

# 1 Samuel

## *Hannah Gives Birth to Samuel*

**1:1** There was a man from Ramathaim Zophim,<sup>1</sup> from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. **1:2** He had two wives; the name of the first was Hannah and the name of the second was Peninnah. Now Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless.

**1:3** Year after year<sup>2</sup> this man would go up from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh. It was there that the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, served as the LORD's priests. **1:4** Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he used to give meat portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. **1:5** But he would give a double<sup>3</sup> portion to Hannah, because he especially loved her.<sup>4</sup> Now the LORD had not enabled her to have children.<sup>5</sup> **1:6** Her rival wife used to upset her and make her worry,<sup>6</sup> for the LORD had not enabled her to have children. **1:7** Peninnah<sup>7</sup> would be-

have this way year after year. Whenever Hannah<sup>8</sup> went up to the LORD's house, Peninnah<sup>9</sup> would upset her so that she would weep and refuse to eat. **1:8** Finally her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep and not eat? Why are you so sad?<sup>10</sup> Am I not better to you than ten<sup>11</sup> sons?"

**1:9** On one occasion in Shiloh, after they had finished eating and drinking, Hannah got up.<sup>12</sup> (Now at the time Eli the priest was sitting in his chair<sup>13</sup> by the doorpost of the LORD's temple.) **1:10** She was very upset<sup>14</sup> as she prayed to the LORD, and she was weeping uncontrollably.<sup>15</sup> **1:11** She made a vow saying, "O LORD of hosts, if you will look with compassion<sup>16</sup> on the suffering of your female servant,<sup>17</sup> remembering me and not forgetting your servant, and give a male child<sup>18</sup> to your servant, then I will dedicate him to the LORD all the days of his life. His hair will never be cut."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The translation follows the MT. The LXX reads "a man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite"; this is followed by a number of recent English translations. It is possible the MT reading עֲזַיִם (*sofim*) arose from dittography of the *mem* (ם) at the beginning of the following word.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from days to days."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The exact sense of the Hebrew word אֶפְסַיִם (*appayim*, "two faces") is not certain here. It is most likely used with the preceding expression ("one portion of two faces") to mean a portion double than normally received. Although evidence for this use of the word derives primarily from Aramaic rather than from Hebrew usage, it provides an understanding that fits the context here better than other suggestions for the word do. The meaning "double" is therefore adopted in the present translation. Other possibilities for the meaning of the word include the following: "heavily" (cf. *Vulg., tristis*) and "worthy" or "choice" (cf. *KJV and Targum*). Some scholars have followed the LXX here, emending the word to אֶפְסַיִם (*efes*) and translating it as "but" or "however." This seems unnecessary. The translators of the LXX may simply have been struggling to make sense of the word rather than following a Hebrew text that was different from the MT here.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for Hannah he loved." Repetition of the proper name would seem redundant in contemporary English, so the pronoun ("her") has been used here for clarity. The translation also adds the adverb "especially" to clarify the meaning of the text. Without this addition one might get the impression that only Hannah, not Peninnah, was loved by her husband. But the point of the text is that Hannah was his favorite.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the LORD had closed her womb." So also in v. 6. The disjunctive clause provides supplemental information that is pertinent to the story.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and her rival wife grieved her, even [with] grief so as to worry her."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The MT has a masculine form of the verb here יַעֲשֶׂה (*ya'aseh*, "he used to do"); the subject in that case would presumably be Elkanah. But this leads to an abrupt change of subject in the following part of the verse, where the subject is

the rival wife who caused Hannah anxiety. In light of v. 6 one expects the statement of v. 7 to refer to the ongoing actions of the rival wife: "she used to behave in this way year after year." Some scholars have proposed retaining the masculine form but changing the vocalization of the verb so as to read a Niphal rather than a Qal (i.e., יַעֲשֶׂה, *ye'aseh*, "so it used to be done"). But the problem here is lack of precedent for such a use of the Niphal of this verb. It seems best in light of the context to understand the reference to be to Hannah's rival Peninnah and to read here, with the Syriac Peshitta, a feminine form of the verb ("she used to do"). In the translation the referent (Peninnah) has been specified for clarity.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "she"; the referent (Hannah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "she"; the referent (Peninnah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "why is your heart displeased?"

<sup>11</sup> **sn** Like the number seven, the number ten is sometimes used in the OT as an ideal number (see, for example, Dan 1:20, Zech 8:23).

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The LXX adds "and stood before the Lord," but this is probably a textual expansion due to the terseness of the statement in the Hebrew text.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "on his throne." See *Joüon* 2:506-7 §137.f.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "she [was in] bitterness of soul."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and weeping, she was weeping." The infinitive absolute emphasizes the extent of her sorrow. The imperfect verbal form emphasizes the continuation of the action in past time.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "if looking you look." The expression can refer, as here, to looking favorably upon another, in this case with compassion.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "handmaid." The use of this term (translated two more times in this verse and once each in v. 16, 17 simply as "servant" for stylistic reasons) is an expression of humility.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "seed of men."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a razor will not go up upon his head."

**1:12** As she continued praying to<sup>1</sup> the LORD, Eli was watching her mouth. **1:13** Now Hannah was speaking from her heart. Although her lips were moving, her voice was inaudible. Eli therefore thought she was drunk. **1:14** So he<sup>2</sup> said to her, “How often do you intend to get drunk? Put away your wine!”

**1:15** But Hannah replied, “That’s not the way it is,<sup>3</sup> my lord! I am under a great deal of stress.<sup>4</sup> I have drunk neither wine nor beer. Rather, I have poured out my soul to<sup>5</sup> the LORD. **1:16** Don’t consider your servant a wicked woman,<sup>6</sup> for until now I have spoken from my deep pain and anguish.”

**1:17** Eli replied, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the request that you have asked of him.” **1:18** She said, “May I, your servant, find favor in your sight.” So the woman went her way and got something to eat.<sup>7</sup> Her face no longer looked sad.

**1:19** They got up early the next morning and after worshipping the LORD, they returned to their home at Ramah. Elkanah had marital relations with<sup>8</sup> his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered<sup>9</sup> her. **1:20** After some time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, thinking, “I asked the LORD for him.”<sup>10</sup>

#### *Hannah Dedicates Samuel to the Lord*

**1:21** This man Elkanah went up with all his family to make the yearly sacrifice to the LORD and to keep his vow, **1:22** but Hannah did not go up with them.<sup>11</sup> Instead she told her husband,

“Once the boy is weaned, I will bring him and appear before the LORD, and he will remain there from then on.”

**1:23** So her husband Elkanah said to her, “Do what you think best.<sup>12</sup> Stay until you have weaned him. May the LORD fulfill his promise.”<sup>13</sup>

So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him. **1:24** Once she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, an ephah<sup>14</sup> of flour, and a container<sup>15</sup> of wine. She brought him to the LORD’s house at Shiloh, even though he was young.<sup>16</sup> **1:25** Once the bull had been slaughtered, they brought the boy to Eli. **1:26** She said, “Just as surely as you are alive, my lord, I am the woman who previously stood here with you in order to pray to the LORD. **1:27** I prayed for this boy, and the LORD has given me the request that I asked of him. **1:28** Now I dedicate him to the LORD. From this time on he is dedicated to the LORD.” Then they<sup>17</sup> worshiped the LORD there.

#### *Hannah Exalts the Lord in Prayer*

**2:1** Hannah prayed,<sup>18</sup>

“My heart rejoices in the LORD;  
my horn<sup>19</sup> is exalted high because of the LORD.

I loudly denounce<sup>20</sup> my enemies,  
for I am happy that you delivered me.<sup>21</sup>

**2:2** No one is holy<sup>22</sup> like the LORD!  
There is no one other than you!

<sup>1</sup> **tc** Heb “before.” Many medieval Hebrew manuscripts read “to.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “Eli.” The pronoun (“he”) has been used in the translation in keeping with contemporary English style.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “No.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “I am a woman difficult of spirit.” The LXX has “for whom the day is difficult,” apparently mistaking the Hebrew word for “spirit” רוּחַ (*ruakh*) to be the word for “day” יוֹם (*yom*).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “before.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “daughter of worthlessness.”

<sup>7</sup> **tc** Several medieval Hebrew mss and the Syriac Peshitta lack the words “and got something to eat.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “Elkanah knew his wife.” The Hebrew expression is a euphemism for sexual relations.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** The Lord “remembered” her in the sense of granting her earlier request for a child. The Hebrew verb is often used in the OT for considering the needs or desires of people with favor and kindness.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “because from the LORD I asked him.” The name “Samuel” sounds like the Hebrew verb translated “asked.” The explanation of the meaning of the name “Samuel” that is provided in v. 20 is not a strict etymology. It seems to suggest that the first part of the name is derived from the Hebrew root שָׁאַל (*sh’l*, “to ask”), but the consonants do not support this. Nor is it likely that the name comes from the root שָׁמַע (*sh’m*, “to hear”), for the same reason. It more probably derives from שֵׁם (*shem*, “name”), so that “Samuel” means “name of God.” Verse 20 therefore does not set forth a linguistic explanation of the meaning of the name, but rather draws a parallel between similar sounds. This figure of speech is known as paronomasia.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The disjunctive clause is contrastive here. The words “with them” have been supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “what is good in your eyes.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “establish his word.” This apparently refers to the promise inherent in Eli’s priestly blessing (see v. 17).

<sup>14</sup> **sn** The *ephah* was a standard dry measure in OT times; it was the equivalent of one-tenth of the OT measure known as a homer. The ephah was equal to approximately one-half to two-thirds of a bushel.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “container” may denote either a clay storage jar (cf. CEV “a clay jar full of wine”) or a leather container (cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV “a skin of wine”; NCV “a leather bag filled with [full of TEV] wine.”

<sup>16</sup> **tc** Heb “and the boy was a boy.” If the MT is correct the meaning apparently is that the boy was quite young at the time of these events. On the other hand, some scholars have suspected a textual problem, emending the text to read either “and the boy was with them” (so LXX) or “and the boy was with her” (a conjectural emendation). In spite of the difficulty it seems best to stay with the MT here.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “he,” apparently referring to Samuel (but cf. CEV “Elkanah”). A few medieval manuscripts and some ancient versions take the verb as plural (cf. TEV, NLT).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “prayed and said.” This is somewhat redundant in contemporary English and has been simplified in the translation.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** Horns of animals have always functioned as both offensive and defensive weapons for them. As a figure of speech the horn is therefore often used in the Bible as a symbol of human strength (see also in v. 10). The allusion in v. 1 to the *horn* being lifted *high* suggests a picture of an animal elevating its head in a display of strength or virility.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “my mouth opens wide against.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “for I rejoice in your deliverance.”

<sup>22</sup> **sn** In this context God’s holiness refers primarily to his sovereignty and incomparability. He is unique and distinct from all other so-called gods.

There is no rock<sup>4</sup> like our God!  
**2:3** Don't keep speaking so arrogantly,<sup>2</sup>  
 letting proud talk come out of your  
 mouth!

For the LORD is a God who knows;  
 he<sup>3</sup> evaluates what people do.

**2:4** The bows of warriors are shattered,  
 but those who stumble find their strength  
 reinforced.

**2:5** Those who are well-fed hire them-  
 selves out to earn food,  
 but the hungry no longer lack.  
 Even<sup>4</sup> the barren woman gives birth to  
 seven,<sup>5</sup>  
 but the one with many children withers  
 away.<sup>6</sup>

**2:6** The LORD both kills and gives life;  
 he brings down to the grave<sup>7</sup> and raises  
 up.

**2:7** The LORD impoverishes and makes  
 wealthy;  
 he humbles and he exalts.

**2:8** He lifts the weak<sup>8</sup> from the dust;  
 he raises<sup>9</sup> the poor from the ash heap  
 to seat them with princes  
 and to bestow on them an honored posi-  
 tion.<sup>10</sup>

The foundations of the earth belong to  
 the LORD,  
 and he has placed the world on them.  
**2:9** He watches over<sup>11</sup> his holy ones,<sup>12</sup>

but the wicked are made speechless in the  
 darkness,  
 for it is not by one's own strength that  
 one prevails.

**2:10** The LORD shatters<sup>13</sup> his adversaries;<sup>14</sup>  
 he thunders against them from<sup>15</sup> the heav-  
 ens.

The LORD executes judgment to the ends  
 of the earth.

He will strengthen<sup>16</sup> his king  
 and exalt the power<sup>17</sup> of his anointed  
 one."<sup>18</sup>

**2:11** Then Elkanah went back home to Ramah.  
 But the boy was serving the LORD under the super-  
 vision of<sup>19</sup> Eli the priest.

### *Eli's Sons Misuse Their Sacred Office*

**2:12** The sons of Eli were wicked men.<sup>20</sup> They  
 did not recognize the LORD's authority.<sup>21</sup> **2:13** Now  
 the priests would always treat the people in the  
 following way:<sup>22</sup> Whenever anyone was making  
 a sacrifice, while the meat was boiling, the priest's  
 attendant would come with a three-pronged fork<sup>23</sup>  
 in his hand. **2:14** He would jab it into the basin,  
 kettle, caldron, or pot, and everything that the fork  
 brought up the priest would take for himself. This  
 is what they used to do to all the Israelites<sup>24</sup> when  
 they came there to Shiloh.

**2:15** Even before they burned the fat, the  
 priest's attendant would come and say to the  
 person who was making the sacrifice, "Hand  
 over some meat for the priest to roast! He won't

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The LXX has "and there is none *righteous* like our God." The Hebrew term translated "rock" refers to a rocky cliff where one can seek refuge from enemies. Here the metaphor depicts God as a protector of his people. Cf. TEV "no protector like our God"; CEV "We're safer with you than on a high mountain."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "proudly, proudly." If MT is original, the repetition of the word is for emphasis, stressing the arrogance of those addressed. However, a few medieval Hebrew manuscripts and some other textual witnesses do not reflect the repetition, suggesting that the Hebrew text may be dittographic.

<sup>3</sup> **tc** The MT (*Qere*) reads "and by him actions are weighed." The translation assumes that reading of the *Qere* וְיָלוּ (*v'elo*, "and by him"), which is supported by many medieval Hebrew MSS, is correct, rather than the reading of the *Kethib* וְיָלוּ (*v'elo*, "and not").

<sup>4</sup> **tc** Against *BHS* but with the MT, the preposition (כִּי, 'ad) should be taken with what follows rather than with what precedes. For this sense of the preposition see Job 25:5.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The number seven is used here in an ideal sense. Elsewhere in the OT having seven children is evidence of fertility as a result of God's blessing on the family. See, for example, Jer 15:9; Ruth 4:15.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "languishes."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Sheol"; NAB "the nether world"; CEV "the world of the dead."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or "lowly"; *Heb* "insignificant."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The imperfect verbal form, which is parallel to the participle in the preceding line, is best understood here as indicating what typically happens.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a seat of honor."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "guards the feet of." The expression means that God watches over and protects the godly in all of their activities and movements. The imperfect verbal forms in v. 9 are understood as indicating what is typically true. Another option is to translate them with the future tense. See v. 10b.

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The translation follows the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading the plural ("his holy ones") rather than the singular ("his holy one") of the *Kethib*.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in this line and in the next two lines are understood as indicating what is typically true. Another option is to translate them with the future tense. See v. 10b.

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The present translation follows the *Qere*, many medieval Hebrew manuscripts, the Syriac Peshitta, and the Vulgate in reading the plural ("his adversaries," similarly many other English versions) rather than the singular ("his adversary") of the *Kethib*.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The Hebrew preposition here has the sense of "from within."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in this and the next line are understood as indicating what is anticipated and translated with the future tense, because at the time of Hannah's prayer Israel did not yet have a king.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the horn," here a metaphor for power or strength. Cf. NCV "make his appointed king strong"; NLT "increases the might of his anointed one."

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The LXX greatly expands v. 10 with an addition that seems to be taken from Jer 9:23-24.

**sn** The anointed one is the anticipated king of Israel, as the preceding line makes clear.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "with [or "before"] the face of."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "sons of worthlessness."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "they did not know the LORD." The verb here has the semantic nuance "recognize the authority of." Eli's sons obviously knew who the Lord was; they served in his sanctuary. But they did not recognize his moral authority.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the habit of the priests with the people [was this]."

<sup>23</sup> **sn** The Hebrew word occurs only twice in the OT, here and again in v. 14. Its exact meaning is not entirely clear, although from the context it appears to be a sacrificial tool used for retrieving things from boiling water.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to all Israel."

take boiled meat from you, but only raw.”<sup>1</sup> **2:16** If the individual said to him, “First let the fat be burned away, and then take for yourself whatever you wish,” he would say, “No!<sup>2</sup> Hand it over right now! If you don’t, I will take it forcibly!”

**2:17** The sin of these young men was very great in the LORD’s sight, for they<sup>3</sup> treated the LORD’s offering with contempt.

**2:18** Now Samuel was ministering before the LORD. The boy was dressed in a linen ephod. **2:19** His mother used to make him a small robe and bring it up to him at regular intervals when she would go up with her husband to make the annual sacrifice. **2:20** Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife saying, “May the LORD raise up for you descendants<sup>4</sup> from this woman to replace the one that she<sup>5</sup> dedicated to the LORD.” Then they would go to their<sup>6</sup> home. **2:21** So the LORD graciously attended to Hannah, and she was able to conceive and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. The boy Samuel grew up at the LORD’s sanctuary.<sup>7</sup>

**2:22** Now Eli was very old when he heard about everything that his sons used to do to all the people of Israel<sup>8</sup> and how they used to have sex with<sup>9</sup> the women who were stationed at the entrance to the tent of meeting. **2:23** He said to them, “Why do you behave in this way? For I hear about these evil things from all these<sup>10</sup> people. **2:24** This ought not to be,<sup>11</sup> my sons! For the report that I hear circulating among the LORD’s people is not good. **2:25** If a man sins against a man, one may appeal to God on his behalf. But if a man sins against the LORD, who then will intercede for him?” But Eli’s sons<sup>12</sup> would not

listen to their father, for the LORD had decided<sup>13</sup> to kill them.

**2:26** Now the boy Samuel was growing up and finding favor both with the LORD and with people.

### *The Lord Judges the House of Eli*

**2:27** A man of God came to Eli and said to him, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Did I not plainly<sup>14</sup> reveal myself to your ancestor’s<sup>15</sup> house when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharaoh? **2:28** I chose your ancestor<sup>16</sup> from all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer sacrifice on my altar, to burn incense, and to bear the ephod before me. I gave to your ancestor’s house all the fire offerings made by the Israelites. **2:29** Why are you<sup>17</sup> scorning my sacrifice and my offering that I commanded for my dwelling place?<sup>18</sup> You have honored your sons more than you have me by having made yourselves fat from the best parts of all the offerings of my people Israel.’”

**2:30** Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, says, ‘I really did say<sup>19</sup> that your house and your ancestor’s house would serve<sup>20</sup> me forever.’ But now the LORD says, ‘May it never be!<sup>21</sup> For I will honor those who honor me, but those who despise me will be cursed! **2:31** In fact, days are coming when I will remove your strength<sup>22</sup> and the strength<sup>23</sup> of your father’s house. There will not be an old man in your house! **2:32** You will see trouble in my dwelling place!<sup>24</sup> Israel will experience blessings,<sup>25</sup> but there will not be an old man in your<sup>26</sup> house for all time. **2:33** Any one of you that I do not cut off from my altar, I

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “living.”

<sup>2</sup> *tc* The translation follows the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS (“no”) rather than the *Kethib* and MT, which read “to him.”

<sup>3</sup> *tc* Heb “the men,” which is absent from one medieval Hebrew MS, a Qumran MS, and the LXX.

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “seed.”

<sup>5</sup> *tn* The MT has a masculine verb here, but in light of the context the reference must be to Hannah. It is possible that the text of the MT is incorrect here (cf. the ancient versions), in which case the text should be changed to read either a passive participle or better, the third feminine singular of the verb. If the MT is correct here, perhaps the masculine is to be understood in a nonspecific and impersonal way, allowing for a feminine antecedent. In any case, the syntax of the MT is unusual here.

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb “his.”

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb “with the LORD.” Cf. NAB, TEV “in the service of the LORD”; NIV, NRSV, NLT “in the presence of the Lord”; CEV “at the Lord’s house in Shiloh.”

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “to all Israel.”

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Heb “lie with.”

<sup>10</sup> *tc* For “these” the LXX has “of the Lord” (κυρίου, *kuriou*), perhaps through the influence of the final phrase of v. 24 (“the people of the LORD”). Somewhat less likely is the view that the MT reading is due to a distorted dittography of the first word of v. 24. The Vulgate lacks the word.

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “no.”

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb “they”; the referent (Eli’s sons) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb “desired.”

<sup>14</sup> *tn* The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb “to your father’s” (also in vv. 28, 30).

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb “him”; the referent (Eli’s ancestor, i.e., Aaron) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>17</sup> *tc* The MT has a plural “you” here, but the LXX and a Qumran MS have the singular. The singular may be the correct reading; the verb “you have honored” later in the verse is singular even in the MT. However, it is more probable that the Lord here refers to Eli and his sons. Note the plural in the second half of the verse (“you have made yourselves fat”).

<sup>18</sup> *tn* Heb “which I commanded, dwelling place.” The noun is functioning as an adverbial accusative in relation to the verb. Since God’s dwelling place/sanctuary is in view, the pronoun “my” is supplied in the translation.

<sup>19</sup> *tn* The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>20</sup> *tn* Heb “walk about before.”

<sup>21</sup> *tn* Heb “may it be far removed from me.”

<sup>22</sup> *tn* Heb “chop off your arm.” The arm here symbolizes strength and activity.

<sup>23</sup> *tn* Heb “arm.”

<sup>24</sup> *tn* Heb “you will see [the] trouble of [the] dwelling place.” Since God’s dwelling place/sanctuary is in view, the pronoun is supplied in the translation (see v. 29).

<sup>25</sup> *tn* Heb “in all which he does good with Israel.”

<sup>26</sup> *tc* The LXX and a Qumran manuscript have the first person pronoun “my” here.

<sup>27</sup> *tn* Heb “all the days.”



will cause your<sup>4</sup> eyes to fail<sup>2</sup> and will cause you grief.<sup>3</sup> All of those born to your family<sup>4</sup> will die in the prime of life.<sup>5</sup> **2:34** This will be a confirming sign for you that will be fulfilled through your two sons,<sup>6</sup> Hophni and Phinehas: in a single day they both will die!<sup>2:35</sup> Then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest. He will do what is in my heart and soul. I will build for him a secure dynasty<sup>7</sup> and he will serve my chosen one for all time.<sup>8</sup> **2:36** Everyone who remains in your house will come to bow before him for a little money<sup>9</sup> and for a scrap of bread. Each will say, ‘Assign me to a priestly task so I can eat a scrap of bread.’”

### *The Call of Samuel*

**3:1** Now the boy Samuel continued serving the LORD under Eli’s supervision.<sup>10</sup> Word from the LORD was rare in those days; revelatory visions were infrequent.

**3:2** Eli’s eyes had begun to fail, so that he was unable to see well. At that time he was lying down in his place, **3:3** and the lamp of God had not yet been extinguished. Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD as well; the ark of God was also there. **3:4** The LORD called to Samuel, and he replied, “Here I am!” **3:5** Then he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli<sup>12</sup> said, “I didn’t call you. Go back and lie down.” So he went back and lay down. **3:6** The LORD again called, “Samuel!” So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli<sup>12</sup> said, “I didn’t call you, my son. Go back and lie down.”

**3:7** Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD; the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. **3:8** Then the LORD called Samuel a third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me!” Eli then realized

that it was the LORD who was calling the boy. **3:9** So Eli said to Samuel, “Go back and lie down. When he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went back and lay down in his place.

**3:10** Then the LORD came and stood nearby, calling as he had previously done, “Samuel! Samuel!” Samuel replied, “Speak, for your servant is listening!” **3:11** The LORD said to Samuel, “Look! I am about to do something in Israel;<sup>13</sup> when anyone hears about it, both of his ears will tingle. **3:12** On that day I will carry out<sup>14</sup> against Eli everything that I spoke about his house – from start to finish! **3:13** You<sup>15</sup> should tell him that I am about to judge his house forever because of<sup>16</sup> the sin that he knew about. For his sons were cursing God,<sup>17</sup> and he did not rebuke them. **3:14** Therefore I swore an oath to the house of Eli, ‘The sin of the house of Eli can never be forgiven by sacrifice or by grain offering.’”

**3:15** So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the LORD’s house. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. **3:16** However, Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son!” He replied, “Here I am.” **3:17** Eli<sup>18</sup> said, “What message did he speak to you?”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds “so that” here, formally connecting this clause with the next.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “fulfill.”

<sup>15</sup> **tc** The MT has לו יהי יהי (v<sup>h</sup>iggadti lo). The verb is Hiphil perfect 1st person common singular, and apparently the conjunction should be understood as vav consecutive (“I will say to him”). But the future reference makes more sense if Samuel is the subject. This would require dropping the final ם (v<sup>o</sup>d) and reading the 2nd person masculine singular יהי (v<sup>h</sup>iggadta). Although there is no external evidence to support it, this reading has been adopted in the present translation. The alternative is to understand the MT to mean “I said to him,” but for this we would expect the preterite with vav consecutive.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The translation understands the preposition to have a causal sense. However, the preposition could also be understood as the *beth pretii*, indicating in a broad sense the price attached to this action. So GKC 380 §119.p.

<sup>17</sup> **tc** The translation follows the LXX θεόν (*theon*, “God”) rather than the MT להם (*lahem*, “to them”). The MT seems to mean “they were bringing a curse on themselves” (cf. ASV, NASB). But this meaning is problematic in part because the verb *qll* means “to curse,” not “to bring a curse on,” and in part because it takes an accusative object rather than the equivalent of a dative. This is one of the so-called *tiqqune sopherim*, or “emendations of the scribes.” Why would the ancient copyists alter the original statement about Eli’s sons cursing God to the less objectionable statement that they brought a curse on themselves? Some argue that the scribes were concerned that such a direct and blasphemous affront against God could occur without an immediate response of judgment from God. Therefore they changed the text by deleting two letters ם and ם (alef and yod) from the word for “God,” with the result that the text then read “to them.” If this ancient scribal claim is accepted as accurate, it implies that the MT here is secondary. The present translation follows the LXX (κακολογούτες θεόν, *kakologountes theon*) and a few mss of the Old Latin in reading “God” rather than the MT “to them.” Cf. also NAB, NRSV, NLT.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The LXX, a Qumran ms, and a few old Latin mss have the third person pronominal suffix “his” here.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “to cause your eyes to fail.” Elsewhere this verb, when used of eyes, refers to bloodshot eyes resulting from weeping, prolonged staring, or illness (see Lev 26:16; Pss 69:3; 119:82; Lam 2:11; 4:17).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “and to cause your soul grief.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “and all the increase of your house.”

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The text is difficult. The MT literally says “they will die [as] men.” Apparently the meaning is that they will be cut off in the prime of their life without reaching old age. The LXX and a Qumran ms, however, have the additional word “sword” (“they will die by the sword of men”). This is an easier reading (cf. NAB, NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT), but that fact is not in favor of its originality.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “and this to you [is] the sign which will come to both of your sons.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “house.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “and he will walk about before my anointed one all the days.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “a piece of silver” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “before Eli.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

Don't conceal it from me. God will judge you severely<sup>4</sup> if you conceal from me anything that he said to you!"

**3:18** So Samuel told him everything. He did not hold back anything from him. Eli<sup>2</sup> said, "The LORD will do what he pleases."<sup>3</sup> **3:19** Samuel continued to grow, and the LORD was with him. None of his prophecies fell to the ground unfulfilled.<sup>4</sup> **3:20** All Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba realized that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. **3:21** Then the LORD again appeared in Shiloh, for it was in Shiloh that the LORD had revealed himself to Samuel<sup>5</sup> through the word of the LORD.<sup>6</sup> **4:1** Samuel revealed the word of the LORD<sup>7</sup> to all Israel.

*The Ark of the Covenant is Lost to the Philistines*

Then the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines.<sup>8</sup> They camped at Ebenezer,<sup>9</sup> and the Philistines camped at Aphek. **4:2** The Philistines arranged their forces to fight<sup>10</sup> Israel. As the battle spread out,<sup>11</sup> Israel was defeated by<sup>12</sup> the

Philistines, who<sup>13</sup> killed about four thousand men in the battle line in the field.

**4:3** When the army<sup>14</sup> came back to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why did the LORD let us be defeated today by<sup>15</sup> the Philistines? Let's take with us the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh. When it is with us, it will save us<sup>16</sup> from the hand of our enemies.

**4:4** So the army<sup>17</sup> sent to Shiloh, and they took from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts who sits between the cherubim. Now the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. **4:5** When the ark of the covenant of the LORD arrived at the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly<sup>18</sup> that the ground shook.

**4:6** When the Philistines heard the sound of the shout, they said, "What is this loud shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" Then they realized that the ark of the LORD had arrived at the camp. **4:7** The Philistines were scared because they thought that gods had come to the camp.<sup>19</sup> They said, "Too bad for<sup>20</sup> us! We've never seen anything like this! **4:8** Too bad for us! Who can deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all sorts of plagues in the desert! **4:9** Be strong and act like men, you Philistines, or else you will wind up serving the Hebrews the way they have served you! Act like men and fight!"

**4:10** So the Philistines fought. Israel was defeated; they all ran home.<sup>21</sup> The slaughter was very great; thirty thousand foot soldiers fell in battle. **4:11** The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were killed.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "So God will do to you and thus he will add." The verbal forms in this pronouncement are imperfects, not jussives, but the statement has the force of a curse or warning. One could translate, "May God do to you and thus may he add."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "what is good in his eyes."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "and he did not cause to fall from all his words to the ground."

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The LXX has a lengthy addition here: "And Samuel was acknowledged to be a prophet of the LORD in all Israel, from one end to the other. Eli was very old and, as for his sons, their way kept getting worse and worse before the LORD." The Hebraic nature of the Greek syntax used here suggests that the LXX translator was accurately rendering a Hebrew variant and not simply expanding the text on his own initiative.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The chapter division at this point is inappropriate. 1 Sam 4:1a is best understood as the conclusion to chap. 3 rather than the beginning of chap. 4.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "and the word of Samuel was." The present translation understands Samuel to be the speaker of the divine word ("Samuel" is a subjective genitive in this case), although the statement could mean that he was the recipient of the divine word ("Samuel" is an objective genitive in this case) who in turn reported it to Israel.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "and Israel went out to meet the Philistines for battle."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "the stone, the help." The second noun is in apposition to the first one and apparently is the name by which the stone was known. Contrast the expression used in 5:1 and 7:12, where the first word lacks the definite article, unlike 4:1.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "to meet."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The MT has וַתִּטּוֹשׁ (*vattitosh*), from the root נָטַשׁ (*nish*). This verb normally means "to leave," "to forsake," or "to permit," but such an idea does not fit this context very well. Many scholars have suspected that the text originally read either וַתִּצֵּט (*vattetz*, "and it spread out"), from the root נָצַח (*nith*), or וַתִּצְהַשׁ (*vattiqesh*, "and it grew fierce"), from the root קָשַׁח (*qsh*). The former suggestion is apparently supported by the LXX ἐκλινεν (*eklinen*, "it inclined") and is adopted in the translation.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "before."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "the Philistines, and they killed." The pronoun "they" has been translated as a relative pronoun ("who") to make it clear to the English reader that the Philistines were the ones who did the killing.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "people."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "before."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "and it will come in our midst and it will save." After the cohortative (see "let's take"), the prefixed verbal forms with the prefixed conjunction indicate purpose or result. The translation understands the ark to be the subject of the third masculine singular verbs, although it is possible to understand the Lord as the subject. In the latter case, one should translate, "when he is with us, he will save us."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or "people."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "shouted [with] a great shout."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has a direct quote, "because they said, 'Gods have come to the camp.'" Even though the verb translated "have come" is singular, the following subject should be taken as plural ("gods"), as v. 8 indicates. Some emend the verb to a plural form.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Traditionally "woe to." They thought disaster was imminent.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "and they fled, each to his tents."

## Eli Dies

**4:12** On that day<sup>1</sup> a Benjaminite ran from the battle lines and came to Shiloh. His clothes were torn and dirt was on his head. **4:13** When he arrived in Shiloh, Eli was sitting in his chair watching by the side of<sup>2</sup> the road, for he was very worried<sup>3</sup> about the ark of God. As the man entered the city to give his report,<sup>4</sup> the whole city cried out.

**4:14** When Eli heard the outcry,<sup>5</sup> he said, “What is this commotion?”<sup>6</sup> The man quickly came and told Eli. **4:15** Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes looked straight ahead;<sup>7</sup> he was unable to see.

**4:16** The man said to Eli, “I am the one who came from the battle lines! Just today I fled from the battle lines!” Eli<sup>8</sup> asked, “How did things go, my son?” **4:17** The messenger replied, “Israel has fled from<sup>9</sup> the Philistines! The army has suffered a great defeat! Your two sons, Hophni and Phineas, are dead! The ark of God has been captured!”

**4:18** When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli<sup>10</sup> fell backward from his chair beside the gate. He broke his neck and died, for he<sup>11</sup> was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years.

**4:19** His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phineas, was pregnant and close to giving birth. When she heard that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she doubled over and gave birth. But her labor pains were too much for her. **4:20** As she was dying, the women who were there with her said, “Don’t be afraid! You have given birth to a son!” But she did not reply or pay any attention.<sup>12</sup>

**4:21** She named the boy Ichabod,<sup>13</sup> saying, “The glory has departed from Israel,” referring to the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. **4:22** She said, “The glory has departed from Israel, because the ark of God has been captured.”

## The Ark Causes Trouble for the Philistines

**5:1** Now the Philistines had captured the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. **5:2** The Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the temple of Dagon, where they positioned it beside Dagon. **5:3** When the residents of Ashdod got up early the next day,<sup>14</sup> Dagon was lying on the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set him back in his place. **5:4** But when they got up early the following day, Dagon was again lying on the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and his two hands were sheared off and were lying at the threshold. Only Dagon’s body was left intact.<sup>15</sup> **5:5** (For this reason, to this very day, neither Dagon’s priests nor anyone else who enters Dagon’s temple step on Dagon’s threshold in Ashdod.)

**5:6** The LORD attacked<sup>16</sup> the residents of Ashdod severely, bringing devastation on them. He struck the people of<sup>17</sup> both Ashdod and the surrounding area with sores.<sup>18</sup> **5:7** When the people<sup>19</sup> of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, “The ark of the God of Israel should not remain with us, for he has attacked<sup>20</sup> both us and our god Dagon!”

**5:8** So they assembled<sup>21</sup> all the leaders of the Philistines and asked, “What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?” They replied, “The ark of the God of Israel should be moved to Gath.” So they moved the ark of the God of Israel.

**5:9** But after it had been moved the LORD attacked<sup>22</sup> that city as well, causing a great deal of panic. He struck all the people of that city<sup>23</sup> with sores.<sup>24</sup> **5:10** So they sent the ark of God to Ekron.

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The LXX adds “they entered the temple of Dagon and saw.”

<sup>15</sup> **tc** *Heb* “only Dagon was left.” We should probably read the word גַּב (gev, “back”) before Dagon, understanding it to have the sense of the similar word גִּבְיָהּ (gʻvinyah, “body”). This variant is supported by the following evidence: The LXX has ἡ ῥάχις (*hē rhachis*, “the back” or “trunk”); the Syriac Peshitta has *wegusmeh* (“and the body of”); the Targum has *gupyeh* (“the body of”); the Vulgate has *truncus* (“the trunk of,” cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV, NLT). On the strength of this evidence the present translation employs the phrase “Dagon’s body.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the hand of the LORD was heavy upon.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The words “the people of” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The LXX and Vulgate add the following: “And mice multiplied in their land, and the terror of death was throughout the entire city.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or “tumors” (so ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NCV “growths on their skin”; KJV “emerods”; NAB “hemorrhoids.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “men.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for his hand is severe upon.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and they sent and gathered.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the hand of the LORD was against the city.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and he struck the men of the city from small and to great.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** See the note on this term in v. 6. Cf. KJV “and they had emerods in their secret parts.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “the same day.” On this use of the demonstrative pronoun see Jöüon 2:532 §143.f.

<sup>2</sup> **tc** Read with many medieval Hebrew mss, the Qere, and much versional evidence יָד (*yad*, “hand”) rather than מַתְּנָה (*matneh*).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “his heart was trembling.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the man came to report in the city.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the sound of the cry.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the sound of this commotion.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “were set” or “were fixed,” i.e., without vision.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “before.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Eli) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the man.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and she did not set her heart.”

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The name *Ichabod* (אִיכָבֹד) may mean, “Where is the glory?”

But when the ark of God arrived at Ekron, the residents of Ekron cried out saying, “They have brought the ark of the God of Israel here<sup>4</sup> to kill our<sup>2</sup> people!” **5:11** So they assembled<sup>3</sup> all the leaders of the Philistines and said, “Get the ark of the God of Israel out of here! Let it go back to its own place so that it won’t kill us<sup>4</sup> and our<sup>5</sup> people!” The terror<sup>6</sup> of death was throughout the entire city; God was attacking them very severely there.<sup>7</sup> **5:12** The people<sup>8</sup> who did not die were struck with sores; the city’s cry for help went all the way up to heaven.

### *The Philistines Return the Ark*

**6:1** When the ark of the LORD had been in the land<sup>9</sup> of the Philistines for seven months,<sup>10</sup> **6:2** the Philistines called the priests and the omen readers, saying, “What should we do with the ark of the LORD? Advise us as to how we should send it back to its place.”

**6:3** They replied, “If you are going to send the ark of<sup>11</sup> the God of Israel back, don’t send it away empty. Be sure to return it with a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will understand why his hand is not removed from you.” **6:4** They inquired, “What is the guilt offering that we should send to him?”

They replied, “The Philistine leaders number five. So send five gold sores and five gold mice, for it is the same plague that has afflicted both you and your leaders. **6:5** You should make images of the sores and images of the mice<sup>12</sup> that are destroying the land. You should honor the God of Israel. Perhaps he will release his grip on you, your gods, and your land.<sup>13</sup> **6:6** Why harden your hearts like the Egyptians and Pharaoh did?<sup>14</sup> When God<sup>15</sup> treated them harshly, didn’t the Egyptians send the Israelites on their way?<sup>16</sup> **6:7** So now go and make a new cart. Get two cows that have calves and that have never had a yoke placed on them. Harness the cows to the cart and take their calves from them back to their stalls. **6:8** Then take the ark of the LORD and place it on the cart, and put in a chest beside it the gold objects you are sending to him as a guilt

offering. You should then send it on its way. **6:9** But keep an eye on it. If it should go up by the way of its own border to Beth Shemesh, then he has brought this great calamity on us. But if that is not the case, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us; rather, it just happened to us by accident.”

**6:10** So the men did as instructed.<sup>17</sup> They took two cows that had calves and harnessed them to a cart; they also removed their calves to their stalls. **6:11** They put the ark of the LORD on the cart, along with the chest, the gold mice, and the images of the sores. **6:12** Then the cows went directly on the road to Beth Shemesh. They went along, mooing as they went; they turned neither to the right nor to the left. The leaders of the Philistines were walking along behind them all the way to the border of Beth Shemesh.

**6:13** Now the residents of Beth Shemesh were harvesting wheat in the valley. When they looked up and saw the ark, they were pleased at the sight. **6:14** The cart was coming to the field of Joshua, who was from Beth Shemesh. It paused there near a big stone. Then they cut up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. **6:15** The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the chest that was with it, which contained the gold objects. They placed them near the big stone. At that time the people of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices to the LORD. **6:16** The five leaders of the Philistines watched what was happening and then returned to Ekron on the same day.

**6:17** These are the gold sores that the Philistines brought as a guilt offering to the LORD – one for each of the following cities: Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. **6:18** The gold mice corresponded in number to all the Philistine cities of the five leaders, from the fortified cities to hamlet villages, to greater Abel,<sup>18</sup> where they positioned the ark of the LORD until this very day in the field of Joshua who was from Beth Shemesh.

**6:19** But the LORD<sup>19</sup> struck down some of the people of Beth Shemesh because they had looked into the ark of the LORD; he struck down 50,070<sup>20</sup> of the men. The people grieved because the LORD had struck the people with a hard

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “to me.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “my.”

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “and they sent and gathered.”

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “me.”

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb “my.”

<sup>6</sup> tn Or “panic.”

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “the hand of God was very heavy there.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb “men.”

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “field.”

<sup>10</sup> tc The LXX adds “and their land swarmed with mice.”

<sup>11</sup> tc The LXX and a Qumran ms add “the covenant of the LORD.”

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “your mice.” A Qumran ms has simply “the mice.”

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “Perhaps he will lighten his hand from upon you and from upon your gods and from upon your land.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “like Egypt and Pharaoh hardened their heart.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “and they sent them away and they went.”

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb “and the men did so.”

<sup>18</sup> tc A few Hebrew mss and the LXX read “villages; the large rock...[is witness] until this very day.”

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>20</sup> tc The number 50,070 is surprisingly large, although it finds almost unanimous textual support in the MT and in the ancient versions. Only a few medieval Hebrew mss lack “50,000,” reading simply “70” instead. However, there does not seem to be sufficient external evidence to warrant reading 70 rather than 50,070, although that is done by a number of recent translations (e.g., NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT). The present translation (reluctantly) follows the MT and the ancient versions here.



blow. **6:20** The residents of Beth Shemesh asked, “Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom will the ark<sup>1</sup> go up from here?”

**6:21** So they sent messengers to the residents of Kiriath Jearim, saying, “The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down here and take it back home with you.”

**7:1** Then the people<sup>2</sup> of Kiriath Jearim came and took the ark of the LORD; they brought it to the house of Abinadab located on the hill. They consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the LORD.

### *Further Conflict with the Philistines*

**7:2** It was quite a long time – some twenty years in all – that the ark stayed at Kiriath Jearim. All the people<sup>3</sup> of Israel longed for<sup>4</sup> the LORD. **7:3** Samuel said to all the people of Israel, “If you are really turning to the LORD with all your hearts, remove from among you the foreign gods and the images of Ashtoreth.<sup>5</sup> Give your hearts to the LORD and serve only him. Then he will deliver you<sup>6</sup> from the hand of the Philistines.” **7:4** So the Israelites<sup>7</sup> removed the Baals and images of Ashtoreth. They served only the LORD.

**7:5** Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD on your behalf.” **7:6** After they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD. They fasted on that day, and they confessed<sup>8</sup> there, “We have sinned against the LORD.” So Samuel led<sup>9</sup> the people of Israel at Mizpah.

**7:7** When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the leaders of the Philistines went up against Israel. When the Israelites heard about this, they were afraid of the Philistines. **7:8** The Israelites said to Samuel, “Keep<sup>10</sup> crying out to the LORD our<sup>11</sup> God so

that he may save us<sup>12</sup> from the hand of the Philistines!” **7:9** So Samuel took a nursing lamb<sup>13</sup> and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. Samuel cried out to the LORD on Israel’s behalf, and the LORD answered him.

**7:10** As Samuel was offering burnt offerings, the Philistines approached to do battle with Israel.<sup>14</sup> But on that day the LORD thundered loudly against the Philistines. He caused them to panic, and they were defeated by<sup>15</sup> Israel. **7:11** Then the men of Israel left Mizpah and chased the Philistines, striking them down all the way to an area below Beth Car.

**7:12** Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpah and Shen.<sup>16</sup> He named it Ebenezer,<sup>17</sup> saying, “Up to here the LORD has helped us.” **7:13** So the Philistines were defeated; they did not invade Israel again. The hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

**7:14** The cities that the Philistines had captured from Israel were returned to Israel, from Ekron to Gath. Israel also delivered their territory from the control<sup>18</sup> of the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites. **7:15** So Samuel led<sup>19</sup> Israel all the days of his life. **7:16** Year after year he used to travel the circuit of Bethel,<sup>20</sup> Gilgal, and Mizpah; he used to judge Israel in all of these places. **7:17** Then he would return to Ramah, because his home was there. He also judged<sup>21</sup> Israel there and built an altar to the LORD there.

### *Israel Seeks a King*

**8:1** In his old age Samuel appointed his sons as judges over Israel. **8:2** The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second son was Abijah. They were judges in Beer Sheba. **8:3** But his sons did not follow<sup>22</sup> his ways. Instead, they made money dishonestly, accepted bribes, and perverted justice.<sup>23</sup>

**8:4** So all the elders of Israel gathered together and approached Samuel at Ramah. **8:5** They said to him, “Look, you are old, and your

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “he” or “it”; the referent here (the ark) has been specified in the translation for clarity (cf. also NIV, CEV, NLT). Others, however, take the referent to be the LORD himself.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “men.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “house” (also in the following verse).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “mourned after”; NIV “mourned and sought after”; KJV, NRSV “lamented after”; NAB “turned to”; NCV “began to follow...again.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “the Ashtarot” (plural; also in the following verse). The words “images of” are supplied for clarity.

**sn** The Semitic goddess Astarte was associated with love and war in the ancient Near East. The presence of Ashtarot in Israel is a sign of pervasive pagan and idolatrous influences; hence Samuel calls for their removal. See 1 Sam 31:10, where the Philistines deposit the armor of the deceased Saul in the temple of the Ashtarot, and 1 Kgs 11:5, 33; 2 Kgs 23:13, where Solomon is faulted for worshiping the Ashtarot.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Following imperatives, the jussive verbal form with the prefixed conjunction indicates purpose/result.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “the sons of Israel.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “said.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “judged”; NAB “began to judge”; TEV “settled disputes among.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “don’t stop.”

<sup>11</sup> **tc** The LXX reads “your God” rather than the MT’s “our God.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** After the negated jussive, the prefixed verbal form with the prefixed conjunction indicates purpose/result.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “a lamb of milk”; NAB “an unweaned lamb”; NIV “a suckling lamb”; NCV “a baby lamb.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “approached for battle against Israel.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “before.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Cf. NAB, NRSV, NLT “Jeshanah.”

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The name *Ebenezer* (אֶבֶן הַיְעֹזֵר) means “stone of help” in Hebrew (cf. TEV); NLT adds the meaning parenthetically after the name.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “hand.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “judged” (also in v. 17).

<sup>20</sup> **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or perhaps “settled disputes for” (cf. NLT “would hear cases there”; NRSV “administered justice there”).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “walk in” (also in v. 5).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “and they turned aside after unjust gain and took bribes and perverted justice.”

sons don't follow your ways. So now appoint over us a king to lead<sup>1</sup> us, just like all the other nations have.”

**8:6** But this request displeased Samuel, for<sup>2</sup> they said, “Give us a king to lead us.” So Samuel prayed to the LORD. **8:7** The LORD said to Samuel, “Do everything the people request of you.<sup>3</sup> For it is not you that they have rejected, but it is me that they have rejected as their king. **8:8** Just as they have done<sup>4</sup> from the day that I brought them up from Egypt until this very day, they have rejected me and have served other gods. This is what they are also doing to you. **8:9** So now do as they say.<sup>5</sup> But seriously warn<sup>6</sup> them and make them aware of the policies of the king who will rule over them.”<sup>7</sup>

**8:10** So Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. **8:11** He said, “Here are the policies of the king who will rule over you: He will conscript your sons and put them in his chariot forces and in his cavalry; they will run in front of his chariot. **8:12** He will appoint for himself leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties,<sup>8</sup> as well as those who plow his ground, reap his harvest, and make his weapons of war and his chariot equipment. **8:13** He will take your daughters to be ointment makers, cooks, and bakers. **8:14** He will take your best fields and vineyards and give them to his own servants. **8:15** He will demand a tenth of your seed and of the produce of your vineyards and give it to his administrators<sup>9</sup> and his servants. **8:16** He will take your male and female servants, as well as your best cattle and your donkeys, and assign them for his own use. **8:17** He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will be his servants. **8:18** In that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD won't answer you in that day.”<sup>10</sup>

**8:19** But the people refused to heed Samuel's warning.<sup>11</sup> Instead they said, “No! There will be a king over us! **8:20** We will be like all the other nations. Our king will judge us and lead us<sup>12</sup> and fight our battles.”

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “judge” (also in v. 6).

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “when.”

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “Listen to the voice of the people, to all which they say to you.”

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “according to all the deeds which they have done.”

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb “and now, listen to their voice.”

<sup>6</sup> tn The infinitive absolute appears before the imperative for emphasis.

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “and tell them the manner of the king who will rule over them.”

<sup>8</sup> tc The numbers of v. 12 are confused in the Greek and Syriac versions. For “fifties” the LXX has “hundreds.” The Syriac Peshitta has “heads of thousands and heads of hundreds and heads of fifties and heads of tens,” perhaps reflecting influence from Deut 1:15.

<sup>9</sup> tn Or “eunuchs” (so NAB); NIV “officials”; KJV, NASB, NRSV, NLT “officers.”

<sup>10</sup> tc The LXX adds “because you have chosen for yourselves a king.”

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “and the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel.”

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “and go out before us.”

**8:21** So Samuel listened to everything the people said and then reported it to the LORD.<sup>13</sup> **8:22** The LORD said to Samuel, “Do as they say<sup>14</sup> and install a king over them.” Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Each of you go back to his own city.”

### *Samuel Meets with Saul*

**9:1** There was a Benjaminite man named Kish son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin. He was a prominent person. **9:2** He had a son named Saul, a handsome young man. There was no one among the Israelites more handsome than he was; he stood head and shoulders above all the people.

**9:3** The donkeys of Saul's father Kish wandered off,<sup>15</sup> so Kish said to his son Saul, “Take one of the servants with you and go<sup>16</sup> look for the donkeys.”<sup>17</sup> **9:4** So Saul<sup>18</sup> crossed through the hill country of Ephraim, passing through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. So they crossed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he crossed through the land of Benjamin, and still they did not find them.

**9:5** When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come on, let's head back before my father quits worrying about the donkeys and becomes anxious about us!” **9:6** But the servant said to him, “Look, there is a man of God in this town. He is highly respected. Everything that he says really happens.<sup>19</sup> Now let's go there. Perhaps he will tell us where we should go from here.”<sup>20</sup> **9:7** So Saul said to his servant, “All right,<sup>21</sup> we can go. But what can we bring the man, since the food in our bags is used up? We have no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?”<sup>22</sup> **9:8** The servant went on to answer Saul, “Look, I happen to have in my hand a quarter shekel<sup>22</sup> of silver. I will give it to the man of God and he will tell us where we should go.”<sup>23</sup> **9:9** (Now it used to be in Israel that whenever someone went

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “and Samuel heard all the words of the people and he spoke them into the ears of the LORD.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “listen to their voice.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “became lost.”

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “and arise, go.”

<sup>17</sup> tc The Syriac Peshitta includes the following words: “So Saul arose and went out. He took with him one of the boys and went out to look for his father's donkeys.”

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>19</sup> tn The infinitive absolute precedes the verb for emphasis.

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “our way on which we have gone.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “look.”

<sup>22</sup> sn A quarter shekel of silver would weigh about a tenth of an ounce (about 3 grams).

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “our way.”

to inquire of God he would say, “Come on, let’s go to the seer.” For today’s prophet used to be called a seer.) **9:10** So Saul said to his servant, “That’s a good idea!<sup>1</sup> Come on. Let’s go.” So they went to the town where the man of God was.

**9:11** As they were going up the ascent to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water. They said to them, “Is this where the seer is?” **9:12** They replied, “Yes, straight ahead! But hurry now, for he came to the town today, and the people are making a sacrifice at the high place. **9:13** When you enter the town, you can find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people won’t eat until he arrives, for he must bless the sacrifice. Once that happens, those who have been invited will eat. Now go on up, for<sup>2</sup> this is the time when you can find him!”

**9:14** So they went up to the town. As they were heading for the middle of the town, Samuel was coming in their direction<sup>3</sup> to go up to the high place. **9:15** Now the day before Saul arrived, the LORD had told<sup>4</sup> Samuel: **9:16** “At this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin. You must consecrate<sup>5</sup> him as a leader over my people Israel. He will save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have looked with favor on my people. Their cry has reached me!”

**9:17** When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said,<sup>6</sup> “Here is the man that I told you about! He will rule over my people.” **9:18** As Saul approached Samuel in the middle of the gate, he said, “Please tell me where the seer’s house is.”

**9:19** Samuel replied to Saul, “I am the seer! Go up in front of me to the high place! Today you will eat with me and in the morning I will send you away. I will tell you everything that you are thinking.<sup>7</sup> **9:20** Don’t be concerned<sup>8</sup> about the donkeys that you lost three days ago, for they have been found. Whom does all Israel desire? Is it not you, and all your father’s family?”<sup>9</sup>

**9:21** Saul replied, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the smallest of Israel’s tribes, and is not my family clan the smallest of all the tribes of Benjamin? Why do you speak to me in this way?”

**9:22** Then Samuel brought<sup>10</sup> Saul and his servant into the room and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited. There were about thirty people present. **9:23** Samuel said to the cook, “Give me the portion of meat that I gave to you – the one I asked you to keep with you.”

**9:24** So the cook picked up the leg and brought it and set it in front of Saul. Samuel<sup>11</sup> said, “What was kept is now set before you! Eat, for it has been kept for you for this meeting time, from the time I said, ‘I have invited the people.’” So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

**9:25** When they came down from the high place to the town, Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof. **9:26** They got up at dawn and Samuel called to Saul on the roof, “Get up, so I can send you on your way.” So Saul got up and the two of them – he and Samuel – went outside. **9:27** While they were going down to the edge of town, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to go on ahead of us.” So he did.<sup>12</sup> Samuel then said,<sup>13</sup> “You remain here awhile, so I can inform you of God’s message.”

#### *Samuel Anoints Saul*

**10:1** Then Samuel took a small container of olive oil and poured it on Saul’s<sup>14</sup> head. Samuel<sup>15</sup> kissed him and said, “The LORD has chosen you<sup>16</sup> to lead his people Israel! You will rule over the LORD’s people and you will deliver them from the power of the enemies who surround them. This will be your sign that the LORD has chosen<sup>17</sup> you as leader over his inheritance.<sup>18</sup> **10:2** When you leave me today, you will find two men near Rachel’s tomb at Zelzah on Ben-

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “your word is good.”

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The MT has “him” (הוֹתוֹ, *’oto*) here, in addition to the “him” at the end of the verse. The ancient versions attest to only one occurrence of the pronoun, although it is possible that this is due to translation technique rather than to their having a Hebrew text with the pronoun used only once. The present translation assumes textual duplication in the MT and does not attempt to represent the pronoun twice. However, for a defense of the MT here, with the suggested translation “for him just now – you will find him,” see S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel*, 72-73.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “to meet them.” This may indicate purpose on Samuel’s part. The next sentence indicates that the meeting was by design, not just an accident.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “uncovered the ear of.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “anoint.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “responded.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “all that is in your heart.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “do not fix your heart.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “and all the house of your father.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “took and brought.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “he” (also in v. 25); the referent (Samuel) has been specified in both places in the translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> **tc** This statement is absent in the LXX (with the exception of Origen), an Old Latin ms, and the Syriac Peshitta.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The words “Samuel then said” are supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “his”; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Samuel) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “Is it not that the LORD has anointed you?” The question draws attention to the fact and is a rhetorical way of affirming the Lord’s choice of Saul. The translation reflects the rhetorical force of the question.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** That is, “anointed.”

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The MT reads simply “Is it not that the LORD has anointed you over his inheritance for a leader?” The translation follows the LXX. The MT apparently suffers from parablepsis, whereby a scribe’s eye jumped from the first occurrence of the expression “the LORD has anointed you” to the second occurrence of this expression at the end of v. 1. This mistake caused the accidental omission of the intervening material in the LXX, which appears to preserve the original Hebrew text here.

jamin's border. They will say to you, "The donkeys you have gone looking for have been found. Your father is no longer concerned about the donkeys but has become anxious about you two!<sup>1</sup> He is asking, "What should I do about my son?"

**10:3** "As you continue on from there, you will come to the tall tree of Tabor. At that point three men who are going up to God at Bethel<sup>2</sup> will meet you. One of them will be carrying three young goats, one of them will be carrying three round loaves of bread, and one of them will be carrying a container of wine. **10:4** They will ask you how you're doing and will give you two loaves of bread. You will accept them. **10:5** Afterward you will go to Gibeah of God, where there are Philistine officials.<sup>3</sup> When you enter the town, you will meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place. They will have harps, tambourines, flutes, and lyres, and they will be prophesying. **10:6** Then the spirit of the LORD will rush upon you and you will prophesy with them. You will be changed into a different person.

**10:7** "When these signs have taken place, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God will be with you.<sup>4</sup> **10:8** You will go down to Gilgal before me. I am going to join you there to offer burnt offerings and to make peace offerings. You should wait for seven days, until I arrive and tell you what to do."

### *Saul Becomes King*

**10:9** As Saul<sup>5</sup> turned<sup>6</sup> to leave Samuel, God changed his inmost person.<sup>7</sup> All these signs happened on that very day. **10:10** When Saul and his servant<sup>8</sup> arrived at Gibeah, a company of prophets was coming out to meet him. Then the spirit of God rushed upon Saul<sup>9</sup> and he prophesied among them. **10:11** When everyone who had

known him previously saw him prophesying with the prophets, the people all asked one another, "What on earth has happened to the son of Kish? Does even Saul belong with the prophets?"

**10:12** A man who was from there replied, "And who is their father?" Therefore this became a proverb: "Is even Saul among the prophets?" **10:13** When Saul<sup>10</sup> had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

**10:14** Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?" Saul<sup>11</sup> replied, "To look for the donkeys. But when we realized they were lost,<sup>12</sup> we went to Samuel." **10:15** Saul's uncle said, "Tell me what Samuel said to you."<sup>13</sup> **10:16** Saul said to his uncle, "He assured us that the donkeys had been found." But Saul<sup>14</sup> did not tell him what Samuel had said about the matter of kingship.

**10:17** Then Samuel called the people together before the LORD at Mizpah. **10:18** He said to the Israelites, "This is what the LORD God of Israel says, 'I brought Israel up from Egypt and I delivered you from the power<sup>15</sup> of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that oppressed you. **10:19** But today you have rejected your God who saves you from all your trouble and distress. You have said, "No!<sup>16</sup> Appoint a king over us." Now take your positions before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans.'"

**10:20** Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen by lot. **10:21** Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the family of Matri was chosen by lot. At last Saul son of Kish was chosen by lot. But when they looked for him, he was nowhere to be found. **10:22** So they inquired again of the LORD, "Has the man arrived here yet?" The LORD said, "He has hidden himself among the equipment."<sup>17</sup>

**10:23** So they ran and brought him from there. When he took his position among the people, he stood head and shoulders above them all. **10:24** Then Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one whom the LORD has cho-

<sup>1</sup> sn In the Hebrew text the pronoun *you* is plural, suggesting that Saul's father was concerned about his son and the servant who accompanied him.

<sup>2</sup> map For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

<sup>3</sup> tn Or "sentries." Some translate "outpost" (NIV) or "garri-son" (NAB, NRSV, NLT) here (see 1 Sam 13:3). The noun is plural in the Hebrew text, but the LXX and other ancient witnesses read a singular noun here.

<sup>4</sup> sn In light of Saul's commission to be Israel's deliverer (see v. 1), it is likely that some type of military action against the Philistines (see v.5) is implied.

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "turned his shoulder."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "God turned for him another heart"; NAB, NRSV "gave him another heart"; NIV, NCV "changed Saul's heart"; TEV "gave Saul a new nature"; CEV "made Saul feel like a different person."

<sup>8</sup> tc Two medieval Hebrew mss, the LXX, and the Syriac Peshitta have the singular "he" (in which case the referent would be Saul alone).

tn Heb "they"; the referents (Saul and his servant) have been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "him"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "And we saw that they were not."

<sup>13</sup> tc In the LXX and Vulgate the pronoun "you" is singular, referring specifically to Saul. In the MT it is plural, including Saul's servant as well.

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "hand" (also later in this verse).

<sup>16</sup> tc The translation follows many medieval Hebrew mss, the LXX, the Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate in reading לֹא (*lo*, "not") rather than the MT וְ ( *ve*; "to him"). Some witnesses combine the variants, resulting in a conflated text. For example, a few medieval Hebrew mss have וְ לֹא (*ve lo*; "to him, 'No.'"). A few others have לִי לֹא (*li lo*; "to me, 'No.'").

<sup>17</sup> tn Or "baggage" (so many English versions); KJV "stuff"; TEV "supplies."



sen? Indeed, there is no one like him among all the people!" All the people shouted out, "Long live the king!"

**10:25** Then Samuel talked to the people about how the kingship would work.<sup>1</sup> He wrote it all down on a scroll and set it before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people away to their homes. **10:26** Even Saul went to his home in Gibeah. With him went some brave men whose hearts God had touched. **10:27** But some wicked men<sup>2</sup> said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and did not even bring him a gift. But Saul said nothing about it.<sup>3</sup>

*Saul Comes to the Aid of Jabesh*

**11:1<sup>4</sup>** Nahash<sup>5</sup> the Ammonite marched<sup>6</sup> against Jabesh Gilead. All the men of Jabesh Gilead said to Nahash, "Make a treaty with us and we will serve you."

**11:2** But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "The only way I will make a treaty with you is if you let me gouge out the right eye of every one of you and in so doing humiliate all Israel!"

**11:3** The elders of Jabesh said to him, "Leave us alone for seven days so that we can send messengers throughout the territory of Israel. If there is no one who can deliver us, we will come out voluntarily to you."

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "the regulation of the kingship." This probably refers to the regulations pertaining to kingship given to Moses (see Deut 17:14-20).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "sons of worthlessness" (see 2:12).

<sup>3</sup> **tc** In place of the MT ("and it was like one being silent") the LXX has "after about a month," taking the expression with the first part of the following chapter rather than with 10:27. Some Hebrew support for this reading appears in the corrected hand of a Qumran ms of Samuel, which has here "about a month." However, it seems best to stay with the MT here even though it is difficult.

<sup>4</sup> **tc** 4QSam<sup>a</sup> and Josephus (*Ant.* 6.68-71) attest to a longer form of text at this point. The addition explains Nahash's practice of enemy mutilation, and by so doing provides a smoother transition to the following paragraph than is found in the MT. The NRSV adopts this reading, with the following English translation: "Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead." This reading should not be lightly dismissed; it may in fact provide a text superior to that of the MT and the ancient versions. But the external evidence for it is so limited as to induce caution; the present translation instead follows the MT. However, for a reasonable case for including this reading in the text see the discussions in P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 199, and R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC), 103.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The name "Nahash" means "serpent" in Hebrew.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "went up and camped"; NIV, NRSV "went up and besieged."

**11:4** When the messengers went to Gibeah (where Saul lived)<sup>7</sup> and informed the people of these matters, all the people wept loudly.<sup>8</sup>

**11:5** Now Saul was walking behind the<sup>9</sup> oxen as he came from the field. Saul asked, "What has happened to the people? Why are they weeping?" So they told him about<sup>10</sup> the men of Jabesh.

**11:6** The Spirit of God rushed upon Saul when he heard these words, and he became very angry. **11:7** He took a pair<sup>11</sup> of oxen and cut them up. Then he sent the pieces throughout the territory of Israel by the hand of messengers, who said, "Whoever does not go out after Saul and after Samuel should expect this to be done to his oxen!" Then the terror of the LORD fell on the people, and they went out as one army.<sup>12</sup> **11:8** When Saul counted them at Bezek, the Israelites were 300,000<sup>13</sup> strong and the men of Judah numbered 30,000.<sup>14</sup>

**11:9** They said to the messengers who had come, "Here's what you should say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: 'Tomorrow deliverance will come to you when the sun is fully up.'" When the messengers went and told the men of Jabesh Gilead, they were happy. **11:10** The men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you<sup>15</sup> and you can do with us whatever you wish."<sup>16</sup>

**11:11** The next day Saul placed the people in three groups. They went to the Ammonite camp during the morning watch and struck them<sup>17</sup> down until the hottest part of the day. The survivors scattered; no two of them remained together.

*Saul Is Established as King*

**11:12** Then the people said to Samuel, "Who were the ones asking, 'Will Saul reign over us?' Hand over those men so we may execute them!"

**11:13** But Saul said, "No one will be killed on this day. For today the LORD has given Israel a victory!" **11:14** Samuel said to the people, "Come on! Let's go to Gilgal and renew the kingship there." **11:15** So all the people went to Gilgal, where<sup>18</sup> they established Saul as king in the LORD's presence. They offered up peace offerings there in the LORD's presence. Saul and all the Israelites were very happy.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "to Gibeah of Saul."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "lifted their voice and wept."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "his oxen." On this use of the definite article see Joüon 2:506-7 §137.f.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "the matters of."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "yoke."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "like one man."

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The LXX and two Old Latin mss read 600,000 here, rather than the MT's 300,000.

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The LXX, two Old Latin mss, and a Qumran ms read 70,000 here, rather than the MT's 30,000.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The second masculine plural forms in this quotation indicate that Nahash and his army are addressed.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "according to all that is good in your eyes."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "Ammon." By metonymy the name "Ammon" is used collectively for the soldiers in the Ammonite army.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "and there in Gilgal."

12:1 Samuel said to all Israel, “I have done<sup>1</sup> everything you requested.<sup>2</sup> I have given you a king.<sup>3</sup> 12:2 Now look! This king walks before you. As for me, I am old and gray, though my sons are here with you. I have walked before you from the time of my youth till the present day. 12:3 Here I am. Bring a charge against me before the LORD and before his chosen king.<sup>4</sup> Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I wronged? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe so that I would overlook something? Tell me,<sup>5</sup> and I will return it to you!”

12:4 They replied, “You have not wronged us or oppressed us. You have not taken anything from the hand of anyone.” 12:5 He said to them, “The LORD is witness against you, and his chosen king<sup>6</sup> is witness this day, that you have not found any reason to accuse me.”<sup>7</sup> They said, “He is witness!”

12:6 Samuel said to the people, “The LORD is the one who chose Moses and Aaron and who brought your ancestors<sup>8</sup> up from the land of Egypt. 12:7 Now take your positions, so I may confront you<sup>9</sup> before the LORD regarding all the LORD’s just actions toward you and your ancestors.<sup>10</sup> 12:8 When Jacob entered Egypt, your ancestors cried out to the LORD. The LORD sent Moses and Aaron, and they led your ancestors out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

12:9 “But they forgot the LORD their God, so he gave<sup>11</sup> them into the hand of Sisera, the general in command of Hazor’s<sup>12</sup> army,<sup>13</sup> and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them. 12:10 Then they cried out to the LORD and admitted,<sup>14</sup> ‘We have sinned, for we have forsaken the LORD and have served the Baals and the images of Ashtoreth.<sup>15</sup> Now deliver us from the hand of our enemies so that we may serve

you.’<sup>16</sup> 12:11 So the LORD sent Jerub-Baal,<sup>17</sup> Barak,<sup>18</sup> Jephthah, and Samuel,<sup>19</sup> and he delivered you from the hand of the enemies all around you, and you were able to live securely.

12:12 “When you saw that King Nahash of the Ammonites was advancing against you, you said to me, ‘No! A king will rule over us’ – even though the LORD your God is your king! 12:13 Now look! Here is the king you have chosen – the one that you asked for! Look, the LORD has given you a king! 12:14 If you fear the LORD, serving him and obeying him<sup>20</sup> and not rebelling against what he says,<sup>21</sup> and if both you and the king who rules over you follow the LORD your God, all will be well.<sup>22</sup> 12:15 But if you don’t obey<sup>23</sup> the LORD and rebel against what the LORD says, the hand of the LORD will be against both you and your king.<sup>24</sup>

12:16 “So now, take your positions and watch this great thing that the LORD is about to do in your sight. 12:17 Is this not the time of the wheat harvest? I will call on the LORD so that he makes it thunder and rain. Realize and see what a great sin you have committed before the LORD by asking for a king for yourselves.”

12:18 So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD made it thunder and rain that day. All the people were very afraid of both the LORD and Samuel. 12:19 All the people said to Samuel, “Pray to the LORD your God on behalf of us – your servants – so we won’t die, for we have added to all our sins by asking for a king.”<sup>25</sup>

12:20 Then Samuel said to the people, “Don’t be afraid. You have indeed sinned.<sup>26</sup> However, don’t turn aside from the LORD. Serve the LORD with all your heart. 12:21 You should not turn aside after empty things that can’t profit

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “Look, I have listened to your voice.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “to all which you said to me.”

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “and I have installed a king over you.”

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “anointed [one].”

<sup>5</sup> tn The words “tell me” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “anointed [one].”

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “that you have not found anything in my hand.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb “fathers” (also in vv. 7, 8).

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “and I will enter into judgment with you” (NRSV similar); NAB “and I shall arraign you.”

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “all the just actions which he has done with you and with your fathers.”

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “sold” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “he allowed them to fall into the clutches of Sisera”; NLT “he let them be conquered by Sisera.”

<sup>12</sup> tn Map For location see Map1-D2; Map2-D3; Map3-A2; Map4-C1.

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “captain of the host of Hazor.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “and said.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “the Ashtarot” (plural). The words “images of” are supplied in both vv. 3 and 4 for clarity.

<sup>sn</sup> The Semitic goddess Astarte was associated with love and war in the ancient Near East. See the note on the same term in 7:3.

<sup>16</sup> tn After the imperative, the prefixed verbal form with the prefixed conjunction indicates purpose/result.

<sup>17</sup> sn *Jerub-Baal* (יֵרֻבְבָעַל) is also known as Gideon (see Judg 6:32). The book of Judges uses both names for him.

<sup>18</sup> tc The MT has “Bedan” (בִּדְאֵן) here (cf. KJV, NASB, CEV). But a deliverer by this name is not elsewhere mentioned in the OT. The translation follows the LXX and the Syriac Peshitta in reading “Barak.”

<sup>19</sup> tc In the ancient versions there is some confusion with regard to these names, both with regard to the particular names selected for mention and with regard to the order in which they are listed. For example, the LXX has “Jerub-Baal, Barak, Jephthah, and Samuel.” But the Targum has “Gideon, Samson, Jephthah, and Samuel,” while the Syriac Peshitta has “Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson.”

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “and you listen to his voice.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “the mouth of the LORD.” So also in v. 15.

<sup>22</sup> tn The words “all will be well” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “listen to the voice of.”

<sup>24</sup> tc The LXX reads “your king” rather than the MT’s “your fathers.” The latter makes little sense here. Some follow MT, but translate “as it was against your fathers.” See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 212.

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb “for we have added to all our sins an evil [thing] by asking for ourselves a king.”

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb “you have done all this evil.”

and can't deliver, since they are empty.<sup>1</sup> **12:22** The LORD will not abandon his people because he wants to uphold his great reputation.<sup>2</sup> The LORD was pleased to make you his own people. **12:23** As far as I am concerned, far be it from me to sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you! I will instruct you in the way that is good and upright. **12:24** However, fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. Just look at the great things he has done for you! **12:25** But if you continue to do evil, both you and your king will be swept away.”

### *Saul Fails the Lord*

**13:1** Saul was [thirty]<sup>3</sup> years old when he began to reign; he ruled over Israel for [forty]<sup>4</sup> years. **13:2** Saul selected for himself three thousand men from Israel. Two thousand of these were with Saul at Micmash and in the hill country of Bethel;<sup>5</sup> the remaining thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin.<sup>6</sup> He sent all the rest of the people back home.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “useless” (so NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “nothing”; NASB “futile”; TEV “are not real.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “on account of his great name.”

<sup>3</sup> **tc** The MT does not have “thirty.” A number appears to have dropped out of the Hebrew text here, since as it stands the MT (literally, “a son of a year”) must mean that Saul was only one year old when he began to reign! The KJV, attempting to resolve this, reads “Saul reigned one year,” but that is not the normal meaning of the Hebrew text represented by the MT. Although most LXX MSS lack the entire verse, some Greek MSS have “thirty years” here (while others have “one year” like the MT). The Syriac Peshitta has Saul’s age as twenty-one. But this seems impossible to harmonize with the implied age of Saul’s son Jonathan in the following verse. Taking into account the fact that in v. 2 Jonathan was old enough to be a military leader, some scholars prefer to supply in v. 1 the number forty (cf. ASV, NASB). The present translation (“thirty”) is a possible but admittedly uncertain proposal based on a few Greek MSS and followed by a number of English versions (e.g., NIV, NCV, NLT). Other English versions simply supply ellipsis marks for the missing number (e.g., NAB, NRSV).

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The MT has “two years” here. If this number is to be accepted as correct, the meaning apparently would be that after a lapse of two years at the beginning of Saul’s reign, he then went about the task of consolidating an army as described in what follows (cf. KJV, ASV, CEV). But if the statement in v. 1 is intended to be a comprehensive report on the length of Saul’s reign, the number is too small. According to Acts 13:21, Saul reigned for forty years. Some English versions (e.g., NIV, NCV, NLT), taking this forty to be a round number, add it to the “two years” of the MT and translate the number in 2 Sam 13:1 as “forty-two years.” While this is an acceptable option, the present translation instead replaces the MT’s “two” with the figure “forty.” Admittedly the textual evidence for this decision is weak, but the same can be said of any attempt to restore sense to this difficult text (note the ellipsis marks at this point in NAB, NRSV). The Syriac Peshitta lacks this part of v. 1.

<sup>5</sup> **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “at Gibeah of Benjamin.” The words “in the territory” are supplied in the translation for clarity.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “each one to his tents.”

**13:3** Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost<sup>8</sup> that was at Geba and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul alerted<sup>9</sup> all the land saying, “Let the Hebrews pay attention!” **13:4** All Israel heard this message,<sup>10</sup> “Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel is repulsive<sup>11</sup> to the Philistines!” So the people were summoned to join<sup>12</sup> Saul at Gilgal.

**13:5** For the battle with Israel the Philistines had amassed 3,000<sup>13</sup> chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and an army as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven. **13:6** The men of Israel realized they had a problem because their army was hard pressed. So the army hid in caves, thickets, cliffs, strongholds,<sup>14</sup> and cisterns. **13:7** Some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan River<sup>15</sup> to the land of Gad and Gilead. But Saul stayed at Gilgal; the entire army that was with him was terrified. **13:8** He waited for seven days, the time period indicated by Samuel.<sup>16</sup> But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the army began to abandon Saul.<sup>17</sup>

**13:9** So Saul said, “Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings.” Then he offered a burnt offering. **13:10** Just when he had finished offering the burnt offering, Samuel appeared on the scene. Saul went out to meet him and to greet him.<sup>18</sup>

**13:11** But Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul replied, “When I saw that the army had started to abandon me<sup>19</sup> and that you didn’t come at the appointed time and that the Philistines had assembled at Micmash, **13:12** I thought,<sup>20</sup> ‘Now the Philistines will come down on me at Gilgal and I have not sought the LORD’s favor.’ So I felt obligated<sup>21</sup> to offer the burnt offering.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or perhaps “struck down the Philistine official.” See the note at 1 Sam 10:5. Cf. TEV “killed the Philistine commander.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “blew the ram’s horn in.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The words “this message” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “stinks.” The figurative language indicates that Israel had become repulsive to the Philistines.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “were summoned after.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Many English versions (e.g., KJV, NASB, NRSV, TEV) read “30,000” here.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or perhaps “vaults.” This rare term also occurs in Judg 9:46, 49. Cf. KJV “high places”; ASV “coverts”; NAB “caverns”; NASB “cellars”; NIV, NCV, TEV “pits”; NRSV, NLT “tombs.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The word “River” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** This apparently refers to the instructions given by Samuel in 1 Sam 10:8. If so, several years had passed. On the relationship between chs. 10 and 13, see V. P. Long, *The Art of Biblical History* (FIC), 201-23.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “dispersed from upon him”; NAB, NRSV “began to slip away.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to bless him.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “dispersed from upon me.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “said.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or “I forced myself” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV, CEV); NAB “So in my anxiety I offered”; NIV “I felt compelled.”

**13:13** Then Samuel said to Saul, “You have made a foolish choice! You have not obeyed<sup>1</sup> the commandment that the LORD your God gave<sup>2</sup> you. Had you done that, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever! **13:14** But now your kingdom will not continue! The LORD has sought out<sup>3</sup> for himself a man who is loyal to him<sup>4</sup> and the LORD has appointed<sup>5</sup> him to be leader over his people, for you have not obeyed what the LORD commanded you.”

**13:15** Then Samuel set out and went up from Gilgal<sup>6</sup> to Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin.<sup>7</sup> Saul mustered the army that remained with him; there were about six hundred men. **13:16** Saul, his son Jonathan, and the army that remained with them stayed in Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin, while the Philistines camped in Micmash.<sup>8</sup> **13:17** Raiding bands went out from the camp of the Philistines in three groups. One band turned toward the road leading to Ophrah by the land of Shual; **13:18** another band turned toward the road leading to Beth Horon; and yet another band turned toward the road leading to the border that overlooks the valley of Zeboim in the direction of the desert.

**13:19** A blacksmith could not be found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines had said, “This will prevent the Hebrews from making swords and spears.” **13:20** So all Israel had to go down to the Philistines in order to get their plowshares, cutting instruments, axes, and sickles<sup>9</sup> sharpened. **13:21** They charged<sup>10</sup> two-thirds of a shekel<sup>11</sup> to sharpen plowshares and cutting

instruments, and a third of a shekel<sup>12</sup> to sharpen picks and axes, and to set ox goads. **13:22** So on the day of the battle no sword or spear was to be found in the hand of anyone in the army that was with Saul and Jonathan. No one but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

### *Jonathan Ignites a Battle*

**13:23** A garrison of the Philistines had gone out to the pass at Micmash. **14:1** Then one day Jonathan son of Saul said to his armor bearer,<sup>13</sup> “Come on, let’s go over to the Philistine garrison that is opposite us.” But he did not let his father know.

**14:2** Now Saul was sitting under a pomegranate tree in Migron, on the outskirts of Gibeah. The army that was with him numbered about six hundred men. **14:3** Now Ahijah was carrying<sup>14</sup> an ephod. He was the son of Ahitub, who was the brother of Ichabod and a son of Phineas, son of Eli, the priest of the LORD in Shiloh. The army was unaware that Jonathan had left.

**14:4** Now there was a steep cliff on each side of the pass through which Jonathan intended to go to reach the Philistine garrison. One cliff was named Bozez, the other Seneh. **14:5** The cliff to the north was closer to Micmash, the one to the south closer to Geba.

**14:6** Jonathan said to his armor bearer, “Come on, let’s go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised men. Perhaps the LORD will intervene<sup>15</sup> for us. Nothing can prevent the LORD from delivering, whether by many or by a few.” **14:7** His armor bearer said to him, “Do everything that is on your mind.<sup>16</sup> Do as you’re inclined. I’m with you all the way!”<sup>17</sup>

**14:8** Jonathan replied, “All right!<sup>18</sup> We’ll go over to these men and fight them. **14:9** If they say to us, ‘Stay put until we approach you,’ we will stay<sup>19</sup> right there and not go up to them. **14:10** But if they say, ‘Come up against us,’ we will go up. For in that case the LORD has given them into our hand – it will be a sign to us.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “kept.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “commanded.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** This verb form, as well as the one that follows (“appointed”), indicates completed action from the standpoint of the speaker. This does not necessarily mean that the Lord had already conducted his search and made his choice, however. The forms may be used for rhetorical effect to emphasize the certainty of the action. The divine search for a new king is as good as done, emphasizing that the days of Saul’s dynasty are numbered.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “according to his heart.” The idiomatic expression means to be like-minded with another, as its use in 1 Sam 14:7 indicates.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “commanded.”

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The LXX and two Old Latin mss include the following words here: “on his way. And the rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the warring army. When they arrived from Gilgal....”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “at Gibeah of Benjamin.” The words “in the territory” are supplied in the translation for clarity (likewise in the following verse).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The juxtaposition of disjunctive clauses in v.16 indicates synchronic action.

<sup>9</sup> **tc** The translation follows the LXX (“their sickles”) here, rather than the MT “plowshares,” which is due to dittography from the word earlier in the verse.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the price was.” The meaning of the Hebrew word פְּצִירָה (*psirah*) is uncertain. This is the only place it occurs in the OT. Some propose the meaning “sharpening,” but “price” is a more likely meaning if the following term refers to a weight (see the following note on the word “shekel”). See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 238.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** This word, which appears only here in the OT, probably refers to a stone weight. Stones marked פִּים (*pim*) have been found in excavations of Palestinian sites. The average

weight of such stones is 0.268 ounces, which is equivalent to about two-thirds of a shekel. This probably refers to the price charged by the Philistines for the services listed. See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 238; *DNWSI* 2:910; and G. I. Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions*, 259.

<sup>12</sup> **tc** *Heb* “and for a third, a pick.” The Hebrew text suffers from haplography at this point. The translation follows the textual reconstruction offered by P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 235.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or “the servant who was carrying his military equipment” (likewise in vv. 6, 7, 12, 13, 14).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “bearing.” Many English versions understand this verb to mean “wearing” (cf. KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NLT).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “act.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in your heart.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Look, I am with you, according to your heart.” See the note at 13:14.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Look!”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “stand.”



**14:11** When they<sup>1</sup> made themselves known to the Philistine garrison, the Philistines said, “Look! The Hebrews are coming out of the holes in which they hid themselves.” **14:12** Then the men of the garrison said to Jonathan and his armor bearer, “Come on up to us so we can teach you a thing or two!”<sup>2</sup> Then Jonathan said to his armor bearer, “Come up behind me, for the LORD has given<sup>3</sup> them into the hand of Israel!”

**14:13** Jonathan crawled up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer following behind him. Jonathan struck down the Philistines,<sup>4</sup> while his armor bearer came along behind him and killed them.<sup>5</sup> **14:14** In this initial skirmish Jonathan and his armor bearer struck down about twenty men in an area that measured half an acre.

**14:15** Then fear overwhelmed<sup>6</sup> those who were in the camp, those who were in the field, all the army in the garrison, and the raiding bands. They trembled and the ground shook. This fear was caused by God.<sup>7</sup>

**14:16** Saul’s watchmen at Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin<sup>8</sup> looked on<sup>9</sup> as the crowd of soldiers seemed to melt away first in one direction and then in another.<sup>10</sup> **14:17** So Saul said to the army that was with him, “Mustering the troops and see who is no longer with us.” When they mustered the troops,<sup>11</sup> Jonathan and his armor bearer were not there. **14:18** So Saul said to Ahijah, “Bring near the ephod,”<sup>12</sup> for he was at that time wearing the ephod.<sup>13</sup> **14:19** While<sup>14</sup> Saul

spoke to the priest, the panic in the Philistines’ camp was becoming greater and greater. So Saul said to the priest, “Withdraw your hand!”

**14:20** Saul and all the army that was with him assembled and marched into battle, where they found<sup>15</sup> the Philistines in total panic killing one another with their swords.<sup>16</sup> **14:21** The Hebrews who had earlier gone over to the Philistine side<sup>17</sup> joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. **14:22** When all the Israelites who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, they too pursued them in battle. **14:23** So the LORD delivered Israel that day, and the battle shifted over to Beth Aven.<sup>18</sup>

### *Jonathan Violates Saul’s Oath*

**14:24** Now the men of Israel were hard pressed that day, for Saul had made the army agree to this oath: “Cursed be the man who eats food before evening! I will get my vengeance on my enemies!” So no one in the army ate anything.

**14:25** Now the whole army<sup>19</sup> entered the forest and there was honey on the ground.<sup>20</sup> **14:26** When the army entered the forest, they saw<sup>21</sup> the honey flowing, but no one ate any of it,<sup>22</sup> for the army was afraid of the oath. **14:27** But Jonathan had not heard about the oath his father had made the army take. He extended the end of his staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. When he ate it,<sup>23</sup> his eyes gleamed.<sup>24</sup> **14:28** Then someone from the army informed him, “Your father put the army under a strict oath<sup>25</sup> saying, ‘Cursed be the man who eats food today!’ That is why the army is tired.” **14:29** Then Jonathan said, “My father has caused trouble for the land. See how my eyes gleamed<sup>26</sup> when I tasted just a little of this honey. **14:30** Certainly if the army had eaten some of the enemies’ provisions that they came across today, would not the slaughter of the Philistines have been even greater?”

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “the two of them.”

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb “a thing.”

<sup>3</sup> *tn* The perfect verbal form is used rhetorically here to express Jonathan’s certitude. As far as he is concerned, the victory is as good as won and can be described as such.

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “and they fell before Jonathan.”

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb “and the one carrying his equipment was killing after him.”

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb “fell upon.”

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb “and it was by the fear of God.” The translation understands this to mean that God was the source or cause of the fear experienced by the Philistines. This seems to be the most straightforward reading of the sentence. It is possible, however, that the word “God” functions here simply to intensify the accompanying word “fear,” in which one might translate “a very great fear” (cf. NAB, NRSV). It is clear that on some occasions that the divine name carries such a superlative nuance. For examples see Joüon 2:525 §141.n.

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “at Gibeah of Benjamin.” The words “in the territory” are supplied in the translation for clarity.

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Heb “saw, and look!”

<sup>10</sup> *tn* Heb “the crowd melted and went, even here.”

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “and they mustered the troops, and look!”

<sup>12</sup> *tc* Heb “the ark of God.” It seems unlikely that Saul would call for the ark, which was several miles away in Kiriath-jearim (see 1 Sam 7:2). The LXX and an Old Latin ms have “ephod” here, a reading which harmonizes better with v. 3 and fits better with the verb “bring near” (see 1 Sam 23:9; 30:7) and with the expression “withdraw your hand” in v.19. This reading is followed in the present translation (cf. NAB, TEV, NLT).

<sup>13</sup> *tc* Heb “for the ark of God was in that day, and the sons of Israel.” The translation follows the text of some Greek manuscripts. See the previous note.

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Or perhaps “until.”

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb “and look, there was”

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb “the sword of a man against his companion, a very great panic.”

<sup>17</sup> *tn* Heb “and the Hebrews were to the Philistines formerly, who went up with them in the camp all around.”

<sup>18</sup> *tc* The LXX includes the following words: “And all the people were with Saul, about ten thousand men. And the battle extended to the entire city on mount Ephraim.”

<sup>19</sup> *tn* Heb “all the land.”

<sup>20</sup> *tn* Heb “the surface of the field.”

<sup>21</sup> *tn* Heb “and the army entered the forest, and look!”

<sup>22</sup> *tn* Heb “and there was no one putting his hand to his mouth.”

<sup>23</sup> *tn* Heb “and he returned his hand to his mouth.”

<sup>24</sup> *tc* The translation follows the *Qere* and several medieval Hebrew MSS in reading “gleamed,” rather than the *Kethib*, “saw.”

<sup>25</sup> *tn* Heb “your father surely put the army under an oath.” The infinitive absolute is used before the finite verb to emphasize the solemn nature of the oath.

<sup>26</sup> *tc* The LXX reads “saw.” See v. 27.

14:31 On that day the army struck down the Philistines from Micmash to Aijalon, and they became very tired. 14:32 So the army rushed greedily on<sup>1</sup> the<sup>2</sup> plunder, confiscating sheep, cattle, and calves. They slaughtered them right on the ground, and the army ate them blood and all.

14:33 Now it was reported to Saul, "Look, the army is sinning against the LORD by eating even the blood." He said, "All of you have broken the covenant!<sup>3</sup> Roll a large stone over here to me." 14:34 Then Saul said, "Scatter out among the army and say to them, 'Each of you bring to me your ox and sheep and slaughter them in this spot and eat. But don't sin against the LORD by eating the blood.'" So that night each one brought his ox and slaughtered it there.<sup>4</sup> 14:35 Then Saul built an altar for the LORD; it was the first time he had built an altar for the LORD.

14:36 Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines at night; we will rout<sup>5</sup> them until the break of day.<sup>6</sup> We won't leave any of them alive!"<sup>7</sup> They replied, "Do whatever seems best to you."<sup>8</sup> But the priest said, "Let's approach God here." 14:37 So Saul asked God, "Should I go down after the Philistines? Will you deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day.

14:38 Then Saul said, "All you leaders of the army come here. Find out<sup>9</sup> how this sin occurred today. 14:39 For as surely as the LORD, the deliverer of Israel, lives, even if it turns out to be my own son Jonathan, he will certainly die!" But no one from the army said anything.<sup>10</sup>

14:40 Then he said to all Israel, "You will be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side." The army replied to Saul, "Do whatever you think is best."

14:41 Then Saul said, "O LORD God of Israel! If this sin has been committed by me or by my son Jonathan, then, O LORD God of Israel, respond with Urim. But if this sin has been committed by your people Israel, respond with

Thummim."<sup>11</sup> Then Jonathan and Saul were indicated by lot, while the army was exonerated.<sup>12</sup> 14:42 Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan!"<sup>13</sup> Jonathan was indicated by lot.

14:43 So Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." Jonathan told him, "I used the end of the staff that was in my hand to taste a little honey. I must die!"<sup>14</sup> 14:44 Saul said, "God will punish me severely if Jonathan doesn't die!"<sup>15</sup>

14:45 But the army said to Saul, "Should Jonathan, who won this great victory in Israel, die? May it never be! As surely as the LORD lives, not a single hair of his head will fall to the ground! For it is with the help of God that he has acted today." So the army rescued Jonathan from death.<sup>16</sup>

14:46 Then Saul stopped chasing the Philistines, and the Philistines went back home.<sup>17</sup> 14:47 After Saul had secured his royal position over Israel, he fought against all their<sup>18</sup> enemies on all sides – the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. In every direction that he turned he was victorious.<sup>19</sup> 14:48 He fought bravely, striking down the Amalekites and delivering Israel from the hand of its enemies.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Members of Saul's Family*

14:49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-Shua.<sup>21</sup> He had two daughters; the older one was named Merab and the younger Michal. 14:50 The name of Saul's wife was

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The translation follows the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading "and they rushed greedily upon," rather than the *Kethib*, "and they did."

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The translation reads with the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS חֲשָׁלָה (*hashalal*, "the spoil") rather than following the *Kethib* reading, שָׁלָל (*shalal*, "spoil").

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "You have acted deceptively." In this context the verb refers to violating an agreement, in this case the dietary and sacrificial regulations of the Mosaic law. The verb form is second masculine plural; apparently Saul here addresses those who are eating the animals.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and all the army brought near, each his ox by his hand, and they slaughtered there."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "plunder."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "until the light of the morning."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and there will not be left among them a man."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all that is good in your eyes." So also in v. 40.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "know and see."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and there was no one answering from all the army."

<sup>11</sup> **tc** *Heb* "to the LORD God of Israel: 'Give what is perfect.'" The Hebrew textual tradition has accidentally omitted several words here. The present translation follows the LXX (as do several English versions, cf. NAB, NRSV, TEV). See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 247-48, and R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC), 132.

<sup>12</sup> **sn** The *Urim* and *Thummim* were used for lot casting in ancient Israel. Their exact identity is uncertain; they may have been specially marked stones drawn from a bag. See Exod 28:30; Lev 8:8, and Deut 33:8, as well as the discussion in R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC), 140.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "went out."

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The LXX includes the following words: "Whomever the Lord will indicate by the lot, let him die! And the people said to Saul, 'It is not this word.' But Saul prevailed over the people, and they cast lots between him and between Jonathan his son."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Look, I, I will die." Apparently Jonathan is acquiescing to his anticipated fate of death. However, the words may be taken as sarcastic ("Here I am about to die!") or as a question, "Must I now die?" (cf. NAB, NIV, NCV, NLT).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "So God will do and so he will add, surely you will certainly die, Jonathan."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and he did not die."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to their place."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his," which could refer to Israel or to Saul.

<sup>20</sup> **tc** The translation follows the LXX ("he was delivered"), rather than the MT, which reads, "he acted wickedly."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "plunderers."

<sup>22</sup> **sn** The list differs from others. In 1 Sam 31:2 (= 1 Chr 10:2), Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua are listed as Saul's sons, while 1 Chr 8:33 and 9:39 list Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the general in command of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle.<sup>1</sup> **14:51** Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son<sup>2</sup> of Abiel.

**14:52** There was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul. So whenever Saul saw anyone who was a warrior or a brave individual, he would conscript him.

### *Saul Is Rejected as King*

**15:1** Then Samuel said to Saul, "I was the one the LORD sent to anoint you as king over his people Israel. Now listen to what the LORD says."<sup>3</sup> **15:2** Here is what the LORD of hosts says: "I carefully observed how the Amalekites opposed<sup>4</sup> Israel along the way when Israel<sup>5</sup> came up from Egypt. **15:3** So go now and strike down the Amalekites. Destroy everything that they have. Don't spare<sup>6</sup> them. Put them to death – man, woman, child, infant, ox, sheep, camel, and donkey alike."<sup>7</sup>

**15:4** So Saul assembled<sup>7</sup> the army<sup>8</sup> and mustered them at Telaim. There were 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. **15:5** Saul proceeded to the city<sup>9</sup> of Amalek, where he set an ambush<sup>10</sup> in the wadi.<sup>11</sup> **15:6** Saul said to the Kenites, "Go on and leave! Go down from among the Amalekites! Otherwise I will sweep you away<sup>12</sup> with them! After all, you were kind to all the Israelites when they came up from

Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from among the Amalekites.

**15:7** Then Saul struck down the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to<sup>13</sup> Shur, which is next to Egypt. **15:8** He captured King Agag of the Amalekites alive, but he executed all Agag's people<sup>14</sup> with the sword. **15:9** However, Saul and the army spared Agag, along with the best of the flock, the cattle, the fatlings,<sup>15</sup> and the lambs, as well as everything else that was of value.<sup>16</sup> They were not willing to slaughter them. But they did slaughter everything that was despised<sup>17</sup> and worthless.

**15:10** Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel: **15:11** "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned away from me and has not done what I told him to do." Samuel became angry and he cried out to the LORD all that night.

**15:12** Then Samuel got up early to meet Saul the next morning. But Samuel was informed, "Saul has gone to Carmel where<sup>18</sup> he is setting up a monument for himself. Then Samuel left<sup>19</sup> and went down to Gilgal."<sup>20</sup> **15:13** When Samuel came to him,<sup>21</sup> Saul said to him, "May the LORD bless you! I have done what the LORD said."

**15:14** Samuel replied, "If that is the case,<sup>22</sup> then what is this sound of sheep in my ears and the sound of cattle that I hear?" **15:15** Saul said, "They were brought<sup>23</sup> from the Amalekites; the army spared the best of the flocks and cattle to sacrifice to the LORD our God. But everything else we slaughtered."

**15:16** Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait a minute!<sup>24</sup> Let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night." Saul<sup>25</sup> said to him, "Tell me."

**15:17** Samuel said, "Is it not true that when you

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The word "uncle" can modify either Abner or Ner. See the note on the word "son" in v. 51 for further discussion.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** 1 Chr 9:35-36 indicates that Jeiel (= Abiel?) had two sons (among others) named Ner and Kish (see also 1 Sam 9:1 and 1 Chr 8:30, where some Greek manuscripts include the name Ner, though it is absent in the Hebrew text). If this Kish was the father of Saul and Ner was the father of Abner, then Saul and Abner were cousins. However, according to 1 Chr 8:33 and 9:39, Ner, not Abiel, was the father of Kish. In this case, Kish and Abner were brothers and Abner was Saul's uncle. The simplest solution to the problem is to see two men named Kish in the genealogy: Abiel (Jeiel) was the father of Ner and Kish I. Ner was the father of Abner and Kish II. Kish II was the father of Saul. The Kish mentioned in 1 Sam 9:1 was the father of Saul (v. 2) and must be identified as Kish II. In this case the genealogy is "gapped," with Ner being omitted. Abiel was the grandfather of Kish II.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "to the voice of the words of the LORD" (so KJV).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "what Amalek did to Israel, how he placed against him."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Israel) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or perhaps "don't take pity on" (cf. CEV).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "caused the people to hear."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "people."

<sup>9</sup> **tc** The LXX has the plural here, "cities."

<sup>10</sup> **tc** The translation follows the LXX and Vulgate which assume a reading וַיִּצְבֹּר (vayyā'arev, "and he set an ambush," from the root אָרַב [arv] with quiescence of *alef*) rather than the MT, which has וַיִּבְרַח (vayyareb, "and he contended," from the root רָיַח [rayh]).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** That is, "the dry stream bed."

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The translation follows the Syriac Peshitta and Vulgate which assume a reading אֶסְפָּא (esf<sup>h</sup>ka, "I sweep you away," from the root סָפַח [sfh]) rather than the MT אֶסְפָּקָא ('osif<sup>h</sup>ka, "I am gathering you," from the root אָסַף [sf]).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "[as] you enter."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "all the people." For clarity "Agag's" has been supplied in the translation.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text is difficult here. We should probably read וְהַחֲמִישִׁים (v<sup>h</sup>hammashim, "the fat ones") rather than the MT וְהַחֲמִישִׁים (v<sup>h</sup>hammishim, "the second ones"). However, if the MT is retained, the sense may be as the Jewish commentator Kimchi supposed: the second-born young, thought to be better than the firstlings. (For discussion see S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel*, 123-24.)

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "good."

<sup>17</sup> **tc** The MT has here the very odd form נִבְזָה (nivzah), but this is apparently due to a scribal error. The translation follows instead the Niphal participle נִבְזָה (nivzah).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "and look."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "and he turned and crossed over."

<sup>20</sup> **tc** At the end of v. 12 the LXX and one Old Latin ms include the following words not found in the MT: "to Saul. And behold, he was offering as a burnt offering to the LORD the best of the spoils that he had brought from the Amalekites."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "to Saul."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The words "if that is the case" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb "they brought them."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Or perhaps "be quiet."

<sup>25</sup> **tc** The translation follows the Qere and many medieval Hebrew mss in reading the singular ("he said") rather than the plural ("they said") of the *Kethib*.

**tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

were insignificant in your own eyes, you became head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD chose<sup>1</sup> you as king over Israel. **15:18** The LORD sent you on a campaign<sup>2</sup> saying, ‘Go and exterminate those sinful Amalekites! Fight against them until you<sup>3</sup> have destroyed them.’ **15:19** Why haven’t you obeyed<sup>4</sup> the LORD? Instead you have greedily rushed upon the plunder! You have done what is wrong in the LORD’s estimation.”<sup>5</sup>

**15:20** Then Saul said to Samuel, “But I have obeyed<sup>6</sup> the LORD! I went on the campaign<sup>7</sup> the LORD sent me on. I brought back King Agag of the Amalekites after exterminating the Amalekites. **15:21** But the army took from the plunder some of the sheep and cattle – the best of what was to be slaughtered – to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.”

**15:22** Then Samuel said,

“Does the LORD take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as he does in obedience?<sup>8</sup> Certainly,<sup>9</sup> obedience<sup>10</sup> is better than sacrifice; paying attention is better than<sup>11</sup> the fat of rams.

**15:23** For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and presumption is like the evil of idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as<sup>12</sup> king.”

**15:24** Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have disobeyed what the LORD commanded<sup>13</sup> and what you said as well.<sup>14</sup> For I was afraid of the army, and I followed their wishes.<sup>15</sup> **15:25** Now please forgive my sin! Go back with me so I can worship<sup>16</sup> the LORD.”

**15:26** Samuel said to Saul, “I will not go back with you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel!”

**15:27** When Samuel turned to leave, Saul<sup>17</sup> grabbed the edge of his robe and it tore. **15:28** Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to one of your colleagues who is better than you! **15:29** The Preeminent One<sup>18</sup> of Israel does not go back on his word<sup>19</sup> or change his mind, for he is not a human being who changes his mind.”<sup>20</sup> **15:30** Saul<sup>21</sup> again replied, “I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel. Go back with me so I may worship the LORD your God.” **15:31** So Samuel followed Saul back, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

### *Samuel Puts Agag to Death*

**15:32** Then Samuel said, “Bring me King Agag of the Amalekites.” So Agag came to him trembling,<sup>22</sup> thinking to himself,<sup>23</sup> “Surely death is bitter!”<sup>24</sup> **15:33** Samuel said, “Just as your sword left women childless, so your mother will be the most bereaved among women!” Then

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb “he,” but Saul is clearly the referent. A Qumran ms and the LXX include the name “Saul” here.

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “splendor,” used here by metonymy as a title for the LORD.

<sup>19</sup> tn Or perhaps “does not lie.”

<sup>20</sup> sn This observation marks the preceding statement (v. 28) as an unconditional, unalterable decree. When God makes such a decree he will not alter it or change his mind. This does not mean that God never deviates from his stated intentions or changes his mind. On the contrary, several passages describe him as changing his mind. In fact, his willingness to do so is one of his fundamental divine attributes (see Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). For a fuller discussion see R. B. Chisholm, Jr., “Does God Change His Mind?” *BSac* 152 (1995): 387-99.

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>22</sup> tn The MT reading מַבְרִיבִי (ma’adannot, literally, “bonds,” used here adverbially, “in bonds”) is difficult. The word is found only here and in Job 38:31. Part of the problem lies in determining the root of the word. Some scholars have taken it to be from the root עָבַד (‘nd, “to bind around”), but this assumes a metathesis of two of the letters of the root. Others take it from the root עָבַד (‘dn) with the meaning “voluptuously,” but this does not seem to fit the context. It seems better to understand the word to be from the root מָבַד (m’d, “to totter” or “shake”). In that case it describes the fear that Agag experienced in realizing the mortal danger that he faced as he approached Samuel. This is the way that the LXX translators understood the word, rendering it by the Greek participle τρέμων (tremon, “trembling”).

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “and Agag said.”

<sup>24</sup> tc The text is difficult here. With the LXX, two Old Latin mss, and the Syriac Peshitta it is probably preferable to delete סָר (sar, “is past”) of the MT; it looks suspiciously like a dittograph of the following word מָר (mar, “bitter”). This further affects the interpretation of Agag’s comment. In the MT he comes to Samuel confidently assured that the danger is over (cf. KJV, NASB, NIV “Surely the bitterness of death is past,” along with NLT, CEV). However, it seems more likely that Agag realized that his fortunes had suddenly taken a turn for the worse and that the clemency he had enjoyed from Saul would not be his lot from Samuel. The present translation thus understands Agag to approach not confidently but in the stark realization that his death is imminent (“Surely death is bitter!”). Cf. NAB “So it is bitter death!”; NRSV “Surely this is the bitterness of death”; TEV “What a bitter thing it is to die!”

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “anointed.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “journey.”

<sup>3</sup> tc The translation follows the LXX, the Syriac Peshitta, and the Targum in reading the second person singular suffix (“you”) rather than the third person plural suffix of the MT (“they”).

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “listened to the voice of the LORD.”

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb “you have done what is evil in the eyes of the LORD.”

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “listened to the voice of the LORD.”

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “journey.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb “as [in] listening to the voice of the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “look.”

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “listening.”

<sup>11</sup> tn The expression “is better” is understood here by ellipsis (see the immediately preceding statement).

<sup>12</sup> tn Or “from [being].”

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “the mouth of the LORD.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “and your words.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “and I listened to their voice.”

<sup>16</sup> tn Following the imperative, the cohortative with the prefixed conjunction indicates purpose/result.



Samuel hacked Agag to pieces there in Gilgal before the LORD.

**15:34** Then Samuel went to Ramah, while Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. **15:35** Until the day he<sup>1</sup> died Samuel did not see Saul again. Samuel did, however, mourn for Saul, but the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

*Samuel Anoints David as King*

**16:1** The LORD said to Samuel, “How long do you intend to mourn for Saul? I have rejected him as king over Israel.<sup>2</sup> Fill your horn with olive oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem,<sup>3</sup> for I have selected a king for myself from among his sons.”<sup>4</sup>

**16:2** Samuel replied, “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me!” But the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you<sup>5</sup> and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ **16:3** Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you should do. You will anoint for me the one I point out<sup>6</sup> to you.”

**16:4** Samuel did what the LORD told him.<sup>7</sup> When he arrived in Bethlehem,<sup>8</sup> the elders of the city were afraid to meet him. They<sup>9</sup> said, “Do you come in peace?” **16:5** He replied, “Yes, in peace. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” So he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

**16:6** When they arrived, Samuel<sup>10</sup> noticed<sup>11</sup> Eliab and said to himself,<sup>12</sup> “Surely, here before the LORD stands his chosen king!”<sup>13</sup> **16:7** But the LORD said to Samuel, “Don’t be impressed by<sup>14</sup> his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. God does not view things the way men do.<sup>15</sup> People look on the outward appearance,<sup>16</sup> but the LORD looks at the heart.”

**16:8** Then Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel.<sup>17</sup> But Samuel<sup>18</sup> said, “The LORD has not chosen this one, either.” **16:9** Then Jesse presented<sup>19</sup> Shammah. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” **16:10** Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel.<sup>20</sup> But Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” **16:11** Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Is that all of the young men?” Jesse<sup>21</sup> replied, “There is still the youngest one, but he’s taking care of the flock.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and get him, for we cannot turn our attention to other things until he comes here.”

**16:12** So Jesse had him brought in.<sup>22</sup> Now he was ruddy, with attractive eyes and a handsome appearance. The LORD said, “Go and anoint him. This is the one!” **16:13** So Samuel took the horn full of olive oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day onward. Then Samuel got up and went to Ramah.

*David Appears before Saul*

**16:14** Now the Spirit of the LORD had turned away from Saul, and an evil spirit<sup>23</sup> from the LORD tormented him. **16:15** Then Saul’s servants said to him, “Look, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you!” **16:16** Let our lord instruct his servants who are here before you to look for a man who knows how to play the lyre. Then whenever the evil spirit from God comes upon you, he can play the lyre<sup>24</sup> and you will feel better.”<sup>25</sup> **16:17** So Saul said to his servants, “Find<sup>26</sup> me a man who plays well and bring him to me.” **16:18** One of his attendants replied,<sup>27</sup> “I have seen a son of Jesse in Bethlehem<sup>28</sup> who knows how to play the lyre. He is a brave warrior<sup>29</sup> and is articulate<sup>30</sup> and handsome,<sup>31</sup> for the LORD is with him.”

<sup>1</sup> tn That is, Samuel.

<sup>2</sup> tc The Lucianic recension of the Old Greek translation includes the following words: “And the Lord said to Samuel.”

<sup>3</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “for I have seen among his sons for me a king.”

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb “in your hand.”

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “say”; KJV, NRSV “name”; NIV “indicate.”

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “said.”

<sup>8</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>9</sup> tc In the MT the verb is singular (“he said”), but the translation follows many medieval Hebrew mss and ancient versions in reading the plural (“they said”).

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Samuel) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “saw.”

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “said”; the words “to himself” are implied, given the secrecy surrounding Samuel’s mission to Bethlehem (v. 2).

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “his anointed one.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “don’t look toward.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “for not that which the man sees.” The translation follows the LXX, which reads, “for not as man sees does God see.” The MT has suffered from homoioteleuton or homoiarcton. See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 274.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “to the eyes.”

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb “and caused him to pass before.”

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “he” (also in v. 9); the referent (Samuel) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb “caused to pass by.”

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “caused seven of his sons to pass before Samuel.” This could be taken as referring to seven sons in addition to the three mentioned before this, but 1 Sam 17:12 says Jesse had eight sons, not eleven. 1 Chr 2:13-15 lists only seven sons, including David. However, 1 Chr 27:18 mentions an additional son, named Elihu.

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Jesse) has been specified in the translation both here and in v. 12 for clarity.

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb “and he sent and brought him.”

<sup>23</sup> tn Or “an injurious spirit”; cf. NLT “a tormenting spirit.” The phrase need not refer to an evil, demonic spirit. The Hebrew word translated “evil” may refer to the character of the spirit or to its effect upon Saul. If the latter, another translation option might be “a mischief-making spirit.”

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb “and he will play with his hand.”

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb “and it will be better for you.”

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb “see.”

<sup>27</sup> tn Heb “answered and said.”

<sup>28</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>29</sup> tn Heb “mighty man of valor and a man of war.”

<sup>30</sup> tn Heb “discerning of word.”

<sup>31</sup> tn Heb “a man of form.”

**16:19** So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me your son David, who is out with the sheep. **16:20** So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a container of wine, and a young goat<sup>1</sup> and sent them to Saul with<sup>2</sup> his son David. **16:21** David came to Saul and stood before him. Saul liked him a great deal,<sup>3</sup> and he became his armor bearer. **16:22** Then Saul sent word to Jesse saying, “Let David be my servant, for I really like him.”<sup>4</sup>

**16:23** So whenever the spirit from God would come upon Saul, David would take his lyre and play it. This would bring relief to Saul and make him feel better. Then the evil spirit would leave him alone.<sup>5</sup>

### David Kills Goliath

**17:1<sup>6</sup>** The Philistines gathered their troops<sup>7</sup> for battle. They assembled at Socoh in Judah. They camped in Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah. **17:2** Saul and the Israelite army<sup>8</sup> assembled and camped in the valley of Elah, where they arranged their battle lines to fight against<sup>9</sup> the Philistines. **17:3** The Philistines were standing on one hill, and the Israelites<sup>10</sup> on another hill, with the valley between them.

**17:4** Then a champion<sup>11</sup> came out from the camp of the Philistines. His name was Goliath; he was from Gath. He was close to seven feet tall.<sup>12</sup> **17:5** He had a bronze helmet on his head and was wearing scale body armor. The weight of his bronze body armor was five thousand shekels.<sup>13</sup> **17:6** He had bronze shin guards<sup>14</sup> on his legs, and a bronze javelin was slung over his shoulders. **17:7** The shaft<sup>15</sup> of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and the iron point of his spear weighed six hundred shekels.<sup>16</sup> His shield bearer was walking before him.

**17:8** Goliath<sup>17</sup> stood and called to Israel’s troops,<sup>18</sup> “Why do you come out to prepare for battle? Am I not the Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose<sup>19</sup> for yourselves a man so he may come down<sup>20</sup> to me! **17:9** If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, we will become your servants. But if I prevail against him and strike him down, you will become our servants and will serve us.” **17:10** Then the Philistine said, “I defy Israel’s troops this day! Give me a man so we can fight<sup>21</sup> each other!” **17:11** When Saul and all the Israelites<sup>22</sup>

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the man of the space between the two [armies].” See v. 23.

<sup>12</sup> **tc** *Heb* “his height was six cubits and a span” (cf. KJV, NASB, NRSV). A cubit was approximately eighteen inches, a span nine inches. So, according to the Hebrew tradition, Goliath was about nine feet, nine inches tall (cf. NIV, CEV, NLT “over nine feet”; NCV “nine feet, four inches”; TEV “nearly 3 metres”). However, some Greek witnesses, Josephus, and a manuscript of 1 Samuel from Qumran read “four cubits and a span” here, that is, about six feet, nine inches (cf. NAB “six and a half feet”). This seems more reasonable; it is likely that Goliath’s height was exaggerated as the story was retold. See P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (AB), 286, 291.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** Although the exact weight of Goliath’s defensive body armor is difficult to estimate in terms of modern equivalency, it was obviously quite heavy. Driver, following Kennedy, suggests a modern equivalent of about 220 pounds (100 kg); see S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel*, 139. Klein, taking the shekel to be equal to .403 ounces, arrives at a somewhat smaller weight of about 126 pounds (57 kg); see R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC), 175. But by any estimate it is clear that Goliath presented himself as a formidable foe indeed.

<sup>14</sup> **sn** Or “greaves.” These were coverings (probably lined for comfort) that extended from about the knee to the ankle, affording protection for the shins of a warrior.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The translation follows the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading “wood,” rather than the “arrow” (the reading of the *Kethib*).

<sup>16</sup> **sn** That is, about fifteen or sixteen pounds.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (Goliath) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds “and said to them.”

<sup>19</sup> **tc** The translation follows the ancient versions in reading “choose,” (from the root בחר *bkr*), rather than the MT. The verb in MT (ברר *brh*) elsewhere means “to eat food”; the sense of “to choose,” required here by the context, is not attested for this root. The MT apparently reflects an early scribal error.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Following the imperative, the prefixed verbal form (either an imperfect or jussive) with the prefixed conjunction indicates purpose/result here.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Following the imperative, the cohortative verbal form indicates purpose/result here.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all Israel.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a kid of the goats.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “by the hand of.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he loved him.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my eyes.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “would turn aside from upon him.”

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The content of 1 Sam 17–18, which includes the David and Goliath story, differs considerably in the LXX as compared to the MT, suggesting that this story circulated in ancient times in more than one form. The LXX for chs. 17–18 is much shorter than the MT, lacking almost half of the material (39 of a total of 88 verses). Many scholars (e.g., McCarter, Klein) think that the shorter text of the LXX is preferable to the MT, which in their view has been expanded by incorporation of later material. Other scholars (e.g., Wellhausen, Driver) conclude that the shorter Greek text (or the Hebrew text that underlies it) reflects an attempt to harmonize certain alleged inconsistencies that appear in the longer version of the story. Given the translation characteristics of the LXX elsewhere in this section, it does not seem likely that these differences are due to deliberate omission of these verses on the part of the translator. It seems more likely that the Greek translator has faithfully rendered here a Hebrew text that itself was much shorter than the MT in these chapters. Whether or not the shorter text represented by the LXX is to be preferred over the MT in 1 Sam 17–18 is a matter over which textual scholars are divided. For a helpful discussion of the major textual issues in this unit see D. Barthélemy, D. W. Gooding, J. Lust, and E. Tov, *The Story of David and Goliath* (OBO). Overall it seems preferable to stay with the MT, at least for the most part. However, the major textual differences between the LXX and the MT will be mentioned in the notes that accompany the translation so that the reader may be alert to the major problem passages.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “camps.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the men of Israel” (so KJV, NASB); NAB, NIV, NRSV “the Israelites.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to meet.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Israel.”

heard these words of the Philistine, they were upset and very afraid.

**17:12<sup>1</sup>** Now David was the son of this Ephraimite named Jesse from Bethlehem<sup>2</sup> in Judah. He had eight sons, and in Saul's days he was old and well advanced in years.<sup>3</sup> **17:13** Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to war. The names of the<sup>4</sup> three sons who went to war were Eliab, his first-born, Abinadab, the second oldest, and Shammah, the third oldest. **17:14** Now David was the youngest. While the three oldest sons followed Saul, **17:15** David was going back and forth<sup>5</sup> from Saul in order to care for his father's sheep in Bethlehem.

**17:16** Meanwhile for forty days the Philistine approached every morning and evening and took his position. **17:17** Jesse said to his son David, "Take your brothers this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread; go quickly<sup>6</sup> to the camp to your brothers. **17:18** Also take these ten portions of cheese to their commanding officer.<sup>7</sup> Find out how your brothers are doing<sup>8</sup> and bring back their pledge that they received the goods.<sup>9</sup> **17:19** They are with Saul and the whole Israelite army<sup>10</sup> in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines."

**17:20** So David got up early in the morning and entrusted the flock to someone else who would watch over it.<sup>11</sup> After loading up, he went just as Jesse had instructed him. He arrived at the camp<sup>12</sup> as the army was going out to the battle lines shouting its battle cry. **17:21** Israel and the Philistines drew up their battle lines opposite one another. **17:22** After David had entrusted his cargo to the care of the supply officer,<sup>13</sup> he ran to the battlefield. When he arrived, he asked his brothers how they were doing. **17:23** As he was speaking with them, the champion named Goliath, the Philistine from Gath, was coming up from the battle lines of the Philis-

tines. He spoke the way he usually did,<sup>14</sup> and David heard it. **17:24** When all the men of Israel saw this man, they retreated<sup>15</sup> from his presence and were very afraid.

**17:25** The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who is coming up? He does so<sup>16</sup> to defy Israel. But the king will make the man who can strike him down very wealthy! He will give him his daughter in marriage, and he will make his father's house exempt from tax obligations in Israel."<sup>17</sup>

**17:26** David asked the men who were standing near him, "What will be done for the man who strikes down this Philistine and frees Israel from this humiliation?<sup>18</sup> For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he defies the armies of the living God?" **17:27** The soldiers<sup>19</sup> told him what had been promised, saying,<sup>19</sup> "This is what will be done for the man who can strike him down."

**17:28** When David's<sup>20</sup> oldest brother Eliab heard him speaking to the men, he became angry<sup>21</sup> with David and said, "Why have you come down here? To whom did you entrust those few sheep in the desert? I am familiar with your pride and deceit!<sup>22</sup> You have come down here to watch the battle!"

**17:29** David replied, "What have I done now? Can't I say anything?"<sup>23</sup> **17:30** Then he turned from those who were nearby to someone else and asked the same question,<sup>24</sup> but they<sup>25</sup> gave him the same answer as before. **17:31** When David's words were overheard and reported to Saul, he called for him.<sup>26</sup>

**17:32** David said to Saul, "Don't let anyone be discouraged.<sup>27</sup> Your servant will go and fight this Philistine!" **17:33** But Saul replied to David, "You aren't able to go against this Philistine and fight him! You're just a boy! He has been a warrior from his youth!"

**17:34** David replied to Saul, "Your servant has been a shepherd for his father's flock. Whenever a lion or bear would come and carry off a sheep from the flock, **17:35** I would go out after it, strike it down, and rescue the sheep from its mouth. If it rose up against me, I would grab it by its jaw, strike it, and kill it. **17:36** Your servant has struck down both the lion and the bear.

<sup>1</sup> **tc** Some MSS of the LXX lack vv. 12-31.

<sup>2</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>3</sup> **tc** The translation follows the Lucianic recension of the LXX and the Syriac Peshitta in reading "in years," rather than MT "among men."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "his."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "was going and returning."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "run."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "officer of the thousand."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "and your brothers, observe with respect to welfare."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "and their pledge take." This probably refers to some type of confirmation that the goods arrived safely. See R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC), 177. Cf. NIV "bring back some assurance"; NCV "some proof to show me they are all right"; NLT "bring me back a letter from them."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "all the men of Israel."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "to a guard"; KJV, NASB, NRSV "with a keeper"; NIV "with a shepherd." Since in contemporary English "guard" sounds like someone at a military installation or a prison, the present translation uses "to someone else who would watch over it."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or "entrenchment."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "the guard of the equipment."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "according to these words."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "fled."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "he is coming up."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "and turns aside humiliation from upon Israel."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "people."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "according to this word, saying."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "his"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "the anger of Eliab became hot."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb "the wickedness of your heart."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb "Is it not [just] a word?"

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb "and spoke according to this word."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb "the people."

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb "he took him."

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb "Let not the heart of a man fall upon him." The LXX reads "my lord," instead of "a man."

This uncircumcised Philistine will be just like one of them.<sup>1</sup> For he has defied the armies of the living God!” 17:37 David went on to say, “The LORD who delivered me from the lion and the bear will also deliver me from the hand of this Philistine!” Then Saul said to David, “Go! The LORD will be with you.”<sup>2</sup>

17:38 Then Saul clothed David with his own fighting attire and put a bronze helmet on his head. He also put body armor on him. 17:39 David strapped on his sword over his fighting attire and tried to walk around, but he was not used to them.<sup>3</sup> David said to Saul, “I can’t walk in these things, for I’m not used to them.” So David removed them. 17:40 He took his staff in his hand, picked out five smooth stones from the stream, placed them in the pouch<sup>4</sup> of his shepherd’s bag, took his sling in hand, and approached the Philistine.

17:41<sup>5</sup> The Philistine kept coming closer to David, with his shield bearer walking in front of him. 17:42 When the Philistine looked carefully at David, he despised him, for he was only a ruddy and handsome boy. 17:43 The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you are coming after me with sticks?”<sup>6</sup> Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 17:44 The Philistine said to David, “Come here to me, so I can give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the field!”<sup>7</sup>

17:45 But David replied to the Philistine, “You are coming against me with sword and spear and javelin. But I am coming against you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel’s armies, whom you have defied! 17:46 This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand! I will strike you down and cut off your head. This day I will give the corpses of the Philistine army to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the land. Then all the land will realize that Israel has a God 17:47 and all this assembly will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves! For the battle is the LORD’s, and he will deliver you into our hand.”

17:48 The Philistine drew steadily closer to David to attack him, while David quickly ran

toward the battle line to attack the Philistine.<sup>8</sup> 17:49 David reached his hand into the bag and took out a stone. He slung it, striking the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank deeply into his forehead, and he fell down with his face to the ground.

17:50<sup>9</sup> David prevailed over the Philistine with just the sling and the stone. He struck down the Philistine and killed him. David did not even have a sword in his hand.<sup>10</sup> 17:51 David ran and stood over the Philistine. He grabbed Goliath’s<sup>11</sup> sword, drew it from its sheath,<sup>12</sup> killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they ran away.

17:52 Then the men of Israel and Judah charged forward, shouting a battle cry.<sup>13</sup> They chased the Philistines to the valley<sup>14</sup> and to the very gates of Ekron. The Philistine corpses lay fallen along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. 17:53 When the Israelites returned from their hot pursuit of the Philistines, they looted their camp. 17:54 David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem,<sup>15</sup> and he put Goliath’s<sup>16</sup> weapons in his tent.

17:55<sup>17</sup> Now as Saul watched David going out to fight the Philistine, he asked Abner, the general in command of the army, “Whose son is this young man, Abner?” Abner replied, “As surely as you live, O king, I don’t know.” 17:56 The king said, “Find out whose son this boy is!”

17:57 So when David returned from striking down the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul. He still had the head of the Philistine in his hand. 17:58 Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” David replied, “I am the son of your servant Jesse in Bethlehem.”<sup>18</sup>

### *Saul Comes to Fear David*

18:1 When David<sup>19</sup> had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan and David became bound together in close friendship.<sup>20</sup> Jonathan loved David as much as he did his own life.<sup>21</sup> 18:2 Saul

<sup>8</sup> tc Most LXX mss lack the second half of v. 48.

<sup>9</sup> tc Most LXX mss lack v. 50.

<sup>10</sup> tn Verse 50 is a summary statement; v. 51 gives a more detailed account of how David killed the Philistine.

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “his”; the referent (Goliath) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> tc Most LXX mss lack the words “drew it from its sheath.”

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “arose and cried out.”

<sup>14</sup> tc Most of the LXX ms tradition has here “Gath.”

<sup>15</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “his”; the referent (Goliath) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>17</sup> tc Most LXX mss lack 17:55–18:5.

<sup>18</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “the soul of Jonathan was bound with the soul of David.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “like his [own] soul.”

sn On the nature of Jonathan’s love for David, see J. A. Thompson, “The Significance of the Verb Love in the David-

<sup>1</sup> tc The LXX includes here the following words not found in the MT: “Should I not go and smite him, and remove today reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised one?”

<sup>2</sup> tn Or “Go, and may the LORD be with you” (so NASB, NCV, NRSV).

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “he had not tested.”

<sup>4</sup> tn This Hebrew word occurs only here and its exact meaning is not entirely clear. It refers to a receptacle of some sort and apparently was a common part of a shepherd’s equipment. Here it serves as a depository for the stones that David will use in his sling.

<sup>5</sup> tc Most LXX mss lack v. 41.

<sup>6</sup> sn Sticks is a pejorative reference to David’s staff (v. 40); the same Hebrew word (מֵצֵל, *maqel*) is used for both.

<sup>7</sup> tc Many medieval Hebrew mss have “the earth” here, instead of the MT’s “the field.”



retained David<sup>4</sup> on that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house. **18:3** Jonathan made a covenant with David, for he loved him as much as he did his own life.<sup>2</sup> **18:4** Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with the rest of his gear, including his sword, his bow, and even his belt.

**18:5** On every mission on which Saul sent him, David achieved success. So Saul appointed him over the men of war. This pleased not only all the army, but also Saul's servants.<sup>3</sup>

**18:6** When the men<sup>4</sup> arrived after David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women from all the cities of Israel came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul. They were happy as they played their tambourines and three-stringed instruments.<sup>5</sup> **18:7** The women who were playing the music sang,

"Saul has struck down his thousands,  
but David his tens of thousands!"

**18:8** This made Saul very angry. The statement displeased him and he thought,<sup>6</sup> "They have attributed to David tens of thousands, but to me they have attributed only thousands. What does he lack, except the kingdom?" **18:9** So Saul was keeping an eye on David from that day onward.

**18:10** The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within his house. Now David was playing the lyre<sup>7</sup> that day. There was a spear in Saul's hand, **18:11** and Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I'll nail David to the wall!" But David escaped from him on two different occasions.

**18:12** So Saul feared David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. **18:13** Saul removed David<sup>8</sup> from his presence and made him a commanding officer.<sup>9</sup> David led the army out to battle and back.<sup>10</sup> **18:14** Now David achieved success in all he did,<sup>11</sup> for the LORD was with him. **18:15** When Saul saw how very successful he was, he was afraid of him. **18:16** But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he was the one leading them out to battle and back.

**18:17<sup>12</sup>** Then Saul said to David, "Here's my oldest daughter, Merab. I want to give her to you in marriage. Only be a brave warrior<sup>13</sup> for me and fight the battles of the LORD." For Saul thought, "There's no need for me to raise my hand against him. Let it be the hand of the Philistines!"

**18:18** David said to Saul, "Who am I? Who are my relatives or the clan of my father<sup>14</sup> in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?" **18:19** When the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she instead was given in marriage to Adriel, who was from Meholah.

**18:20** Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul about this, it<sup>15</sup> pleased him. **18:21** Saul said, "I will give her to him so that she may become a snare to him and the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Today is the second time for you to become my son-in-law."<sup>16</sup>

**18:22** Then Saul instructed his servants, "Tell David secretly, 'The king is pleased with you, and all his servants like you. So now become the king's son-in-law.'" **18:23** So Saul's servants spoke these words privately<sup>17</sup> to David. David replied, "Is becoming the king's son-in-law something insignificant to you? I'm just a poor and lightly-esteemed man!"

**18:24** When Saul's servants reported what David had said, **18:25** Saul replied, "Here is what you should say to David: 'There is nothing that the king wants as a price for the bride except a hundred Philistine foreskins, so that he can be avenged of his<sup>18</sup> enemies.'" (Now Saul was thinking that he could kill David by the hand of the Philistines.)

**18:26** So his servants told David these things and David agreed<sup>19</sup> to become the king's son-in-law. Now the specified time had not yet expired<sup>20</sup> **18:27** when David, along with his men, went out<sup>21</sup> and struck down two hundred Philistine men. David brought their foreskins and presented all of them to the king so he could become the king's son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

Jonathan Narratives in 1 Samuel," VT 24 (1974): 334-38.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "him"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "like his [own] soul."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "it was good in the eyes of all the people and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "them." The masculine plural pronoun apparently refers to the returning soldiers.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "with tambourines, with joy, and with three-stringed instruments."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "said." So also in vv. 11, 17.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds here "with his hand."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "him"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "an officer of a thousand."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "and he went out and came in before the people." See v. 16.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "in all his ways."

<sup>12</sup> **tc** Much of the ms evidence for the LXX lacks vv. 17-19.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "son of valor."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "Who are my relatives, the clan of my father?" The term כְּהַי (khai), traditionally understood as "my life," is here a rare word meaning "family, kinfolk" (see HALOT 309 s.v. III כְּהַי). The phrase "clan of my father" may be a scribal gloss explaining the referent of this rare word.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "the matter."

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The final sentence of v. 21 is absent in most LXX mss.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "in the ears of."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "the king's."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "and it was acceptable in the eyes of David."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "the days were not fulfilled."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "arose and went."

18:28 When Saul realized<sup>1</sup> that the LORD was with David and that his<sup>2</sup> daughter Michal loved David,<sup>3</sup> 18:29 Saul became even more afraid of him.<sup>4</sup> Saul continued to be at odds with David from then on.<sup>5</sup> 18:30<sup>6</sup> Then the leaders of the Philistines would march out, and as often as they did so, David achieved more success than all of Saul's servants. His name was held in high esteem.

*Saul Repeatedly Attempts to Take David's Life*

19:1 Then Saul told his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Saul's son Jonathan liked David very much.<sup>7</sup> 19:2 So Jonathan told David, "My father Saul is trying<sup>8</sup> to kill you. So be careful tomorrow morning. Find<sup>9</sup> a hiding place and stay in seclusion.<sup>10</sup> 19:3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are. I will speak about you to my father. When I find out what the problem is,<sup>11</sup> I will let you know."

19:4 So Jonathan spoke on David's behalf<sup>12</sup> to his father Saul. He said to him, "The king should not sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you. On the contrary, his actions have been very beneficial<sup>13</sup> for you. 19:5 He risked his life<sup>14</sup> when he struck down the Philistine and the LORD gave all Israel a great victory. When you saw it, you were happy. So why would you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death for no reason?"

19:6 Saul accepted Jonathan's advice<sup>15</sup> and took an oath, "As surely as the LORD lives, he will not be put to death." 19:7 Then Jonathan called David and told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as he had done formerly.<sup>16</sup>

19:8 Now once again there was war. So David went out to fight the Philistines. He defeated them thoroughly<sup>17</sup> and they ran away from him. 19:9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon<sup>18</sup> Saul. He was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was

playing the lyre.<sup>19</sup> 19:10 Saul tried to nail David to the wall with the spear, but he escaped from Saul's presence and the spear drove into the wall.<sup>20</sup> David escaped quickly<sup>21</sup> that night.

19:11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to guard it and to kill him in the morning. Then David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save yourself<sup>22</sup> tonight, tomorrow you will be dead!" 19:12 So Michal lowered David through the window, and he ran away and escaped.

19:13 Then Michal took a household idol<sup>23</sup> and put it on the bed. She put a quilt<sup>24</sup> made of goat's hair over its head<sup>25</sup> and then covered the idol with a garment. 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, "He's sick."

19:15 Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed so I can kill him." 19:16 When the messengers came, they found only the idol on the bed and the quilt made of goat's hair at its head.

19:17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me this way by sending my enemy away? Now he has escaped!" Michal replied to Saul, "He said to me, 'Help me get away or else I will kill you!'"<sup>26</sup>

19:18 Now David had run away and escaped. He went to Samuel in Ramah and told him everything that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth. 19:19 It was reported to Saul saying, "David is at Naioth in Ramah." 19:20 So Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw a company of prophets prophesying with Samuel standing there as their leader, the spirit of God came upon Saul's messengers, and they also prophesied. 19:21 When it was reported to Saul, he sent more messengers, but they prophesied too. So Saul sent messengers a third time, but they also prophesied. 19:22 Finally Saul<sup>27</sup> himself went to Ramah. When he arrived at the large cistern that is in Secu, he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" They said, "At Naioth in Ramah."

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "saw and knew."

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "Saul's." In the translation the proper name has been replaced by the pronoun for stylistic reasons.

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "him"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb "of David." In the translation the proper name has been replaced by the pronoun for stylistic reasons.

<sup>5</sup> tc The final sentence of v. 29 is absent in most LXX mss.

tn Heb "all the days."

<sup>6</sup> tc Verse 30 is absent in most LXX mss.

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "delighted greatly in David."

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "seeking."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "stay in."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "and hide yourself."

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "when I see."

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "spoke good with respect to David."

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "good."

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "and he put his life into his hand."

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "and Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "and he was before him as before."

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "and he struck them down with a great blow."

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "[was] to."

<sup>19</sup> tn The Hebrew text adds here "with his hand."

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb "and he drove the spear into the wall."

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "fled and escaped."

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb "your life."

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb "teraphim" (also a second time in this verse and once in v. 16). These were statues that represented various deities. According to 2 Kgs 23:24 they were prohibited during the time of Josiah's reform movement in the seventh century. The idol Michal placed under the covers was of sufficient size to give the mistaken impression that David lay in the bed, thus facilitating his escape.

<sup>24</sup> tn The exact meaning of the Hebrew word כְּבִיר (kavir) is uncertain; it is found in the Hebrew Bible only here and in v. 16. It probably refers to a quilt made of goat's hair, perhaps used as a fly net while one slept. See HALOT 458 s.v. \*כְּבִיר. Cf. KJV, TEV "pillow"; NLT "cushion"; NAB, NRSV "net."

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb "at the place of its head."

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb "Send me away! Why should I kill you?" The question has the force of a threat in this context. See P. K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (AB), 325-26.

<sup>27</sup> tn Heb "he" (also in v. 23). The referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

**19:23** So Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. The Spirit of God came upon him as well, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah. **19:24** He even stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel. He lay there<sup>1</sup> naked all that day and night. (For that reason it is asked, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”)

*Jonathan Seeks to Protect David*

**20:1** David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came to Jonathan and asked,<sup>2</sup> “What have I done? What is my offense?<sup>3</sup> How have I sinned before your father? For he is seeking my life!”

**20:2** Jonathan<sup>4</sup> said to him, “By no means are you going to die! My father does nothing<sup>5</sup> large or small without making me aware of it.<sup>6</sup> Why would my father hide this matter from me? It just won’t happen!”

**20:3** Taking an oath, David again<sup>7</sup> said, “Your father is very much aware of the fact<sup>8</sup> that I have found favor with you, and he has thought,<sup>9</sup> ‘Don’t let Jonathan know about this, or he will be upset.’ But as surely as the LORD lives and you live, there is about one step between me and death!” **20:4** Jonathan replied to David, “Tell me what I can do for you.”<sup>10</sup>

**20:5** David said to Jonathan, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am certainly expected to join the king for a meal.<sup>11</sup> You must send me away so I can hide in the field until the third evening from now. **20:6** If your father happens to miss me, you should say, ‘David urgently requested me to let him go<sup>12</sup> to his city Bethlehem,<sup>13</sup> for there is an annual sacrifice there for his entire family.’ **20:7** If he should then say, ‘That’s fine,<sup>14</sup> then your servant is safe. But if he becomes very angry, be assured that he has decided to harm me.<sup>15</sup> **20:8** You must be loyal<sup>16</sup> to your servant, for you have made a covenant

with your servant in the LORD’s name.<sup>17</sup> If I am guilty,<sup>18</sup> you yourself kill me! Why bother taking me to your father?”

**20:9** Jonathan said, “Far be it from you to suggest this! If I were at all aware that my father had decided to harm you, wouldn’t I tell you about it?”

**20:10** David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?” **20:11** Jonathan said to David, “Come on. Let’s go out to the field.”

When the two of them had gone out into the field, **20:12** Jonathan said to David, “The LORD God of Israel is my witness.<sup>19</sup> I will feel out my father about this time the day after tomorrow. If he is favorably inclined toward David, will I not then send word to you and let you know?<sup>20</sup> **20:13** But if my father intends to do you harm, may the LORD do all this and more to Jonathan, if I don’t let you know<sup>21</sup> and send word to you so you can go safely on your way.<sup>22</sup> May the LORD be with you, as he was with my father. **20:14** While I am still alive, extend to me the loyalty of the LORD, or else I will die! **20:15** Don’t ever cut off your loyalty to my family, not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth **20:16** and called David’s enemies to account.” So Jonathan made a covenant<sup>23</sup> with the house of David.<sup>24</sup> **20:17** Jonathan once again took an oath with David, because he loved him. In fact Jonathan loved him as much as he did his own life.<sup>25</sup> **20:18** Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty. **20:19** On the third day<sup>26</sup> you should go down quickly<sup>27</sup> and come to the place where you hid yourself the day this all started.<sup>28</sup> Stay near the stone

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb “for into a covenant of the LORD you have brought your servant with you.”

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “and if there is in me guilt.”

<sup>19</sup> tc The Hebrew text has simply “the LORD God of Israel.” On the basis of the Syriac version, many reconstruct the text to read “[is] my witness,” which may have fallen out of the text by homoiocorction (an error which is entirely possible if נָדַ, ‘ed,’ “witness,” immediately followed דָּוִד, “David,” in the original text).

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “and uncover your ear.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “uncover your ear.”

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb “in peace.”

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “cut.” The object of the verb (“covenant”) must be supplied.

<sup>24</sup> tn The word order is different in the Hebrew text, which reads “and Jonathan cut with the house of David, and the LORD will seek from the hand of the enemies of David.” The translation assumes that the main clauses of the verse have been accidentally transposed in the course of transmission. The first part of the verse (as it stands in MT) belongs with v. 17, while the second part of the verse actually continues v. 15.

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb “for [with] the love of his [own] life he loved him.”

<sup>26</sup> tc Heb “you will do [something] a third time.” The translation assumes an emendation of the verb from שְׁלִישִׁית (shillashita, “to do a third time”) to שְׁלִישִׁית (shillishit, “[on] the third [day]”).

<sup>27</sup> tn Heb “you must go down greatly.” See Judg 19:11 for the same idiom.

<sup>28</sup> tn Heb “on the day of the deed.” This probably refers to the incident recorded in 19:2.

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “and he fell down.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “and he came and said before Jonathan.”

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “What is my guilt?”

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Jonathan) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>5</sup> tc The translation follows the Qere, many medieval Hebrew mss, and the ancient versions in reading “he will not do,” rather than the *Kethib* of the MT (“do to him”).

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “without uncovering my ear.”

<sup>7</sup> tc The LXX and the Syriac Peshitta lack the word “again.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “said,” that is, to himself. So also in v. 25.

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “whatever your soul says, I will do for you.”

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “and I must surely sit with the king to eat.” The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “to run.”

<sup>13</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “good.”

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “know that the evil is completed from with him.”

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “and you must do loyalty.”

Ezel. **20:20** I will shoot three arrows near it, as though I were shooting at a target. **20:21** When I send a boy after them, I will say, "Go and find the arrows." If I say to the boy, "Look, the arrows are on this side of you,"<sup>1</sup> get them,<sup>2</sup> then come back. For as surely as the LORD lives, you will be safe and there will be no problem. **20:22** But if I say to the boy, "Look, the arrows are on the other side of you,"<sup>2</sup> get away. For in that case the LORD has sent you away. **20:23** With regard to the matter that you and I discussed, the LORD is the witness between us forever!<sup>3</sup>

**20:24** So David hid in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat his meal. **20:25** The king sat down in his usual place by the wall, with Jonathan opposite him<sup>4</sup> and Abner at his side.<sup>5</sup> But David's place was vacant. **20:26** However, Saul said nothing about it<sup>6</sup> that day, for he thought,<sup>7</sup> "Something has happened to make him ceremonially unclean. Yes, he must be unclean." **20:27** But the next morning, the second day of the new moon, David's place was still vacant. So Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why has Jesse's son not come to the meal yesterday or today?"

**20:28** Jonathan replied to Saul, "David urgently requested that he be allowed to go to Bethlehem. **20:29** He said, 'Permit me to go,<sup>8</sup> for we are having a family sacrifice in the city, and my brother urged<sup>9</sup> me to be there. So now, if I have found favor with you, let me go<sup>10</sup> to see my brothers.' For that reason he has not come to the king's table."

**20:30** Saul became angry with Jonathan<sup>11</sup> and said to him, "You stupid traitor!<sup>12</sup> Don't I

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "from you and here."

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "from you and onward."

<sup>3</sup> tc Heb "the LORD [is] between me and between you forever." The translation assumes that the original text read עַד עַד-עוֹלָם ('*ed 'ad-'olam*'), "a witness forever," with the noun "a witness" accidentally falling out of the text by haplography. See P. K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (AB), 338.

<sup>4</sup> tc Heb "and Jonathan arose." Instead of MT's וַיָּקָם (*vayy-aqam*, "and he arose"; from the hollow verbal root *qum*), the translation assumes a reading וַיֵּיָקֶדֶם (*vayyiqaddem*, "and he was in front of"; from the verbal root *qdm*). See P. K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (AB), 338.

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "and Abner sat at the side of Saul."

<sup>6</sup> tn The words "about it" are not present in the Hebrew text, although they are implied.

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "said," that is, to himself.

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "send me."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "commanded."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "be released [from duty]."

<sup>11</sup> tc Many medieval Hebrew mss include the words "his son" here.

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "son of a perverse woman of rebelliousness." But such an overly literal and domesticated translation of the Hebrew expression fails to capture the force of Saul's unrestrained reaction. Saul, now incensed and enraged over Jonathan's liaison with David, is actually hurling very coarse and emotionally charged words at his son. The translation of this phrase suggested by Koehler and Baumgartner is "bastard of a wayward woman" (*HALOT* 796 s.v. יָדָה), but this is not an expression commonly used in English. A better English approximation of the sentiments expressed here by the Hebrew phrase would be "You stupid son of a bitch!" However, sensitivity to the various public formats in which the Bible is read aloud has led to a less startling English rendering which focuses on the semantic value of Saul's utterance (i.e., the

realize that to your own disgrace and to the disgrace of your mother's nakedness you have chosen this son of Jesse? **20:31** For as long as<sup>13</sup> this son of Jesse is alive on the earth, you and your kingdom will not be established. Now, send some men<sup>14</sup> and bring him to me. For he is as good as dead!"<sup>15</sup>

**20:32** Jonathan responded to his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" **20:33** Then Saul threw his spear at Jonathan<sup>16</sup> in order to strike him down. So Jonathan was convinced<sup>17</sup> that his father had decided to kill David. **20:34** Jonathan got up from the table enraged. He did not eat any food on that second day of the new moon, for he was upset that his father had humiliated David.<sup>18</sup>

**20:35** The next morning Jonathan, along with a young servant, went out to the field to meet David. **20:36** He said to his servant, "Run, find the arrows that I am about to shoot." As the servant ran, Jonathan<sup>19</sup> shot the arrow beyond him. **20:37** When the servant came to the place where Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan called out to<sup>20</sup> the servant, "Isn't the arrow further beyond you?" **20:38** Jonathan called out to the servant, "Hurry! Go faster! Don't delay!" Jonathan's servant retrieved the arrow and came back to his master. **20:39** (Now the servant did not understand any of this. Only Jonathan and David knew what was going on.)<sup>21</sup> **20:40** Then Jonathan gave his equipment to the servant who was with him. He said to him, "Go, take these things back to the city."

behavior of his own son Jonathan, which he viewed as both a personal and a political betrayal [= "traitor"]). But this concession should not obscure the fact that Saul is full of bitterness and frustration. That he would address his son Jonathan with such language, not to mention his apparent readiness even to kill his own son over this friendship with David (v. 33), indicates something of the extreme depth of Saul's jealousy and hatred of David.

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "all the days that."

<sup>14</sup> tn The words "some men" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "a son of death."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "him"; the referent (Jonathan) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "knew."

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "for he was upset concerning David for his father had humiliated him." The referent of the pronoun "him" is not entirely clear, but the phrase "concerning David" suggests that it refers to David, rather than Jonathan.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Jonathan) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb "called after" (also in v. 38).

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "knew the matter."



**20:41** When the servant had left, David got up from beside the mound,<sup>1</sup> knelt<sup>2</sup> with his face to the ground, and bowed three times. Then they kissed each other and they both wept, especially David. **20:42** Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, for the two of us have sworn together in the name of the LORD saying, ‘The LORD will be between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.’”

*David Goes to Nob*

(21:1)<sup>3</sup> Then David<sup>4</sup> got up and left, while Jonathan went back to the city. **21:1** (21:2) David went to Ahimelech the priest in Nob. Ahimelech was shaking with fear when he met<sup>5</sup> David, and said to him, “Why are you by yourself with no one accompanying you?” **21:2** David replied to Ahimelech the priest, “The king instructed me to do something, but he said to me, ‘Don’t let anyone know the reason I am sending you or the instructions I have given you.’<sup>6</sup> I have told my soldiers<sup>7</sup> to wait at a certain place.<sup>8</sup> **21:3** Now what do you have at your disposal?<sup>9</sup> Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever can be found.”

**21:4** The priest replied to David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread at my disposal. Only holy bread is available, and then only if your soldiers<sup>10</sup> have abstained from sexual relations with women.”<sup>11</sup> **21:5** David said to the priest, “Certainly women have been kept away from us, just as on previous occasions when I have set out. The soldiers’<sup>12</sup> equipment is holy, even on an ordinary journey. How much more so will they be holy today, along with their equipment!”

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The translation follows the LXX in reading “the mound,” rather than the MT’s “the south.” It is hard to see what meaning the MT reading “from beside the south” would have as it stands, since such a location lacks specificity. The NIV treats it as an elliptical expression, rendering the phrase as “from the south side of the stone (rock NCV).” This is perhaps possible, but it seems better to follow the LXX rather than the MT here.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “fell.”

<sup>3</sup> **sn** Beginning with 20:42b, the verse numbers through 21:15 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (*BHS*), with 20:42b ET = 21:1 HT, 21:1 ET = 21:2 HT, 21:2 ET = 21:3 HT, etc., through 21:15 ET = 21:16 HT. With 22:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “trembled to meet.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “let not a man know anything about the matter [for] which I am sending you and [about] which I commanded you.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “servants.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The Hebrew expression here refers to a particular, but unnamed, place. It occurs in the OT only here, in 2 Kgs 6:8, and in Ruth 4:1, where Boaz uses it to refer to Naomi’s unnamed kinsman-redeemer. A contracted form of the expression appears in Dan 8:13.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “under your hand.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “servants.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “have kept themselves from women” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “haven’t had sexual relations recently”; NLT “have not slept with any women recently.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “servants’.”

**21:6** So the priest gave him holy bread, for there was no bread there other than the bread of the Presence. It had been removed from before the LORD in order to replace it with hot bread on the day it had been taken away. **21:7** (One of Saul’s servants was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, who was in charge of Saul’s shepherds.) **21:8** David said to Ahimelech, “Is there no sword or spear here at your disposal? I don’t have my own sword or equipment in hand due to the urgency of the king’s instructions.”

*David Goes to Gath*

**21:9** The priest replied, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the valley of Elah, is wrapped in a garment behind the ephod. If you wish, take it for yourself. Other than that, there’s nothing here.” David said, “There’s nothing like it! Give it to me!” **21:10** So on that day David arose and fled from Saul. He went to King Achish of Gath. **21:11** The servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one that they sing about when they dance, saying,

‘Saul struck down his thousands,  
But David his tens of thousands?’”

**21:12** David thought about what they said<sup>13</sup> and was very afraid of King Achish of Gath. **21:13** He altered his behavior in their presence.<sup>14</sup> Since he was in their power,<sup>15</sup> he pretended to be insane, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard.

**21:14** Achish said to his servants, “Look at this madman! Why did you bring him to me? **21:15** Do I have a shortage of fools, that you have brought me this man to display his insanity in front of me? Should this man enter my house?”

*David Goes to Adullam and Mizpah*

**22:1** So David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and the rest of his father’s family<sup>16</sup> learned about it, they went down there to him. **22:2** All those who were in trouble or owed someone money or were discontented<sup>17</sup> gathered around<sup>18</sup> him, and he became their leader. He had about four hundred men with him.

**22:3** Then David went from there to Mizpah in Moab, where he said to the king of Moab, “Please let my father and mother stay<sup>19</sup> with you until I know what God is going to do for me.” **22:4** So he had them stay with the king of Moab;

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “placed these matters in his heart.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in their eyes.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in their hand.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “house.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “bitter of soul.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “go forth.”

they stayed with him the whole time<sup>1</sup> that David was in the stronghold. **22:5** Then Gad the prophet said to David, “Don’t stay in the stronghold. Go to the land of Judah.” So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

#### *Saul Executes the Priests*

**22:6** But Saul found out the whereabouts of David and the men who were with him.<sup>2</sup> Now Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree at an elevated location with his spear in hand and all his servants stationed around him. **22:7** Saul said to his servants who were stationed around him, “Listen up, you Benjaminites! Is Jesse’s son giving fields and vineyards to all of you? Or is he making all of you<sup>3</sup> commanders and officers?<sup>4</sup> **22:8** For all of you have conspired against me! No one informs me<sup>5</sup> when my own son makes an agreement with this son of Jesse! Not one of you feels sorry for me or informs me that my own son has commissioned my own servant to hide in ambush against me, as is the case today!”

**22:9** But Doeg the Edomite, who had stationed himself with the servants of Saul, replied, “I saw this son of Jesse come to Ahimelech son of Ahitub at Nob. **22:10** He inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions. He also gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.”

**22:11** Then the king arranged for a meeting with the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and all the priests of his father’s house who were at Nob. They all came to the king. **22:12** Then Saul said, “Listen, son of Ahitub.” He replied, “Here I am, my lord.” **22:13** Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and this son of Jesse? You gave<sup>6</sup> him bread and a sword and inquired of God on his behalf, so that he opposes<sup>7</sup> me and waits in ambush, as is the case today!”

**22:14** Ahimelech replied to the king, “Who among all your servants is faithful like David? He is the king’s son-in-law, the leader of your bodyguard, and honored in your house! **22:15** Was it just today that I began to inquire of God on his behalf? Far be it from me! The king should not accuse<sup>8</sup> his servant or any of my fa-

ther’s house. For your servant is not aware of all this – not in whole or in part!”<sup>9</sup>

**22:16** But the king said, “You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father’s house! **22:17** Then the king said to the messengers<sup>10</sup> who were stationed beside him, “Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, for they too have sided<sup>11</sup> with David! They knew he was fleeing, but they did not inform me.” But the king’s servants refused to harm<sup>12</sup> the priests of the LORD.

**22:18** Then the king said to Doeg, “You turn and strike down the priests!” So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests. He killed on that day eighty-five<sup>13</sup> men who wore the linen ephod. **22:19** As for Nob, the city of the priests, he struck down with the sword men and women, children and infants, oxen, donkeys, and sheep – all with the sword.

**22:20** But one of the sons of Ahimelech son of Ahitub escaped and fled to David. His name was Abiathar. **22:21** Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. **22:22** Then David said to Abiathar, “I knew that day when Doeg the Edomite was there that he would certainly tell Saul! I am guilty<sup>14</sup> of all the deaths in your father’s house! **22:23** Stay with me. Don’t be afraid! Whoever<sup>15</sup> seeks my life is seeking your life as well. You are secure with me.”

#### *David Delivers the City of Keilah*

**23:1** They told David, “The Philistines are fighting in Keilah and are looting the threshing floors.” **23:2** So David asked the LORD, “Should I go and strike down these Philistines?” The LORD said to David, “Go, strike down the Philistines and deliver Keilah.”

**23:3** But David’s men said to him, “We are afraid while we are still here in Judah! What will it be like if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” **23:4** So David asked the LORD once again. But again the LORD replied, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.”

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Heb “small or great.”

<sup>10</sup> *tn* Heb “runners.”

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “their hand is.”

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb “to extend their hand to harm.”

<sup>13</sup> *tc* The number is confused in the Greek *ms* tradition. The LXX, with the exception of the Lucianic recension, has the number 305. The Lucianic recension, along with a couple of Old Latin *mss*, has the number 350.

<sup>14</sup> *tc* The translation follows the LXX, which reads “I am guilty,” rather than the MT, which has “I have turned.”

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Or “the one who.” This may refer specifically to Saul, in which case David acknowledges that Abiathar’s life is endangered because of his allegiance to David. The translation assumes that the statement is more generalized, meaning that any enemy of Abiathar is an enemy of David. In other words, David promises that he will protect Abiathar with his very own life.

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “all the days.”

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb “and Saul heard that David and the men who were with him were known.”

<sup>3</sup> *tc* The MT has “to all of you.” If this reading is correct, we have here an example of a prepositional phrase functioning as the equivalent of a dative of advantage, which is not impossible from a grammatical point of view. However, the LXX, the Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate all have “and.” A conjunction rather than a preposition should probably be read on the front of this phrase.

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “officers of a thousand and officers of a hundred.”

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb “uncovers my ear.”

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb “by giving.”

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb “rises up against.”

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “set a matter against.”

**23:5** So David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines. He took away their cattle and thoroughly defeated them.<sup>1</sup> David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah.

*David Eludes Saul Again*

**23:6** Now when Abiathar son of Ahimelech had fled to David at Keilah, he had brought with him an ephod.<sup>2</sup> **23:7** When Saul was told that David had come to Keilah, Saul said, “God has delivered<sup>3</sup> him into my hand, for he has boxed himself into a corner by entering a city with two barred gates.”<sup>4</sup> **23:8** So Saul mustered all his army to go down to Keilah and besiege David and his men.<sup>5</sup>

**23:9** When David realized that Saul was planning to harm him,<sup>6</sup> he told Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod!” **23:10** Then David said, “O LORD God of Israel, your servant has clearly heard that Saul is planning<sup>7</sup> to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me. **23:11** Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, please inform your servant!”

Then the LORD said, “He will come down.” **23:12** David asked, “Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me and my men into Saul’s hand?” The LORD said, “They will deliver you over.”

**23:13** So David and his men, who numbered about six hundred, set out and left Keilah; they moved around from one place to another.<sup>8</sup> When told that David had escaped from Keilah, Saul called a halt to his expedition. **23:14** David stayed in the strongholds that were in the desert and in the hill country of the desert of Ziph. Saul looked for him all the time,<sup>9</sup> but God did not deliver David<sup>10</sup> into his hand. **23:15** David realized<sup>11</sup> that Saul had come out to seek his life; at

that time David was in Horesh in the desert of Ziph.

**23:16** Then Jonathan son of Saul left and went to David at Horesh. He encouraged him<sup>12</sup> through God. **23:17** He said to him, “Don’t be afraid! For the hand of my father Saul cannot find you. You will rule over Israel, and I will be your second in command. Even my father Saul realizes this.”

**23:18** When the two of them had made a covenant before the LORD, David stayed on at Horesh, but Jonathan went to his house.

**23:19** Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeath and said, “Isn’t David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh on the hill of Hakilah, south of Jeshimon? **23:20** Now at your own discretion,<sup>13</sup> O king, come down. Delivering him into the king’s hand will be our responsibility.”

**23:21** Saul replied, “May you be blessed by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me. **23:22** Go and make further arrangements. Determine precisely<sup>14</sup> where he is<sup>15</sup> and who has seen him there, for I am told that he is extremely cunning. **23:23** Locate precisely all the places where he hides and return to me with dependable information.<sup>16</sup> Then I will go with you. If he is in the land, I will find him<sup>17</sup> among all the thousands of Judah.”

**23:24** So they left and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the desert of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. **23:25** Saul and his men went to look for him.<sup>18</sup> But David was informed and went down to the rock and stayed in the desert of Maon. When Saul heard about it, he pursued David in the desert of Maon. **23:26** Saul went on one side of the mountain, while David and his men went on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, but Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men so they could capture them. **23:27** But a messenger came to Saul saying, “Come quickly, for the Philistines have raided the land!”

**23:28** So Saul stopped pursuing David and went to confront the Philistines. Therefore that place is called Sela Hammahlekoth.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “and struck them down with a great blow.”

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb “an ephod went down in his hand.”

<sup>3</sup> *tn* The MT reading (“God has alienated him into my hand”) in v. 7 is a difficult and uncommon idiom. The use of this verb in Jer 19:4 is somewhat parallel, but not entirely so. Many scholars have therefore suspected a textual problem here, emending the word נָכַר (*nikkar*, “alienated”) to סָכַר (*sikkar*, “he has shut up [i.e., delivered]”). This is the idea reflected in the translations of the Syriac Peshitta and Vulgate, although it is not entirely clear whether they are reading something different from the MT or are simply paraphrasing what for them too may have been a difficult text. The LXX has “God has sold him into my hands,” apparently reading מָכַר (*makar*, “sold”) for MT’s נָכַר. The present translation is a rather free interpretation.

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “with two gates and a bar.” Since in English “bar” could be understood as a saloon, it has been translated as an attributive: “two barred gates.”

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb “So Saul mustered all his army for battle to go down to Keilah to besiege against David and his men.”

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb “Saul was planning the evil against him.”

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb “seeking.”

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “they went where they went.”

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Heb “all the days.”

<sup>10</sup> *tn* Heb “him”; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “saw.”

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb “strengthened his hand.”

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb “to all the desire of your soul.”

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Heb “know and see.” The expression is a hendiadys. See also v. 23.

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb “his place where his foot is.”

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb “established.”

<sup>17</sup> *tn* Heb “I will search him out.”

<sup>18</sup> *tn* Heb “to search.”

<sup>19</sup> *sn* The name הַמְּחַלְקוֹת סֵלָה (*Sela Hammakhleqoth*) probably means “Rock of Divisions” in Hebrew, in the sense that Saul and David parted company there (cf. NAB “Gorge of Divisions”; TEV “Separation Hill”). This etymology assumes that the word derives from the Hebrew root חָלַק (*khlaq*, “to divide”; HALOT 322 s.v. חָלַק). However, there is another root חָלַק, which means “to be smooth or slippery” (HALOT 322 s.v. חָלַק). If the word is taken from this root, the expression would mean “Slippery Rock.”

23:29 (24:1)<sup>1</sup> Then David went up from there and stayed in the strongholds of En Gedi.

### *David Spares Saul's Life*

24:1 (24:2) When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, they told him, "Look, David is in the desert of En Gedi." 24:2 So Saul took three thousand select men from all Israel and went to find<sup>2</sup> David and his men in the region of<sup>3</sup> the rocks of the mountain goats.<sup>4</sup> 24:3 He came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave. Saul went into it to relieve himself.<sup>5</sup>

Now David and his men were sitting in the recesses of the cave. 24:4 David's men said to him, "This is the day about which the LORD said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you can do to him whatever seems appropriate to you.'"<sup>6</sup> So David got up and quietly cut off an edge of Saul's robe. 24:5 Afterward David's conscience bothered him<sup>7</sup> because he had cut off an edge of Saul's robe. 24:6 He said to his men, "May the LORD keep me far away from doing such a thing to my lord, who is the LORD's chosen one,<sup>8</sup> by extending my hand against him. After all,<sup>9</sup> he is the LORD's chosen one."<sup>10</sup> 24:7 David restrained his men with these words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and started down<sup>11</sup> the road.

24:8 Afterward David got up and went out of the cave. He called out after Saul, "My lord, O king!" When Saul looked behind him, David kneeled down and bowed with his face to the ground. 24:9 David said to Saul, "Why do you pay attention when men say, 'David is seeking to do you harm'?" 24:10 Today your own eyes see how the LORD delivered you – this very day – into my hands in the cave. Some told me to kill you, but I had pity<sup>12</sup> on you and said, 'I will not extend my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's chosen one.'<sup>13</sup> 24:11 Look, my father, and see the edge of your robe in my hand! When

I cut off the edge of your robe, I didn't kill you. So realize and understand that I am not planning<sup>14</sup> evil or rebellion. Even though I have not sinned against you, you are waiting in ambush to take my life. 24:12 May the LORD judge between the two of us, and may the LORD vindicate me over you, but my hand will not be against you. 24:13 It's like the old proverb says: 'From evil people evil proceeds.' But my hand will not be against you. 24:14 Who has the king of Israel come out after? Who is it that you are pursuing? A dead dog? A single flea? 24:15 May the LORD be our judge and arbiter. May he see and arbitrate my case and deliver me from your hands!"

24:16 When David finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" Then Saul wept loudly.<sup>15</sup> 24:17 He said to David, "You are more innocent<sup>16</sup> than I, for you have treated me well, even though I have tried to harm you! 24:18 You have explained today how you have treated me well. The LORD delivered me into your hand, but you did not kill me. 24:19 Now if a man finds his enemy, does he send him on his way in good shape? May the LORD repay you with good this day for what you have done to me. 24:20 Now look, I realize that you will in fact be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. 24:21 So now swear to me in the LORD's name<sup>17</sup> that you will not kill<sup>18</sup> my descendants after me or destroy my name from the house of my father."

24:22 David promised Saul this on oath.<sup>19</sup> Then Saul went to his house, and David and his men went up to the stronghold.

### *The Death of Samuel*

25:1 Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned him. They buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David left and went down to the desert of Paran.<sup>20</sup>

### *David Marries Abigail the Widow of Nabal*

25:2 There was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. This man was very wealthy;<sup>21</sup> he owned three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. At that time he was shearing his

<sup>1</sup> sn Beginning with 23:29, the verse numbers through 24:22 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 23:29 ET = 24:1 HT, 24:1 ET = 24:2 HT, 24:2 ET = 24:3 HT, etc., through 24:22 ET = 24:23 HT. With 25:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "to search [for]."

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "upon the face of."

<sup>4</sup> tn Or "the region of the Rocks of the Mountain Goats," if this expression is understood as a place name (cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV, TEV, CEV).

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "to cover his feet," an idiom (euphemism) for relieving oneself (cf. NAB "to ease nature").

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "is good in your eyes."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "the heart of David struck him."

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "anointed."

<sup>9</sup> tn Or "for."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "anointed."

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "went on."

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "it had pity," apparently with the understood subject being "my eye," in accordance with a common expression.

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "anointed."

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "there is not in my hand."

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "lifted his voice and wept."

<sup>16</sup> tn Or "righteous" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB "you are in the right"; NLT "are a better man than I am."

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "by the LORD."

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "cut off."

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "and David swore an oath to Saul."

<sup>20</sup> tc The LXX reads "Maon" here instead of "Paran," perhaps because the following account of Nabal is said to be in Maon (v. 2). This reading is followed by a number of English versions (e.g., NAB, NIV, NCV, NLT). The MT, however, reads "Paran," a location which would parallel this portion of David's life with that of the nation Israel which also spent time in Paran (Num 10:12). Also, the desert of Paran was on the southern border of Judah's territory and would be the most isolated location for hiding from Saul.

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "great."



sheep in Carmel. **25:3** The man's name was Nabal,<sup>1</sup> and his wife's name was Abigail. She was both wise<sup>2</sup> and beautiful, but the man was harsh and his deeds were evil. He was a Calebite.

**25:4** When David heard in the desert that Nabal was shearing his sheep, **25:5** he<sup>3</sup> sent ten servants,<sup>4</sup> saying to them,<sup>5</sup> "Go up to Carmel to see Nabal and give him greetings in my name."<sup>6</sup> **25:6** Then you will say to my brother,<sup>7</sup> "Peace to you and your house! Peace to all that is yours!" **25:7** Now I hear that they are shearing sheep for you. When your shepherds were with us, we neither insulted them nor harmed them the whole time they were in Carmel. **25:8** Ask your own servants; they can tell you! May my servants find favor in your sight, for we have come<sup>8</sup> at the time of a holiday. Please provide us – your servants<sup>9</sup> and your son David – with whatever you can spare."<sup>10</sup>

**25:9** So David's servants went and spoke all these words to Nabal in David's name. Then they paused. **25:10** But Nabal responded to David's servants, "Who is David, and who is this son of Jesse? This is a time when many servants are breaking away from their masters! **25:11** Should I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers and give them to these men? I don't even know where they came from!"

**25:12** So David's servants went on their way. When they had returned, they came and told

David<sup>11</sup> all these things. **25:13** Then David instructed his men, "Each of you strap on your sword!" So each one strapped on his sword, and David also strapped on his sword. About four hundred men followed David up, while two hundred stayed behind with the equipment.

**25:14** But one of the servants told Nabal's wife Abigail, "David sent messengers from the desert to greet<sup>12</sup> our lord, but he screamed at them. **25:15** These men were very good to us. They did not insult us, nor did we sustain any loss during the entire time we were together<sup>13</sup> in the field. **25:16** Both night and day they were a protective wall for us the entire time we were with them, while we were tending our flocks. **25:17** Now be aware of this, and see what you can do. For disaster has been planned for our lord and his entire household."<sup>14</sup> He is such a wicked person<sup>15</sup> that no one tells him anything!"

**25:18** So Abigail quickly took two hundred loaves of bread, two containers<sup>16</sup> of wine, five prepared sheep, five seahs<sup>17</sup> of roasted grain, a hundred bunches of raisins, and two hundred lumps of pressed figs. She loaded them on donkeys **25:19** and said to her servants, "Go on ahead of me. I will come after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

**25:20** Riding on her donkey, she went down under cover of the mountain. David and his men were coming down to meet her, and she encountered them. **25:21** Now David had been thinking,<sup>18</sup> "In vain I guarded everything that belonged to this man in the desert. I didn't take anything from him. But he has repaid my good with evil. **25:22** God will severely punish David,<sup>19</sup> if I leave alive until morning even one male<sup>20</sup> from all those who belong to him!"

**25:23** When Abigail saw David, she got down

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The name נָבָל (*Nabal*) means "foolish" or "senseless" in Hebrew, and as an adjective the word is used especially of persons who have no perception of ethical or religious claims. It is an apt name for this character, who certainly typifies such behavior.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "good of insight"; KJV "of good understanding"; NAB, NIV, TEV "intelligent"; NRSV "clever."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "David"; for stylistic reasons the pronoun has been used in the translation.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or "young men."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and David said to the young men."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and inquire concerning him in my name in regard to peace."

<sup>7</sup> **tc** The text is difficult here. The MT and most of the early versions support the reading לֶחַי (*lekhai*, "to life," or "to the one who lives"). Some of the older English versions (KJV, ASV; cf. NKJV) took the expression to mean "to him who lives (in prosperity)," but this translation requires reading a good deal into the words. While the expression could have the sense of "Long life to you!" (cf. NIV, NJPS) or perhaps "Good luck to you!" this seems somewhat redundant in light of the salutation that follows in the context. The Latin Vulgate has *fratribus meis* ("to my brothers"), which suggests that Jerome understood the Hebrew word to have an *alef* that is absent in the MT (i.e., לֶחַי, *le'ekhay*). Jerome's plural, however, remains a problem, since in the context David is addressing a single individual, namely Nabal, and not a group. However, it is likely that the Vulgate witnesses to a consonantal Hebrew text that is to be preferred here, especially if the word were to be vocalized as a singular rather than a plural. While it is impossible to be certain about this reading, the present translation essentially follows the Vulgate in reading "my brother" (so also NJB; cf. NAB, RSV, NRSV).

<sup>8</sup> **tc** The translation follows many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading בָּנוּ (*ba'nu*, "we have come") rather than the MT's בָּנוּ (*banu*, "we have built").

<sup>9</sup> **tn** This refers to the ten servants sent by David.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "whatever your hand will find."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "him"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "bless."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all the days we walked about with them when we were."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all his house" (so ASV, NRSV); NAB, NLT "his whole family."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he is a son of worthlessness."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "skins."

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The seah was a dry measure equal to one-third of an ephah, or not quite eleven quarts.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "said."

<sup>19</sup> **tc** *Heb* "Thus God will do to the enemies of David and thus he will add." Most of the Old Greek ms tradition has simply "David," with no reference to his enemies. In OT imprecations such as the one found in v. 22 it is common for the speaker to direct malediction toward himself as an indication of the seriousness with which he regards the matter at hand. In other words, the speaker invites on himself dire consequences if he fails to fulfill the matter expressed in the oath. However, in the situation alluded to in v. 22 the threat actually does not come to fruition due to the effectiveness of Abigail's appeal to David in behalf of her husband Nabal. Instead, David is placated through Abigail's intervention. It therefore seems likely that the reference to "the enemies of David" in the MT of v. 22 is the result of a scribal attempt to deliver David from the implied consequences of this oath. The present translation follows the LXX rather than the MT here.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "one who urinates against a wall" (also in v. 34); KJV "any that pisseth against the wall."

quickly from the donkey, threw herself down before David, and bowed to the ground. **25:24** Falling at his feet, she said, "My lord, I accept all the guilt! But please let your female servant speak with my lord! Please listen to the words of your servant!" **25:25** My lord should not pay attention to this wicked man Nabal. He simply lives up to his name! His name means 'fool,' and he is indeed foolish!<sup>1</sup> But I, your servant, did not see the servants my lord sent.<sup>2</sup>

**25:26** "Now, my lord, as surely as the LORD lives and as surely as you live, it is the LORD who has kept you from shedding blood and taking matters into your own hands. Now may your enemies and those who seek to harm my lord be like Nabal. **25:27** Now let this present<sup>3</sup> that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the servants who follow<sup>4</sup> my lord. **25:28** Please forgive the sin of your servant, for the LORD will certainly establish the house of my lord, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD. May no evil be found in you all your days! **25:29** When someone sets out to chase you and to take your life, the life of my lord will be wrapped securely in the bag<sup>5</sup> of the living by the LORD your God. But he will sling away the lives of your enemies from the sling's pocket! **25:30** The LORD will do for my lord everything that he promised you,<sup>6</sup> and he will make<sup>7</sup> you a leader over Israel. **25:31** Your conscience will not be overwhelmed with guilt<sup>8</sup> for having poured out innocent blood and for having taken matters into your own hands. When the LORD has granted my lord success,<sup>9</sup> please remember your servant."

**25:32** Then David said to Abigail, "Praised<sup>10</sup> be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you this day to meet me! **25:33** Praised be your good judgment! May you yourself be rewarded<sup>11</sup> for having prevented me this day from shedding blood and taking matters into my own hands! **25:34** Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives – he who has prevented me from harming you – if you had not come so quickly to meet me, by morning's light not even one male belonging to Nabal would have remained alive!" **25:35** Then David took from her hand what she had brought to him. He said to her, "Go back<sup>12</sup>

to your home in peace. Be assured that I have listened to you<sup>13</sup> and responded favorably."<sup>14</sup>

**25:36** When Abigail went back to Nabal, he was holding a banquet in his house like that of the king. Nabal was having a good time<sup>15</sup> and was very intoxicated. She told him absolutely nothing<sup>16</sup> until morning's light. **25:37** In the morning, when Nabal was sober,<sup>17</sup> his wife told him about these matters. He had a stroke and was paralyzed.<sup>18</sup> **25:38** After about ten days the LORD struck Nabal down and he died.

**25:39** When David heard that Nabal had died, he said, "Praised be the LORD who has vindicated me and avenged the insult that I suffered from Nabal!<sup>19</sup> The LORD has kept his servant from doing evil, and he has repaid Nabal for his evil deeds."<sup>20</sup> Then David sent word to Abigail and asked her to become his wife.

**25:40** So the servants of David went to Abigail at Carmel and said to her, "David has sent us to you to bring you back to be his wife." **25:41** She arose, bowed her face toward the ground, and said, "Your female servant, like a lowly servant, will wash<sup>21</sup> the feet of the servants of my lord." **25:42** Then Abigail quickly went and mounted her donkey, with five of her female servants accompanying her.<sup>22</sup> She followed David's messengers and became his wife.

**25:43** David had also married<sup>23</sup> Ahinoam from Jezreel; the two of them became his wives. **25:44** (Now Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was from Gallim.)

### *David Spares Saul's Life Again*

**26:1** The Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Isn't David hiding on the hill of Hakilah near<sup>24</sup> Jeshimon?" **26:2** So Saul arose and

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "your voice."

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "I have lifted up your face."

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "and the heart of Nabal was good upon him"; NASB, NRSV "Nabal's heart was merry within him"; NIV "he was in high spirits"; NCV, TEV "was in a good mood"; CEV "was very drunk and feeling good."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "and she did not tell him a thing, small or large."

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "when the wine had gone out from Nabal."

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "and his heart died within him and he became a stone." Cf. TEV, NLT "stroke"; CEV "heart attack." For an alternative interpretation than that presented above, see Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, "The Law of the Heart: The Death of a Fool (1 Samuel 25)," *JBL* 120 (2001): 401-27, who argues that a medical diagnosis is not necessary here. Instead, the passage makes a connection between the heart and the law; Nabal dies for his lawlessness.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "who has argued the case of my insult from the hand of Nabal."

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb "his servant he has held back from evil, and the evil of Nabal the LORD has turned back on his head."

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "Here is your maidservant, for a lowly servant to wash."

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb "going at her feet."

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb "taken."

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb "upon the face of."

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "and foolishness is with him."

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "my lord's servants, whom you sent."

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "blessing."

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb "are walking at the feet of."

<sup>5</sup> tn Cf. KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV "bundle"; NLT "treasure pouch."

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "according to all which he spoke, the good concerning you."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "appoint."

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "and this will not be for you for staggering and for stumbling of the heart of my lord."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "and the LORD will do well for my lord."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "blessed" (also in vv. 33, 39).

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "blessed."

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "up."

went down to the desert of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand select men of Israel, to look for David in the desert of Ziph. **26:3** Saul camped by the road on the hill of Hakilah near Jeshimon, but David was staying in the desert. When he realized that Saul had come to the desert to find<sup>1</sup> him, **26:4** David sent scouts and verified that Saul had indeed arrived.<sup>2</sup>

**26:5** So David set out and went to the place where Saul was camped. David saw the place where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the general in command of his army, were sleeping. Now Saul was lying in the entrenchment, and the army was camped all around him. **26:6** David said to Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" Abishai replied, "I will go down with you."

**26:7** So David and Abishai approached the army at night and found Saul lying asleep in the entrenchment with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. Abner and the army were lying all around him. **26:8** Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me drive the spear<sup>3</sup> right through him into the ground with one swift jab!<sup>4</sup> A second jab won't be necessary!"

**26:9** But David said to Abishai, "Don't kill him! Who can extend his hand against the LORD's chosen one<sup>5</sup> and remain guiltless?" **26:10** David went on to say, "As the LORD lives, the LORD himself will strike him down. Either his day will come and he will die, or he will go down into battle and be swept away. **26:11** But may the LORD prevent me from extending my hand against the LORD's chosen one! Now take the spear by Saul's head and the jug of water, and let's get out of here!" **26:12** So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got out of there. No one saw them or was aware of their presence or woke up. All of them were asleep, for the LORD had caused a deep sleep to fall on them.

**26:13** Then David crossed to the other side and stood on the top of the hill some distance away; there was a considerable distance between them. **26:14** David called to the army and to Ab-

ner son of Ner, "Won't you answer, Abner?" Abner replied, "Who are you, that you have called to the king?" **26:15** David said to Abner, "Aren't you a man? After all, who is like you in Israel? Why then haven't you protected your lord the king? One of the soldiers came to kill your lord the king. **26:16** This failure on your part isn't good!<sup>6</sup> As surely as the LORD lives, you people who have not protected your lord, the LORD's chosen one, are as good as dead!<sup>7</sup> Now look where the king's spear and the jug of water that was by his head are!"

**26:17** When Saul recognized David's voice, he said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" David replied, "Yes, it's my voice, my lord the king." **26:18** He went on to say, "Why is my lord chasing his servant? What have I done? What wrong have I done?"<sup>8</sup> **26:19** So let my lord the king now listen to the words of his servant. If the LORD has incited you against me, may he take delight in<sup>9</sup> an offering. But if men have instigated this,<sup>10</sup> may they be cursed before the LORD! For they have driven me away this day from being united with the LORD's inheritance, saying, 'Go on, serve other gods!' **26:20** Now don't let my blood fall to the ground away from the LORD's presence, for the king of Israel has gone out to look for a flea the way one looks for a partridge<sup>11</sup> in the hill country."

**26:21** Saul replied, "I have sinned. Come back, my son David. I won't harm you, for you treated my life with value<sup>12</sup> this day. I have behaved foolishly and have made a very terrible mistake!"<sup>13</sup> **26:22** David replied, "Here is the king's spear! Let one of your servants cross over and get it. **26:23** The LORD rewards each man for his integrity and loyalty.<sup>14</sup> Even though today the LORD delivered you into my hand, I was not willing to extend my hand against the LORD's chosen one. **26:24** In the same way that I valued your life this day,<sup>15</sup> may the LORD value my life<sup>16</sup> and deliver me from all danger." **26:25** Saul replied to David, "May you be rewarded,<sup>17</sup> my son David! You will without question be

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb "after."

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb "and David sent scouts and he knew that Saul had certainly come."

<sup>3</sup> *tn* Here "the spear" almost certainly refers to Saul's own spear, which according to the previous verse was stuck into the ground beside him as he slept. This is reflected in a number of English versions: TEV, CEV "his own spear"; NLT "that spear." Cf. NIV, NCV "my spear," in which case Abishai refers to his own spear rather than Saul's, but this is unlikely since (1) Abishai would probably not have carried a spear along since such a weapon would be unwieldy when sneaking into the enemy camp; and (2) this would not explain the mention of Saul's own spear stuck in the ground beside him in the previous verse.

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb "let me strike him with the spear and into the ground one time."

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb "anointed" (also in vv. 11, 16, 23).

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb "Not good [is] this thing which you have done."

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb "you are sons of death."

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb "What in my hand [is] evil?"

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Heb "may he smell." The implication is that Saul should seek to appease God, for such divine instigation to evil would be a sign of God's disfavor. For a fuller discussion of this passage see R. B. Chisholm, Jr., "Does God Deceive?" *BSac* 155 (1998): 19-21.

<sup>10</sup> *tn* Heb "but if the sons of men."

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb "the calling [one]," which apparently refers to a partridge.

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb "my life was valuable in your eyes."

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb "and I have erred very greatly."

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Heb "and the LORD returns to the man his righteousness and his faithfulness."

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb "your life was great this day in my eyes."

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb "may my life be great in the eyes of the LORD."

<sup>17</sup> *tn* Heb "blessed."

successful!"<sup>1</sup> So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

*David Aligns Himself with the Philistines*

**27:1** David thought to himself,<sup>2</sup> "One of these days I'm going to be swept away by the hand of Saul! There is nothing better for me than to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of searching for me through all the territory of Israel and I will escape from his hand."

**27:2** So David left and crossed over to King Achish son of Maoch of Gath accompanied by his six hundred men. **27:3** David settled with Achish in Gath, along with his men and their families.<sup>3</sup> David had with him his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's widow. **27:4** When Saul learned that David had fled to Gath, he did not mount a new search for him.

**27:5** David said to Achish, "If I have found favor with you, let me be given a place in one of the country towns so that I can live there. Why should your servant settle in the royal city with you?" **27:6** So Achish gave him Ziklag on that day. (For that reason Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah until this very day.) **27:7** The length of time<sup>4</sup> that David lived in the Philistine countryside was a year<sup>5</sup> and four months.

**27:8** Then David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. (They had been living in that land for a long time, from the approach<sup>6</sup> to Shur as far as the land of Egypt.) **27:9** When David would attack a district,<sup>7</sup> he would leave neither man nor woman alive. He would take sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing and would then go back to Achish. **27:10** When Achish would ask, "Where<sup>8</sup> did you raid today?" David would say, "The Negev of Judah" or "The Negev of Jeharmeel" or "The Negev of the Kenites." **27:11** Neither man nor woman would David leave alive so as to bring them back to Gath. He was thinking, "This way they can't tell on us, saying, 'This is what David did.'" Such

was his practice the entire time<sup>9</sup> that he lived in the country of the Philistines. **27:12** So Achish trusted David, thinking to himself<sup>10</sup> "He is really hated<sup>11</sup> among his own people in<sup>12</sup> Israel! From now on<sup>13</sup> he will be my servant."

*The Witch of Endor*

**28:1** In those days the Philistines gathered their troops<sup>14</sup> for war in order to fight Israel. Achish said to David, "You should fully understand that you and your men must go with me into the battle."<sup>15</sup>

**28:2** David replied to Achish, "That being the case, you will come to know what your servant can do!" Achish said to David, "Then I will make you my bodyguard<sup>16</sup> from now on."<sup>17</sup>

**28:3** Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented over him and had buried him in Ramah, his hometown.<sup>18</sup> In the meantime Saul had removed the mediums<sup>19</sup> and magicians<sup>20</sup> from the land. **28:4** The Philistines assembled; they came and camped at Shunem. Saul mustered all Israel and camped at Gilboa. **28:5** When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was absolutely terrified.<sup>21</sup> **28:6** So Saul inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him – not by dreams nor by Urim<sup>22</sup> nor by the prophets. **28:7** So Saul instructed his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium,<sup>23</sup> so that I may go to her and inquire of her." His servants replied to him, "There is a woman who is a medium in Endor."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "all the days."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "saying."

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "he really stinks." The expression is used figuratively here to describe the rejection and ostracism that David had experienced as a result of Saul's hatred of him.

<sup>12</sup> tc Many medieval Hebrew MSS lack the preposition "in."

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "permanently."

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "their camps."

<sup>15</sup> tc The translation follows the LXX (εἰς πόλεμον, *eis polemon*) and a Qumran MS בלחמה במלחמה (*(m)lkhmh*) *bam-milkhamah* ("in the battle") rather than the MT's במחנה (*bam-makhaneh*, "in the camp"; cf. NASB). While the MT reading is not impossible here, and although admittedly it is the harder reading, the variant fits the context better. The MT can be explained as a scribal error caused in part by the earlier occurrence of "camp" in this verse.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "the guardian for my head."

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "all the days."

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "in Ramah, even in his city."

<sup>19</sup> tn The Hebrew term translated "mediums" actually refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits (see 2 Kgs 21:6). In v. 7 the witch of Endor is called the owner of a ritual pit. See H. Hoffner, "Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew 'OB,'" *JBL* 86 (1967): 385-401. Here the term refers by metonymy to the owner of such a pit (see H. A. Hoffner, *TDOT* 1:133).

<sup>20</sup> sn See Isa 8:19 for another reference to magicians who attempted to conjure up underworld spirits.

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "he was afraid, and his heart was very terrified."

<sup>22</sup> sn See the note at 1 Sam 14:41.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb "an owner of a ritual pit." See the note at v. 3.

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "you will certainly do and also you will certainly be able." The infinitive absolutes placed before the finite verbal forms lend emphasis to the statement.

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "said to his heart."

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "a man and his house."

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb "the number of the days."

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "days." The plural of the word "day" is sometimes used idiomatically to refer specifically to a year. In addition to this occurrence in v. 7 see also 1 Sam 1:3, 21; 2:19; 20:6; Lev 25:29; Judg 17:10.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "from where you come."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "the land."

<sup>8</sup> tc The translation follows the LXX (ἐπι τίνα, *epi tina*) and Vulgate (*in quem*) which assume עַל מִי (*'el mi*, "to whom") rather than the MT אַל (*'al*, "not"). The MT makes no sense here. Another possibility is that the text originally had אַן (*'an*, "where"), which has been distorted in the MT to אַל. Cf. the Syriac Peshitta and the Targum, which have "where."



**28:8** So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothing and left, accompanied by two of his men. They came to the woman at night and said, “Use your ritual pit to conjure up for me the one I tell you.”<sup>1</sup>

**28:9** But the woman said to him, “Look, you are aware of what Saul has done; he has removed<sup>2</sup> the mediums and magicians<sup>3</sup> from the land! Why are you trapping me<sup>4</sup> so you can put me to death?” **28:10** But Saul swore an oath to her by the LORD, “As surely as the LORD lives, you will not incur guilt in this matter!” **28:11** The woman replied, “Who is it that I should bring up for you?” He said, “Bring up for me Samuel.”

**28:12** When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out loudly.<sup>5</sup> The woman said to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!” **28:13** The king said to her, “Don’t be afraid! What have you seen?” The woman replied to Saul, “I have seen one like a god<sup>6</sup> coming up from the ground!” **28:14** He said to her, “What about his appearance?” She said, “An old man is coming up! He is wrapped in a robe!”

Then Saul realized it was Samuel, and he bowed his face toward the ground and kneeled down. **28:15** Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul replied, “I am terribly troubled! The Philistines are fighting against me and God has turned away from me. He does not answer me – not by the prophets nor by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what I should do.”

**28:16** Samuel said, “Why are you asking me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and has become your enemy? **28:17** The LORD has done exactly as I prophesied!<sup>7</sup> The LORD has torn the kingdom from your hand and has given it to your neighbor David! **28:18** Since you did not obey the LORD<sup>8</sup> and did not carry out his fierce anger against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this thing to you today. **28:19** The LORD will hand you and Israel over to the Philistines!<sup>9</sup> Tomorrow both you and your sons will be with me.<sup>10</sup> The LORD will also hand the army<sup>11</sup> of Israel over to the Philistines!”

**28:20** Saul quickly fell full length on the ground and was very afraid because of Samuel’s words. He was completely drained of energy,<sup>12</sup> not having eaten anything<sup>13</sup> all that day and night. **28:21** When the woman came to Saul and saw how terrified he was, she said to him, “Your servant has done what you asked.<sup>14</sup> I took my life into my own hands and did what you told me.” **28:22** Now it’s your turn to listen to your servant! Let me set before you a bit of bread so that you can eat. When you regain your strength, you can go on your way.”

**28:23** But he refused, saying, “I won’t eat!” Both his servants and the woman urged<sup>16</sup> him to eat, so he gave in.<sup>17</sup> He got up from the ground and sat down on the bed. **28:24** Now the woman<sup>18</sup> had a well-fed calf<sup>19</sup> at her home that she quickly slaughtered. Taking some flour, she kneaded bread and baked it without leaven. **28:25** She brought it to Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they arose and left that same night.

#### *David Is Rejected by the Philistine Leaders*

**29:1** The Philistines assembled all their troops<sup>20</sup> at Aphek, while Israel camped at the spring that is in Jezreel. **29:2** When the leaders of the Philistines were passing in review at the head of their units of hundreds and thousands,<sup>21</sup> David and his men were passing in review in the rear with Achish.

**29:3** The leaders of the Philistines asked, “What about these Hebrews?” Achish said to the leaders of the Philistines, “Isn’t this David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me for quite some time?<sup>22</sup> I have found no fault with him from the day of his defection until the present time!”<sup>23</sup>

**29:4** But the leaders of the Philistines became angry with him and said<sup>24</sup> to him, “Send the man back! Let him return to the place that you assigned him! Don’t let him go down with us into the battle, for he might become<sup>25</sup> our

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “Use divination for me with the ritual pit and bring up for me the one whom I say to you.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “how he has cut off.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** See the note at v. 3.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “my life.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “in a great voice.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “gods.” The modifying participle (translated “coming up”) is plural, suggesting that underworld spirits are the referent. But in the following verse Saul understands the plural word to refer to a singular being. The reference is to the spirit of Samuel.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “just as he said by my hand.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “listen to the voice of the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “And the LORD will give also Israel along with you into the hand of the Philistines.”

<sup>10</sup> **tc** With the exception of the Lucianic recension, the LXX has here “and tomorrow you and your sons with you will fall.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “camp.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “also there was no strength in him.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “food.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “listened to your voice.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “listened to your words that you spoke to me.”

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The translation follows many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading *vayyiftseru* (וַיִּפְּצֵרֻהוּ) “and they pressed”; from the root *פצר* (*psr*) rather than the MT’s *vayyifretsu* (וַיִּפְּרְצֻהוּ) “and they broke forth”; from the root *פרץ* (*prs*).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “he listened to their voice.”

<sup>18</sup> **sn** Masoretic mss of the Hebrew Bible mark this word as the half-way point in the book of Samuel, treating 1 and 2 Samuel as a single book. Similar notations are found at the midway point for all of the books of the Hebrew Bible.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “a calf of the stall.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “camps.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “passing by with respect to hundreds and thousands.” This apparently describes a mustering of troops for the purpose of inspection and readiness.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “these days or these years.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “from the day of his falling [away] until this day.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “and the leaders of the Philistines said.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “so that he might not become.”

adversary in the battle. What better way to please his lord than with the heads of these men?<sup>1</sup> **29:5** Isn't this David, of whom they sang as they danced,<sup>2</sup>

'Saul has struck down his thousands, but David his tens of thousands?'

**29:6** So Achish summoned David and said to him, "As surely as the LORD lives, you are an honest man, and I am glad to have you<sup>3</sup> serving<sup>4</sup> with me in the army.<sup>5</sup> I have found no fault with you from the day that you first came to me until the present time. But in the opinion<sup>6</sup> of the leaders, you are not reliable.<sup>7</sup> **29:7** So turn and leave<sup>8</sup> in peace. You must not do anything that the leaders of the Philistines consider improper!"<sup>9</sup>

**29:8** But David said to Achish, "What have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day that I first came into your presence until the present time, that I shouldn't go and fight the enemies of my lord the king?" **29:9** Achish replied to David, "I am convinced that you are as reliable<sup>10</sup> as the angel of God! However, the leaders of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us in the battle.' **29:10** So get up early in the morning along with the servants of your lord who have come with you.<sup>11</sup> When you get up early in the morning, as soon as it is light enough to see, leave."<sup>12</sup>

**29:11** So David and his men got up early in the morning to return<sup>13</sup> to the land of the Philistines, but the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

### *David Defeats the Amalekites*

**30:1** On the third day David and his men came to Ziklag. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They attacked Ziklag and burned it.<sup>14</sup> **30:2** They took captive the women who were in it, from the youngest to the oldest, but they did not kill anyone. They simply carried them off and went on their way.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "our men." On this use of the demonstrative pronoun see *Joüon* 2:532 §143.e.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in dances."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "it is good in my eyes." Cf. v. 7.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "your going forth and your coming in." The expression is a merism.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "camp."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "eyes."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "good."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "go."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and you must not do evil in the eyes of the leaders of the Philistines."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I know that you are good in my eyes."

<sup>11</sup> **tc** The LXX and a couple of Old Latin mss include here the following words: "and you shall go to the place that I have appointed you. Don't place an evil thing in your heart, for you are good before me."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "when you get up early in the morning and you have light, go."

<sup>13</sup> **tc** *Heb* "to go in the morning to return." With the exception of Origen and the Lucianic recension, the Old Greek tradition lacks the phrase "in the morning." The Syriac Peshitta also omits it.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds "with fire."

**30:3** When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned.<sup>15</sup> Their wives, sons, and daughters had been taken captive. **30:4** Then David and the men<sup>16</sup> who were with him wept loudly<sup>17</sup> until they could weep no more.<sup>18</sup> **30:5** David's two wives had been taken captive – Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's widow. **30:6** David was very upset, for the men<sup>19</sup> were thinking of stoning him;<sup>20</sup> each man grieved bitterly<sup>21</sup> over his sons and daughters. But David drew strength from the LORD his God.

**30:7** Then David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. **30:8** David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Should I pursue this raiding band? Will I overtake them?" He said to him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them and carry out a rescue!"

**30:9** So David went, accompanied by his six hundred men. When he came to the Wadi Besor, those who were in the rear stayed there.<sup>22</sup> **30:10** David and four hundred men continued the pursuit, but two hundred men who were too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor stayed there.

**30:11** Then they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David. They gave him bread to eat and water to drink. **30:12** They gave him a slice of pressed figs and two bunches of raisins to eat. This greatly refreshed him,<sup>23</sup> for he had not eaten food or drunk water for three days and three nights. **30:13** David said to him, "To whom do you belong, and where are you from?" The young man said, "I am an Egyptian, the servant of an Amalekite man. My master abandoned me when I was ill for three days. **30:14** We conducted a raid on the Negev of the Kerethites, on the area of Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb. We burned Ziklag."<sup>24</sup> **30:15** David said to him, "Can you take us down to this raiding party?" He said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to this raiding party."

**30:16** So he took David<sup>25</sup> down, and they found them spread out over the land. They were eating and drinking and enjoying themselves because of all the loot<sup>26</sup> they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and David and his men came to the city, and look, it was burned with fire."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "people."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "lifted up their voice and wept."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "until there was no longer in them strength to weep."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "people."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "said to stone him."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for bitter was the soul of all the people, each one."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "stood." So also in v. 10.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his spirit returned to him."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds "with fire."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "him"; the referent (David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "because of all the large plunder."

Judah. **30:17** But David struck them down from twilight until the following evening. None of them escaped, with the exception of four hundred young men who got away on camels.<sup>1</sup> **30:18** David retrieved everything the Amalekites had taken; he<sup>2</sup> also rescued his two wives. **30:19** There was nothing missing, whether small or great. He retrieved sons and daughters, the plunder, and everything else they had taken.<sup>3</sup> David brought everything back. **30:20** David took all the flocks and herds and drove them in front of the rest of the animals. People were saying, “This is David’s plunder!”

**30:21** Then David approached the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to go with him,<sup>4</sup> those whom they had left at the Wadi Besor. They went out to meet David and the people who were with him. When David approached the people, he asked how they were doing. **30:22** But all the evil and worthless men among those who had gone with David said, “Since they didn’t go with us,<sup>5</sup> we won’t give them any of the loot we retrieved! They may take only their wives and children. Let them lead them away and be gone!”

**30:23** But David said, “No! You shouldn’t do this, my brothers. Look at what the LORD has given us!<sup>6</sup> He has protected us and has delivered into our hands the raiding party that came against us. **30:24** Who will listen to you in this matter? The portion of the one who went down into the battle will be the same as the portion of the one who remained with the equipment! Let their portions be the same!”

**30:25** From that time onward it was a binding ordinance<sup>7</sup> for Israel, right up to the present time.

**30:26** When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah who were his friends, saying, “Here’s a gift<sup>8</sup> for you from the looting of the LORD’s enemies!” **30:27** The gift was for those in the following locations:<sup>9</sup> for those in Bethel,<sup>10</sup> Ramoth Negev, and Jattir; **30:28** for those in Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, **30:29** and Racal; for those in the cities of the Jerahmeelites and Kenites; **30:30** for those in Hormah, Bor Ashan, Athach, **30:31** and Hebron; and for those in whatever other places David and his men had traveled.

### *The Death of Saul*

**31:1** Now the Philistines were fighting against Israel. The men of Israel fled from the Philistines and many of them fell dead on Mount Gilboa. **31:2** The Philistines stayed right on the heels<sup>11</sup> of Saul and his sons. They<sup>12</sup> struck down Saul’s sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua. **31:3** Saul himself was in the thick of the battle;<sup>13</sup> the archers<sup>14</sup> spotted him and wounded him severely.

**31:4** Saul said to his armor bearer, “Draw your sword and stab me with it! Otherwise these uncircumcised people will come, stab me, and torture me.” But his armor bearer refused to do it, because he was very afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it. **31:5** When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his own sword and died with him. **31:6** So Saul, his three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men died together that day.

**31:7** When the men of Israel who were in the valley and across the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned the cities and fled. The Philistines came and occupied them.

**31:8** The next day, when the Philistines came to strip loot from the corpses, they discovered Saul and his three sons lying dead<sup>15</sup> on Mount Gilboa. **31:9** They cut off Saul’s<sup>16</sup> head and stripped him of his armor. They sent messengers to announce the news in the temple of their idols and among their people throughout the surrounding land of the Philistines. **31:10** They placed Saul’s armor in the temple of the

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “who rode on camels and fled.”

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb “David.” The pronoun (“he”) has been substituted for the proper name in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>3</sup> *tn* Heb “there was nothing missing to them, from the small even unto the great, and unto sons and daughters, and from loot even unto all which they had taken for themselves.”

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “David.” The pronoun (“him”) has been substituted for the proper name in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>5</sup> *tc* Heb “with me.” The singular is used rather than the plural because the group is being treated as a singular entity, in keeping with Hebrew idiom. It is not necessary to read “with us,” rather than the MT “with me,” although the plural can be found here in a few medieval Hebrew mss. See also the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Vulgate, although these versions may simply reflect an understanding of the idiom as found in the MT rather than a different textual reading.

<sup>6</sup> *tc* This clause is difficult in the MT. The present translation accepts the text as found in the MT and understands this clause to be elliptical, with an understood verb such as “look” or “consider.” On the other hand, the LXX seems to reflect a slightly different Hebrew text, reading “after” where the MT has “my brothers.” The Greek translation yields the following translation: “You should not do this after the LORD has delivered us.” Although the Greek reading should be taken seriously, it seems better to follow the MT here.

<sup>7</sup> *tn* Heb “a statute and a judgment.” The expression is a hendiadys.

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “blessing.”

<sup>9</sup> *tn* This sentence is not in the Hebrew text. It is supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity.

<sup>10</sup> *map* For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “stuck close after.”

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb “the Philistines.”

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb “and the battle was heavy against Saul.”

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Heb “the shooters, men with the bow.”

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb “fallen.”

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb “his”; the referent (Saul) has been specified in the translation for clarity (likewise in the following verse).

Ashtoreths<sup>1</sup> and hung his corpse on the city wall of Beth Shan.

**31:11** When the residents of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, **31:12** all their warriors set out and traveled throughout the night. They took Saul's corpse and the corpses of his sons from the city wall of Beth Shan and went<sup>2</sup> to Jabesh, where they burned them. **31:13** They took the bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh; then they fasted for seven days.

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<sup>1</sup> **sn** The Semitic goddess Astarte was associated with love and war in the ancient Near East. See the note on the same term in 7:3.

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The translation follows the MT, which vocalizes the verb as a Qal. The LXX, however, treats the verb as a Hiphil, "they brought."