonʹathan at Gibʹeah of Benjamin. He sent the rest of the people away, each one to his tent. 3 Then Jonʹathan struck down the garrison of the Philisʹtines that was in Geʹba, and the Philisʹtines heard about it. And Saul had the horn blown throughout all the land, saying: “Let the Hebrews hear!” 4 All Israel heard the news: “Saul has struck down a garrison of the Philisʹtines, and now Israel has become a stench among the Philisʹtines.” So the people were summoned to follow Saul at Gilʹgal.

5 The Philisʹtines also gathered together to fight against Israel, with 30,000 war chariots and 6,000 horsemen and troops as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore; and they went up and camped in Michʹmash to the east of Beth-aʹven. 6 And the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble, because they were hard-pressed; so the people hid in the caves, the hollows, the crags, the cellars, and the cisterns. 7 Some of the Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilʹead. But Saul was still in Gilʹgal, and all the people following him were trembling. 8 He continued waiting for seven days until the designated time that Samuel had set, but Samuel did not come to Gilʹgal, and the people were scattering from him. 9 Finally Saul said: “Bring to me the burnt sacrifice and the communion sacrifices.” And he offered up the burnt sacrifice.

10 But as soon as he had finished offering up the burnt sacrifice, Samuel arrived. So Saul went out to meet him and bless him. 11 Then Samuel said: “What have you done?” Saul replied: “I saw that the people were deserting me, and you did not come within the designated time, and the Philisʹtines were gathering together at Michʹmash. 12 So I said to myself, ‘Now the Philisʹtines will come down against me at Gilʹgal, and I have not sought the favor of Jehovah.’ So I felt obligated to offer up the burnt sacrifice.”

13 At this Samuel said to Saul: “You have acted foolishly. You have not obeyed the commandment that Jehovah your God gave you. If you had, Jehovah would have made your kingdom firm over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom will not last. Jehovah will find a man agreeable to his heart, and Jehovah will commission him as a leader over his people, because you did not obey what Jehovah commanded you.”

15 Then Samuel rose and went his way up from Gilʹgal to Gibʹeah of Benjamin, and Saul took the count of the people; those still with him were about 600 men. 16 Saul, his son Jonʹathan, and the people still with them were dwelling in Geʹba of Benjamin, and the Philisʹtines had encamped at Michʹmash. 17 And the raiding parties would go out from the camp of the Philisʹtines in three bands. One band would turn toward the road to Ophʹrah, to the land of Shuʹal; 18 another band would turn toward the road of Beth-hoʹron; and the third band would turn toward the road leading to the boundary that overlooks the valley of Zeboʹim, toward the wilderness.

19 Now there was not a metalworker to be found in all the land of Israel, because the Philisʹtines had said: “So that the Hebrews may not make a sword or a spear.” 20 And all the Israelites had to go down to the Philisʹtines to get their plowshares, mattocks, axes, or sickles sharpened. 21 The price for sharpening was a pim for the plowshares, for the mattocks, for the three-toothed instruments, for the axes, and for fixing fast the oxgoad. 22 And on the day of battle, not a sword or a spear was found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonʹathan; only Saul and his son Jonʹathan had weapons.

23 Now a garrison of the Philisʹtines had gone out to the ravine pass of Michʹmash.

**Chapter 14**

1 One day Jonʹathan the son of Saul said to the attendant carrying his weapons: “Come and let us cross over to the Philisʹtine outpost on the other side.” But he did not tell his father. 2 Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibʹeah under the pomegranate tree in Migʹron, and there were about 600 men with him. 3 (And Ahiʹjah the son of Ahiʹtub, the brother of Ichʹabod, the son of Phinʹehas, the son of Eʹli, the priest of Jehovah in Shiʹloh, was carrying the ephʹod.) And the people did not know that Jonʹathan had gone. 4 Now between the passages that Jonʹathan was trying to cross over to reach the outpost of the Philisʹtines, there was a toothlike crag on one side and a toothlike crag on the other side; the name of the one was Boʹzez, and the name of the other was Seʹneh. 5 The one crag was a pillar on the north facing Michʹmash, and the other was on the south facing Geʹba.

6 So Jonʹathan said to his armor-bearer: “Come and let us cross over to the outpost of these uncircumcised men. Perhaps Jehovah will act in our behalf, for nothing can hinder Jehovah from saving by many or by few.” 7 At this his armor-bearer said to him: “Do whatever your heart impels you to do. Turn wherever you wish, and I will follow you wherever your heart impels you.” 8 Then Jonʹathan said: “We will cross over to those men and reveal our presence to them. 9 If they say to us, ‘Stand still until we come to you!’ we will stand where we are and not go up to them. 10 But if they say, ‘Come up against us!’ we will go up, because Jehovah will give them into our hand. This will be our sign.”

11 Then both of them revealed their presence to the outpost of the Philisʹtines. The Philisʹtines said: “Look! The Hebrews are coming out from the holes where they have been hiding.” 12 So the men of the outpost said to Jonʹathan and his armor-bearer: “Come up to us, and we will teach you a lesson!” At once Jonʹathan said to his armor-bearer: “Follow me, for Jehovah will give them into the hand of Israel.” 13 And Jonʹathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer was behind him; and the Philisʹtines began to fall before Jonʹathan, and his armor-bearer was putting them to death behind him. 14 In the first attack that Jonʹathan and his armor-bearer made, they struck down about 20 men within about half the plowing line in an acre of field.

15 Then terror spread in the field camp and among all the people of the outpost, and even the raiding parties were terrified. The earth began quaking, and a terror from God ensued. 16 Saul’s watchmen in Gibʹeah of Benjamin saw that the turmoil was spreading in every direction.

17 Saul said to the people with him: “Take a count, please, and see who has left us.” When they took the count, they saw that Jonʹathan and his armor-bearer were not there. 18 Saul now said to Ahiʹjah: “Bring the Ark of the true God near!” (For the Ark of the true God was with the Israelites at that time.) 19 And while Saul was speaking to the priest, the turmoil in the camp of the Philisʹtines was growing greater and greater. Then Saul said to the priest: “Stop what you are doing.” 20 So Saul and all the people with him assembled and went into the battle, where they found that the Philisʹtines had turned their swords against one another, and the confusion was very great. 21 Also, the Hebrews who had previously sided with the Philisʹtines and who had come up with them into the camp were going over to Israel under Saul and Jonʹathan. 22 All the men of Israel who had hidden in the mountainous region of Eʹphraim heard that the Philisʹtines had fled, and they too joined in pursuing them in the battle. 23 So Jehovah saved Israel on that day, and the battle extended as far as Beth-aʹven.

24 But the men of Israel were hard-pressed on that day, for Saul had put the people under this oath: “Cursed is the man who eats any food before the evening and until I have taken vengeance on my enemies!” So none of the people ate any food.

25 And all the people came into the forest, and there was honey on the ground. 26 When the people came into the forest, they saw the honey dripping, but no one would put his hand to his mouth, because they feared the oath. 27 But Jonʹathan had not heard his father put the people under an oath, so he stretched out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb. When he drew his hand back to his mouth, his eyes brightened. 28 At this one of the people said: “Your father put the people under a strict oath, saying, ‘Cursed is the man who eats food today!’ That is why the people are so tired.” 29 However, Jonʹathan said: “My father has brought great trouble on the land. Look at how my eyes brightened because I tasted this little bit of honey. 30 How much better if the people had eaten freely today from the spoil of their enemies that they found! For then the slaughter of the Philisʹtines would have been even greater.”

31 On that day they kept striking down the Philisʹtines from Michʹmash to Aiʹjalon, and the people became very tired. 32 So the people began rushing greedily at the spoil, and they took sheep and cattle and calves and slaughtered them on the ground, and they ate the meat along with the blood. 33 So it was reported to Saul: “Look! The people are sinning against Jehovah by eating meat with the blood.” At this he said: “You have acted faithlessly. Roll a large stone to me immediately.” 34 Saul then said: “Spread out among the people and say to them, ‘Each of you must bring his bull and his sheep and slaughter them here and then eat them. Do not sin against Jehovah by eating meat with the blood.’” So each of them brought his bull with him that night and slaughtered it there. 35 And Saul built an altar to Jehovah. This was the first altar he built to Jehovah.

36 Saul later said: “Let us go down after the Philisʹtines by night and plunder them until the morning light. We will not leave a single survivor.” To this they said: “Do whatever seems good in your eyes.” Then the priest said: “Let us approach the true God here.” 37 And Saul inquired of God: “Should I go down after the Philisʹtines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?” But God did not answer him on that day. 38 So Saul said: “Come here, all you chiefs of the people, and find out what sin has been committed today. 39 For as surely as Jehovah is alive, who rescued Israel, even if it turns out to be Jonʹathan my son, he must die.” But none of the people would answer him. 40 Then he said to all Israel: “You will be on one side, and my son Jonʹathan and I will be on the other side.” At this the people said to Saul: “Do whatever seems good in your eyes.”

41 Saul then said to Jehovah: “O God of Israel, answer with the Thumʹmim!” Then Jonʹathan and Saul were selected, and the people went free. 42 Saul now said: “Cast lots to decide between me and my son Jonʹathan.” And Jonʹathan was selected. 43 Then Saul said to Jonʹathan: “Tell me, what have you done?” So Jonʹathan told him: “I merely tasted a little honey on the tip of the staff in my hand. Here I am! I am ready to die!”

44 At this Saul said: “Thus may God do and may he add to it if you do not die, Jonʹathan.” 45 But the people said to Saul: “Should Jonʹathan die—the one who brought this great victory to Israel? It is unthinkable! As surely as Jehovah is alive, not even a single hair of his head should fall to the ground, for it was with God that he acted this day.” With that the people rescued Jonʹathan, and he did not die.

46 So Saul stopped pursuing the Philisʹtines, and the Philisʹtines went to their own territory.

47 Saul secured the kingship over Israel and fought against all his enemies on every side, against the Moʹabites, the Amʹmonites, the Eʹdomites, the kings of Zoʹbah, and the Philisʹtines; and wherever he went he defeated them. 48 And he fought bravely and conquered the Amalʹekites and rescued Israel from the hand of their plunderers.

49 The sons of Saul were Jonʹathan, Ishʹvi, and Malʹchi-shuʹa. And he had two daughters; the name of the older one was Meʹrab, and the name of the younger one, Miʹchal. 50 The name of Saul’s wife was Ahinʹoam the daughter of Ahimʹaaz. The name of the chief of his army was Abʹner the son of Ner, the uncle of Saul. 51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abʹner was the son of Abiʹel.

52 There was fierce warfare with the Philisʹtines all the days of Saul. When Saul saw any strong or courageous man, he would recruit him into his service.

**Chapter 15**

1 Then Samuel said to Saul: “Jehovah sent me to anoint you as king over his people Israel; now listen to what Jehovah has to say. 2 This is what Jehovah of armies says: ‘I will call to account the Amalʹekites for what they did to Israel when they opposed them along their way coming up from Egypt. 3 Now go, and strike down the Amalʹekites, and devote them to destruction along with all that they have. You must not spare them; you are to put them to death, man as well as woman, child as well as infant, bull as well as sheep, camel as well as donkey.’” 4 Saul summoned the people and counted them in Telaʹim: There were 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah.

5 Saul advanced as far as the city of Amʹalek and set an ambush by the valley. 6 Saul then said to the Kenʹites: “Go, depart from among the Amalʹekites, so that I do not sweep you away with them. For you showed loyal love to all the people of Israel at the time they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenʹites departed from the midst of Amʹalek. 7 After that Saul struck down the Amalʹekites from Havʹilah as far as Shur, which is next to Egypt. 8 He caught Aʹgag the king of Amʹalek alive, but all the other people he devoted to destruction with the sword. 9 However, Saul and the people spared Aʹgag and the best of the flock, the herd, the fattened animals, the rams, and all that was good. They did not want to devote them to destruction. But all the goods that were worthless and unwanted, these they devoted to destruction.

10 Then the word of Jehovah came to Samuel: 11 “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned away from following me and he has not carried out my words.” Samuel became very upset, and he kept crying out to Jehovah all night long. 12 When Samuel got up early in the morning to meet Saul, Samuel was told: “Saul went to Carʹmel, and there he erected a monument for himself. Then he turned around and went down to Gilʹgal.” 13 When Samuel finally came to him, Saul said to him: “May Jehovah bless you. I have carried out the word of Jehovah.” 14 But Samuel said: “Then what is this sound of the flock in my ears and the sound of the cattle that I hear?” 15 To this Saul said: “They were brought from the Amalʹekites, because the people spared the best of the flock and the herd for sacrificing them to Jehovah your God; but what was left we devoted to destruction.” 16 At this Samuel said to Saul: “Stop! Let me tell you what Jehovah said to me last night.” So he said to him: “Speak!”

17 Samuel continued: “Were you not insignificant in your own eyes when you were made head of the tribes of Israel and when Jehovah anointed you as king over Israel? 18 Jehovah later sent you on a mission and said, ‘Go, and devote the sinful Amalʹekites to destruction. Fight against them until you have exterminated them.’ 19 So why did you not obey the voice of Jehovah? Instead, you rushed greedily toward the spoil and did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah!”

20 However, Saul said to Samuel: “But I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah! I went on the mission to which Jehovah sent me, and I brought back Aʹgag the king of Amʹalek, and I devoted the Amalʹekites to destruction. 21 But the people took sheep and cattle from the spoil, the best of what was devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to Jehovah your God at Gilʹgal.”

22 Samuel then said: “Does Jehovah take as much pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Look! To obey is better than a sacrifice, and to pay attention than the fat of rams; 23 for rebelliousness is the same as the sin of divination, and pushing ahead presumptuously the same as using magical power and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Jehovah, he has rejected you from being king.”

24 Then Saul said to Samuel: “I have sinned, for I have overstepped the order of Jehovah and your words, because I feared the people and listened to what they said. 25 And now, please, pardon my sin, and return with me so that I may bow down to Jehovah.” 26 But Samuel said to Saul: “I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of Jehovah, and Jehovah has rejected you from continuing as king over Israel.” 27 As Samuel was turning to go, Saul grabbed hold of the hem of his sleeveless coat, but it ripped away. 28 At this Samuel said to him: “Jehovah has ripped away the royal rule of Israel from you today, and he will give it to one of your fellow men who is better than you. 29 Moreover, the Excellency of Israel will not prove false or change his mind, for He is not a mere man that he should change his mind.”

30 At this he said: “I have sinned. But honor me, please, in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel. Return with me, and I will bow down to Jehovah your God.” 31 So Samuel returned behind Saul, and Saul bowed down to Jehovah. 32 And Samuel said: “Bring Aʹgag the king of Amʹalek near to me.” Then Aʹgag went to him reluctantly, for Aʹgag had been saying to himself: ‘Surely the threat of death is past.’ 33 However, Samuel said: “Just as your sword has bereaved women of children, so your mother will be most bereaved among women.” With that Samuel hacked Aʹgag to pieces before Jehovah at Gilʹgal.

34 Samuel now went to Raʹmah, and Saul went up to his own house at Gibʹeah of Saul. 35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, for Samuel went into mourning for Saul. And Jehovah regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

**Chapter 16**

1 Jehovah eventually said to Samuel: “How long will you mourn for Saul now that I have rejected him from ruling as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesʹse the Bethʹlehemite, because I have selected from among his sons a king for myself.” 2 But Samuel said: “How can I go? When Saul hears about it, he will kill me.” Jehovah replied: “Take a young cow with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to Jehovah.’ 3 Invite Jesʹse to the sacrifice; then I will make known to you what to do. You must anoint for me the one whom I designate to you.”

4 Samuel did what Jehovah said. When he came to Bethʹlehem, the elders of the city were trembling at meeting him, and they said: “Does your coming mean peace?” 5 To this he said: “It means peace. I have come to sacrifice to Jehovah. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then he sanctified Jesʹse and his sons, after which he summoned them to the sacrifice. 6 As they came in and he saw Eliʹab, he said: “Surely here before Jehovah stands his anointed one.” 7 But Jehovah said to Samuel: “Do not pay attention to his appearance and how tall he is, for I have rejected him. For the way man sees is not the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes, but Jehovah sees into the heart.” 8 Then Jesʹse called Abinʹadab and had him pass before Samuel, but he said: “Jehovah has not chosen this one either.” 9 Next Jesʹse presented Shamʹmah, but he said: “Jehovah has not chosen this one either.” 10 So Jesʹse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesʹse: “Jehovah has not chosen any of these.”

11 Finally Samuel said to Jesʹse: “Are these all of your boys?” To this he said: “The youngest has been left out until now; he is pasturing the sheep.” Then Samuel said to Jesʹse: “Send for him, because we will not sit down for the meal until he comes here.” 12 So he sent for him and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes, and handsome in appearance. Then Jehovah said: “Get up, anoint him, for this is the one!” 13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. And the spirit of Jehovah began to empower David from that day forward. Samuel later rose and went his way to Raʹmah.

14 Now the spirit of Jehovah had departed from Saul, and a bad spirit from Jehovah terrorized him. 15 The servants of Saul said to him: “You see that a bad spirit from God is terrorizing you. 16 Let our lord, please, command your servants before you to look for a man who is skilled at playing the harp. Whenever a bad spirit from God comes upon you, he will play it, and you will feel better.” 17 So Saul said to his servants: “Find me, please, a man who plays well, and bring him to me.”

18 One of the attendants said: “Look! I have seen how a son of Jesʹse the Bethʹlehemite plays skillfully, and he is a courageous, mighty warrior. He can speak well, and he is handsome, and Jehovah is with him.” 19 Saul then sent messengers to Jesʹse and said: “Send to me your son David, who is with the flock.” 20 So Jesʹse loaded a donkey with bread, a skin bottle of wine, and a young goat and sent them to Saul with his son David. 21 Thus David came to Saul and began serving him. Saul grew to love him very much, and he became his armor-bearer. 22 Saul sent a message to Jesʹse: “Please let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my eyes.” 23 Whenever a bad spirit from God came upon Saul, David took the harp and played it, and Saul found relief and felt better, and the bad spirit would depart from him.

**Chapter 17**

1 And the Philisʹtines assembled their armies for war. They assembled at Soʹcoh, which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Soʹcoh and Azeʹkah, in Eʹphes-damʹmim. 2 Saul and the men of Israel assembled and camped in the Valley of Eʹlah, and they drew up in battle formation to meet the Philisʹtines. 3 The Philisʹtines occupied the mountain on one side, and the Israelites occupied the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them.

4 Then a champion came out from the camps of the Philisʹtines; his name was Goliʹath, from Gath, and his height was six cubits and a span. 5 He had a helmet of copper on his head, and he was wearing a coat of mail of overlapping scales. The weight of the copper coat of mail was 5,000 shekels. 6 He had shin guards of copper on his legs and a javelin of copper slung between his shoulders. 7 The wooden shaft of his spear was like the beam of loom workers, and the iron blade of his spear weighed 600 shekels; and his shield-bearer was marching ahead of him. 8 Then he stood and called out to the battle line of Israel and said to them: “Why have you come out to draw up in battle formation? Am I not the Philisʹtine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, we will then become your servants. But if I prevail against him and strike him down, you will become our servants and serve us.” 10 The Philisʹtine then said: “I do taunt the battle line of Israel this day. Give me a man, and let us fight it out!”

11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philisʹtine, they became terrified and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of the Ephʹrathite from Bethʹlehem of Judah named Jesʹse, who had eight sons and who in the days of Saul was already an old man. 13 The three oldest sons of Jesʹse had followed Saul to the war. The names of his three sons who went to war were Eliʹab the firstborn, his second son Abinʹadab, and the third Shamʹmah. 14 David was the youngest, and the three oldest followed Saul.

15 David was going back and forth from Saul to tend the sheep of his father at Bethʹlehem. 16 Meanwhile, the Philisʹtine would come forward and take his position each morning and each evening for 40 days.

17 Then Jesʹse said to his son David: “Take, please, this eʹphah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them quickly to your brothers in the camp. 18 And take these ten portions of cheese to the chief of the thousand; also, you should check on the welfare of your brothers and bring back some token from them.” 19 They were with Saul and all the other men of Israel in the Valley of Eʹlah, fighting against the Philisʹtines.

20 So David got up early in the morning and left someone in charge of the sheep; then he packed up and went just as Jesʹse had commanded him. When he came to the camp enclosure, the army was going out to the battle line, shouting a battle cry. 21 Israel and the Philisʹtines drew up so that one battle line faced the other battle line. 22 David immediately left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper and ran to the battle line. When he arrived, he began asking about the welfare of his brothers.

23 While he was speaking with them, there came the champion named Goliʹath, the Philisʹtine from Gath. He came out from the battle line of the Philisʹtines, and he spoke the same words as before, and David heard him. 24 When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him, terrified. 25 The men of Israel were saying: “Have you seen this man who is coming out? He comes to taunt Israel. The king will give great riches to the man who strikes him down, he will give him his own daughter, and he will give the house of his father exemption in Israel.”

26 David began to say to the men who were standing near him: “What will be done for the man who strikes down that Philisʹtine over there and takes away reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philisʹtine that he should taunt the battle line of the living God?” 27 Then the people told him the same thing as before: “This is what will be done for the man who strikes him down.” 28 When his oldest brother Eliʹab heard him speak to the men, he became angry with David and said: “Why have you come down? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I well know your presumptuousness and the bad intentions of your heart; you came down just to see the battle.” 29 To this David said: “What have I done now? I was only asking a question!” 30 So he turned from him toward someone else and asked the same thing as before, and the people gave him the same reply as before.

31 The words that David had spoken were overheard and reported to Saul. So he sent for him. 32 David said to Saul: “Let no one lose heart because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philisʹtine.” 33 But Saul said to David: “You are not able to go fight against this Philisʹtine, for you are but a boy, and he has been a soldier from his youth.” 34 David then said to Saul: “Your servant became a shepherd of his father’s flock, and a lion came, also a bear, and each carried off a sheep from the flock. 35 I went out after it and struck it down and rescued it from its mouth. When it rose up against me, I grabbed it by its fur and struck it down and put it to death. 36 Your servant struck down both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philisʹtine will become like one of them, for he has taunted the battle lines of the living God.” 37 Then David added: “Jehovah, who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear, he is the one who will rescue me from the hand of this Philisʹtine.” At this Saul said to David: “Go, and may Jehovah be with you.”

38 Saul now clothed David with his garments. He put a copper helmet on his head, after which he clothed him with a coat of mail. 39 Then David strapped on his sword over his garments and tried to go but could not, for he was not used to them. David said to Saul: “I am unable to go in these things, for I am not used to them.” So David took them off. 40 He then took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the streambed and placed them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag, and his sling was in his hand. And he began approaching the Philisʹtine.

41 The Philisʹtine came closer and closer to David, and his shield-bearer was ahead of him. 42 When the Philisʹtine looked and saw David, he sneered at him in contempt because he was just a ruddy and handsome boy. 43 So the Philisʹtine said to David: “Am I a dog, so that you are coming against me with sticks?” With that the Philisʹtine cursed David by his gods. 44 The Philisʹtine said to David: “Just come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the beasts of the field.”

45 David replied to the Philisʹtine: “You are coming against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I am coming against you in the name of Jehovah of armies, the God of the battle line of Israel, whom you have taunted. 46 This very day Jehovah will surrender you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and on this day I will give the corpses of the camp of the Philisʹtines to the birds of the heavens and to the wild beasts of the earth; and people of all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 And all those gathered here will know that it is not with the sword or the spear that Jehovah saves, for the battle belongs to Jehovah, and he will give all of you into our hand.”

48 Then the Philisʹtine rose and drew steadily closer to meet David, but David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philisʹtine. 49 David thrust his hand into his bag and took a stone from there and slung it. He struck the Philisʹtine in the forehead, and the stone sank into his forehead and he fell facedown on the ground. 50 So David prevailed over the Philisʹtine with a sling and a stone; he struck down the Philisʹtine and put him to death, though there was no sword in David’s hand. 51 David continued running and stood over him. Then he took hold of the Philisʹtine’s sword and pulled it out of its sheath and made sure that he was dead by cutting off his head with it. When the Philisʹtines saw that their mighty one had died, they fled.

52 At that the men of Israel and of Judah rose and broke into shouting and pursued the Philisʹtines all the way from the valley to the gates of Ekʹron, and the slain of the Philisʹtines lay fallen along the road from Shaʹaraʹim, as far as Gath and Ekʹron. 53 After the Israelites returned from hotly pursuing the Philisʹtines, they pillaged their camps.

54 Then David took the head of the Philisʹtine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put the Philisʹtine’s weapons in his own tent.

55 At the moment that Saul saw David go out to meet the Philisʹtine, he said to Abʹner, the chief of the army: “Whose son is this boy, Abʹner?” Abʹner replied: “As surely as you live, O king, I do not know!” 56 The king said: “Find out whose son the young man is.” 57 So as soon as David returned from striking down the Philisʹtine, Abʹner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philisʹtine in his hand. 58 Saul now said to him: “Whose son are you, boy?” to which David said: “The son of your servant Jesʹse the Bethʹlehemite.”

**Chapter 18**

1 As soon as David had finished speaking to Saul, Jonʹathan and David became bound together in close friendship, and Jonʹathan began to love him as himself. 2 From that day, Saul kept David with him, and he did not allow him to return to his father’s house. 3 And Jonʹathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as himself. 4 Jonʹathan took off the sleeveless coat that he wore and gave it to David, along with his gear, his sword, his bow, and his belt. 5 David began going out and was successful wherever Saul would send him. So Saul put him in charge of the fighting men, and this pleased all the people and the servants of Saul.

6 When David and the others would return from striking down the Philisʹtines, the women would come out from all the cities of Israel with song and dances to meet King Saul with tambourines, with rejoicing, and with lutes. 7 The women who were celebrating would sing:

“Saul has struck down his thousands,

And David his tens of thousands.”

8 Saul became very angry, and this song displeased him, for he said: “They have credited David with tens of thousands, but to me they have credited thousands. The only thing left to give him is the kingship!” 9 From that day on, Saul was always looking at David suspiciously.

10 The next day a bad spirit from God gripped Saul, and he started to act strangely inside the house, while David was playing music on the harp as on other occasions. Saul had a spear in his hand, 11 and he hurled the spear, saying to himself: ‘I will pin David to the wall!’ But David escaped from him twice. 12 Then Saul was afraid of David because Jehovah was with him but had departed from Saul. 13 So Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him as chief of a thousand, and David would lead the army into battle. 14 David continued to have success in all he did, and Jehovah was with him. 15 And when Saul saw that he was very successful, he became afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he would lead them in their campaigns.

17 Saul later said to David: “Here is my oldest daughter Meʹrab. I will give her to you as a wife. However, you should continue to display your courage for me and fight the wars of Jehovah.” For Saul said to himself: ‘Do not let my hand come against him. Let the hand of the Philisʹtines strike him.’ 18 At this David said to Saul: “Who am I and who are my relatives, my father’s family in Israel, for me to become son-in-law to the king?” 19 However, when the time came to give Saul’s daughter Meʹrab to David, she had already been given to be the wife of Aʹdriel the Meholʹathite.

20 Now Saul’s daughter Miʹchal was in love with David, and it was reported to Saul, and this pleased him. 21 So Saul said: “I will give her to him to serve as a snare to him, so that the hand of the Philisʹtines may come upon him.” Saul then said to David a second time: “You will form a marriage alliance with me today.” 22 Further, Saul ordered his servants: “Speak to David secretly and say, ‘Look! The king is pleased with you, and all his servants are fond of you. So now form a marriage alliance with the king.’” 23 When Saul’s servants told David these things, David said: “Is it a trivial matter to you to form a marriage alliance with the king when I am a man poor and lightly esteemed?” 24 Then Saul’s servants reported to him: “These are the words that David spoke.”

25 At that Saul said: “This is what you should say to David, ‘The king does not want any bride price except 100 foreskins of the Philisʹtines, to take revenge on the enemies of the king.’” For Saul was scheming to have David fall by the hand of the Philisʹtines. 26 So his servants reported these words to David, and it was pleasing to David to form a marriage alliance with the king. Before the allotted time, 27 David went with his men and struck down 200 Philisʹtine men, and David brought the full number of their foreskins to the king, to form a marriage alliance with the king. Therefore, Saul gave him his daughter Miʹchal as a wife. 28 Saul realized that Jehovah was with David and that his daughter Miʹchal loved him. 29 This made Saul even more afraid of David, and Saul became an enemy of David for the rest of his life.

30 The princes of the Philisʹtines would go out to battle, but as often as they went out, David was more successful than all the servants of Saul; and his name was highly esteemed.

**Chapter 19**

1 Saul later spoke to Jonʹathan his son and to all his servants about putting David to death. 2 Since Saul’s son Jonʹathan was very fond of David, Jonʹathan told David: “My father Saul wants to have you put to death. Please be on your guard in the morning, and go to a secret place and remain hidden. 3 I will go out and stand next to my father in the field where you will be. I will talk about you to my father, and if I learn anything, I will be sure to tell you.”

4 So Jonʹathan spoke well of David to his father Saul. He said to him: “The king should not sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you and what he has done for you has benefited you. 5 He risked his life to strike down the Philisʹtine, so that Jehovah brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw it, and you were overjoyed. So why should you sin against innocent blood in having David put to death for no reason?” 6 Saul listened to Jonʹathan, and Saul swore: “As surely as Jehovah is living, he will not be put to death.” 7 Afterward Jonʹathan called David and told him all these things. So Jonʹathan brought David to Saul, and he continued to serve him as before.

8 In time war broke out again, and David went out and fought against the Philisʹtines and struck them down with a great slaughter, and they fled from before him.

9 And a bad spirit from Jehovah came upon Saul when he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing music on the harp. 10 Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he eluded Saul, who drove the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped during that night. 11 Saul later sent messengers to David’s house to watch it and to kill him in the morning, but David’s wife Miʹchal told him: “If you do not escape tonight, tomorrow you will be a dead man.” 12 Immediately Miʹchal let David down through the window, so that he could run away and escape. 13 Miʹchal took the teraphim statue and placed it on the bed, and she put a net of goat hair at the place of his head, and she covered it with a garment.

14 Saul now sent messengers to take David, but she said: “He is sick.” 15 So Saul sent the messengers to see David and told them: “Bring him to me on his bed to have him put to death.” 16 When the messengers came in, there was the teraphim statue on the bed and a net of goat hair where his head would have been. 17 Saul said to Miʹchal: “Why did you trick me like this and send my enemy away so that he could escape?” Miʹchal replied to Saul: “He said to me, ‘Send me away, or I will kill you!’”

18 Now David had run away and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Raʹmah. He told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went away, and they stayed in Naiʹoth. 19 In time it was reported to Saul: “Look! David is in Naiʹoth in Raʹmah.” 20 At once Saul sent messengers to seize David. When they saw the elderly ones of the prophets prophesying and Samuel standing and presiding over them, the spirit of God came to be upon Saul’s messengers, and they began behaving as prophets as well.

21 When they told it to Saul, he immediately sent other messengers, and they too began behaving as prophets. So Saul sent messengers again, a third group, and they too began behaving as prophets. 22 Finally he also went to Raʹmah. When he reached the great cistern that is in Seʹcu, he asked: “Where are Samuel and David?” They replied: “There in Naiʹoth in Raʹmah.” 23 While Saul was on his way from there to Naiʹoth in Raʹmah, the spirit of God came upon him as well, and he walked along behaving as a prophet until he came into Naiʹoth in Raʹmah. 24 He also stripped off his garments, and he too behaved as a prophet before Samuel, and he lay there naked all that day and all that night. That is why they say: “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

**Chapter 20**

1 Then David ran away from Naiʹoth in Raʹmah. However, he came to Jonʹathan and said: “What have I done? What is my offense, and how have I sinned against your father for him to seek my life?” 2 At this Jonʹathan said to him: “It is unthinkable! You will not die. Look! My father will not do anything, great or small, without disclosing it to me. Why should my father hide this matter from me? This will not happen.” 3 But David swore further and said: “Your father surely knows that I have found favor in your eyes and would say, ‘Do not let Jonʹathan know this or he will be upset.’ But as surely as Jehovah is living and as surely as you are living, there is only a step between me and death!”

4 Then Jonʹathan said to David: “Whatever you say, I will do for you.” 5 David said to Jonʹathan: “Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am certainly expected to sit with the king to eat; you must send me away, and I will hide in the field until the evening on the third day. 6 If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David begged me for permission to go quickly to his city Bethʹlehem, because there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.’ 7 If his response is, ‘That is fine,’ it means peace to your servant. But if he becomes angry, you can be sure that he is determined to harm me. 8 Show loyal love to your servant, for you have brought your servant into Jehovah’s covenant with you. But if I am guilty, put me to death yourself. Why turn me over to your father?”

9 To this Jonʹathan said: “It is unthinkable to suggest that about you! If I learn that my father is determined to harm you, would I not tell you?” 10 Then David said to Jonʹathan: “Who will tell me whether your father gives you a harsh answer?” 11 Jonʹathan said to David: “Come, let us go out into the field.” So both of them went out into the field. 12 And Jonʹathan said to David: “Let Jehovah the God of Israel be a witness that I will sound out my father about this time tomorrow or by the third day. If he is favorably disposed toward David, will I not then send you word and disclose it to you? 13 But if my father intends to harm you, may Jehovah do that and more to Jonʹathan if I do not disclose it to you and send you away in peace. May Jehovah be with you, just as he was with my father. 14 And will you not show me the loyal love of Jehovah while I am alive and even when I die? 15 Never withdraw your loyal love from my household, even when Jehovah wipes out all the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” 16 So Jonʹathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “Jehovah will require it and call David’s enemies to account.” 17 So Jonʹathan had David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved himself.

18 Jonʹathan then said to him: “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be vacant. 19 By the third day, you will be missed even more, and you must go to the place where you hid the other day and stay near the stone here. 20 I will then shoot three arrows to one side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. 21 When I send the attendant, I will say, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to the attendant, ‘Look! The arrows are on this side of you, get them,’ then you may come back, for as surely as Jehovah is living, it means everything is peaceful for you and there is no danger. 22 But if I should say to the boy, ‘Look! The arrows are beyond you,’ then go, for Jehovah has sent you away. 23 As for the promise that we have made, you and I, may Jehovah be between us forever.”

24 So David hid in the field. When the new moon came, the king took his seat at the meal to eat. 25 The king was sitting in his usual seat by the wall. Jonʹathan was facing him, and Abʹner was sitting at Saul’s side, but David’s place was vacant. 26 Saul did not say anything that day, for he said to himself: ‘Something has happened so that he is not clean. Yes, he must be unclean.’ 27 And the day after the new moon, on the second day, David’s place continued vacant. Saul then said to Jonʹathan his son: “Why has the son of Jesʹse not come to the meal either yesterday or today?” 28 Jonʹathan answered Saul: “David begged me for permission to go to Bethʹlehem. 29 He said, ‘Please permit me to go, because we have a family sacrifice in the city, and my own brother summoned me. So if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me slip away to see my brothers.’ That is why he has not come to the king’s table.” 30 Then Saul became enraged with Jonʹathan, and he said to him: “You son of a rebellious woman, do you think I do not know that you are choosing to side with the son of Jesʹse, to your own shame and to the shame of your mother? 31 As long as the son of Jesʹse is alive on the earth, you and your kingship will not be firmly established. So now send someone to bring him to me, for he must die.”

32 However, Jonʹathan said to Saul his father: “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” 33 At that Saul hurled the spear at him to strike him, so Jonʹathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. 34 Jonʹathan immediately rose up from the table in the heat of anger, and he did not eat any food on the second day after the new moon, for he was upset over David and his own father had humiliated him.

35 In the morning Jonʹathan went out to the field for the appointment with David, and a young attendant was with him. 36 And he said to his attendant: “Please run and find the arrows that I shoot.” The attendant ran, and Jonʹathan shot the arrow beyond him. 37 When the attendant reached the place where Jonʹathan had shot the arrow, Jonʹathan called out to the attendant: “Is not the arrow beyond you?” 38 Jonʹathan called out to the attendant: “Hurry! Go quickly! Do not delay!” And Jonʹathan’s attendant picked up the arrows and came back to his master. 39 The attendant did not understand anything about the matter; only Jonʹathan and David knew what was meant. 40 Then Jonʹathan gave his weapons to his attendant and told him: “Go, take them to the city.”

41 When the attendant left, David rose up from a place nearby that was to the south. Then he fell with his face to the ground and bowed three times, and they kissed each other and wept for each other, but David wept the most. 42 Jonʹathan said to David: “Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of Jehovah, saying, ‘May Jehovah be between you and me and between your offspring and my offspring forever.’”

Then David rose up and left, and Jonʹathan went back to the city.

**Chapter 21**

1 David later came to Nob to Ahimʹelech the priest. Ahimʹelech began to tremble when he met David, and he said to him: “Why are you by yourself and no one is with you?” 2 David replied to Ahimʹelech the priest: “The king instructed me to do something, but he said, ‘Do not let anyone know anything about the mission on which I am sending you and about the instructions I have given you.’ I made an appointment with my young men to meet at a certain place. 3 Now if there are five loaves of bread at your disposal, just give them to me, or whatever is available.” 4 But the priest answered David: “There is no ordinary bread on hand, but there is holy bread—provided that the young men have kept away from women.” 5 David answered the priest: “Women have certainly been kept away from us as on previous occasions when I went out on a campaign. If the bodies of the young men are holy even when the mission is ordinary, how much more so today should they be holy!” 6 So the priest gave him the holy bread, because there was no bread there except the showbread, which had been removed from Jehovah’s presence to be replaced by fresh bread on the day it was taken away.

7 Now one of Saul’s servants was there on that day, detained before Jehovah. His name was Doʹeg the Eʹdomite, the chief of Saul’s shepherds.

8 David then said to Ahimʹelech: “Is there a spear or a sword here at your disposal? I did not take my own sword or my weapons with me, because the king’s mission was urgent.” 9 To this the priest said: “The sword of Goliʹath the Philisʹtine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Eʹlah, is here, wrapped up in a cloth behind the ephʹod. If you want to take it for yourself, take it, because it is the only one here.” David said: “There is none like it. Give it to me.”

10 That day David rose up and continued his flight from Saul, and he eventually came to King Aʹchish of Gath. 11 The servants of Aʹchish said to him: “Is this not David, the king of the land? Is he not the one they sang about when they danced, saying,

‘Saul has struck down his thousands,

And David his tens of thousands’?”

12 David took these words to heart, and he became very much afraid of King Aʹchish of Gath. 13 So he disguised his sanity in their presence and acted insane while among them. He was making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard. 14 Finally Aʹchish said to his servants: “You see that this man is crazy! Why bring him to me? 15 Do I have a shortage of crazy men that I need to have this one acting crazy before me? Should this man enter my house?”

**Chapter 22**

1 So David went from there, escaping to the cave of Adulʹlam. When his brothers and his father’s entire house heard of it, they went down there to him. 2 And all those who were in trouble and in debt and who had a grievance gathered to him, and he became their chief. There were about 400 men with him.

3 David later went from there to Mizʹpeh in Moʹab and said to the king of Moʹab: “Please let my father and mother stay with you until I know what God will do for me.” 4 So he left them with the king of Moʹab, and they stayed with him the whole time that David was in the stronghold.

5 In time Gad the prophet said to David: “Do not stay in the stronghold. Go from there into the land of Judah.” So David left and went into the forest of Heʹreth.

6 Saul heard that David and the men with him had been found. Saul was then sitting in Gibʹeah under the tamarisk tree on the high place with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were stationed around him. 7 Then Saul said to his servants stationed around him: “Listen, please, you Benʹjaminites. Will the son of Jesʹse also give fields and vineyards to all of you? Will he appoint all of you as chiefs of thousands and chiefs of hundreds? 8 All of you have conspired against me! No one informed me when my own son made a covenant with the son of Jesʹse! Not one of you has sympathy for me and informs me that my own son has incited my own servant against me to ambush me, as is now the case.”

9 Then Doʹeg the Eʹdomite, who was stationed there over the servants of Saul, answered: “I saw the son of Jesʹse come to Nob to Ahimʹelech the son of Ahiʹtub. 10 And he inquired of Jehovah for him and gave him provisions. He even gave him the sword of Goliʹath the Philisʹtine.” 11 At once the king sent for Ahimʹelech son of Ahiʹtub the priest and all the priests of his father’s house, who were in Nob. So all of them came to the king.

12 Saul now said: “Listen, please, you son of Ahiʹtub!” to which he replied: “Here I am, my lord.” 13 Saul said to him: “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesʹse, by giving him bread and a sword and by making an inquiry of God for him? He opposes me and waits in ambush, as is now the case.” 14 At this Ahimʹelech answered the king: “Who among all your servants is as trustworthy as David? He is the king’s son-in-law and a chief over your bodyguard and honored in your house. 15 Was today the first time I inquired of God for him? What you are saying is unthinkable on my part! Do not let the king hold anything against his servant and against my father’s entire house, for your servant did not know a single thing about any of this.”

16 But the king said: “You will surely die, Ahimʹelech, you along with all your father’s house.” 17 With that the king said to the guards stationed around him: “Turn and kill the priests of Jehovah, because they have sided with David! They knew that he was a runaway, and they did not inform me!” But the king’s servants did not want to lift their hands to assault the priests of Jehovah. 18 Then the king said to Doʹeg: “You turn and assault the priests!” Immediately Doʹeg the Eʹdomite went and assaulted the priests himself. He killed on that day 85 men wearing the linen ephʹod. 19 He also struck Nob, the city of the priests, with the sword; man as well as woman, child as well as infant, bull, donkey, and sheep, he put to the sword.

20 However, one son of Ahimʹelech the son of Ahiʹtub, whose name was Abiʹathar, escaped and ran away to follow David. 21 Abiʹathar told David: “Saul has killed the priests of Jehovah.” 22 At this David said to Abiʹathar: “I knew on that day, when Doʹeg the Eʹdomite was there, that he would be sure to tell Saul. I am personally responsible for the death of everyone in your father’s house. 23 Stay with me. Do not be afraid, for whoever seeks your life seeks my life; you are under my protection.”

**Chapter 23**

1 In time David was told: “The Philisʹtines are fighting against Keiʹlah, and they are raiding the threshing floors.” 2 So David inquired of Jehovah: “Should I go and strike down these Philisʹtines?” Jehovah said to David: “Go, strike down the Philisʹtines and rescue Keiʹlah.” 3 But the men of David said to him: “Look! We are afraid while here in Judah; how much more so if we go to Keiʹlah against the battle line of the Philisʹtines!” 4 So David inquired once again of Jehovah. Jehovah now answered him: “Rise up; go down to Keiʹlah because I will give the Philisʹtines into your hand.” 5 So David went with his men to Keiʹlah and fought against the Philisʹtines; he carried off their livestock and struck them down with a great slaughter, and David rescued the inhabitants of Keiʹlah.

6 Now when Abiʹathar the son of Ahimʹelech ran away to David at Keiʹlah, he had an ephʹod with him. 7 Saul was told: “David has come to Keiʹlah.” Then Saul said: “God has handed him over to me, for he has trapped himself by entering a city with gates and bars.” 8 So Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keiʹlah and besiege David and his men. 9 When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiʹathar the priest: “Bring the ephʹod here.” 10 Then David said: “O Jehovah the God of Israel, your servant has indeed heard that Saul intends to come to Keiʹlah to destroy the city because of me. 11 Will the leaders of Keiʹlah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O Jehovah the God of Israel, please tell your servant.” To this Jehovah said: “He will come down.” 12 David asked: “Will the leaders of Keiʹlah surrender me and my men into Saul’s hand?” Jehovah replied: “They will surrender you.”

13 At once David rose up with his men, about 600 in number, and they left Keiʹlah and moved about wherever they could. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keiʹlah, he did not go out after him. 14 David stayed in the wilderness in places difficult to approach, in the mountainous region of the wilderness of Ziph. Saul searched for him constantly, but Jehovah did not give him into his hand. 15 David was aware that Saul had gone out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Hoʹresh.

16 Jonʹathan the son of Saul now went out to David at Hoʹresh, and he helped him find strength in Jehovah. 17 He said to him: “Do not be afraid, for my father Saul will not find you; you will be king over Israel, and I will become second to you; and my father Saul also knows that.” 18 Then the two of them made a covenant before Jehovah, and David stayed in Hoʹresh, and Jonʹathan went to his home.

19 The men of Ziph later went up to Saul at Gibʹeah and said: “Is not David hiding near us in the places difficult to approach at Hoʹresh, on the hill of Hachiʹlah, which is south of Jeshiʹmon? 20 Whenever it pleases you to come down, O king, come, and we will surrender him into the hand of the king.” 21 At this Saul said: “May you be blessed by Jehovah, for you have shown compassion to me. 22 Please go and try to find out exactly where he is and who saw him there, for I have been told that he is very cunning. 23 Carefully ascertain where all his hiding places are and return to me with the evidence. I will then go with you, and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah.”

24 So they left and went to Ziph ahead of Saul, while David and his men were in the wilderness of Maʹon, in the Arʹabah to the south of Jeshiʹmon. 25 Then Saul came with his men to look for him. When David was told, he at once went down to the crag and stayed in the wilderness of Maʹon. When Saul heard this, he chased after David into the wilderness of Maʹon. 26 As Saul came to one side of the mountain, David and his men were on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, but Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. 27 But a messenger came to Saul, saying: “Come quickly, for the Philisʹtines have made a raid on the land!” 28 At that Saul stopped chasing after David and went to confront the Philisʹtines. That is why that place was named the Crag of the Divisions.

29 Then David made his way up from there and stayed in the places difficult to approach at En-gedʹi.

**Chapter 24**

1 As soon as Saul returned from pursuing the Philisʹtines, they told him: “Look! David is in the wilderness of En-gedʹi.”

2 So Saul took 3,000 men chosen from all Israel and went to look for David and his men on the rocky cliffs of the mountain goats. 3 Saul came to the stone sheepfolds along the road, where there was a cave, and he went in to relieve himself while David and his men were sitting in the recesses at the back of the cave. 4 David’s men said to him: “This is the day on which Jehovah is saying to you, ‘Look! I am giving your enemy into your hand, and you can do to him whatever seems good to you.’” So David rose up and quietly cut off the edge of Saul’s sleeveless coat. 5 But afterward David’s heart kept striking him because he had cut off the edge of Saul’s sleeveless coat. 6 He said to his men: “It is unthinkable from Jehovah’s standpoint that I should do such a thing to my lord, the anointed of Jehovah, by lifting my hand against him, for he is the anointed of Jehovah.” 7 So David restrained his men with these words, and he did not allow them to attack Saul. As for Saul, he rose up from the cave and went on his way.

8 Then David got up and went out from the cave and called out after Saul: “My lord the king!” When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down low with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. 9 David said to Saul: “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Look! David is seeking to harm you’? 10 This very day your own eyes have seen how Jehovah gave you into my hand in the cave. But when someone said to kill you, I had pity on you and said, ‘I will not lift my hand against my lord, for he is the anointed of Jehovah.’ 11 And look, my father, yes, see the edge of your sleeveless coat in my hand; for when I cut off the edge of your sleeveless coat, I did not kill you. You can now see and understand that I do not intend to harm you or to rebel, and I have not sinned against you, whereas you are hunting me down to take my life. 12 May Jehovah judge between you and me, and may Jehovah take vengeance on you for me, but my hand will not come against you. 13 Just as the ancient proverb says, ‘From the wicked comes wickedness,’ but my hand will not come against you. 14 After whom has the king of Israel gone out? Whom are you chasing? A dead dog? A single flea? 15 May Jehovah be the judge, and he will judge between you and me, and he will see and will plead my case and judge me and rescue me from your hand.”

16 At the moment that David finished speaking these words to him, Saul said: “Is this your voice, my son David?” And Saul began to weep loudly. 17 He said to David: “You are more righteous than I am, for you have treated me well and I have repaid you with evil. 18 Yes, today you have told me of the good you did by not killing me when Jehovah surrendered me into your hand. 19 For what man finds his enemy and sends him on his way unharmed? Jehovah will reward you with good because of what you have done for me today. 20 And now look! I know that you will surely rule as king and that in your hand the kingdom of Israel will endure. 21 Now swear to me by Jehovah that you will not wipe out my descendants after me and that you will not annihilate my name out of my father’s house.” 22 So David swore to Saul, after which Saul went home. But David and his men went up to the stronghold.

**Chapter 25**

1 In time Samuel died; and all Israel gathered together to mourn for him and to bury him at his house in Raʹmah. Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paʹran.

2 Now there was a man in Maʹon whose work was in Carʹmel. The man was very wealthy; he had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, and he was then shearing his sheep at Carʹmel. 3 The man’s name was Naʹbal, and his wife’s name was Abʹigail. The wife was discerning and beautiful, but the husband, a Caʹlebite, was harsh, and he behaved badly. 4 David heard in the wilderness that Naʹbal was shearing his sheep. 5 So David sent ten young men to him, and David told the young men: “Go up to Carʹmel, and when you come to Naʹbal, ask him in my name about his welfare. 6 Then say, ‘May you live long and may you be well and may your household be well and may all that you have be well. 7 Now I hear that you are doing your shearing. When your shepherds were with us, we did not harm them, and they found nothing missing the whole time they were in Carʹmel. 8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you. May my young men find favor in your eyes, because we have come at a joyous time. Please give to your servants and to your son David whatever you can spare.’”

9 So David’s young men went and told all of this to Naʹbal in David’s name. When they finished, 10 Naʹbal answered David’s servants: “Who is David, and who is the son of Jesʹse? Nowadays many servants are breaking away from their masters. 11 Do I have to take my bread and my water and the meat that I butchered for my shearers and give it to men who come from who knows where?”

12 At that David’s young men returned and reported all these words to him. 13 David immediately said to his men: “Everyone strap on your sword!” So they all strapped on their swords, and David also strapped on his own sword, and about 400 men went up with David, while 200 men stayed with the baggage.

14 Meanwhile, one of the servants reported to Abʹigail, Naʹbal’s wife: “Look! David sent messengers from the wilderness to wish our master well, but he screamed insults at them. 15 Those men were very good to us. They never harmed us, and we did not miss a single thing the whole time we were together with them in the fields. 16 They were like a protective wall around us, both by night and by day, the whole time we were with them shepherding the flock. 17 Now decide what you are going to do, for disaster has been determined against our master and against all his house, and he is such a worthless man that no one can speak to him.”

18 So Abʹigail quickly took 200 loaves of bread, two large jars of wine, five dressed sheep, five seah measures of roasted grain, 100 cakes of raisins, and 200 cakes of pressed figs and put all of it on the donkeys. 19 Then she said to her servants: “Go on ahead of me; I will follow you.” But she said nothing to her husband Naʹbal.

20 While she was riding on the donkey and going down under cover of the mountain, just then David and his men were coming down toward her, and she met them. 21 Now David had been saying: “It was for nothing that I guarded everything that belongs to this fellow in the wilderness. Not a single thing belonging to him went missing, and yet he repays me evil for good. 22 May God do the same and more to the enemies of David if I allow a single male of his to survive until the morning.”

23 When Abʹigail caught sight of David, she hurried down off the donkey and threw herself facedown before David, bowing to the ground. 24 She then fell at his feet and said: “My lord, let the blame be on me; let your servant girl speak to you, and listen to the words of your servant girl. 25 Please, do not let my lord pay attention to this worthless Naʹbal, for he is just like his name. Naʹbal is his name, and senselessness is with him. But I, your servant girl, did not see my lord’s young men whom you sent. 26 And now, my lord, as surely as Jehovah is living and as you are living, it is Jehovah who has held you back from incurring bloodguilt and from taking revenge with your own hand. May your enemies and those seeking injury to my lord become like Naʹbal. 27 Now let this gift that your servant girl has brought to my lord be given to the young men who are following my lord. 28 Pardon, please, the transgression of your servant girl, for Jehovah will without fail make for my lord a lasting house, because my lord is fighting the wars of Jehovah, and no evil has been found in you all your days. 29 When someone rises up to pursue you and seeks your life, the life of my lord will be wrapped securely in the bag of life with Jehovah your God, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away like stones from a sling. 30 And when Jehovah has done for my lord all the good things he has promised and he appoints you as leader over Israel, 31 you will have no remorse or regret in your heart for shedding blood without cause and for letting the hand of my lord take revenge. When Jehovah confers good upon my lord, remember your servant girl.”

32 At this David said to Abʹigail: “Praise Jehovah the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! 33 And blessed be your good sense! May you be blessed for restraining me this day from incurring bloodguilt and from taking revenge with my own hands. 34 Otherwise, as surely as Jehovah the God of Israel who held me back from harming you is living, if you had not come quickly to meet me, by morning there would not have remained a single male belonging to Naʹbal.” 35 With that David accepted from her what she had brought him and said to her: “Go up in peace to your house. See, I have listened to you, and I will grant your request.”

36 Abʹigail later went back to Naʹbal, who was feasting like a king in his house, and Naʹbal was in a good mood and was as drunk as could be. She did not tell him a single thing until the morning light. 37 In the morning, when Naʹbal was sober, his wife told him these things. And his heart became like a dead man’s, and he lay paralyzed like a stone. 38 About ten days later, Jehovah struck Naʹbal, and he died.

39 When David heard that Naʹbal had died, he said: “Praise Jehovah, who has pleaded my case of reproach from Naʹbal and has kept his servant from doing anything bad, and Jehovah has brought the badness of Naʹbal back on his own head!” Then David sent word to propose to Abʹigail to take her as his wife. 40 So David’s servants came to Abʹigail at Carʹmel and said to her: “David has sent us to you to take you as his wife.” 41 She immediately rose up and bowed with her face to the ground and said: “Here is your slave as a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.” 42 Then Abʹigail quickly rose up and rode on her donkey with five of her female servants walking behind her; she accompanied the messengers of David and became his wife.

43 David had also married Ahinʹoam from Jezʹreel, and both women became his wives.

44 But Saul had given his daughter Miʹchal, David’s wife, to Palʹti the son of Laʹish, who was from Galʹlim.

**Chapter 26**

1 In time the men of Ziph came to Saul at Gibʹeah, saying: “Is David not hiding on the hill of Hachiʹlah facing Jeshiʹmon?” 2 So Saul rose up and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with 3,000 chosen men of Israel to look for David in the wilderness of Ziph. 3 Saul camped on the hill of Hachiʹlah, which faces Jeshiʹmon, by the road. David was then living in the wilderness, and he learned that Saul had come into the wilderness after him. 4 So David sent spies to verify that Saul had indeed come. 5 David later went to the place where Saul had encamped, and David saw the place where Saul and Abʹner the son of Ner, the chief of his army, were lying asleep; Saul lay asleep in the camp enclosure with the troops camping all around him. 6 Then David said to Ahimʹelech the Hitʹtite and Abishʹai the son of Zeruʹiah, the brother of Joʹab: “Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?” Abishʹai replied: “I will go down with you.” 7 So David and Abishʹai made their way to the troops by night, and they found Saul lying asleep in the camp enclosure with his spear stuck into the ground next to his head; Abʹner and the troops were lying all around him.

8 Abishʹai now said to David: “Today God has surrendered your enemy into your hand. And now, please, let me pin him to the ground with the spear just once, and I will not need to do it twice.” 9 However, David said to Abishʹai: “Do not harm him, for who can lift his hand against the anointed of Jehovah and remain innocent?” 10 David continued: “As surely as Jehovah is living, Jehovah himself will strike him down, or his day will come and he will die, or he will go down into battle and perish. 11 It is unthinkable from Jehovah’s standpoint for me to lift my hand against the anointed of Jehovah! So now take, please, the spear next to his head and the water jug, and let us be on our way.” 12 So David took the spear and the water jug from next to Saul’s head, and they went away. No one saw or noticed them or woke up, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from Jehovah had fallen upon them. 13 Then David crossed to the other side and stood on the top of the mountain some distance away, with a considerable space between them.

14 David called out to the troops and to Abʹner the son of Ner, saying: “Abʹner, will you not answer?” Abʹner answered: “Who are you who calls to the king?” 15 David said to Abʹner: “Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel? So why did you not keep watch over your lord the king? For one of the soldiers came in to do away with your lord the king. 16 What you have done is not good. As surely as Jehovah is living, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the anointed of Jehovah. Now look around! Where are the king’s spear and the water jug that were next to his head?”

17 Then Saul recognized the voice of David and said: “Is this your voice, my son David?” David replied: “It is my voice, my lord the king.” 18 He added: “Why is my lord chasing after his servant, for what have I done, and what am I guilty of? 19 My lord the king, please, listen to the words of his servant: If it is Jehovah who incited you against me, let him accept my grain offering. But if men have incited you, they are cursed before Jehovah, because they have driven me away today from being united with Jehovah’s inheritance, saying, ‘Go, serve other gods!’ 20 And now do not let my blood fall to the ground away from the presence of Jehovah, for the king of Israel has gone out to look for a single flea, as if he were chasing a partridge on the mountains.”

21 In turn Saul said: “I have sinned. Come back, my son David, for I will do you no more harm, because you regarded my life as precious this day. Yes, I have acted foolishly and have made a terrible mistake.” 22 David answered: “Here is the spear of the king. Let one of the young men come over and take it. 23 It is Jehovah who will repay each one for his own righteousness and his own faithfulness, for today Jehovah gave you into my hand, but I was unwilling to lift my hand against the anointed of Jehovah. 24 Look! Just as your life was precious to me this day, so may my life be precious in the eyes of Jehovah, and may he rescue me out of all distress.” 25 Saul replied to David: “May you be blessed, my son David. You will surely do great things, and you will surely prevail.” Then David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

**Chapter 27**

1 However, David said in his heart: “One day I will perish by Saul’s hand. The best thing for me is to escape to the land of the Philisʹtines; then Saul will give up looking for me in all the territory of Israel, and I will escape from his hand.” 2 So David rose up with the 600 men who were with him and went over to Aʹchish the son of Maʹoch, the king of Gath. 3 David stayed with Aʹchish in Gath, he and his men, each man with his household. With David were his two wives, Ahinʹoam of Jezʹreel and Abʹigail the Carʹmelite, Naʹbal’s widow. 4 When report was made to Saul that David had run away to Gath, he stopped searching for him.

5 Then David said to Aʹchish: “If I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities of the countryside, so that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?” 6 So Aʹchish gave him Zikʹlag on that day. That is why Zikʹlag belongs to the kings of Judah down to this day.

7 The length of time that David lived in the countryside of the Philisʹtines was a year and four months. 8 David would go up with his men to raid the Geshʹurites, the Girʹzites, and the Amalʹekites, for they were inhabiting the land that extended from Teʹlam as far as Shur and down to the land of Egypt. 9 When David would attack the land, he preserved neither man nor woman alive, but he took the flocks, herds, donkeys, camels, and clothing, after which he would return to Aʹchish. 10 Then Aʹchish would ask: “Where did you make a raid today?” David would reply: “Against the south of Judah” or “Against the south of the Jerahʹmeelites” or “Against the south of the Kenʹites.” 11 David did not spare alive any man or woman to be brought to Gath, saying: “That they may not tell them about us and say, ‘This is what David did.’” (And that was his practice the whole time he lived in the countryside of the Philisʹtines.) 12 So Aʹchish believed David, saying to himself: ‘He has certainly become a stench among his people Israel, so he will always be my servant.’

**Chapter 28**

1 In those days the Philisʹtines assembled their armies for war against Israel. So Aʹchish said to David: “You know, of course, that you and your men will go out into battle with me.” 2 At that David said to Aʹchish: “You surely know what your servant will do.” Aʹchish said to David: “That is why I will appoint you as my permanent bodyguard.”

3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned him and had buried him in Raʹmah, his own city. And Saul had removed the spirit mediums and the fortune-tellers from the land.

4 The Philisʹtines assembled and went and set up camp in Shuʹnem. So Saul assembled all Israel, and they set up camp in Gilboʹa. 5 When Saul saw the camp of the Philisʹtines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 6 Although Saul would inquire of Jehovah, Jehovah never answered him, either in dreams or by the Uʹrim or through the prophets. 7 Finally Saul said to his servants: “Find me a woman who is a spirit medium, and I will go and consult her.” His servants replied: “Look! There is a woman who is a spirit medium in En-dor.”

8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went to the woman by night with two of his men. He said: “Use divination, please, by acting as a spirit medium, and bring up for me the one whom I designate to you.” 9 However, the woman said to him: “You must know what Saul did, how he removed the spirit mediums and the fortune-tellers from the land. Why, then, are you trying to trap me to have me put to death?” 10 Saul then swore to her by Jehovah, saying: “As surely as Jehovah is alive, you will not incur any guilt in this matter!” 11 At this the woman said: “Whom should I bring up for you?” He replied: “Bring up Samuel for me.” 12 When the woman saw “Samuel,” she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul: “Why did you trick me? You are Saul!” 13 The king said to her: “Do not be afraid, but what do you see?” The woman replied to Saul: “I see one like a god coming up out of the earth.” 14 At once he asked her: “What does he look like?” to which she said: “It is an old man coming up, and he is clothed in a sleeveless coat.” At that Saul realized that it was “Samuel,” and he bowed low with his face to the ground and prostrated himself.

15 Then “Samuel” said to Saul: “Why have you disturbed me by having me brought up?” Saul replied: “I am in great trouble. The Philisʹtines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me and no longer answers me, either through the prophets or in dreams; so that is why I am calling on you to let me know what I should do.”

16 And “Samuel” said: “Why do you inquire of me now that Jehovah has departed from you and has become your adversary? 17 Jehovah will do for himself what he foretold through me: Jehovah will rip the kingdom out of your hands and give it to one of your fellow men, David. 18 Because you did not obey the voice of Jehovah and you did not execute his burning anger against the Amalʹekites, that is why Jehovah is doing this to you this day. 19 Jehovah will also give both Israel and you into the hand of the Philisʹtines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Jehovah will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philisʹtines.”

20 At once Saul fell full length on the ground and became very much afraid because of “Samuel’s” words. And there was no strength left in him, because he had not eaten food all day and all night. 21 When the woman came to Saul and saw that he had been greatly disturbed, she said to him: “Here your servant has obeyed what you said, and I risked my life and did what you told me to do. 22 Now, please, listen to what your servant has to say. Let me set before you a piece of bread; then eat so that you will have some strength to go on your way.” 23 But he refused and said: “I am not going to eat.” However, his servants and also the woman kept urging him. Finally he listened to them and got up from the ground and sat on the bed. 24 The woman had a fattened calf in the house, so she quickly slaughtered it and took flour and kneaded dough and baked it into unleavened bread. 25 She served them to Saul and his servants, and they ate. After that they rose up and left during the night.

**Chapter 29**

1 The Philisʹtines assembled all their armies at Aʹphek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring in Jezʹreel. 2 And the lords of the Philisʹtines were passing by with their hundreds and their thousands, and David and his men were marching at the rear with Aʹchish. 3 But the princes of the Philisʹtines said: “Why are these Hebrews here?” Aʹchish replied to the princes of the Philisʹtines: “This is David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me for a year or more. I have not found any fault in him from the day he deserted to me until today.” 4 But the princes of the Philisʹtines became indignant at him, and they said to him: “Make the man go back. Let him return to the place where you assigned him. Do not let him go down with us into the battle, so that he will not turn against us during the battle. For what better way to put himself in favor with his lord than with the heads of our men? 5 Is this not the David about whom they sang when they danced, saying:

‘Saul has struck down his thousands,

And David his tens of thousands’?”

6 So Aʹchish summoned David and said to him: “As surely as Jehovah is living, you are upright, and I am pleased to have you go on the campaign with my army, for I have not found any fault with you from the day you came to me until today. But the lords do not trust you. 7 So return in peace, and do not do anything to displease the lords of the Philisʹtines.” 8 However, David said to Aʹchish: “Why, what have I done? What fault have you found in your servant from the day that I came to you until today? Why should I not come with you and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” 9 Aʹchish answered David: “From my standpoint, you have been as good as an angel of God. But the princes of the Philisʹtines have said, ‘Do not let him go up with us into the battle.’ 10 Now get up early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you; rise up and leave early in the morning as soon as it is light.”

11 So David and his men rose up early in the morning to return to the land of the Philisʹtines, and the Philisʹtines went up to Jezʹreel.

**Chapter 30**

1 When David and his men came to Zikʹlag on the third day, the Amalʹekites had made a raid on the south and on Zikʹlag, and they had attacked Zikʹlag and burned it with fire. 2 They had taken captive the women and all who were in it, from the smallest to the greatest. They had not killed anyone, but they had carried them off and gone on their way. 3 When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned down, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been carried off captive. 4 So David and the men with him began weeping loudly until they had no strength left to weep. 5 David’s two wives had also been carried off captive, Ahinʹoam of Jezʹreel and Abʹigail the widow of Naʹbal the Carʹmelite. 6 David was very distressed, because the men were talking of stoning him, for all the men had become very bitter over the loss of their sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself by Jehovah his God.

7 David then said to Abiʹathar the priest, the son of Ahimʹelech: “Please bring the ephʹod here.” So Abiʹathar brought the ephʹod to David. 8 David inquired of Jehovah: “Should I chase after this marauder band? Will I overtake them?” At this He said to him: “Go in pursuit, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will make the rescue.”

9 David immediately set out with the 600 men who were with him, and they went on as far as the Wadi Beʹsor, where some of the men stayed behind. 10 David kept up the chase with 400 men, but the 200 men who were too tired to cross the Wadi Beʹsor stayed behind.

11 They found an Egyptian man in the field and took him to David. They gave him food to eat and water to drink, 12 as well as a slice of a cake of pressed figs and two cakes of raisins. After he ate, he regained his strength, for he had not eaten any food or drunk any water for three days and three nights. 13 David now asked him: “To whom do you belong, and where are you from?” to which he said: “I am an Egyptian attendant, a slave of an Amalʹekite man, but my master left me because I got sick three days ago. 14 We made a raid on the south of the Cherʹethites and on the territory of Judah and on the south of Caʹleb, and Zikʹlag we burned with fire.” 15 At this David said to him: “Will you lead me down to this marauder band?” He replied: “If you swear to me by God that you will not put me to death and that you will not hand me over to my master, I will lead you down to this marauder band.”

16 So he led him down to where they were spread out all over the land, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philisʹtines and the land of Judah. 17 Then David struck them down from the morning darkness until the following evening; not a man escaped except 400 men who fled on camels. 18 David recovered all that the Amalʹekites had taken, and David rescued his two wives. 19 Nothing of theirs was missing, from the smallest to the greatest. They recovered their sons and daughters and the spoil; David recovered everything that they had taken. 20 So David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before their own livestock. They said: “This is David’s spoil.”

21 Then David came to the 200 men who had been too tired to go along with David and who had stayed behind by the Wadi Beʹsor, and they came out to meet David and the people with him. When David came near to the men, he asked them how they were. 22 However, every bad and worthless man among those who had gone with David said: “Since they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we recovered except that each one may take his wife and his sons and go away.” 23 But David said: “You must not do this, my brothers, with what Jehovah has given us. He protected us and gave into our hand the marauder band that came against us. 24 Who would agree with you on this? The share of the one who went down into the battle will be the same as the share of the one who sat by the baggage. All will have a share together.” 25 And from that day forward, he kept it set as a regulation and a rule for Israel down to this day.

26 When David returned to Zikʹlag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah who were his friends, saying: “Here is a gift for you from the spoil of Jehovah’s enemies.” 27 He sent it to those who were in Bethʹel, to those in Raʹmoth of the Negʹeb, to those in Jatʹtir, 28 to those in Aroʹer, to those in Siphʹmoth, to those in Eshtemoʹa, 29 to those in Raʹcal, to those in the cities of the Jerahʹmeelites, to those in the cities of the Kenʹites, 30 to those in Horʹmah, to those in Borʹashan, to those in Aʹthach, 31 to those in Hebʹron, and to all the places that David and his men had frequented.

**Chapter 31**

1 Now the Philisʹtines were fighting against Israel. And the men of Israel fled from before the Philisʹtines, and many fell slain on Mount Gilboʹa. 2 The Philisʹtines kept in close range of Saul and his sons, and the Philisʹtines struck down Jonʹathan, Abinʹadab, and Malʹchi-shuʹa, Saul’s sons. 3 The fighting grew fierce against Saul, and the archers found him, and he was severely wounded by the archers. 4 Then Saul said to his armor-bearer: “Draw your sword and run me through with it, so that these uncircumcised men may not come and run me through and deal ruthlessly with me.” But his armor-bearer was unwilling, because he was very much afraid. So Saul took the sword and fell on it. 5 When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his own sword and died with him. 6 Thus Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men died together on that day. 7 When the people of Israel who were in the region of the valley and in the region of the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons had died, they began to abandon the cities and flee; the Philisʹtines then came and occupied them.

8 The next day, when the Philisʹtines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboʹa. 9 So they cut off his head and stripped off his armor and sent word throughout the land of the Philisʹtines to spread the news in the houses of their idols and among the people. 10 Then they put his armor in the house of the Ashʹtoreth images and fastened his corpse to the wall of Beth-shan. 11 When the inhabitants of Jaʹbesh-gilʹead heard what the Philisʹtines had done to Saul, 12 all the warriors rose and traveled all night and took the bodies of Saul and his sons off the wall of Beth-shan. They returned to Jaʹbesh and burned them there. 13 Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jaʹbesh, and they fasted for seven days.