


FIRST SAMUEL

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CHAPTER 1

Prophetic History teaches us the glory of consecrated living 1-20

The **FACT IS** that there was one man from Ramathaim Zophim from Mount Ephraim and his name was Elkanah son of Yeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph and an Ephrathite. He had two wives; the name of one was Hannah and the name of the second was Peninnah and **THE FACT IS** Penninah had offspring but Hannah had no family. And the husband went up from year to year to worship and to offer sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh.

And there the two sons of Eli Hophni and Phineas were priests of the LORD. And history was made that day when Elkanah made his offering he then gave portions to Penninah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters. But to Hannah he would give one more for he loved Hannah though Yahweh had closed her womb. And her adversary who continued to provoke her provoked her on account of her vexation because the LORD had shut her womb **on her behalf** [d[b]]. *It appears the Peninnah was provoking Hannah with the fact that God was on her side and Hannah had fallen out of His favour. She rendered it a religious conflict of interest.*

So basically he did this from year to year when he went up to the house of the LORD thus she would provoke her and she would weep and not eat. But Elkanah her husband said to her “Hannah why were you weeping and why are you not eating and why is your heart distressed with trembling? Am I not better to you than ten sons? *Elkanah was sympathetic and observant and very kind but the shaft of jealousy had pierced deeply. Hannah was being gradually worn down until she virtually accepted that God was against her. Elkanah did not perceive that. Sometimes we husbands miss the vital spiritual ingredient of concern in the heart of our spouse!*

HANNAH ENCOUNTERS ELI 9-18

Prophetic History teaches us the effectual nature of prayer

Then Hannah arose after the eating [hl ka 3rd person feminine or **infinitive** or 3rd person Peal passive form which ought to be taken as referring to the eating of others and not to her concession to eat because she was fasting and seeking God – which is proven from the reference to “drinking” that is a definite infinitive] and after the drinking in Shiloh. Just then Eli the priest was sitting on the seat at the Mezzuzah or door-post of the temple of the LORD. But she was bitter of soul and had been praying to the LORD and weeping; she just wanted to weep. So she vowed a vow and she said “O LORD of hosts if you really see through the affliction of your handmaid and remember me and do not forget your handmaid and will give to your handmaid a seed of mortal men then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life and a razor will not come up over his head. *Hannah was saying her son would become a Nazarite and his whole life would be subject to a vow.*

And **THE FACT IS** that as she multiplied to make supplication to the face of the LORD then Eli paid attention to her mouth. But Hannah herself was speaking upon her heart; only her lips moved but her voice was not audible and Eli reckoned that she was intoxicated. Then Eli said to her “How long will you have been drunk? Put away your wine from over or about you. But Hannah answered and said “No my Lord. I am a woman of heavy grieved spirit. I have not drunk wine or intoxicating drink but I

have poured out my soul before the LORD. Let him not give your handmaid to look like a daughter of Belial for from the greatness of my meditation and my provocation I have spoken until this *time*. *It appears to have been closing time at the temple and Hannah had been a long time talking to God.*

Then Eli answered and said “Go for a life of peace and the God of **Israel**... [who wrestled with God]... grant your petition that you have asked from being with Him.” Then she said “Let your own family handmaid [*j tjpV*] find “grace” in your sight. And the woman went on to resume her way of life and she ate and her *sad* face was hers no longer. *The expressions are tell-tale. Grace changed everything. It changed her attitude to Eli-she was going to put in considerable service that she could see was necessary at Shiloh. She was going to take up life with gusto. She was back to her food. She never looked sad again.*

THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL 19-28

Prophetic History tells us God sends leaders and prophets

Then they rose in the morning and worshipped the LORD and went back and came to their house at Ramah and Elkanah had relations with his wife and the LORD remembered her. And **THE FACT IS** according to the going round of the days when Hannah conceived she also delivered a son and called his name “Samuel – because I asked him from the LORD”

Then the husband Elkanah and his whole house went up to offer to the LORD the offering of the days [*Passover*] and his vow. But Hannah did not go up for she said to her husband “I will wait till the child is bigger and I will bring him up and he will make his *first* appearance before the LORD and dwell there all his life. Then Elkanah her husband said to her “Do what is best in your eyes; abide with him till he is bigger; May the LORD definitely establish His word. So the woman stayed there and fed her son until she had weaned him.

About the time she had weaned him she took him up with three bullocks and an ephah of flour and one bottle of wine and brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh and the infant child was *really just* an infant. So they slaughtered the bullock and caused the child to be brought to Eli. Then she said I pray my lord as the soul of my lord lives I am the woman that stood fixed or firm with you at this place to continually make my supplication to the LORD. I had been supplicating for this child and the LORD gave me my petition that I asked from beside Him. **But also I have caused him to be asked to belong to the LORD** all the days which he lives he is asked for the LORD and he will have worshipped the LORD there *again and again*. *The infant was himself very young to be a worshipper but nothing is impossible. The verb is a Hithpalel which takes us away into the future when often and often Samuel would have worshipped God in this place. Hannah also makes emphatic her prayer-vow so that in her asking she requested a temple-servant and a man of God who would for his life-time be engaged in the things of God.*

CHAPTER 2

HANNAH’S LIFE OF PRAYER 1-3A

And Hannah would have **prayed and prayed**. [*||ptt Hithpalel future*] *This introductory line in the first instance comes doubtless from the pen of her son and the ultimate writings would have been compiled by Jehoshaphat and written by Seraiah. The prayer would be lengthy extending till the courts closed from at least the time of afternoon sacrifice at 3pm. The prayer by definition is both intense and prolonged.*

The word may even be translated “You would have gone on praying and praying” as if a son’s appreciation of his mother’s prayer for in this instance the 2nd & 3rd person are the same in Hebrew] Then she said 1. “My heart is rejoicing or “triumphant” (cf Psalm 25.2 literally “leaps”) in Yahweh; 2. My horn is lifted up in Yahweh; 3. My mouth is wide open in defiance of my enemies because 4. I rejoice [literally “I am cheerful glad and radiant] in your salvation rescue. The silver horn which could be as long as 9-12 inches was mounted like a modern fascinator but frontally on the head of the eastern wife. It signified an important woman. Hannah came away from God’s presence radiant and uplifted in spirit and her mood reflected the “horn” she wore. There is none holy as Yahweh for there is none “except” [t/b perhaps even “resisting”] You and **there is no Rock** [a metaphor deriving from quarried stone and signifying for the “founder of a nation” as stone supports and builds a house] like our God Eloheanu

Do not be exalted or great you who will talk proud so proud [The term *hjbq* is repeated]. Let not “break up” [*qt*] – a word used also of aged persons likely soon to pass from or break off from their family] or impudence come forth from your (plural) mouth. This is a rare usage meaning “your(plural) mouth(singular)” It appears to be a comment on the domestic situation where Penninah and her children speak in such a way as to break up the family of Elkanah. It could also have been happening in Eli’s family. It is the case when several people take up the one dangerous incitement or scurrilous remark and rub it in. Elkanah probably did not know how deep the rift in his home where the women lived a separate life. This word is appropriate to much “break-up” even today where families divide by the use of a poisonous jibe.

HANNAH’S THEOLOGY 3B-17

1. For **Yahweh is a powerful God of multiple awareness** or manifold knowledge [Literally “knowings”] and...

2. Does **He not ponder and justly weigh habitual acts** or painful maltreatment? [! !] [The rabbinic *Qere* or “opposite” midrash suggests “by him” in place of “not” which negative requires a question mark that is not provided in the text! In this case the *Qere* (Oral Text in margin of original Hebrew text) wins.

The bows of the mighty are broken in pieces or shattered and the tottering stumbling ones have fastened on the belt of might. In the one there is no power to fight and in the other strength has risen. This is the way of God whether in Egypt at the foundation of Israel or in the home of Elkanah or even Israel’s priesthood and political framework.

Those (once) satiated with food have hired themselves for bread and the famished have ceased to be hungry; unto the barren [*hrq*] *d*] is born seven and she who was great with sons is feeble. We learn from 2.21 that Hannah had two sons and three daughters. Leah, the co-builder of Israel, had six sons and a daughter and two sons by Zilpah. The simplest interpretation is that the word means “enough”. The feeble or languishing one has borne seven and is great. The word “great” is as ever in the text of Samuel tantalising. It is written with a small “Tau” at the end This “Rab” or teacher was one perennially “great with child” but behind the text the scribe may be hinting that “a great teacher, Samuel” emerged through Hannah. We cannot rule out the scribal wit and awareness of Seraiah (see 2 Samuel 8.16.

3. The LORD is the One who allots death and allots life. He takes away and brings down to Sheol and He brings up from thence. Hannah’s theology included the LORD’S possession of the keys of death and hell. **The use of the prefix “m” from *mm* in Hannah’s monologue recognises God as “dividing and apportioning”.**

4. **Yahweh allots loss of possessions** or dispossessing and He is the divider and allotter of wealth. He is the one who allots who is levelled down how much more of those who are raised up. *Wealth and poverty are very often morally and spiritually related.*

5. He is the One who raises and divides from the dust those who swing in weakness [*Id literally like doors pushed about by others*]; from the dunghill He raises the dreadful poor [*myba*] to cause them to dwell with princes or nobility. *This was the lot of Mephiboseth and as in the instance of other allusions this has a much more prophetic reference.*

6. Then **He will** cause them to inherit the throne of glory. *There is nothing that parallels this properly except the raising of sinful men and women to share the glory of Christ* For the columns [*qx literally "poured out (volcanic) rock*] of the earth belong to the LORD and he has set the world [*lbt from llb "mixed round cake (ball)"*]. *The world is a mixture of oil and water and earth and is established upon rock masses that we call tectonic plates – there is nothing in this that does not accord with what we understand about the world around us.]*

7. **He will watch** the feet of His “pious” or “kind” or “excellent” ones and the evil or wicked shall be speechless or silent in darkness for with might or wealth man shall not be victorious.

8. Those who strive with Yahweh **will be terrified** or broken. *The Hebrew has “The adversaries or contenders with him – the LORD –they will be broken or terrified. The Qere reading has “The adversaries (of) the LORD will be broken”.* In heaven he will cause a tumult or trembling (thunder) over them. *Hannah foresees the end of the turmoil of nations and the beginning of Shiloh’s kingdom.*

9. **Yahweh will judge** the ends of the earth. *Hannah foresees the judgment of nations on earth.*

10. **And He will give prevailing might or waxing power to His king** and raise the horn of His Anointed One. *Hannah predicts the victory and reign of Messiah on earth.*

Hannah’s teaching about God is learned from scripture and involves God’s historic blessing on the faithful of the past and the development of grace towards the holy ones of the future and the eschatological triumph of the Messiah. It is a theology of the omniscient Lord of creation and ordinance, of His judgment and grace who lifts the lowly and of a purpose to subdue and rule the nations in His Kingdom of the latter days.

Then Elkanah would or should go to Ramah to his house but the child was there with his portion to minister as a seraph to the LORD before the face of Eli the priest. *The future tense demonstrates the diffidence of Elkanah to leave the little boy he loved with the old priest – but he gained grace to do it.* But the sons of Eli were sons of Belial [*literally “without profit”*]; they did not know the LORD. *How regularly persons of supposed religious habit and office have little or no personal awareness of God.* The usage or mode of operation of the priests relating to the people was when any man offered and offering the servant of the priest arrived as the flesh was cooked and had a three pronged fork in his hand and he plunged it into the basin fire-pan or boiling cauldron or roasting pan or into the strainer; all that the fork brought up the priest took for himself. They acted like this towards the entirety of Israel that came there to Shiloh. Also before they burned the fat as incense the servant of the priest arrived and said to the man that sacrifices “Give meat for **roasting** (as opposed to boiling) to the priest and he will not take from you **boiled meat** but fresh meat or meat alive on the hoof. But when a man said to him “They shall burn the fat as

incense **on the day** but take for yourself just as your soul would like.” Then he (the servant) said to him “But he will give it **now** and if not I will have it taken by force. *The priests were not content with boiled fare but desired a roast as well. They were not going to wait until the day the man who sacrificed came to provide a separate sacrifice as he approached God in prayer on another day. The priests were in a hurry to rob worshippers and would use force to take such beasts as were not yet slain during a festival period.* The sin of the young servants was very great before the LORD for men rejected or despised the offering [*tjmm* “bloodless offering” and “offering in general” – *this was the universal view*] of the LORD.

SAMUEL’S COAT 18-19

But Samuel ministered as a seraph before the face of the LORD – a child girded with an ephod of linen, and his mother made him a little mantle [*l [m* “a long full upper garment” *such as nobles wear*] and she came up to him **year on year** in her going up with her husband to sacrifice the offering of those days of festival. (*Passover as it opens the year and was the premier gathering is in mind*)

ELI BLESSES ELKANAH AND HANNAH – SAMUEL GROWS 20-21

Then Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife and said “The LORD appoint you a seed from this wife instead of the one requested that was requested for the LORD and they went away to their place. Then the LORD visited Hannah and she conceived and brought forth three sons and two daughters and Samuel the youth would grow valued or more entwined with the LORD [*hwly my l dqj*] *The Hebrew concept of greatness is derived from wrestling or twisting around and so being strengthened by the one who supports your life– the living God. This is a brilliant concept for the spiritual development of youth. Looking back I can trace it in my own life. The line runs through Sunday School –a mother’s prayers– Christian Endeavour – Boys Brigade – the Faith Mission Open Air ministry – CSSM – YPF – several prayer meetings – gospel rallies and boys club where testimony and then speaking were encouraged through to mission hall speaking engagements. All the while by personal daily study of God’s word one’s walk with the LORD was becoming more definitive.*

ELI’S BELATED WARNING 22-26

But Eli was exceedingly aged and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel and that they would sleep with the women of the hosts at the door of the tent of the congregation. Then he said to them “What is the reason you are you doing according to these acts? I am hearing all these people – your acts are grossly evil. Not so my sons for surely the report I am hearing is not good; the people of the LORD are transgressors. If a man sins as to a man the judges or angels shall execute judgment on him but if a man sins concerning Yahweh who will have been his judge or intercessor? But they would not listen to the voice of their father because the LORD was pleased to put them to death. But the child Samuel was walking and growing (as he became entwined with God) and was good or prosperous or lovely with the LORD and also with men.

THE STERN WARNING OF THE MAN OF GOD 27-36

But a man of God came to Eli and said to him “Thus says the LORD ‘ Did I fail to make myself open to the house of your father when they were living in Egypt *and* belonged the house of Pharaoh? Then I chose him from all the tribes of Israel to be high-priest to me to offer burnt offering on my altar and to burn incense – to bear or

lift up the Ephod before my face and I gave to your father all the offerings of the sons of Israel. *The LORD drew especial attention to the Ephod that had a shoulder piece and breastplate attached whereon were the names that the priests should perpetually hold before God in prayer. Also the generous supply quota of priestly food is stated. The great privilege is stressed by this man of God. Why do you kick at my offering and at my meal offering that I commanded the habitation **or as permanent or refuge?** [Hebrew *נמא*] The LORD is asking why Eli's house has done such prejudice to offerings that were by divine command to remain as designed. Also you have glorified your sons more than me to cause you to be fattened from the chief of all the offerings of the people of Israel.*

For that fundamental reason [*nk*] the LORD God of Israel whispers "I said with finality [*literally "saying I said"*] that your house and the house of your father should walk before me **towards the age** (Exodus 27.21 & 29.5) but now the LORD whispers "profane" or "far be it from me" [*llj*]

Josephus tells us (Antiquities 5.11.5) that Eli was the first high-priest from Aaron's first son Ithamar but during Solomon's reign Eleazar's line and the Zadokite priesthood resumed leadership of Israel in holy things.

*The LORD would consider it a making of his holiness common profanity to proceed without interdict into perpetuity on his promise and yet the Zadokite priesthood descended from Eliezer the third son of Aaron acted faithfully in Solomon's temple and during the second temple era and with Qumran support till the fall of Herod's temple. At that point the Melchisadekian ministry of Christ took over and though from the Aaronic Cohanim a new Jewish priesthood is currently being modelled it has been prevented by the vicissitudes of history from becoming established in a temple of the latter days. God's interdict may not be a lasting indictment and yet it is to be known though it seems clear the LORD will allow the Zadokite house of Aaron to resume holy duties as outlined in Ezekiel 44.15. Thus divine grace would be demonstrated by the house that God forgave whilst He kept his promise that they should serve "**into the Messianic age**".*

But now the LORD says "**Let it be far from me for he who continues to glorify me I will continue to glorify** [*dbk* both verbs are in the Piel so that as long as one glorifies the LORD he will add weight to one's character and life. The supreme example is Jesus Christ who when he called on the Father heard the words "I have glorified it and I will glorify it" and on another occasion heard the word, "This is my beloved Son, hear Him"] and they that are in contempt of me [*zzb*] will be diminished or despised" [*llp*]. **Whilst the divine commitment is to His saints His glory shines in the believer only as we live to His glory.**

Behold the days will arrive when I will break or cut off your arm or violence and the human power of your father's house and there shall not be a venerable man in your house and you shall have respect for or have to expect an adversary *in the holy habitation in the house of all in which He (the LORD) prospered Israel. Thus the rifling of the temple under Nebuchadnezzar and the Romans was envisaged in the long term and also the loss of the ark to the Philistines more immediately and there will not be a venerable man in your house all the days. This decree seems to put a limit of short age on the Cohen family though again this is periodic for in the Messianic kingdom men shall live through the era. This interdict may also have ended with the Herodian temple. Annas was at least 66 and perhaps 68 when he adjudged of Christ.*

And the man belonging to you whom I do not cut off from my altar will cause your eyes to pine and make your soul faint and the entire large number of your house will

die in robust manhood. And this signal *of all that* for you will come upon your two sons Hophni and Phineas and in a single day they shall both die. But I will cause a faithful priest to be raised to me that will do according to my heart and my soul and **I will cause myself to build him a faithful house and he will have his walk before the face of my Meshiach or anointed one all the days.** *This is plainly a prophecy of the resumption of the Aaronic ministry simultaneous with Christ's kingdom while days remain. There is no escaping the fact that this man of God foretold God's great grace to Israel.*

And **it will be that** that all the rest of your house remaining *in those days* will have persistently come to bow in submission to him for an agerah of silver and a morsel of bread and to say "Please admit me or let me join [*jps*] one of the priests to eat broken bread." ***This prophecy sits precisely within the framework of a new priesthood which is not hereditary nevertheless one which by Christ's will and union with him and by His grace alone admits the Jew to a priesthood of which He has singular control. Thus Zadokite lineage though respected is not of itself sufficient for the priesthood – but rather being admitted to the ordinance of the Passover of Christ and the "broken bread" along with the washing of regeneration and baptism are the enduring credentials.***

CHAPTER 3

Prophetic History tells us that spiritual light can grow dim

SAMUEL'S CALL 1-8

And the young child Samuel served Yahweh as a Seraph minister or light-bearer [*hrv*] before the face of Eli and the word of the LORD was "precious" in those days; there was no vision that scattered or dispersed itself or broke with urgency [*xrp*]. And **THE LIVE HISTORICAL FACT IS** that daily that Eli lay down in his place and his eyes began as small windows [*llj*] to be dim and he was not able to see. *This description is quite vivid and it parallels a lack of spiritual vision too.* But the lamp of God would not yet be quenched and Samuel was lying down in the temple-tabernacle of the LORD where the ark of God was.

Then the LORD called Samuel and (1) he said "**Behold me**". Then he ran quickly [*xwr*] to Eli and (2) said "**Behold me** for you called for me". And he said "I did not call. God back and lie down so he went and lay down. Then the LORD added to call Samuel again and Samuel arose and went to Eli and (3) said "**Behold me** for you called for me" And he said "I did not call, my son, go back to lie down *and sleep*. But Samuel as yet was not familiar or acquainted with the LORD and the word of the LORD was not yet revealed or clear to him. *Samuel did not know that God communed personally with people and he had no idea that He spoke like a man speaks to a friend.*

Then the LORD added to call Samuel through three times and he arose and went to Eli and said "Behold me for you called for me". Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the child.

THE LESSON OF DIVINE VICTORY AND THE BELIEVER'S SUBMISSION 9-14

Prophetic History teaches us that the LORD speaks emphatically

Then Eli said to Samuel "Go lie down and **THE FACT IS** when He calls to you then you shall say "**Speak, Yahweh, for your servant is listening or obeying**" so Samuel went and lay down in his place. Then the LORD came and **stood firm as a**

conqueror [bxy] and called as time upon time [m[p literally “hammer-blow on hammer-blow] “Samuel. Samuel” and Samuel said “**Speak**, for your servant is listening”. *Samuel did not use the name of the LORD for he was not yet familiar with the LORD but all that was to change in one night. When the LORD acts in early life to bring a child to Him there enters the soul a heightened awareness of the numinous. Spiritual things become the first love. The living God is an intimate in every day. Life is laden with meaning fragrant with beauty, throbbing with hope. God’s investment in mankind has been discovered. A relationship with the LORD of glory is the fondest affection of all.*

Then the LORD said to Samuel “Behold I am executing an act in Israel which will sink into and tumble into both ears of all who hear it.” In that day I will appoint to Eli all that I have spoken and promised about his house to cause a start and to make an end. I have also explained to him that I will judge his house until the age because of the iniquity of which he knows for his sons have brought shameful spewing on them and he did not admonish or deter them [hhk “chide their burning passion” – the term is used of “dimming a flame”] And concerning that which is established I have sworn concerning the house of Eli that the iniquity of the house of Eli shall not have been atoned by sacrifice or offering until the age or during its existence or perpetually.

ELI’S QUESTION AND THE HONEST REPLY OF SAMUEL 15-18

So Samuel lay on till the morning then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and Samuel feared to explain what he had seen in vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said “Samuel my son. And he said “**Behold me.**” *This little phrase conveys the feeble state of Eli’s eyes – for which reason Samuel stood close in front of the old man and listened to him. And he said “What is the word that the LORD spoke to you. Please do not conceal from me one word of the matter that He told you. So Samuel informed him of all the words and concealed nothing from him. And he (Eli) said “He is Yahweh; He will do that which is good in his eyes.”*

Prophetic History teaches us that godly men are effectual

SAMUEL IS A GOOD AND EFFECTIVE MAN 19-21

So Samuel grew great and the LORD was with him and **THE FACT IS** He did not cause any of all his words to fall to the ground. Then all Israel from Dan to Beersheba was aware that Samuel was establishing him and becoming confident and sure concerning **as a prophet** and **concerning God**. And the LORD caused to add to appear in Shiloh for the LORD **revealed Himself** [hlg] to Samuel in Shiloh through **the word** of Yahweh. *Twice we read that the LORD became intimate with Samuel in a spiritual manner whereas the earlier generation had become intimate with woman in an incestuous and immoral manner. Samuel experienced the presence of God and heard the word of God and became the “second founder” of the nation.*

CHAPTER 4

Prophetic History and prophecy teach us that the LORD’S will and word prevail in the end

A BIG LESSON-THE ARK IS NOT THE ANSWER-THE PROPHETIC WORD OF GOD IS THE ANSWER 1-2

And **THE FACT IS** that the word of Samuel was for all Israel. And Israel went out for battle to encounter the Philistines and they encamped at Ebenezer (*In the plain of Sharon*). And the Philistines camped at Aphek. And the Philistines drew out their battle line for encounter with Israel and the battle spread itself out and Israel was

defeated [pgm] before the Philistines and they slew through the length of the battlefield about 4000 men.

THE PHILISTINES RECOVER FROM FEAR AND FIGHT 3-9

And the people came into the camp and the elders of Israel said “Why has the LORD defeated them today before the Philistines? **Let us take the ark of the covenant** of the LORD along with us from Shiloh and it will come into our midst and save us from the hand of our enemies. So the people sent to Shiloh and lifted the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts that dwells with the Cherubim. And the two sons of Eli were with the ark of the covenant of God.

Prophetic History teaches that when the LORD is present his enemies melt away

And **THE FACT IS** that the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the army camp all Israel shouted with a great voice of victory and the earth shook. So the Philistines heard the voice of triumph and they said “What is this great voice of triumph in the camp of the Hebrews? But they were aware that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp. So the Philistines feared for they said “The LORD is come to the camp and they said “Woe to us for there has never been historically anything like this three days beyond yesterday”. *It may be that the great shaking of the earth was not just an echo but something that the Philistines felt was ominous. A frightful sense of God was certainly conveyed by the “shout of triumph” besides. This was an unprecedented move – though the Ethiopian people are rumoured to have used the ark of Axum in some of their victorious conflicts some centuries ago.*

“Woe to us! Who shall deliver us from the hand of these great and glorious Gods? These are the Gods that struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. *The Philistine memoir appears to be confused. It may be, however, that they thought of Egypt as a desert and after the ten plagues as a real wilderness.* You must have yourselves strengthened and you must be brave warriors and you shall fight.

Prophetic History teaches us that ignominious defeat follows wrong living 10-11

So the Philistines did fight and Israel was defeated before them and fled every man to his tent and **THE FACT** is that there was a very great slaughter and there fell 30,000 infantry from Israel. Also the ark of God was taken and the two sons of Eli Hophni and Phineas died.

THE MESSENGER WITH HIS OWN GOOD NEWS AND THE NEWS OF THE NATION’S WORST NIGHTMARE 12-18

Prophetic History teaches us that violence begets violence and the LORD recompenses in the same coin

Then a soldier of Benjamin sped away from the battle lines and came that same day to Shiloh with his garment torn apart and red earth upon his head. And as he was coming behold Eli was sitting on a seat at the side of the road waiting expectantly for his heart was trembling and hastening on account of the ark of God and the man went to cause it to be announced in the city and the whole city cried out [q[z] “a shout to inform and express sorrow”]. And Eli heard the voice of **the cry for help** [q[x]distinctly “a cry for help”] and said “What is this voice of the multitude?” and the man came in quickly and told Eli. And Eli was a son of ninety eight years and his eyes were lifted up but he was unable to see. And the man said to Eli “I have come from the battle front and I fled from the front today. And he (Eli) said “What action happened IN

FACT my son? Then the bearer of tidings [*r/vb normally means “good tidings”- perhaps he was trying to give the good news of his escape first*] said “Israel fled before the Philistines and also a great slaughter and defeat **IS A FACT** among the people and your two sons Hophni and Phineas are dead and the ark of God has been captured. Then **IT’S A FACT** when he brought to mind the ark of the LORD He also fell from his seat backwards in close to the side of the gate or door and his neck broke and he died for he was old and heavy and he had judged Israel for forty years. *We seldom meet Eli at any other place than on his chair. Priests normally were active and their work was performed on their feet. He had a position close to the door of the temple tabernacle of Shiloh and he was on this occasion just outside the door in the street. His ministrations were largely in the hands of Samuel by now and would pass over completely to Samuel with immediate effect.*

ICHABOD 19-21

And his daughter in law the wife of Phineas was pregnant near to giving birth but she would hear the report about the capture of the ark of God and of the death of her father-in-law and her husband and she sank down on her knees and gave birth for her pains changed *that is, her contractions of birth changed to death throes.* And about the time of her death those appointed over her would say “Do not fear for you have given birth to a son but she did not answer and she did not place it on her heart. But she called the child “Where is the glory” (Ichabod) saying “The glory has gone like a naked exile [*h/g*] from Israel!” over the capture of the ark of God and the death of her father-in-law and her husband. Then she said “The glory is gone like a naked captive from Israel for the ark of God is taken”.

CHAPTER 5

Prophetic History teaches the LORD has no peer

DAGON FALLS AND TUMOURS STRIKE THE PHILISTINES 1-9

The LXX has it that the condition was “one of tumours in the groin”

So the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it to the house of Dagon and caused it to be placed or left [*gxy*] near by the side of or even “joined” [*l xa*] to Dagon. *In their simplicity like moderns they imagined that Yahweh would be good company for Dagon and work well with him. But soon they were to learn that the truth was very different. In this story there are decided implications for our syncretistic age when gods of every name are accredited with honour equal to Yahweh. But the people of Ashdod rose on the morrow and behold Dagon was falling on his face to the earth before the face of the ark of Yahweh so they took Dagon and set him up in the place where he belonged. So they woke up on the morning after and behold Dagon was falling on his face to the ground before the ark of Yahweh and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off at the door – he had only the fish Dagon fish tail left. The writer sees the funny side of this incident. The palms of the hands were at the temple door. He had a sore fall. The head also had rolled along to the opposite side of the temple to welcome all-comers. It was a heavy fall and this second incident must have carried a telling lesson about the power of Yahweh.*

For that reason the priests of Dagon and all comers to the house of Dagon do not approach by way of the door of Dagon’s temple in Ashdod *till this day.*

The incident closed the temple until access by a rear door was opened to the public. The temple remained a testimony to the power of Yahweh.

So the hand of Yahweh was heavy upon the people of Ashdod and he destroyed them and struck them with tumours – both Ashdod and its bordering coastal area. When the warriors of Ashdod saw why it was thus they said “The ark of the gods of Israel shall not dwell with us because His hand is severe or harsh against us and against Dagon our God. So they sent and convened all the lords of the Philistines and said “What shall we do about the ark of the gods of Israel?” And they said “Let the ark of the gods of Israel go over to Gath!” So they brought the ark of the gods of Israel around *there. Presumably the might of Gath, as they imagined, would curb the activities of Yahweh.* So **IT’S A FACT** after they had brought it round that the hand of God was against the city in this and that way in great destruction and He struck the men of the city from the least to the greatest and they broke forth with tumours.

Prophetic History teaches us that atonement is woven in the warp & woof of life

THE PHILISTINES HURRY THE ARK BACK 10-12

So they sent the ark of God to Ekron and **THE FACT IS** the ark of God came into Ekron that the people of Ekron cried out saying “They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to me to slay me and my people. *Ekron took the personal implications very seriously but the consequences were unavoidable so long as they used God as a tool and did not worship and obey Him.* Then they sent and gathered all the lords of the Philistines together and they said “They must send – they must they must [*uj / v Piel of “send, send, send]* hurry away the ark of the God of Israel and he is to dwell in His place that belongs to Him so He will not kill me and my people for there was death everywhere in the whole city – the hand of God was very heavy there. Also the men that did not die were struck by haemorrhoids and the cry for help [*uv]* of the city ascended to heaven. *The subsequent stay of David is understandable in a generation when Philistine leaders like the Lord of Ekron took Yahweh so seriously. An analysis of Achish’s conversation with David shows that the LORD had earned respect among many Philistines.*

CHAPTER 6

Prophetic History shows paganism uncomfortable & challenged by the LORD

RETURNED WITH RECOGNITION 1-21

And **THE FACT IS** – the ark of the LORD was in the land of the Philistines seven months. *The “appearance of the LORD” at Shiloh and the subsequent battle were in October– November. The ark’s absence was from ploughing and Tabernacles in late October until Siwan or May June in the following year. Thus the ark of God was absent and Phineas’ wife testified to the departure of “the Glory” of God. Yet scripture attested that God revealed Himself to Samuel at this time “as a captive” This revelation of God being ill-treated gives us one of the great pictures of 1st Samuel- a foretaste of the humiliation of Christ. This is one of the earliest presentations of “Christ to the nations” though judgment befell them they were taught that Yahweh was God.*

Then the Philistines made a proclamation to the priests and the divining prophets to say what should be done concerning the ark of the LORD “Cause us to be aware with what we should send it to the place where it stands. And they said “If you are going to send off the ark of the gods of Israel do not send it empty for it must be returned – you shall cause there to be sent back with it a guilt offering [*mva]*; from then you will be healed and you will become aware why his had will not be taken off you. *The false prophets and priests realised atonement for sin was essential and this lesson was*

taught to Philistinia – a means of salvation and redemption is essential. Even the false prophets and priests well understood the consequences of sin and the means of its atonement were not hidden from them. They declared the will of God written on their consciences as the apostle says. However the unclean mice and phallic offerings of an idol sort that were chosen would have been abominable should Israel have made them but as a genuine reflection of sacrifice and penitence of Philistine lords and people and a reflection of the principle of “guilt offering” the LORD acknowledged them. So they (the Philistine lords) said “What sort of guilt offering shall we return with it?” And they (the priests & false-prophets) said “From the number of the lords of the Philistines you provide five haemorrhoids of gold and five mice of gold because the same single disease was afflicted on all and on your lords.

*So you shall cause figures or idols of your haemorrhoids and of your mice that destroyed the land to be made and **give glory** the gods of Israel – perhaps He will abate *the weight* of His hand upon you and over your gods and your land. And for what reason should you make your hearts obdurate or boastful as when the Egyptians and Pharaoh made their hearts hard and burdensome? Did He not like because of that continually vex them or put forth all his power [11] [– the A.V. margin has “work wonderfully”] – did they not send them off and they went off? *The lesson of Egypt was still live for these magicians and falsetto priests. They could see that there was need to “send gifts” and to “let the ark go” by parallel with God’s offer of relenting to Egypt. That lesson of 300 and more years ago still lived on to instruct nations in this later era.**

*Then now you must take offerings and make a single new ox-cart [hlg] the term for ox and that for cart are exactly the same word with only a small variant vocalisation making the difference between them. This requires emphasis because the bullocks which drew the cart would be proper offerings for Yahweh]and take two young heifers that have had no yoke upon them and bind the heifers to the cart and cause their calves to return from following them to the house. Then you shall take the ark of Yahweh and put it on the ox-cart and the ornaments of gold that you are returning for Him as a guilt offering. You shall set them in a “hanging box” from its side. *The ornaments did not share the platform with the ark but a box was constructed at the side which would shake about as the cart moved they were emblems of the shaken people of the Philistines and the priests did not even accord them a place of prominence.* So you shall keep sending it away and it will be gone. *From the five districts the ornaments were transported and the heifers driven out with persistence.* Then watch if it goes up in the direction of His border to Bethshemesh then He has enacted this great calamity upon us and if not then it was not his hand that touched us – it was an accident that happened to us.*

THE ARK RETURNS TO BETHSHEMESH 10-18

So the men did as appointed and took two heifers and tied them to the ox-cart and they kept their calves pining in the house. Then they positioned the ark of the LORD and the box and the gold mice and golden haemorrhoids on the cart. And the heifers would go straight throughout the way along the road to Bethshemesh – along the single highway they went – they lowed as they travelled along and they did not defer to the right or left and the Lords of the Philistines travelled after them to the border of Bethshemesh. Just then at Bethshemesh the reapers were cutting the wheat on the plain or in the valley and they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark and rejoiced at the sight. *It was about the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost as we know it. The ark had been among the Philistines since the land was ploughed in October-November following*

the feast of Tabernacles during which the deadly conflict with Israel probably took place.

Then the cart went into a field of Joshua a Bethshemite and it stood still in ministry there [dm] -it seemed that the very heifers presented themselves as an offering now that their task was completed in the sense Charles Wesley declared,

*“Ready for all they perfect will,
My acts of faith and love repeat,
Till death thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete.”*

There was also a great stone there and they cut the wood of the ox-cart and they offered up the oxen a whole burnt offering to the LORD. But the Levites caused the ark of the LORD and the box which was with it *containing* ornaments of gold to be taken down. So they were set on the great stone and the men of Bethshemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifice *of animals* to the LORD on that day. *The careful recipients showed their joy and obedience when the priests were present by giving also of their own livestock as they reverently approached the LORD and in lieu of their sin.* So the five lords of the Philistines watched and they returned to Ekron on that day. *The obvious reality of Israel’s worship was a witness to the heathen and the careful ministry of the Levites demonstrated to them the holiness of God. Achish who later helped David would have been one of these Lords and the impression left on his heart was not negligible.*

So these were the shining gold haemorrhoids that the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to the LORD; one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Askelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron. Also the shining gold mice according to the count of the Philistine cities belonging to the five lords; from walled and fortified cities to scattered villages to the great **stone of Abel** on which they caused the ark to rest that is in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite *to this day.*

PENALTY FOR CARELESS APPROACH TO GOD 19-21

But He (the LORD) struck through the men of Bethshemesh for they looked inside the ark of the LORD; and He struck fifty thousand and seventy men so the people mourned with tears because the LORD struck throughout the people – it was a massive smiting. So the men of Bethshemesh said “Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God and to whom shall He go up from upon us?” *The question was little different from that asked by the Philistines. These men wanted the ark to be taken away but they feared for others to whom it would go. We must always bear in mind that no man can look on God and that God is holy and that sin must be atoned for by blood. The ark spelt out these principles within the life of the covenant people*

Then they sent messengers to those who live at Kirjath-Jearim saying “The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to you.

CHAPTER 7

Prophetic History teaches that repentance not lament changes lifestyle

KIRJATH-JEARIM 1-3

Then the men of Kirjath-Jearim (the city in the woods) came and brought up the ark of the LORD and took it to the house of Abinadab on the hill and he sanctified his son Eleazar to watch the ark of the LORD. And **THE FACT IS** from that day the time the ark stayed in Kirjath Jearim there were many days and twenty years **CAME AND WENT** and the whole house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

THE PROPHETIC CALL FOR REPENTANCE AND FAITH 4-8

Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel saying “If you return to the LORD with all your hearts and remove the foreign gods and Ashtoreth from your midst and establish your hearts with God and serve Him alone He will deliver you from the power of the Philistines. Then the sons of Israel removed the Baalim and the Ashtoreth and served God alone. So Samuel said “Kibbutz all Israel at Mizpeh and I will pray around you or on behalf of you to the LORD. So they kibbutzed at Mizpeh and they drew water and poured it out profusely *like tears* before the LORD and fasted that day and said there “We have sinned in what belongs to the LORD or in our relationship to the LORD”. Then Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah. *Mizpah which was in Benjamin is described in 1 Maccabees as “a place of prayer aforesaid in Israel”. It was there Israel demonstrated by the outpouring of water as in the time of Jesus at the feast recorded in John 7.38-39 that they were heartily repentant. It was there that they settled grievances between man and man. The great commandments of the law gained fulfilment and the nation was on course for better days.*

But the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had kibbutzed at Mizpah and the lords of the Philistines they went up against Israel. But the sons of Israel heard of it and were afraid of the presence of the Philistines. Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel “Do not dry up from informing the LORD our God about us and our need [q[z]and He will save us from the hand of the Philistines” *There was a new desire for prayer in Israel and a new faith in God as a prayer hearing God!*

SAMUEL INTERCEDES 9-12

Then Samuel took one lamb on its mother’s milk and offered it as a burnt offering completely and Samuel cried to the LORD on behalf of Israel and the LORD answered. And it was historical fact that as Samuel offered up the burnt offering the Philistines also drew near to fight with Israel and the LORD roared tumultuously with a great voice through that day against the Philistines and routed or dispersed them and they were defeated before Israel. So the men of Israel issued out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and smote them right until they were under Bethcar. *Thus Israel pursued the enemy from just north of Jerusalem to the borders of Philistinia – some 15 miles to the centre of the old border of Dan – modern Ein esh Shems. From there the land fell away to the Philistine plain. Bethcar or modern Beth far is just 3 miles North West of Beersheba – decidedly the place where Israel had to call a halt as they were at the Philistine border. Then Samuel took a single rock and placed it between Mizpah and Shen and called its name “Ebenezer” and “to this point Yahweh has helped us”. Frank Boreham mentions that his mother once paced up and down the room in front of a calendar when he was a boy during a time of family difficulty. She then wrote a note on a scrap of paper “Hitherto hath the LORD helped us” and shortly afterward a text picture hung on the wall over the head of his parents’ bed. Religion and real life are vitally connected-that is the message of Samuel’s raised stone and of that picture text.*

Shen was also called Jeshanah (cf 2Chron 13. 19) and lay on the line of Abijah’s battle pursuit between Bethel and Ephraim or Ophrah. Ebenezer we can thus exactly locate as precisely between Bethel and Mizpeh about 3 miles from Samuel’s home to the North West. The stone could not have been more than 2 miles from Bethel. The testimony of Ebenezer stands alongside the testimony of Bethel –the one cries out “If the LORD will be with me and keep me then He will be my God” or “from this

point may the LORD help me”; the other cries “to this point the LORD has helped us”.

Prophetic History shows that when a mans ways please the Lord He makes his enemies to be at peace with him Proverbs 16.7

PHILISTINE PROFILE DECLINES SAMUEL –THE LAST JUDGE 13-17

Then the Philistines were bowed or brought low (LXX “humbled”) and did not add a return advance into the border of Israel and **THE FACT IS** that the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities the Philistines captured were returned to Israel from Ekron to Gath and the coasts Israel delivered from the power of the Philistines. **AND THE FACT IS** there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. So Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he walked from that time or sufficiently year by year and compassed or moved around to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah and judged Israel at all these notable places. But his retreat was to Ramah for there his house was and there also he judged Israel and he built there an altar to the LORD. *Samuel lived as the second most respected figure in Israel’s history. He was a prophet and a priest (1 Samuel 13.13) and a judge. He has “a godly name” and was a man with a deep prayer life. He is one of faith’s heroes in the catalogue of Hebrews 11. Josephus tells us Samuel visited the locations where justice was dispensed and spiritual issues sorted twice per annum. In his annals or Antiquities Josephus tells us that Samuel presided spiritually for 12 years after Eli died and 18 years into the reign of Saul. It would be twenty (two) years after the death of Samuel at the death of Saul when David whom Samuel anointed ascended to the throne. Eighteen years after Samuel’s death Saul using the familiar spirit of the witch of Endor entered into communication with Samuel at the time of his downfall. The life of Samuel was characterised by a gentle prayerful ministry. He was effective in calling for repentance and regular in intercession and honoured by the LORD.*

CHAPTER 8

Prophetic History shows spirituality is not hereditary and leadership is a gift of God

SAMUEL GROWS OLD 1-5

And **IT CAME TO PASS** because Samuel was aged he then place his son as Judges over Israel. And the name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second Abiah. They were judges in Beersheba. *Josephus insists that one judged in Bethel and the other at Beersheba.* But his sons did not walk in his pathway of life but caused themselves to incline or expand after unjust gain or fraud [/xb] and took bribes and inclined away from justice; then all the aged men of Israel kibbutzed and came to Samuel at Ramah. So they said to him “Behold now you are an aged man and your sons are not walking in your ways of life. Cause a king to be appointed for us to bring us justice as with all the Gentile nations.

SAMUEL CONSULTS THE LORD CONCERNING THEOCRACY 6-9

But the word was ill in the eyes of Samuel because they said “provide us a king to do justice for us” so Samuel had a time of prayer to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel “Listen to the voice of the people as to all they are saying to you for they have not rejected you but they have rejected me as king over them. According to all the actions they have done from the day I brought them up from Egypt – they have forsaken me and have served different gods – they are doing alike to you. So now definitely listen to their voice for as a cause of testimony you will cause testimony to

be given against them and you will apprise them of the administration of the king that shall have rule over them”.

ADDRESS ON THE MAINTENANCE OF MONARCHY 10-18

So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. And he said “This will be the law of the king that shall rule over you.

1. He will take your sons and make them his establishment for his chariots and horsemen and some will be forerunners in front of his chariots.
2. And it is about setting commanders over thousands and fifties
3. And for ploughing they will be ploughmen and to harvest they will be reapers
4. And to create utilities for his military and for his chariots
5. And he will take your daughters for making delicacies and for cooks and bakers.
6. And he will take the choice fields, vineyards and olive groves of yours for his servants.
7. And he will tithe your fields and vineyards and allot it to his captains and servants.
8. And he will take your serving men and maidservants and asses and make them his wealth and service corps
9. And a tenth of your flocks will be his for his servants.
10. And you will cry out for help in that day because of the king you have chosen but the LORD will not answer in that day.

THE PEOPLE PERSIST AND CALL FOR A KING 19-22

But the people were unwilling to attend to the call of Samuel and said “No! Notwithstanding there shall be a king over us. Then we will even be as all the nations and our king will give us justice and go out before us *as a leader* and fight our battles.”

So Samuel heard all that the people spoke and he detailed them in the hearing of the LORD. Then the LORD said to Samuel “Listen to their voice and you make a king to reign over them” so Samuel said to the men of Israel “Go every man to his city”.

CHAPTER 9

WANDERING DONKEYS LEAD TO A SPIRITUAL CHANGE 1-10

And there was a man from Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel who was son of Zeror, himself son of Bechorath the son of Aphiah originally son of a man of the right hand [*probably called **Jemini** cf AV margin*] – a warrior of military power. *Saul is described as a seventh generation Benjamite who distinguished himself when he was alive. There lived in that generation 350 years back this man who must have distinguished himself at the settlement under Joshua. At the Battles of Jericho Makkedah Libnah Lachish and with the Anakim he would have distinguished himself and in the settlement after Joseph’s sons his people were allocated the central area including Bethel Jerusalem Ramah and Gibeah. That this tribe which descended from Israel’s youngest son should be settled near those of Joseph’s own heirs continued the intimacy Joseph himself expressed. That God should choose Israel’s first king from this tribe and also Israel’s great evangelist Saul of Tarsus is worth recording. The “**Man of the right hand**” in heaven sought in Saul the king and Saul the Apostle one after his own heart who would so rule His people and so teach His Church as to reflect the grace and heart of God. As Israel loved Benjamin so the Father loved the Son.*

And he had a son whose name was Saul, a very special and fine person and not a man from the sons of Israel was better; from his shoulders and upward he stood taller than the entire people. *Since there must have been men in Israel at least six foot tall we need to understand that Saul was at least 6foot nine inches tall.*

Then the slow-stepping asses of Kish the father of Saul kept straying away and Kish said to Saul his son “Please take one of the young servants with you and rise go search for the asses. So (1) he passed throughout Mount Ephraim and (2) crossed into the land of Shalishah and did not find them so (3) they passed on into the land of Shaalim and there was no sign so (4) they went on into the land of the Jamini and did not find them. *At Shalisha he was close to Shechem in Ephraim having crossed the central ridge of the Ephraim range of hills and then returned from the North West to the borders of Benjamin once more travelling in all about 100 miles in an anticlockwise circuit.*

And when they came to the land of Zuph [*“honey overflowing” – a district of Benjamin*] Saul said to his servant “Come, let us go back; perhaps my father will have left caring for the asses and be anxious for us”. Then he said to him “Please look out there is a man of God in this city and he is a glorious man – everything that he says is to come comes to pass. Now let us go there; perhaps he will explain to us the way we should go. *There are two observations worth making on this passage. First the centre of the famous “Land of Honey” was close to Ramah – possibly on the north western side of the rise. Second that Samuel was widely respected as a prophet and Saul ironically said “He will show us **the way** we should go”. For years into the future Samuel would have much concern about the **way of life** of Saul.*

But Saul said to his servant “Then, look, we will go but what of the prophet? What is there for the man? For the bread is gone from our vessels and there is no traveller’s gift [*rwv*] to bring to the man of God. What have we? *Saul again trips himself when it comes to understanding consecration. He had his life to present to God but his thoughts were characteristically too mundane to see the sort of trophy the LORD seeks.*

But the youth added to answer Saul “Behold I have discovered I can give a fourth part of a silver shekel and I will give it to the man of God and he will explain to us our pathway.” *The youth is willing to give all he has though like the widow’s mite it is small. This self-less ness is recorded by the Spirit of God to instruct us on “giving and sacrificing to the last”.* Concerning names or designations in Israel a man spoke in this manner in going to seek God “Come and let us go to the seer for in those days they called the prophet the seer”. *In the light of Saul’s fumbling for terms to describe Samuel this explanation is given. The explanation shows that the prophets dealt with a whole variety of issues.* Then Saul said to the youth “You have spoken excellent. Go, we will go” so they travelled toward the city where the man of God was.

THE TESTIMONY OF SPIRITUAL MAIDENS 11-14

As these were going up in the climb to the city these men also discovered young maidens going to draw water and they said to them “Is the seer in this city?” *The men were obviously out of breath for the question is not finished. I have been at Ramah and it registered at the time as the steepest urban acclivity I visited and comparable to Nimrod’s fortress at Caesarea.* And they answered them and said “Look he is in front of you; hurry now for he has come to the city today because there is a sacrifice today for the people at the high place.” As you come to the city you on that account you will find him at the house before he goes up to the high place to eat for the people will not eat until he comes for he blesses the sacrifice; after that those who are called

eat. So now go up for with him how great is the day [mwhk] you will find him. *These young women were not invited but they could testify and did acclaim at some length the moment of the sacrifice and the significance of the “blessing” which is “forgiveness” and finally gave the men some foretaste of what lay before them.* So these went up to the city going into the heart of the city and behold Samuel came out to meet them to go up to the high place. *Impelling prophetic insight was on course. Samuel was not just going to the high place –the scripture says plainly he was coming to meet Saul.*

SAUL BECOMES CHIEF GUEST 15-24

For the LORD had revealed [*literally “made naked the ear”*] to the ear of Samuel the day before about the presence of Saul who would be coming saying “About this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin and you shall anoint him to be ruler or prince over my people Israel and he shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines for I have seen my people for their cry for help has come to me. “ Then Samuel saw Saul and the LORD testified “Behold the man of whom I spoke to you; this man will be ruler over my people” And Saul approached Samuel in the middle of the gate and said “Please could you tell me where the house of the Seer is?” Then Samuel answered Saul and said (1) “I am the seer (2) “Go up before me to the high place and you will eat with me today and (3) I will send you away in the morning and (4) all that is going through your heart I will explain to you. (5) And you had to come today about the asses that wandered off. (6) Do not focus your heart on them for they were found three days ago (7) but what is the whole object of desire of Israel, it not you and the entire house of your father? *The comprehensive handling of Saul’s concerns by Samuel is impressive. He was a man skilled even beyond moderns in abating concern and a most capable encourager of those who felt retiring shy and easily daunted. He was a master at sorting priorities.*

But Saul answered and said “Am I not just a Benjamite from the smallest tribe of Israel and is not my family the meanest little family of all the families of my tribe of Benjamin? So why do you talk to me with a word like this? But Samuel took Saul and his servant captive and made him come to join him at the banqueting room alongside [*JVI*] and would provide them a place at the head of the guests and these were around thirty men. And Samuel said to the butcher-cook “Deliver the portion I gave you which I said you should set by you”. So the butcher-cook raised high the shoulder and *the trimmings* on it and set it before Saul and he [*Samuel*] said “Look for a remnant to set before you. Eat up for this occasion of meeting I have been watching or it has been waiting for you to speak to the people I have called and Saul ate with Samuel on that day. *Samuel used a good joint of meat to demonstrate the care he took to make sure the future leader became aware of his significance and took his role seriously. Not alone in the food but in the select guests Saul saw future events present in draft. These thirty men were among the elite of the nation.*

Prophetic History commends the morning watch—start the day with God.

SAMUEL PRAYS AND DECLARES THE WORD 25-27

Then when they came down from the high place of the city Samuel also spoke with Saul upon the rooftop. And they awoke and **THE FACT IS** as the morning broke then Samuel called for Saul on the rooftop saying “Come up then I will send you away. So Saul arose and they both went out; Samuel and he went into the open. And as they were going down through the fringe of the city Samuel also said to Saul “Speak to the youth and he shall go along before us and cross over *towards home* but you remain

about a day and I will cause you to hear the word of God. *Samuel took every care to establish Saul in the word of God and to bring him to lively faith. His efforts were no less than those of John Stott whose brief was to prepare the Prince of Wales spiritually for his walk with God. The question of abiding curiosity is – how deeply did Saul buy into the truth taught?*

CHAPTER 10

Prophetic history shows that Spirit filled people impact life

SAUL IS ANOINTED 1-8

Then Samuel took a flask of the anointing oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said “Is it not because the LORD has anointed you as leader over his heritage? (1) In travelling today because of being with me you will also find two men by the tomb of Rachel at the boundary of Benjamin at Zelzah [*a location now known as Beit Jala scarcely more than a mile north West of Bethlehem*] Saul was being sent on a further spiritual mission more important than returning home. They will also say to you “The asses that you went to seek are found and behold your father has abandoned the matter of the slow-stepping asses and is concerned for you saying “What will I do about my son?” (2) Then you shall leave that behind [*p/j –the term suggests a “revival” of interest spiritually*] or change from that and wearied you shall (3) go to the oak of Tabor and you will find three men there going up to God at Bethel – one carrying three kids and one carrying three loaves of bread and one carrying a skin of wine. Then they will ask concerning your welfare and give you two loaves and you shall take them from their hands. (4) After that you shall go to **Gibeah** of God where the military outpost of the Philistines is and **THE FACT WILL BE** [*Here is a testimony to the historical dynamic of prophecy. God calls things that are not as if they are*] as you come to the city there you will encounter a band of prophets going down from the high place and in front of them a Nabal player, a drummer, a flautist and harpist and these are committed men of prophecy. And the Spirit of Yahweh will pass over or fall upon you or *finish the work in you successfully* so that you will be continuing to prophecy with them and you are changing into a different man or different soldier. So it will come to pass when these signs shall come to belong to you, you must do what **your power** finds to do for the God of power is with you.

We have here the most exciting spread of Samuel’s teaching. He tells Saul that he shall not go home but rather go to what has become known as the Shepherd’s fields where also our Saviour’s incarnation was announced by angels. The N.T. doctrine of the incarnate Christ is mirrored in this event. The message he gets there is a Father’s message “What shall I do concerning my Son?” Bethlehem is the place where that eternal question was decided by God – He gave his son for a world of sinners. By this time Saul was weary but he passed by Jerusalem and came to Bethel a hill where there was a watchtower of the Philistines. There he met men who had a song and who gave him bread to break. It was there the Saviour who died for sinner first showed Jacob the ancient appointed stairway to heaven. Thence to Gibeah (3 miles north of Jerusalem) where the Holy Spirit was given to a weary Saul who speedily revives as do believers through this experience of the new birth and baptism in the Spirit life when life is wholly turned around. Here again vital events in the purpose of God for future history are foreshadowed. The signs and experience are all aimed at creating a new warrior spiritually. He is to be active for God. Somehow sadly this did not follow. Samuel did not fail but Saul’s became a double-minded life-style which displeased God.

(5) Then you shall go down before me to Gilgal and look out *for me*; I am coming down to be with you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall constrain yourself to wait expectantly [/j] until I come to you and (6) I will have you understand what you shall do *next*.

Prophetic History shows us both the genuine prophet and those that masquerade

SAUL IS A CHANGED MAN 9-13

And **THE FACT IS** as he caused his shoulder to face away to go from being with Samuel God gave him another heart and all those signs came about in that day. So they came there to Gibeah-hill and behold a brotherly band [/bj] of prophets met him and the Spirit of God descended or advanced upon him and he would have been prophesying among them. So **THE FACT IS** that all who knew him but days before saw it and behold he prophesied with the prophets.

(1) TEXTUAL GAP WITH VERY REAL SIGNIFICANCE 10.11

The gap is of interest. It suggests a total change equivalent to conversion. In the later chapter 20 Saul again falls under the power of the Holy Spirit. First he received a new heart and with this experience to which he was introduced by Samuel came the new tongue and new interpretations that were associated with the ancient gift of discerning God's will and the authority to rebuke kings. These lived close to God. Israel's first king through disobedience became subject to weighty conviction of the Holy Spirit and aware of a burden of calamity which was his lot. As he moved inexorably to oppose David God on just one occasion gave him a glimpse of the submission He God desired but the will to follow close was gone. This sentence spoken by Saul's familiars observes that Saul is "with the prophets" The second part of the sentence asks the popular question more widely posed "Is the Son of Kish in the house of the prophets?" Saul had another calling and anointing as king but Samuel was keen that he be a prophetic king listening to God and interpreting His will. Whereas Samuel reserved the Priest-Kingship for Messiah and God disinherited Saul for adopting that prerogative wrongly prophetic status was not debarred.

WHY THIS EVENT TAUGHT A TRUTH 12-13

Then **a man from there** answered and said "But who is their Father?" For this reason "Is Saul also in the house of the prophets" became a parable. *Because the answer to the question about Saul was the source of his power—was it human and from Kish or even from Samuel or from Almighty God this wise and probably prophetic figure who acted like Peter on the day of Pentecost solved the enigma and sourced the conundrum of Saul to its root. Had He the real relationship with God and with the prophets or was it just an occasional feature of his life? It is ever so. Spirituality is not a postage stamp but a "New heart" and "new tongue" and "new fellowship" and "new prayer life". So he finished from the heights [Hebrew Hithpael apparently of abn (prophecy) but apparently from hbh (heights)] It would seem Saul ended once and for all his involvement in this heightened converse with God and went to the high place. It is a picture of his life moving from prophecy to priesthood—from obedience to contumacy.*

SAUL PROVES A BLAND WITNESS 14-16

Then the uncle of Saul said to him and to his young servant "Where did you go?" And they said "To find the asses" but we saw for ourselves they were nowhere to be seen we went to Samuel". And the uncle of Saul said "Please explain to me what Samuel

said to you?” Then Saul said to his uncle “He kept emphasising to us that the asses were found” but **the word of the kingdom** on which Samuel spoke with illumination he did not explain to him. *How very often is it the case that Christians speak of the preacher’s minor emphasis but how easily we omit the weighty matters of the Kingdom of God.*

SAMUEL ANOINTS SAUL KING AT MIZPAH 17-25

Then Samuel called the people to the LORD at Mizpah. *This call was a call from the prophet’s heart. He knew the people needed a shepherd and had done his best to prepare this first king. This appeal also related to the King’s need for his people’s prayers and support. The place of meeting was a “watchtower” and God’s people are to be watchful as to God’s will and the enemy’s devices but especially concerning Messiah and the promotion and arrival of the kingdom.*

And he said to the sons of Israel “Thus says Yahweh God of Israel, I brought Israel up from Egypt and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that pressured or afflicted you. But you have this day lightly esteemed or been in contempt of your God who was your Messiah or Saviour from all your calamities and adversities because you have said to Him “place a king over us so now you must station yourselves like a garrison before the LORD in your tribes and thousands. And Samuel brought near (to God) all the tribes of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. Then he called the tribe of Benjamin by their families and the family of Matri [“rain”] was taken. And Saul the son of Kish was taken and they would keep seeking him and he would not let himself be found. *As it was with the asses of Kish so it was with the son of Kish. He was a wanderer. He would do his own thing. This was to prove his undoing.*

So they enquired thoroughly from the LORD again whether the man is still **scattered** or the man is **struck** (with the Spirit?) or **obedient** since *ml h* “come here” originally was an imperative. *It is fascinating that the people challenged the suitability of the first king momentarily because he did not “muster” obediently.*

(2) TEXTUAL GAP 10.22

*They ask if Saul is still the man since he has not mustered. Then the LORD said he has gone to the stuff or **the weapons**. This gap stressed that Saul had a personal interest in material things. He never was without his javelin. When Israel had few weapons Saul and Jonathan had the best equipment. The other option is that he had gone to the pots or vessels to eat or drink. We do learn from Chapter 20 that Saul was supervisor of the feast. Either way Saul was on the wrong foot from day one.*

GOD SAVE THE KING 22-25

But they would run and they would take him from there and they would have presented him in the midst of the people and he would be taller than the entire people from the shoulders and upward.

The predominant use of the future tense in Samuel is one of the characteristics. It displays both a compiler and an original hand. An original hand for the reason that the will of the people and the way things actually happened are cast not just in a history book style but in autobiographical style. Samuel recalled the desire to go and get him and the pressure they put on him to appear and the enthusiasm of presentation and the impression of the great tall youthful king. It also very clearly accompanies the familiar expression “until this day” as a further sign that the history was recorded many years later. The textual gaps can hardly be denied as testimony to

the fact that matters we do not have and that the Spirit of God knew we do not need are no longer preserved. The Gaps, happily, without exception afford considerable leverage for spiritual assessment of matters of the day.

Then Samuel said to all the people “Have you taken a good look at the one whom the LORD has chosen for there is none like him among the entire people. And all the people would shout and they said “He will be the king”. Then Samuel spoke to the people about the legal administration of the kingdom and he wrote it down in a book and he would cause it to be deposited before the LORD and Samuel discharged the entire people—every man to his house.

SAUL’S ESTEEMED RETINUE 26-27

Saul could hardly have had a better start. He had been brought to understand the LORD. He had mingled with the prophets. He had the acclaim of the entire nation. He now marches in step with a band of men who were spiritual men. It is probably for such reason years later that they loved David and they too could enter into the experience of the prophets when sent to fetch David.

And Saul also went to his house at Gibeah and there went with him a valiant dancing force that the LORD had **touched** or **kindled** in their hearts. But the sons of Belial said “How shall this man save us?” So they showed him contempt and would not cause a present to be brought to him but he was **as if he was deaf** or he was “gentle” [Cyrj] *In this response which was his first pass with the truculent animosity of citizens Saul showed a statesmanlike manner and qualities that one associates with Christ in the utter meekness of His kingdom. The writer makes a valuable teaching point drawing out from the example of Saul the proper manner to treat those who oppose. How very different, sadly, his eventual harsh and deceitful treatment of David. In the book of Samuel we are dealing with the “different man” whose heart “the LORD touched or lit up” and later we are dealing with the convicted man who faces the nemesis of calamity from which there is no escape.*

CHAPTER 11

Prophetic History condemns dissipation for sin is a reproach to any people (Proverbs 14.34)

DAVID’S ADULTERY WITH BATHSHEBA 1-5

IT’S A FACT that when the year had turned around again and at the time kings go out to war David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel and they vanquished the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah but David just settled down at Jerusalem.

THE FACT WAS the moment evening came David rose from his bed and he had a walk in the garden of the house of the king and he caught sight of a woman bathing from the upper part of the garden and the woman was very beautiful to look at. Then David sent and searched for the woman and he (*a conveniently unnamed messenger*) said “Is this not Bathsheba daughter of Eliam [“God’s people” LXX Eliab “God is Father” A.V. margin Ammiel “people of God”] wife of Uriah the Hittite?

Together with the military recorder this leading soldier also was among David’s top brass and clearly had married a Jewess and was a righteous gentile.

Then David sent messengers and took her and she was brought to him and he lay down with her for she was a companion of purity from her period but she returned to her house. So the woman conceived and she sent and informed David and she said “I have conceived”.

DAVID ACTS SHREWDLY 6-13

Then David sent to Joab saying “Send me Uriah the Hittite!” and Joab sent Uriah to David. So Uriah came to him and David asked him concerning the wellbeing of Joab and the welfare of the people and the prosperous nature of the war. Then David said to Joab “Go down to your house and wash your feet and Uriah went out of the house of the king and there followed him an offering [*a lifting up like the “celebratory portions Joseph offered his brothers and like the gifts accompanying the banquet of Ahasuerus at his marriage to Esther*] of the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the house of the king along with all the servants of his lord and he did not go down to his house. Then it was told David saying “Uriah did not go down home and David said to Uriah “Why, being aware as you are you had come a way or gone on your way did you not go down to your house?” Then Uriah said to David “The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents or Succoth and my master Joab and the servants of my lord are camping upon the open field. Should I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As You live and your soul lives should I do this thing – *I will not.*

And David said “Remain here today and also tomorrow and I will send you away and it will be departure.” *The Hebrew “it will depart” or “be departure day” is not a 2nd but third person verb suggesting something sinister.* Uriah was in Jerusalem that day and the next. Then David called him and he ate and drank before his face and he(David) would keep him drinking [Piel future] but in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord but he did not go down to his house.

THE DEATH OF URIAH 14-17

Its live history in the morning that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah and he wrote in the letter saying “Place Uriah at the front faces of the strength of battle and withdraw from him and he will be smitten and die.”

And its live history through Joab’s observing of the city he delivered Uriah to a place where he knew that elite soldiers were. Then the stout men of the city issued out and engaged Joab in battle and some of the people and servants of David fell and also Uriah the Hittite died.

THE BATTLE REPORT INCRIMINATES DAVID 18-23

Then Joab sent and informed David all the details of the battle. He also commanded the messengers saying “As you finish speaking of all the battle detail to the king and it happens that the king’s wrath is raised and he says to you “Why aware as you were did you approach so close to the city for battle? Surely you would know that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech son of Jerrub Besheth? Was it not a woman who caused an upper millstone [*bkr jlp*] from the wall above and he died in Thebes? Why did you go near the wall?” Then you shall say “Your servant Uriah is dead – finished.” [*Or “that’s me finished!”*] *The Hittite war scribe gives us the exact detail of this incident which is a major blot on the life of David and in the divine providence an acute and honest reporter was on hand to paint in for us the veriest details of the incident and retail the entire story from start to finish.*

DAVID COUNTS URIAH’S LIFE CHEAP 22-25

Then the messenger went and arrived and apprised David of all that Joab sent. And the messenger said to David “When the men prevailed over us and came out against us in the field we were right on top of them to the entrance of the gate but the archers

shot from above on the wall against your servants and some of the servants of the king are dead and even Uriah the Hittite is dead.” Then David said to the messenger “This is what you shall say to Joab ‘Let this matter not be distressful in your eyes for the sword swallows up this one and that one alike. Cause your battle to take firm hold upon the city and pull it down and you continue to press it.’ *Under the guise of continued deep concern for state of the military and the success of the campaign David hid his own wickedness and showed callous disregard for the loss of a great and good man.*

URIAH’S WIFE TRAUMATISED 26-27

Then his wife heard that Uriah her husband was dead and she lamented for her husband. Then the mourning passed and David sent and added her to his household and wedded her and she bore him a son but the thing that David had done distressed the LORD. *Bathsheba was full of tears and clothed in dark sackcloth and walking with her head bowed for days. After such sadness David took her and married her forthwith. The matter made God tremble like a curtain in a breeze. The Spirit of God was with David but on this occasion almost forsook him. David was well aware of this divine aspect for in his famous 22nd psalm he writes “Take not Your Holy Spirit from me”. This story rumbles on for a further chapter in scripture and the sacred writer as I have suggested is himself a Hittite believer and will have all the truth come to view. The LORD taught through this callous and unequivocally sinful month in the life of David that we must never cease to battle for righteousness and that the sins of the flesh are most likely to molest us when we lay aside any of the weapons of the Holy Spirit which are set at our disposal in Ephesians 6.*

CHAPTER 12

NATHAN’S PARABLE 1-5

Then the LORD sent Nathan to David and he came to him and said to him “There were two men in one city and one was rich and one was in need. The rich man had a very large flock and herd and the poor man had nothing at all except one little ewe lamb which he bought and it lived and was growing big – the darling [*nydjy*] with a family bond to him and his growing family. And it ate his special delicacy and it drank from his cup and it lay in his lap and it was like a daughter to him. Then the rich man came to the man and he thought it a pity to take from his flock and herd to offer *food* to a man on a journey that came to him but he took the ewe-lamb of the poor man and offered it to the man who had come on his journey to him. And the anger of David was raised greatly and he said to Nathan “As the LORD lives because he did this he should die”. He shall recompense the ewe lamb four times over as reward because he had done this thing and above that because he has had no pity [*lmj*].

YOU ARE THE MAN 6-14

Then Nathan said to David “You are the man”. Thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘I anointed you to be king over Israel and I delivered you from Saul’s hand and I gave you the house of your lord and the wives of your lord into your bosom and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah and if that were small I would have caused to add to you similarly here and there. Why when aware of it you made contemptible the word of the LORD’S promise to do evil in his sight? You struck Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife for your wife and you slaughtered him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. But now the sword shall not depart from your house for its

duration... *The A.V. interestingly uses “never” for ml#a for “eternity” is not in view but rather the dynasty of David ...on account of the fact that you have been in contempt of me and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Thus says the LORD| “Behold me as I raise against you a calamity from your house and I will take away your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion and he will sleep with your wives in the open before this very sun” for you acted in secret and I will enact this matter before all Israel and before the sun.*

Then David said to Nathan “I have sinned before the LORD.” And Nathan said to David “The LORD will also cause a passing over of your sin - you will not die!”

Except because you have clearly given occasion for blasphemy or reproach [*xan*] to the enemies of the LORD in this matter the son that will be born to you will also die.

*Prophetic history attests that when I regard iniquity in my heart the LORD will not hear me
Psalm 66.18*

DAVID ON PRAYER AND FASTING 15-23

Then Nathan walked to his house and the LORD struck or “defeated” the child of the wife of Uriah born to David and he was very ill. But David sought God on behalf of the child and David fasted and came and sojourned overnight lying on the earth. Then the elders of his house arose to cause him to rise from the earth but he was unwilling and he would not cut or eat bread [*mhl arb*] with them.

IT IS A FACT that on the seventh day the child died and the servants of David feared to announce to him that the child had died for they said “While the child’s life was in him we spoke with him and he would not listen to our voice and how will we say to him that the child is dead – and he produce a calamity. But David saw that his servants were a company of whisperers and David understood that the child was dead and David said to his servants “Is the child dead?” and they said “He is dead”. So David arose from the earth and washed and anointed him and changed his outer garment and went to the house of the LORD and worshipped Him. Then he came to his own house and made request and they set bread before him and he ate.

This is most instructive on facing trauma. David gained understanding by enquiry and then abandoned his hope of life but prepared for the society of others and first frequented the presence of God. Then he resumed normal life.

Then the servants said to him “Why did you take the action you have done because during the life of the child you fasted and wept and as soon as the child died you arose and ate bread? Then he said, “While the child was alive I fasted and wept because I said ‘who knows if the LORD will give me the life of the child?’ *This is of interest for it flies in the face of the distinct word of the prophet Nathan. David tested if God would favour him in spite of His revealed word! He believed **divine mercy exults against judgment** (cf Psalm 52.8, 89 24-8, 101.1, 103.8 and was prepared to pray in accordance with his faith.* But now that he is dead what reason is there that I should fast? Am I able to cause him to return again? I shall go to him but he shall not return to me! *David is stating quite clearly his belief in the life of those who pass into eternity.*

BATHSHEBA BEARS SOLOMON 24-25

Then David comforted Bathsheba his wife and he went in to her and she conceived a son and he called his name “Solomon” [*recompense*] and the LORD loved him. But he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet and called his name Jedidah [*“beloved”*] because of the “passing over” [*rwb[b]*] of the LORD. *The significance of involving Nathan again is to recognise the grace of God in forgiveness and that the “eve lamb”*

story triggers something deep - that the Lamb of God in Passover enables peace and forgiveness in depth.

JOAB'S DOGGED FIGHT IS REWARDED-DAVID TAKES THE CITY 26-31

But Joab fought the sons of Ammon at Rabbah and captured the royal city. Then Joab sent messengers to David and said "I have battled on my own in Rabbah; I have also taken the city of rivers or waters so now gather the rest of the people and camp against the city and capture it lest I should capture the city and my name gets proclaimed over it. So David gathered all the people and marched to Rabbah and encamped against it and captured it. Then he took the crown of their king off his head and in weight it was about a Cor of Gold and precious stones and it was placed on the head of David and he caused very great booty to be taken from the city. *There is a little pun here in that "Great" and the city name "Rabbah" pronounce the same. So David took Rabbah out of Rabbah – he took the greatness from the Great.* And the people that he evacuated he also appointed for the saw [*hrqm*] and threshing harrows [*xrj*] of iron and iron axes [*rzqm*] and he caused them to pass over as workers in the brick-kilns [*nb/m*] and he did so to all the cities of the sons of Ammon and David returned and all Israel to Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 13

Prophetic history declares the vital need for patience and perseverance

SAUL'S BIG CHALLENGE AT GILGAL 1-10

Saul was one year into his reign; but when he was two years king over Israel Saul chose 3000 from Israel for himself and two thousand were with Saul at Michmash and at the hill of Bethel and there were a thousand with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. But the remainder of the people he sent away every man to his tent. Then Jonathan struck the military outpost of the Philistines which was at Gibeah but the Philistines heard. Then Saul blasted on the shophar throughout the land saying "The Hebrews will obey". So all Israel heard the report "Saul has attacked the outpost of the Philistines and also Israel had made them abhorrent to the Philistines" and the people were called to help getting behind Saul at Gilgal. *As ever in war the messages get garbled. Saul, however, was very confident of support and acted with faith and expedition. The early Saul gave great promise.*

Then the Philistines gathered for battle with Israel thirty thousand chariots and six thousand cavalry and manpower as the sand on the edge of the sea for multitude and they went up and set up a battle front at Michmash east of Bethaven. Then the warrior of Israel saw that it was adverse to him for the people were distressed and had concealed them [*abj*] in caverns or dug-outs and amid thorns and in among rocks and high precipices and in pits or cisterns. Hebrews also crossed over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead but Saul stayed still in Gilgal and all the manpower hurried trembling after him. And he was waiting expectantly for seven days for an assembly or meeting on account of Samuel but Samuel had not come to Gilgal and the people were dispersing from around him. Then Saul said "You must bring me the burnt offering and peace offerings and he offered up the whole burnt offering. *In straitened circumstances and when it appeared Samuel was not coming he acted out of fear and assumed the role of a priest. He had acted with acceptance as a prophet but this was an anointed office and was not his of right. Only Christ could combine in His office as Melchisadek the regal and priestly duties.* And **THE FACT IS** as he had completed making the burnt offering then behold Samuel came and Saul went to meet him and to bless him.

SAMUEL BITTERLY DISAPPOINTED 11-16

But Samuel said “What have you done?” and Saul said “Because I saw that the people were dispersing from around me and you had not come for the assembly on the days *past* and the Philistines are massing at Michmash.

And I said “Now the Philistines will come down to me at Gilgal and I have not supplicated the face of the LORD so I constrained myself and offered up the burnt offering.” But Samuel said to Saul “You have acted foolishly; you have not observed the command of the LORD your God that He commanded you for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel until the age or for perpetuity. But now your kingdom shall not rise. The LORD has sought or is seeking a man for Him like him in heart and the LORD has commanded him to rule over His people for you have not kept watch on what the LORD commanded you. So Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin and Saul counted the forces that were found with him and they were around 600 men. So Saul and Jonathan his son and the people that were found with him returned to Gibeah of Benjamin and the Philistines camped at Michmash.

THREE PRONGED OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE PHILISTINES 17-18

And those that cause destructive espionage went out from the camp of the Philistines in three divisions. The first division set up a front on the way to Ophrah toward the land of Shual. *This thrust was toward the North East.* And another company set up a front towards Bethhoron. *That thrust was South Easterly.* The other division set up a front on the route of the border that twists and overlooks the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness. *This third division faced downward toward Gilgal and the Dead Sea and was mustered in the valley of the Hyenas which is along the Jericho road.*

Prophetic History shows the Lord of Israel's hosts despises military arsenals

ABSOLUTE LACK OF JEWISH MILITARY HARDWARE 19-23

Then or at that time there was not an iron or brass working smith to be found in all the land of Israel for the Philistines said “Perhaps the Hebrews would make the sword or spear.” But all Israel went down to the Philistines – each man to sharpen [*vf/*] *his disc and his ploughshare and his axe [mdrq]* and his cutting instruments *as scythes.* But there was the file for sharpening the edges of coulters and ploughs and three pointed forks [*v/v*] and pitchforks [*v/q*] and axes [*drq*] and to set or hew goads [*brd*] So **THE FACT IS** in the day of battle that neither sword nor spear was in the hand of all the people that were with Saul and with Jonathan. But they were found to belong to Saul and Jonathan his son. Then the military at the Philistine base went out to the passage of Michmash.

CHAPTER 14

Prophetic History shows that through the LORD the humble do exploits

JONATHAN'S BRAVE ATTACK 1-3

And **THE FACT IS** on that same day Jonathan Saul's son said to his young servant “Take up arms; go, we will cross over to the stronghold of the Philistines “because there has been a passing out” or “which is accessible from the pass” but he did not inform his father about this. So Saul stayed in the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is in Migron and the people that were with him were about 600 soldiers. And Ahiah [*known also as Ahimelech*] the son of Ahitub brother of Ichabod,

Phineas' son who himself was son of Eli was the priest of the LORD in Shiloh wearing the Ephod. Yet the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. *The sacred writer – whether the war correspondent or the religious scribe– is recording that Jonathan did not seek to the oracle of God in this time of “departed presence”.* *Though there were 600 men around they were not aware of the absence of the prince. Clearly Jonathan was attempting a highly secret and dangerous mission designed to inspire Israel.*

JONATHAN'S HEROIC ACT & TIMELESS FAITH PRINCIPLE 4-13

And between the passes where Jonathan sought to cross to the garrison of the Philistines there was a rugged acclivity of rock on this side and on that side and the name of one was Bozez (“shining” rock) and of the other Seneh (“thorn bush” rock) . The sharp too precipice of the one was precipitous from the northern aspect facing Michmash and the other precipitous facing south. But Jonathan said to his young servant “Take up the armour; go and make your way across to the army post of these uncircumcised. **Perhaps the LORD will work in our favour for there is no restraint [rx] [“no rule” “no hindrance” “no shut door”] to the LORD to save by many or by few.** And his armour-bearer said to him “Do all that is in your heart; I must bow to you; look, I am with you in tune with your heart purpose.

There is something dynamic and magnetic about real leadership. The armour-bearer like David saw courage in Jonathan– and not just bravado– but divinely directed action. His faith and hope lit up his scheme.

Then Jonathan said “Behold we will cross over or be Hebrews in face of these stout men and we will reveal ourselves to them. If this is what they say to us “Stand still till we come to you” we will stand where we are and not go up to them. But if they speak thus to us “Come up to us” we will go up for this will be the sign for us that the LORD has delivered *them* into our hand. So they both disclosed them to the military stronghold of the Philistines and the Philistines said “Behold the Hebrews coming from the caves where they have been hiding. Then the stout fellows of the stronghold answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer and said “Come up to us and we will teach you a thing”. [SPACE IN HEBREW TEXT] Then Jonathan said to his armour-bearer “come up after me for the LORD has delivered into the power of Israel” *This is a good example of the clipped or incomplete speech of 1 Samuel but again we are to remember that these two men are climbing one of the steepest rock shelves in Israel. The text may be understood to exactly reflect the speech. **The palace recorder and possibly war diarist of David Ahilud (2 Samuel 8.16-18) may well have delighted in these nuances.***

(3) (4) (5) TEXTUAL GAPS & COMMENT

*The text which previously in Chapter 10 had two small gaps at verses 11 & 21 now has two more. In this chapter we have three further spaces 3, 4 and 5. Further along there are spaces in Chapters 16, 20, 23(2), 24 and 28 – making 10 in all of the sort I quote and a final space which states “part of the book is in the spaces” or as others interpret the word *qsp* “destroyed” [cf Proverbs 13.3]. The Rabbinic comment is “**A space to be repaired by the opening of the lips**”. The Hebrew interpreters were kind to **the Kethibh or written text** and simply mention that there is oral detail which is unaccounted not vital and space testifies to its existence. Critics deal controversially with this book not alone because of the gaps but because words seem to be dropped easily. On one occasion I propose to counter this criticism when Saul climbs Ramah*

the speech is staccato and words are dropped but understandably so as the men are out of breath.

There are over 100 footnotes in the Hebrew text tendering comments on the text of which the eleven that I quote are just one tenth. Some are insignificant as the spelling of a thousand with or without an "I" in Chapter 21.12 and in the subsequent Chapter 22 six Qere or oral alternative readings are given which I will now set out as examples of textual detail

- (1) v13 The expressing "conspired **against me**" has the Qere alternative "conspired murmuring against" with *nyl a* instead of *yl* [
- (2) v.15 The Qere or **oral interpretation** has the Peal participle "asking constantly"(God) for the textual "the asking" or "prayer"
- (3) v.17 The Qere has "the guard" [literally "ears" instead of "footmen".] The LXX has ""runners". The A.V. reflects the Hebrew alternative in its margin
- (4) v.18 The Qere spells the conspirators name "Doag" whereas the text gives "Doeg"
- (5) v.22 A repeat of the previous readings
- (6) v.23 There is a comment at the end of the passage which says "Not according to the opening of lips". The Hebrew is clear "He that continually seeks my life seeks your life" but the LXX which probably reflects the Qere reads "Where I seek (a place) for my soul I will seek for yours" There is no good reason to reject the kethibh text of the Hebrew

With such detail the text is strewn. The provenance may well have been historically undulating as the composition derived from primary sources such as Samuel himself and Hannah and David passing through the hands of Shemaiah and the military scribe and being re-written on new scrolls over hundreds of years. Nothing of the message is lost and the word of the LORD is clear throughout.

Prophetic History shows by faith they put armies to flight Hebrews 11

RESUMED TRANSLATION & COMMENTARY 14-23

And **THE FACT IS** that the first strike Jonathan and his armour-bearer struck about 20 men as in half a furrow of a yoke of oxen's ploughing of the field. *The expression means that what two oxen would plough in a day these two warriors did single-handed. The area is of little consequence but the size of the undertaking is vital.* And there was fearful trembling and concern in the army in the field and among all the people of the military stronghold and the primary assault force (so called "spoilers") and the earth would tremble and **THE FACT IS** the trembling belonged to God. *It is worth observing that a mighty continuous earthquake occurred happily after Jonathan had scaled and descended from the mountain and in the event of Saul's faithfulness to God this alone would have seen off the enemy had Saul been in the right place at the right time.* And the look-outs of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin watched and behold the humming multitude melted like snow [*gmm*] and went away and came to blows [*mlj*].

Then Saul said to the forces with him "Please take a muster and see who is gone out from us and they numbered and behold there was no sign of Jonathan and his armour-bearer. Then Saul said to Ahiah "Cause the ark of God to come near for the ark of God was among the sons of Israel that day.

PHILISTINE INSURRECTION 19-23

Prophetic History is strewn with divine reversals

And **THE FACT IS** while Saul spoke with the priest the confused tumult also which was in the army ranks of the Philistines kept going on to increase massively. *The text has a further gap just here.* Then Saul said to the priest “You must draw your hand” *Saul is asking for a determination by use of the Ephod oracle.*

And Saul cried for support and all the people that were with him also came towards the battle and behold the sword of every man was against his fellow and there was very great tumult and confusion. Then the Hebrews around about who **were** with the Philistines until three days ago who also went up with them in battle – these also were **for being** with Israel that **was** loyal [literally “with”] to Saul and Jonathan. *The text is clear enough. It has to be noted that much use is made of the verb “to be” and very often in Samuel the meaning depends on this verb whether present or absent.* Then all the men of Israel that had been “long hiding” or “adults hiding” in Mount Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled and they also glued themselves to pursue after them in battle. *The writer is somewhat humorous speaking of the men as playing a cowardly game of hide and seek and following it up with a courageous game of chasing.*

So the LORD saved Israel that day and the battle passed over to Bethaven which was the boundary of Benjamin – margining the Philistine area of influence.

THE ACUTE ANALYSIS OF JONATHAN 24-32

But the soldier of Israel was distressed that day when Saul had got an undertaking from or acted foolish towards the people saying the soldier was cursed who ate bread till evening and I will avenge myself on **my** enemies and the entire people did not so much as taste bread. And they came – the whole land into the wood for there was honey over the face of the land *The expression does not mean that everybody came on that one occasion-but that the place was so distinguished for “honey” that from all over Israel honey collectors came there just like the soldiers that day.* So the forces came to the wood and behold honey was streaming but no one reached out his hand to his mouth for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan had not heard that his father had caused the people to swear and put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand and immersed it in a comb of honey and brought his hand back to his mouth and his eyes brightened. *The immediate shot of energy revived Jonathan. That honey was the means God provided for energy after a hard day but the army were forbidden its use because of Saul’s will to avenge but even more on account of his foolish oath.* Then a soldier answered from the army and said “Your father caused the army to swear an oath saying “Cursed is the soldier that eats bread today” but the people were fatigued and weary [p[y]]. Then Jonathan said “My father has irritated confused or troubled the land. Please look for my eyes have brightened because I tasted this small portion of honey. *Jonathan made the troops aware of the energy level and the quick reaction promoted by the infusion of energy.* Moreover no doubt would that the people had eaten their fill today from the spoil of **its** enemies which it found for now there would have been a greater slaughter among the Philistines.”

Jonathan contrasted the “enemies of Saul” with the “enemies of the nation”. Behind Saul’s oath was more than simply an aversion to the Philistines. He was intent on acting in this instance without David and showing that he could slay “his myriads” but the battle is the LORD’S and Jonathan took great exception to working with his father at this juncture because he had failed to await Samuel and acted foolishly as a priest and in his ambitious envious heart and in his foolish oath he demanded of

*Israel as he pursued supposedly a great slaughter. Jonathan who triggered the action recognised God's support and expressed the belief that the future would have been very different had not Saul envied and forced the nation to a calamitous oath. Gilboa might never have happened and the Philistines who lived to fight another day got off the hook. All this mischief **the heart of Saul** created. God sought a man **after His own heart**.*

So they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon but the people were extremely fatigued. So the people sped to the spoil. *The Hebrew Qere or oral reading is "The people advised "to the spoil". It may be that belatedly Jonathan's debate disposed of the oath his father imposed or it may be evening had come and the oath could be abandoned with sunset.*

So they captured sheep and cattle and calves and slaughtered them on the ground and the people ate along with the blood.

SAUL WILLS TO DIE FOR THE PEOPLE'S SIN 33-35

So it was told to Saul "Behold the people have sinned against the LORD". And he said "You have dealt in a cloak and dagger manner. Roll over me today a great stone" Then Saul said "Disperse among the people and say to them "Bring each man his ox and his sheep and slay them with this and you shall eat and not sin against the LORD in eating with the blood. So all the people –each man brought near his ox in his hand that night and slew it there. **Then Saul built an altar to the LORD. This was the beginning of building an altar to the LORD.**

THE PEOPLE SPARE JONATHAN 36-46

Then Saul said "Let us go down after the Philistines at night and take booty for ourselves among them till the light of morning and we will not leave a remnant– not a man among them. And they said "do all that seems good in your eyes". *A further space in the Hebrew text leaves us asking about the motive of Saul. This was a subtle action and seemed to be dictated by the desire to establish himself as a great commander on a par with David or at any rate to make up for his failure to vanquish the Philistines.*

But the priest said "Let us draw near thus far to God". Then Saul asked God "Shall I go down in pursuit of the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel" but He (God) did not answer him that day. So Saul said "Come close to me here as with presents all the leaders [*men of presence*] among the people and know intimately and see clearly through what the sin is this day. For as the LORD lives that caused the salvation of Israel even if it is in Jonathan my son he shall surely die but none from all the people gave him answer.

Then he said to all Israel "You and all Israel will be on the one side and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side so the people said to Saul "Do what is good in your eyes". Then Saul said to the LORD God of Israel "Deliver the perfect" or "Give a complete answer". Then Jonathan and Saul were taken and the people went away. Then Saul said to Jonathan "Explain to me what you have done and Jonathan said "To taste I tasted a little honey on the end of my staff that was in my hand; behold it is I – I must die!" Then Saul said "Thus may God do and thus add if Jonathan does not die the death." But the people said to Saul "Shall Jonathan die who has begun this great deliverance in Israel this night. And as the LORD lives there shall not fall to earth a hair from his head for he has worked with God this day and the people preserved [*hdp*] Jonathan and he did not die. So Saul went up from pursuit of the Philistines and the Philistines went to their well known place.

SAUL'S REIGN IN SUMMARY-A PERPETUAL WAR AND SEARCH FOR WARRIORS 47-52

And Saul took the kingship over Israel and battled around against all his enemies in Moab and among the sons of Ammon and in Edom and with the kings of Zobah and with the Philistines and in every place he faced them he disturbed and disquieted them. And he did valiantly and struck Amalek and delivered Israel from the power of those that plundered them. And the sons of Saul were Jonathan and Ishui and Malchi Shua; then the names of his two daughters – the name of the first Merab and the name of the younger Michal. And the name of the wife of Saul was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz and the name of the commander of the host was Abner son of Abiel. And Kish was father of Saul and Ner father of Abner son of Abiel. And there was harsh warfare with the Philistines all the days of Saul and Saul looked at every man as a warrior and he gathered to him every man of valour.

CHAPTER 15

THE CALL TO ELIMINATE AMALEK 1-9

So Samuel said to Saul “The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over my people – over Israel so now listen to the voice of the words of the LORD *as He calls*. Thus says the LORD of hosts “**I am reviewing** or re-visiting [*dqp*] that which Amalek did to Israel when there on the road belonging to him in coming up from Egypt.” **History teaches us that God reviews the past and in this instance some 350 years later too. The attitude of a nation to” the people who trust totally in the LORD” is of the highest consequence. The “Inasmuch” of Jesus was not to individuals but to nations (Matthew 25 32 &40).**

Now go and bring about a strike against Amalek and **utterly destroy** [*literally “put them to the ban”*] all that belongs to him. And do not have pity or compassion on him and put to death from man to woman; from child to feeding baby, from ox to sheep, from camel to ass. So Saul summoned the people and **reviewed** them at Talaim – 200,000 infantry and 10,000 soldiers of Judah. *It is important to notice the “review of Saul” in the light of the “review of God”. God saw the immense growth of an evil nation and was now determined to halt its power. Saul attested the decline of Israel comparatively when we compare the numbers with those of the Exodus—in Numbers 1.46 we read “All that were numbered were 603,550...all that were able to go forth to war in Israel”.*

Then Saul came to the city of Amalek and strove at the river or river valley. And Saul said to the Kenites “Go, leave finally and go away down as a river in spate from the centre of Amalek lest I gather you up along with him and you made a covenant with all the sons of Israel at their coming up from Egypt. So the Kenites removed from among Amalek. Then Saul struck Amalek from Havilah in your going down to Shur which is facing Egypt or the Egyptians. *The battle raged over the same territory as anciently Israel passed on the way to Canaan. Havilah is a strip of country south of the Philistine occupied land and 20 miles south west of Beersheba. Along a front and presumably in the 20 mile wide corridor to the west the River that irrigated Havilah and Amalek and the River of Egypt to the east Saul pursued Amalek twenty or thirty miles towards Shur. The original battle of Israel with the Amalekites was 150 miles south near Rephidim and it is recorded in Exodus 17 8-16. It would appear that Amalek was expanding through the passage of hundreds of years and had spread widely over the desert and was settling in some numbers south of Israel’s Negev.*

And he handled king of Amalek roughly [*vpt*] taking him alive and all the people were destroyed by ban before the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the flock and herd also second best and the fat lambs [*rrk*] and all that was good but the complete lot of the faint and spoiled they destroyed by ban.

SAUL IN A WHIRLWIND POWER BUILD-UP 10-23

Prophetic History shows God is love whereas man is the critic

Then **THE FACT IS** – the word of the LORD came to Samuel saying “It grieves me [*literally “I feel pity or sigh” (for the people). It is notable that Saul charges the people but exonerates himself but that God pities the people and accuses Saul*] that I have made Saul king for he has turned from following me and has not established my word [*“made my word prosper”*] and it made Samuel angry or vexed or zealous and he cried to the LORD for help all night long. But Samuel rose early to call Saul in the morning and Samuel was apprised saying “Saul has gone to Carmel and behold he has set up a base of power for him and is going around and passing through (*here*) as he goes down to Gilgal” *It would appear that Saul was involved in building a power base in the north and proceeding to Gilgal – he was rushing hither and thither – but Samuel met him as he passed near Ramah. The sheep he had spared were with him.* But Samuel went to Saul and Saul said to him “Blessed are you –**the LORD’S own**. I have established the word of the LORD.” But Samuel said “But what is the language [*literally “human voice” or “call”*] of this flock in my ear? And what is the language of the herd that I am hearing?” Then Saul said “**They** brought them from the Amalekites because **the people** took pity on the best of the flock and herd for the purpose of sacrificing to the LORD your God and the remainder **we** have utterly destroyed.” But Samuel said to Saul “**Make yourself free or relax** [*hpr*] **and I will explain to you what the LORD told me in the night.**” And he told him to go on speaking. So Samuel said “**Is it not so when you were little in your own eyes you became head of the tribes of Israel and the Lord anointed you to be king over Israel?**” Then the LORD sent you on a pathway and said to you “Also utterly destroy those sinful ones the Amalekites and battle with him until they are finished off. So why did you not obey the voice of the LORD? And why did he rush upon the spoil of war and do this evil in the LORD’S eyes?” Then Saul said to Samuel “Because I listened to the voice of the LORD and went the way He sent me and I have brought Agag king of Amalek but put Amalek to the ban with destruction. But the people took from the spoil of sheep and cattle the best of that for destruction to offer to the LORD your God at Gilgal!” *Saul was plainly shifting the blame for something he could well have changed by leadership.*

But Samuel said “**Is there pleasure for the LORD in burnt offerings and sacrifices comparable to obeying the voice of the LORD. Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to make yourself listen precisely is better than the fat of the strong rams. For resistance or contumacy is the sin of false prophecy or divination and wilful stubbornness[“dulling the sharp edge” of the mind] is iniquity and “domestic gods” or Teraphim.** Because you have refused the word of the LORD the LORD also has rejected you from being king.” *This oft-quoted statement is even more cogent in its second part than in its first lines. The perceptive mind of Samuel which overnight had shared with God seems to have dropped to the view that Saul was margining on interaction with evil spirits and showing the same contumacy as an idolater and a like evasiveness as those directed by Satan. It may be that Saul was already dabbling with spirits in his mind and so the evil spirit that troubled him was a covert development for which he was liable to divine retribution.*

SAUL'S ABJECT CONFESSION 24-31

Then Saul said to Samuel "I have sinned for I have passed over the mouth of the LORD and your words because I swathe people and I heard their voice. But now please lift the burden of my sin and return with me and I will worship the LORD." But Samuel said to Saul "I will not return with you because you have rejected the word of the LORD and the LORD has rejected you from continuing as king over Israel." Then as Samuel turned about to leave he took firm hold of the wing of his mantle and it was torn. And Samuel said to Saul "The LORD has rent the kingdom of Israel from over you and given it to your neighbour that is better than you." *Ironically the better sheep of Amalek were spared. Now the LORD is telling Saul that he is the rejected leader and his friend his better. Saul had little difficulty understanding "Who was his neighbour?" for the man who had been a "shepherd and who ate at his table [h[r] was David his very son-in-law.*

And also the eternal or "for-ever" president or conqueror [hx]] of Israel will not violate a covenant or act deceptively and He will not repent because he is not a man to feel regret.

Samuel used the exact word the LORD used in saying "It grieves me I have made Saul king". The word used with l [or la "over" or "on account of" signifies "repentance" but without these adverbs it simply conveys God's internal "signs" which is as far as man ever reaches to understand the stricken heart of God.

Then he (Saul) said "I have sinned" "Now please give me honour in the presence of the elders of my people and in Israel's presence and turn with me and worship the LORD **your God** with me." *Saul's last word like his first word acknowledged that the LORD was unquestionably Samuel's God but, sadly, he could not put his name alongside and speak of "our God". So Samuel turned after Saul and they worshipped the LORD.*

SAMUEL AND SAUL PART FOR GOOD 32 -35

Then Samuel said "Let them bring near to me Agag king of Amalek" and Agag came to him cheerfully or guardedly and Agag said "It *seems* confirmed the bitterness of death is gone or turned away [rns]. But Samuel said "As your sword has bereaved women thus your mother will be bereaved among women. And Samuel cut Agag in pieces [psv] before the LORD in Gilgal. Then Samuel went to Ramah and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. But Samuel did not add to see Saul until the day of his death but Samuel continually lamented (privately) over Saul and the LORD sighed in himself that he had made Saul king over Israel. *Samuel had constant sorrow and the LORD sighed as well as comforting himself [mj]]. That divine capability means that God can go on working with David and moving inexorably to lead His people whereas even the greatest of men feel entrapped by the sadness of the past and sympathy for pitiable people whose lives because of contumacy will never be untangled.*

CHAPTER 16

THE CALL OF GOD TO ANOINT DAVID 1-5

And the LORD said to Samuel "To what extent or lengths will you be a man lamenting over Saul for I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite for I have seen my king among his sons. But Samuel said "How can I go for Saul is listening and will slay me?" But the LORD said "Take a heifer of the herd in your hand and declare "I am

going to do sacrifice to the LORD!” And call for Jesse at the sacrifice and I will cause you to be aware what you shall do and you will anoint for me the one of whom I will tell you.” So Samuel did what the LORD said and went to Bethlehem and the elders of the city were terrified and said “Have you come peacefully?” And he said “Peacefully, I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify you and come with me to the sacrifice and he set apart Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.”

Prophetic History demonstrates the LORD chooses leaders man would overlook

THE PARADE OF SONS –AND CHOICE OF DAVID 6-13

And **THE FACT IS** as they came was that he looked at Eliab and said “Definitely His anointed is before the LORD!” **But the LORD said to Samuel “Do not regard his looks and the height he has grown with expectation [fbn] for I have little esteemed him for it is not what man sees for man sees what is before his eyes but the LORD sees what the heart possesses.”** Then Jesse called Abinadab and caused him to pass before the face of Samuel and Samuel said to Jesse “The LORD has not chosen among these. Then Samuel said to Jesse “Are your young servants at an end or is that them all?” Then he said “The little one still remains but look he is shepherding with the flock” Then Samuel said to Jesse “Send and take him for I will not go round until he comes here.” So he sent and brought him and (1) he was “red-haired” [*ymda indicates hair hue as opposed to the colour of the skin mda*] (2) with excellent bright graceful eyes and (3) happy or cheerful and pleasant to look at.

(6)TEXTUAL GAP 16.12

The Hebrew text has a gap at this point which allows us to have something like a picture of the youthful David. His hair and eyes impressed but above all his cheerful disposition. The space like others in the narrative of Samuel allows of oral exchanges which are not recorded by the Spirit or provided in the provenance of scripture for us. We are to conclude that further comment either by Jesse or Samuel is superfluous. Clearly the sacrifice and the meal took place at this time though scripture makes no mention of either. The LORD’S business was about His anointed. And the LORD said “Arise and anoint him for this is he”. So Samuel took the horn of the oil and anointed him in the middle of his brothers and the Spirit of the LORD descended on or prospered in David or through David from that day and onwards and Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

THE CEASELESS CONVICTION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD 14-18

But the Spirit of the LORD removed or **deviated [hrs]** from Saul and a “spirit of calamity” from the LORD throughout (*his days*) continually came suddenly and alarmingly upon Saul. Then the servants of Saul said to him **“Please watch –the spirit of God of calamity is continually troubling or alarming you.”** Please let our LORD speak to your servants before your face –they will search for a man who is knowledgeable of music or playing with a harp and the history lesson is when **the Spirit the calamity of God** comes upon you he will then play constantly with his might and it will be better for you. Then Saul said to his servants “Please look for a man to play for me who will bring out the best. Then one of the young servants answered and said “Behold I have seen a son belonging to Jesse the Bethlehemite who knows how to play constantly and he is a valiant warrior and a man of war and discerning or wise in word and the man is good looking and the LORD is with him. *Saul’s servants easily recognised that this immense king with great prowess was become fearful because he no longer walked in step with the Holy Spirit. The*

deviation is indicative of times when God still visited him but that caused immense turmoil. David who was anointed in his place possibly best understood the terrible burden upon the king. He acted with the obduracy of a pagan and the contumacy of a witch and yet as Samuel said Saul would share with him in God's eternity. He was not utterly without the Spirit of God else he would not be the LORD'S.

Prophetic History accentuates the value of praise and joyous song

DAVID COMMISSIONED TO PLAY FOR SAUL 19-23

So Saul sent a messenger to Jesse and said "Send me David your son who is with the flock. Then Jesse took a homer of bread and a bottle of wine and one kind of the goats and sent to Saul by the hand of David his son. So David came to Saul and stood before his face and he loved him greatly and he was with him carrying his armour. Then Saul sent to Jesse saying "Please may David remain before my face because he had found grace in my eyes."

And **THE FACT** is throughout the coming of the spirit from God upon Saul then David took the harp and played with his might and the spirit of the calamity left him and he was better or cheerful or well. *We are not looking at a psychopath but a man who when moved by the Spirit of God was not cheerful but fearful for he stood under conviction and condemnation for his gross sin. A small "s" indicates his unsettled spirit.*

CHAPTER 17

THE BIG BATTLE WHERE DAVID SPRINGS TO PROMINENCE 1-3

Then the Philistines massed their armies for war and they brought up the rear at Shochoh which Judah possessed and they camped between Shochoh and Azekah in Ephes Dammim [*the end of bloodshed*]. And Saul and the soldiers of Israel amassed and camped in the long valley [*qm*] of Elah and stretched out a battle-front to engage the Philistines. But the Philistines made a stand on the hill on that side and Israel took up position on this side of the hill and the flat river valley [*ayg*] lay between them.

GOLIATH'S CHALLENGE 4-19

And the man who comes between went out from the armies of the Philistines – Goliath by name. He was from Gath and his height was six cubits and a span. [*Measurement of old was based on human dimensions so a cubit was 1 foot six inches – a normal step; and a hand-span was 9 inches. Goliath was 9 feet 9 inches tall.*] And there was a helmet of brass and heavy mail for cladding and the weight of the mail was five thousand shekel weight. And armour of brass upon his legs and a sparkling ornament of brass [*mdyk from ddk*] between his shoulder pieces. And the wooden shaft of his spear was like the yoke-beam of the weavers. The iron head of his spear was also 600 hundred shekels in iron and a protective shield bearer walked in front of him. And he stood and proclaimed to the wide army front of Israel and said to them "Why are you come to lengthen your battle-lines? Am not I the Philistine and you are servants of Saul. Choose a man on your side and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and smite me we will be your servants but if I shall have been capable and cause him to be struck then you will be our servants and you will serve us!" *The evident pride of Goliath ["Heap" – truly he was a "heap of a man"] is demonstrated in his statement that "He is "the" Philistine.*

Then the Philistine said "I hold in contempt [*prj*] the long army lines of Israel today. Give me a man and we will join in battle. *Israel was probably less well armed and its best hope was mass attack and encirclement.*

Then Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine and they lay low or the words “penetrated” [tjʌ] and they were very frightened. *The bold challenge got to them.* Then David was just the son of this Ephrathite man from Bethlehem Judah and his name was Jesse and he had eight sons but the man in the days of Saul became an elder among men. And three of the older sons of Jesse went out and marched after Saul to battle and the name of his three sons that went to battle were Eliab the firstborn and his second was Abinadab and the third Shammah. As for David he was the little one but the three eldest sons marched after Saul. But David was continuing to go and returning from being around Saul to shepherd the flock of his father at Bethlehem. *David’s role was of occasional sort and he had lots of time to care for the sheep that he loved.*

So the Philistine came up close [vʝm-very close-probably within 60 feet of Israel’s lines] both in early morning and in the evening and stationed himself four times daily. *When Goliath rose he took up position ready to fight. Then he marched close to Israel and retired to his station after issuing his challenge. This he repeated in the evening.* And Jesse said to David his son “Please take an Ephah of this roasted corn and these ten loaves of bread and run to the camp to your brothers. Also get these ten cuts of goats’ milk cheese to the commander of the thousand and you shall visit your brothers for their welfare and take their assurance [mtbʱra The sense is “to be liable for another” as well as “mingle with them in fellowship” and “take their place”] Jesse may have sought assurance that the brothers would bravely protect their homeland but rather that they were trusting in God like their Father. The phrase admits us to the writer’s interpretation that David actually became a “surety” for them] But Saul and these (three) and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah battling with the Philistines. *Clearly there were skirmishes going on but nothing decisive was happening.*

DAVID ARRIVES AT ELAH AND ASKS ABOUT GOLIATH 21-27

So Israel and the Philistines were preparing the battle line-up to engage in warfare. And David abandoned [vʱi] the vessels he was carrying to the hand or care of the keeper of the vessels and went and ran to the battlefield to his brothers and asked about their welfare. And as he was talking with them behold the Philistine warrior from Gath that came between was coming up – Goliath by name and he spoke similarly to these [earlier] words and David heard him. And every man of Israel fled from before him at the sight of the man for they were very frightened. And a soldier of Israel said “Have you seen this man who comes up? He comes up to scorn Israel and **THE FACT IS** that the man that slays him the king will enrich and make him great and give him his daughter and make the house of his father freemen throughout Israel. Then David spoke to the soldiers that stood with him and said “What will be done to the man that slays the Philistine and what will belong to this man that diminishes the reproach from over Israel. For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he scorns the array of the living God of strength? Then the people said to him “According to this word to illumine –thus it will be done for the man that slays him.

ELIAB CHIDES DAVID 28-29

But Eliab his older brother was listening in to the word with the men and the anger of Eliab against David became heated and he said “Why is this that you have come down? And for whom have you abandoned that little flock in the wilderness? I know well your insolence [dʱz] and the evil in your heart for you have come down to watch the battle!” But David said “What have I now done? Is there not a word or a matter?”

David is showing that he came for a quite obvious reason which the brothers knew well enough but whereas his elders wished to have him appear in a poor light he was protective of their repute in not stating the obvious.

DAVID PRESENTED TO SAUL 30-31

But he turned round from close to him to another opposite and he spoke confirming this same word of promise and the people replied the word of promise exactly like the first statement of promise. And they obeyed the words that David spoke and reported to the face of Saul and he captured David.

Prophetic History attests experience is never lost-God provides & uses it.

DAVID'S TESTIMONY ON THE VALUE OF EXPERIENCE 32-40

In this section we learn how important experience is to building character. David had challenged wild animals single-handed and with only the LORD and a few simple implements of the shepherd to hand for assault. David knew his bible history and he knew that had Adam kept close to God he could have conquered Satan. He knew that Adam was made in God's image and as long as he trusted God he would be a conqueror.

Then David said to Saul “**The heart of Adam** will not fall on account of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine”. *David was looking back to the great challenge to man in the garden and saying that with faith in God this battle would be won though Adam lost his struggle with the adversary.*

But Saul said to David “You are not capable to pit yourself against this Philistine or to fight with him for you are a youth and he is a man of war from his youth. But David said to Saul “Your servant has **LIFE EXPERIENCE** shepherding my father's flock and the lion came and the bear and carried off one of the flock. But I went after it and smote it and delivered from its mouth and he rose up against me but I held him fast by his beard and smote him and he died. Your servant struck both the lion and the bear and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them. Then Saul said to David “Go and the LORD be with you!” *Good as David's faith and testimony was the king's bidding and blessing were as good. He prayed for the youth God's presence and help.* Then Saul clad David with his long body armour and provided a helmet of brass upon his head and clothed him with mail. And David girded his sword on his side and he attempted to go but he had not tried them out. Then David said to Saul “I am not able to go in these because I have not proved them” [hsl] and David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the river and put them in his bag that Shepherd's had – in his lap purse for gathered stones and his sling was in his hand and he drew near to the Philistine. *The valley was earlier described as one with a river at its base so as David gathered his stones he was already half way between the armies. Now he was across the stream and approaching the champion—closer than even Goliath had attempted to come to Israel.*

THE PHILISTINE'S BOAST 41-44

- (1) And the Philistine would **walk** as he went along and he drew near to David and his armour bearer was in front of him. *It is evident that the deliberate and slow movements of Goliath were coupled with his armour bearer's alacrity so that there was some space developed between the two figures.*
- (2) And the Philistine would take a look and he saw David and he despised him because he was a youth and red-haired with a lovely appearance. *Goliath must first have made some comment on David's child-like beauty.*
- (3) And the Philistine said

to David “Am I a dog that you have come out to me with sticks? (4) And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. (5) And the Philistine said to David “Come to me and I will give your flesh to the fowl of the heavens and to the beasts of the field”

DAVID’S RESPONSE OF FAITH 43-47

(2) But David said to the Philistine (1) “You come to me with a sword and a spear and with mail armour but I am coming to you in the name of the Yahweh of Hosts, the God of the arrayed armies of Israel that you despise. (2) This day the LORD will shut you up [rqs] in my power (3) and I will strike you and sever your head from above you and I will give the corpses of the army of the Philistines this day to the fowl of heaven (4) and so it is to be the earth will know– the entire earth–that there is a God in Israel (5) And all this gathering shall become aware that the LORD does not save by sword or spear for the battle is the LORD’S and He will give you into our hands.

Prophetic History tells us that the Christian soldier is to be vigilant. (Goliath was lying down) 48-58

And **THE FACT IS** the Philistine arose and walked and drew near to engage David and David went speedily and ran towards the Philistine from (his) army [hkr[mh] ranks. And David thrust his hand into his bag and took from there a stone and shot it at the Philistine and he killed him and there was no sword in the hand of David. Then David ran and stood upon the Philistine and took hold of his sword and drew it out of its sheath and with it he cut off his head so the Philistines saw that their warrior was dead and they fled. Then the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted victoriously and pursued the Philistines until you come to the valley or estuary and to the gates of Ekron. So the sons of Israel returned from ardently pursuing [q/d] after the Philistines and they destroyed their encampments. And David took the head of the Philistine and he brought it to Jerusalem and took his armour into his tent. *This latter expression could mean that David recovered the vessels he brought with him or took other useful armour as trophy.*

But as Saul saw David going to encounter the Philistines he said to Abner the captain of the host “Whose son is this youth?” And Abner said “As your soul lives O King if I only knew!” And the king said “You ask whose son the young man is?” So as David returned from smiting the Philistine Abner took him and caused him to come before the presence of Saul and the head of the Philistine was in his arm. And Saul said to him “Whose son are you?” Then David said “The son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite!”

CHAPTER 18

JONATHAN’S LOVE FOR DAVID 1-4

And the history lesson is that as David concluded speaking with Saul the soul of Jonathan was also bound or joined to the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. *We hear nothing of the king’s daughter or royal bounty or making freemen– though the latter may well have followed Saul’s enquiry but we learn that Jonathan had found his hero and a man in whom the Spirit of God dwelt. He was a spiritual man and David was his “forever friend” to quote Daniel O’Donnell.*

And Saul took him that day and did not give him leave to return to his father’s house. But Jonathan and David would cut a covenant through love of him with him as his life and soul. *The form of words enables us to read the covenant as a mutual matter. And*

Jonathan permanently stripped himself of his mantle and gave it to David and his vestment and his sword and his bow and his girdle. *Jonathan was continually passing on his personal effects – both robes and weapons. David was treated as a brother and a prince by Jonathan.*

Prophetic History shows some will hate you some will love you for your faith

SAUL IS DISAPPOINTED 5-9

So David went everywhere Saul despatched him; *he was wise* and Saul set him over his men of war and he was cheery and did well in the eyes of all the people and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul. And **THE FACT IS** with their coming in David's return from striking the Philistine the women also came out from every city of Israel for song and dancing to meet Saul the king with tabrets and in radiance and with triangular harps. And the women answered jokingly saying "Saul struck in thousands and David in myriads. And Saul was very heated and the comment was bad in his eyes and he said "They have accorded myriads to David and to me they have given thousands and the kingdom still definitely belongs to him." And **THE FACT IS** that Saul was eyeing David from that day onward.

Prophetic history demonstrates the sorrow of the soul tortured with conviction

(1) SAUL'S MURDER ATTEMPTS 10-11

And **THE FACT IS** the following day that a spirit of God of calamity descended upon Saul and **he would continue to prophecy** in the midst of his house and David played with his hand that day as on any day and there was a javelin in the hand of Saul. And Saul would cast the javelin and said "I will strike David to the wall" But David turned around from its face twice. *Saul's style of prophecy was dark prediction and his open hostility is seen in his double undisguised attempt to slay David. Only death he imagined could save his throne.*

Prophetic history commends spiritual and practical wisdom

SAUL'S FEAR–MICHAL'S LOVE 12-21

But Saul was afraid of the face of David for the LORD was with him and had departed from Saul. But Saul moved him away from by him and made him commander of a thousand and he went out and came in before the forces or the people. And **THE FACT IS** that David *was wise* in all his ways and the LORD was with him. But Saul saw that *he was very wise* and he was very afraid [*rgy*] in his presence. But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was going out and coming in before them. *David was immensely popular and it must be observed that three times the sacred writer refers to his wisdom and skill.*

Prophetic History abounds with the disappointments of human love & assurance of God's love

(2) SAUL AND THE MARRIAGE TRAP 17-21

Then Saul said to David "Behold I will give my eldest daughter Merab to you as your wife; definitely be a valiant man for me and fight the wars of the LORD" so Saul said "My hand shall not be upon him but the hand of the Philistines shall be upon him". But David said to Saul "Who am I and what is the family of my father in Israel that I should be son-in-law to the king? But **THE FACT IS** at the time Merab the daughter of Saul was to have been given to David that she was given to Adriel the Meholite as his wife. But Michal the daughter of Saul loved David and they informed Saul and the comment was right in his eyes. So Saul said "I will give her to him and she shall be a

snare or trap for him and the hand of the Philistines will be against him. So Saul said to David “You will be my son-in-law twice over today.

(3) SAUL’S THIRD TRICK- DEATH AT THE HAND OF THE PHILISTINES 22-27

Then Saul commanded his servants that they say to David privately “Behold the king is delighted with you and all his servants love you. You must be the king’s son-in-law. Then the servants of Saul spoke these words in David’s ears but David said “Does it seem a little mean matter in your eyes that I must be son-in-law to the king seeing I am dispossessed [*vry*] and despised? Then the servants of Saul informed him saying “David spoke in words like these”. Then Saul said “Thus you will say to David “The king has no delight in a bridal price but would be pleased with 100 foreskins of the Philistines to get revenge on the enemies of the king– so Saul imagined to cause David to fall by the hand of the Philistines. So the servants informed David of these words and the matter was approved in the eyes of David in connection with becoming son-in-law of the king but the days were not set. *The sacred writer tells us that no marriage date or actual detail was attached to these indirect arrangements-it was just a façade.* Then David arose and marched – he and his stalwarts and struck 200 Philistines and David brought the full quota of foreskins to the king to become son-in-law to the king and Saul gave him Michal his daughter as his wife.

DAVID’S SKILL & WISDOM NOTED FOR A FOURTH TIME 28-30

And Saul saw and was aware that the LORD was with David and that Michal daughter of Saul loved him. So Saul had still added fear of David’s presence and Saul became the enemy of David every day. Then the princes of the Philistines went out and it happened that when they went out David *was wiser than all the servants of Saul* and his name and reputation became very precious. *Saul has further murderous schemes in mind to ward off this calamity of the end of his throne but God gave David such wisdom as would safeguard his life from them all.*

CHAPTER 19

(4) SAUL’S FOURTH PLOT FOILED 1-7

Then Saul talked on the matter to Jonathan his son and to all his servants aimed at killing David. But Jonathan the son of Saul took great pleasure in David. So Jonathan informed David saying “Saul my father is in a quest to cause your death and now please watch yourself through the morning and stay under cover and lie in hiding. But I will go and stand at the right hand of my father in the field just there where you are and I will talk through about you with my father and I will get to see what’s happening and tell you. **But Jonathan spoke well of David** to Saul his father and said to him “The king will not miss the mark with his servant David for as far as concerns him he has not sinned concerning you and because he has done very well for you. For he put his life in his hand and slew the Philistine and the LORD created a great deliverance for all Israel.” You saw that and you rejoiced and why should you sin against innocent blood to cause David to die without cause? So Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan and Saul swore by the living God that he would not die. So Jonathan called to David and Jonathan told him all these words and Jonathan brought David to Saul and he was before his face as in former days. *The ever conciliatory Jonathan alone would reach his father’s stubborn will and move his heart to*

sorrowful penitence. However, the nemesis of the divine fiat disturbed Saul deeply on many occasions. The Spirit of God convicted him deeply. He was anointed but not living a life of fellowship with God. Even the melodies of David's harp could not avail to cure his spiritual apathy though they might brighten his mood. Saul was compelled to live out his days as monarch but did so with bad grace.

Prophetic History reminds us ever that wars go on till Shiloh comes

(5) FIFTH MURDER ATTEMPT & FURTHER WAR 8-11

And **THE FACT IS** war was renewed and David went out to fight with the Philistines and struck them with a great defeat and they fled before his face. Then **THE FACT WAS** the spirit of the LORD of calamity was upon Saul and he was sitting in his house and his javelin was in his hand and David was playing with his hand and Saul sought to pin David to the wall with his spear but David burst out from the presence of Saul and thrust his spear deep into the wall but David fled and slipped away on that night.

(6) SIXTH ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

(1) Then Saul sent agents to the house of David to watch him and to kill him in the morning but Michal his wife told David saying "If you do not escape with your life tonight you will be dead in the morning."

MICHAL SAVES DAVID 12-17

So Michal lowered David from a window and he was gone and sped off and slipped away. Then **Michal took the teraphim** and placed them on the bed and placed a cushion of goat's hair for his head and covered it artfully. (2) Then Saul sent agents to capture David and she said "He is sick!" (3) But Saul sent agents to seek David saying "Bring him in the couch to me that I may slay him" Then the agents came in and behold there were the Teraphim on the bed and the cushion of goats hair at his head. Then Saul said to Michal "Why have you craftily thrown me off and sent my enemy off and he has slipped away?" Then Michal said to Saul "He said to me 'Send me off for why should I take your life?'" *Much about Michal is pleasant. Like her brother she was deeply committed to David. She did retain the "household gods" just as Rachel did. They were more of a distraction than idols but they speak of a syncretistic upbringing.*

THE SUPERIOR POWER OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT 12-24

So David sped off and made his escape and came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul was doing to him. Then he and Samuel went and they were living in Naioth (habitation). And it was told Saul saying "Behold David is in Naioth in Ramah." (1) Then Saul sent agents to capture David but they saw the capture of the prophets prophesying and Samuel as overseer ministering over them and it happened that the Spirit came upon these agents of Saul and these also would keep on prophesying. Then it was reported to Saul and (2) he sent other messengers and these also would prophesy.

TEXTUAL GAP 19.21

There is a small space in the Hebrew text at this point because there appears to be no end to the previous sentence no account of a report to Saul but quite obviously the time factor would determine that these had not accomplished their mission. (3) The Saul added to despatch a third group of agents and these also would be *taken by*

the Spirit of prophecy. **Then he went to Ramah himself** and came to the great well that is in Sechu and he asked and said “Where are Samuel and David?” And they said “Look in Naioth of Ramah”. So he went there to Naioth of Ramah and **THE FACT IS** that the Spirit of God also came upon him as he went along and he continued prophesying till he came to Naioth of Ramah. And he also stripped off his robes and was even carried away prophesying before Samuel and **fell down** uncovered all that day **and all night** on which account they were saying “Is Saul also among the prophets?” *The lesson is that nothing can withstand the Spirit of God. Samuel was a man who believed constantly in the spiritual solution and this episode proves his wisdom. No agents could withstand the power of God. The link between Samuel and his God was at the root of the prophetic revival in Israel. It has to be said that this movement has peculiar and evident comparison with modern glossalalia and the gift of tongues. The reality is too evident to miss- indeed shall we not say that Saul was “slain of the Spirit”? How else could this matter categorise? Samuel who gets honourable mention in Hebrews 11 was among those holy men of Old Testament time who were moved by the Holy Spirit and consciously so.*

CHAPTER 20

DAVID CONFERS WITH JONATHAN 1-23

Then David sped off from Naioth in Ramah and went and said directly to Jonathan’s face “What have I done? What is my iniquity and what is my error before the face of your father that he seeks my life?

But he said to him “It would be woe! You shall not die. Look, my father will do nothing either great or small but he will disclose it to my ears. And why would my father conceal this matter lest I should know it? There is nothing of this!” But David still swore and said “Your father knows very well that I have found favour in your eyes”; then he said “there is not even the like of a stride between me and death”. Then Jonathan said to David “What your life is speaking I will do for you”.

Then David said to Jonathan “Look, tomorrow is new moon and I would be seated at the sitting with the king to eat but despatch me and I will hide myself in the field until the evening of the third day. *The feast must have been Passover for three reasons. First it was a religious family festival. Its link to the moon virtually declares it Passover and third, the three day nature of it speaks of preparation, evening feast and Sabbath worship.*

If your father reviews he will miss or punish me but you say “David implored me earnestly to run to Bethlehem his city for the days of sacrifice there with his whole family.” If he says thus “Peace to your servant” it is well but if his rage gets heated know that the calamity is consuming and destroying him. And act kindly over your servant for you have brought your servant with yourself into covenant of Yahweh. But if there is evil in me you put me to death; for what else is this causing me to come to your father? Then Jonathan said “God forbid that for you for if I become personally aware that **the calamity** is completely overwhelming my father to go against you would I not also inform you?” Then David said to Jonathan “Who will tell me or what if your father should reply to you harshly or stubbornly?” Then Jonathan said to David “Come and let us go out into the country” so they both went into the country.

JONATHAN’S FAITH STATEMENT 11-17

And Jonathan said for David’s sake *“O LORD God of Israel when I have dug this secret from my father about this time on the third day and behold it is favourable for David but I do not send at that time to you and disclose it to your ear thus may the LORD do to Jonathan and thus*

add; but if the calamity or evil falling on you seems better to my father I will also disclose it to you and dismiss you and you shall go in peace and the LORD will be with you as when he was with my father. And while I am still alive you shall not cease to show me the covenant kindness of the LORD and I will not die. And do not cut off your covenant love from my house for ever and not even when the LORD has cut off the enemies of David every man from the face of the fertile earth.” So Jonathan cut a covenant with the house of David and supplicated the LORD beyond or against the power of the enemies of David. Then Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him **for the love of his soul** he loved him. *The sacred writer is telling us that David had a deep interest in the welfare of Jonathan’s soul. This is why Jonathan went to commune with God and David in the first instance. Jonathan knew that David wanted the best for the prince and was his soul-friend. He could only say- “I know you want my spiritual good - keep faith for with your spiritual care I shall be able to continue living with this great issue.”*

(7)TEXTUAL GAP 20.18

*At this point we have a further textual gap where the sworn faithfulness of David would have naturally featured but does not. To this the only testimony we have is David’s kindness to Mephibosheth. The textual note tells us they parted significantly on **the eve of the new moon** when the lamb was slain. The connection with the passion of Christ is immediately significant. The loss of David to Jonathan was akin to the loss of Jesus to the disciples. The sorrow of heart in the open field can be understood in terms of Gethsemane and even the “strengthening” of David by Jonathan has a mirror image in the appearance of the angel in the garden of Gethsemane.*

JONATHAN’S SIGN OF THE PALACE ATTITUDE 18-23

Then Jonathan said to him “Tomorrow is new moon and you will cause your absence to be noted for your seat will be numbered. So you will still go down for three days but you will come to the place where you hid in the day of the undertaking and rest near the stone Ezel. And I will aim three arrows [*hry the selfsame term as TORAH which speaks of the future or prophetic “aim” of the law towards Christ*] at the side of the rock as if at a target. Then look out; I will send a lad to go and find the arrows. If I keep saying to the lad “Behold the arrows are on this side of you, look and retrieve them you will also come for there is well-being or peace for you and nothing *untoward* as the LORD lives. But if I say to the youth “Behold the arrows are farther off go for the LORD has despatched you. And on the matter I and you have discussed Behold the LORD be or watch between me and you for ever”

Prophetic History has many examples of evil acts cloaked by religious celebration

JONATHAN BECOMES THE OBJECT OF SAUL’S FURY24-34

So David hid himself in the field. And **THE FACT IS** that at new moon the king sat over the food to feast. And the king sat upon his seat as time after time—upon the seat at the wall and Jonathan rose and Abner sat down by the side of Saul and the usual place reserved for David was vacant. But Saul did not speak about what was what that day for he said “From an incident he is not clean –it’s because he is not purified. But **THE FACT IS** that on the next day –the second of the month –that David’s place was vacant.

(8) TEXTUAL GAP 20.27

And Saul said to Jonathan his son “Do you know why the son of Jesse has not come either yesterday or today to the feast?” And Jonathan answered Saul “David made earnest request from me *to be at [d[]] Bethlehem. The absence of a verb suggests Jonathan spoke in quiet staccato saying “He pleaded for leave—at Bethlehem”* And he said “Please release me for my family have a sacrifice for us in the city and my brother has demanded that I be there and now if I have found favour in your eyes let me get off and see my brothers. For this reason he has not come to the table the king prepared.” Then the anger of Saul grew fierce against Jonathan and he said to him “O son of a changeable one” *[[m “timbrel”] of a seditious one [drm] should I not know that you chose in favour of the son of Jesse for your own shame and the shame of the nakedness of your mother. For all the days the son of Jesse lives on earth your kingdom shall not be established. So now send and get him to me for he is going to die. This was Passover and David becomes an unsuspecting precursor of the Christ who was taken and crucified at Passover. This was the commemoration of the Exodus and had Saul had his way David was to be scapegoat for Saul’s sins.* Then Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him “Why must he die? What has he done?” Then Saul cast a javelin at him to strike him and Jonathan knew that it was final with his father to kill David. Then Jonathan rose from the company of the table in the heat of anger and did not eat on that second day of the feast because he was afflicted with sorrow that his father had made him a disgrace. *This “second day of the month”v27 would actually parallel the resurrection. It becomes evident why the Spirit provided for pause in the sacred text. The Saturday was a silent day with Saul but the search for David was well and truly pursued on Sunday as was the frenzied action of the religious authorities of Jerusalem on the first day of the week after Passover. The intimate knowledge of David’s whereabouts compares with that of the disciples who knew that Jesus had risen. In this book Gaps 7 & 8 bear a curious but significant testimony to the death and resurrection of Christ and to that extent represent in another idiom signals of something greater than they prophecy.*

Prophetic History shows divine love overcomes ancient hatred as God’s truth marches on **DAVID’S DEPARTURE 35-42**

And **THE FACT IS** in the morning that Jonathan went to the field to meet David and there was a little lad with him. And he said to his lad “Please run and find the arrows which I am going to shoot!” And the lad ran and he shot an arrow that passed him. Then the lad came to the location of the arrow that Jonathan fired and Jonathan called after the lad and said “Is the arrow not farther away beyond you?” Then Jonathan called after the lad “Hurry, rush off quick, do not stand there.” So Jonathan’s lad collected the arrows and came to his master. But the lad did not know one thing or another. Only Jonathan and David knew the reason. Then Jonathan gave his equipment to the lad that belonged to him and said to him “Take these and bring them to the city.” The lad was off and David rose from Ezel of the Negev and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times and they would kiss each man his companion and they would bless each man his friend until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David “*Go for peace because we both have sworn in the name of Yahweh saying “The LORD be between me and you and my seed and your seed for life for ever.”* These touching words of parting tell of Jonathan’s clear faith in God and in His greater purpose. The mystery of how he returned to his father and how they made up their quarrel has never been told. David’s panegyric on their death in battle displays that at heart however uneasy the relationship Jonathan was a superb son.

CHAPTER 21

JESUS, THE PRIESTS AND BELIEVING NT PRIESTS

This passage is referred to by our LORD Matthew 12.3 Mark 2.25 & Luke 6.3. In the N.T. context the priest is named as Abiathar by Peter as Mark transcribes. In each of the three N.T. instances David has others with him although Ahimelech in 1 Samuel 21 refers to David as ostensibly alone. However David does refer to his servants being in a place of hiding. On the matter of the priests name the A.V. margin gives Ahiah. Abiathar is the son of Ahimelech and he in turn appears to have had a son called Ahimelech who served as in 2 Samuel 8 under David's monarchy. Abiathar as our LORD specifically accounted of him being the one who dealt with the showbread served alongside his father and escaped the massacre of Saul (cf 1 Samuel 22.20). The complexity of this data shows with what excellent analysis our LORD mastered the history of the time not to speak of his inerrancy and that wisdom that reflected the ineffable and omniscient God in the flesh.

The noteworthy lesson Christ derived was that in the "new wine" situation of NT time a new priesthood of sharing was being developed. Whereas in old time only "priests" were considered kosher for the divine presence in NT days of Messianic atonement all the redeemed might approach and "handle things unseen".

DAVID EATS THE SHOWBREAD 1-7

Then Jonathan arose and constraining himself to go he went into the city. *Scripture reflects by the use of the Hiphil the determination necessary to leave David and go back alone to the city. The same usage in Job 27.21 speaks of the rich man forced away by the wind.* And David went away shooting off to Ahimelech the priest but Ahimelech trembled or shivered at the approach of David and said to him "Is it known that you are alone and no soldier with you?" Then David said to Ahimelech the priest "**The king** commanded a matter or "word" and said to me "No man should know one thing or another of the matter which I am strictly commanding you" [*Piel*] and **I also strictly command you to secrecy** and the youths **of my intelligence** to be at a certain silent or secret place. So now what is there under your power? Give me five loaves of bread or what you can find. But the priest answered David and said "There is no ordinary bread within my power to give except consecrated bread if the youths have definitely kept themselves from women. *It seems David introduced his request with an untruth. The Hebrew is complex and there are three inferences: (1) The King is supposed to have despatched David on a secret mission. (2) David is compelling Ahimelech not to speak of his visit. (3) David says that others who know what he is involved in are nearby in hiding. It is only through our LORD'S interpretation that we can affirm that there were such youths with David.*

Then David answered the priest and said to him "Because we have restrained ourselves from female company for three days with my going out and the secret parts or clothing of the young men are holy and this (bread) is in course of becoming common and further though today it was set aside in the vessel." *David puts a cogent argument to the priest on the holiness of men as opposed to the holiness of bread which sours and becomes stale within one day in the mid-east.*

Then the priest gave him the consecrated bread because there was no bread there but the bread of the presence that was removed from before the LORD to put warm bread there when it was taken away. But on that day there was a man there of Saul's servants shut up in the presence of the LORD and his name was Doeg he Edomite the powerful chief herdsman of Saul.

DAVID OBTAINS GOLIATH'S SWORD 8-9

AND David said to Ahimelech “Is there not under your authority here a spear or a sword for I have not even taken my sword or my armour in my hand for the matter of the king is one that has been urgent [*xj*] passive)? And the priest said “The sword of Goliath the Philistine that you slew in the valley of Elah – look at it covered in a garment ... [*hlmc* – “a wrapper” ironically the name of an Edomite king in Genesis 36.36]...behind the ephod. What about it? Take it for yourself. Take it for there is none remaining still besides it in its class. And David said “There is none like that; give it to me!”

DAVID'S FLIGHT TO ACHISH 10-15

So David arose and sped off that day from the face of Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. But the servants of Achish said to him “Is not this David the king of the land? Is it not about this man they sang antiphonies in their war triumphs saying “Saul struck his thousands and David his myriads?” So David treasured these words in his heart and feared greatly before Achish king of Gath. So he changed his “mental and spiritual perceptions” or taste in their sight and **kept being mad or singing praise** or shamefully foolish in their hands and he pissed on the doors of the palace gate and his saliva [*rwr*] ran down on to his beard. Then Achish said to his servants “Look you can see the man has become **a permanent madman or prophetic fanatic**”. [*Hithpael of [gv which is pronounced shAGA like our GAGA]* Am I short of madmen that you cause **this fanatic wrought on by divine fury** to me? Will this fellow come to my house?

There is something strangely true amid this humour and dissimulation. A response quite frequently encountered by those who preach the word is that they are fanatics. Eventually David returns to Achish as recorded in Chapter 27 on that occasion with an army of 600 men. His recovery and evident power and prowess were recognised and he was presently given asylum and a fine city within the borders of Gath. There can be little doubt though he acted somewhat craftily during that time that his testimony gained for the name of the LORD very real respect in Gath. David's very great courage or virtue commended his life and easily made him the confidant of the great and good.

CHAPTER 22

DAVID PROVIDES A RESORT FOR THE NEEDY 1-2

So David left there and slipped off to the empty cave of Adullam and his brothers heard of him and all the house of his father went down to him there and there would gather to him all men in distress or urgent trouble and every man who had a debt burden and every man who was bitter of soul and he was over them as a prince or commander and there were about 400 men with him. *From this we learn that our own exigencies are far less than those of others. Many need leadership and support whose “distress [*qwx* “oppression” and “pressures”] or “debt to creditors” [*axw* “exactings”] and “unhappiness” [*rm* “weeping”] had become overwhelming*

DAVID PROVIDES FOR HIS PARENTS 3-4

Then David went from there to Mizpah of Moab and said to the king of Moab “Please let my father and mother come to be with you until I shall know what God will create for me.” *David also was prompt to care about his aged relatives as the apostle insisted that each Christian be careful also to do (1Timothy5.8)*

So he would conduct them back to the presence of the king of Moab and they lived with him all the days that David was in the defensive mountain stronghold.

THE VISIT OF GAD 5-8

Then Gad the prophet said to David “You shall not live in the hold; you must go and you will come to link yourself with the land of Judah so David went and entered the forest of Hareth. *The command of Gad to stay with Judah was important. The command words LECH LECHA are similar to those issued by God to Abraham. The latter was to break his connection with Ur and go to Canaan. David was to form a connection with Judah and go.* Then Saul heard that there was fresh awareness of David and his trusty men that were with him (Then Saul was living in Gibeah under the tamarisk or grave in Ramah and his javelin was in his hand and all his servants were in garrison position around him. And Saul said to his servants garrisoning him “Hear now, you Benjamites, will the son of Jesse provide you all fields and vineyards and place you all as commanders of thousands and hundreds? For you all have bound yourselves in conspiracy against me and none reveals [“makes bare my ear”] to me that my son has raised up my servant against me to ambush me as is the case to day.”) *This short speech coupled with Saul’s permanent tented home bristling with protection is an evident sign of the fear of a megalomaniac. His charge against Jonathan was totally unfounded and his fear of David was wholly unprovoked.*

DOEG INCRIMATES AHIMELECH 9-16

Then Doeg the Edomite answered (for he had become supervisor over Saul’s servants) – *Doeg had risen from his post over the cattle to be chief of the household. His earlier detention may well have been because unsatisfactory beasts were offered to the LORD or he may temporarily have fallen from favour in the court)*

And he said “I watched the son of Jesse when he came to Nob to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. He enquired then for him from the LORD and gave him food and the sword of Goliath the Philistine. Then the king sent to call Ahimelech son of Ahitub the priest and all the household of his father the priests that were in Nob and they all came to the king. And the king said “Please listen Son of Ahitub” And he said “Behold me, my Lord.” And Saul said to him “Why have you bound yourselves in conspiracy against me? You (Ahimelech) and the son of Jesse? By giving him food and a sword and enquiring for him with God to rise against me and to lie in wait as today?”

Then Ahimelech answered the king “But who among all your servants is faithful as David? And he is son-in-law to the king and turns aside at hearing you and is worthy throughout your household. Was is that day I began to enquire from God for him? –It was common for me *to do so*. The king should not place a charge against his servant against the whole house of my father for your servant is not aware through all this of a charge or reason large or small.” But Saul said “Ahimelech you must die and all the house of your father.”

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE HOUSE OF AHIMELECH 17-19

And the king said to the runners who were posted by him “You turn about and kill the priests of the LORD because even their hands are with David and because they knew when he sped away and did not reveal it to my ear. But the servants of the king were not willing to put forth their hands to attack the priests of the LORD. Then the king said to Doeg “You turn and fall upon the priests” and Doeg the Edomite turned about and fell upon the priests and there died that day 85 men who wore the linen ephod.

And he struck Nob the city of priests with the edge of the sword from men to women and from children to feeding babies and ox and ass and sheep before the edge of the sword. But one son of Ahimelech son of Ahitub slipped away and his name was Abiathar and he bolted after David. So Abiathar informed David that Saul had slain the priests of the LORD. Then David said to Abiathar “I was aware that day when Doeg the Edomite was there that he would definitely apprise Saul. I have set things in motion against every soul of the house of your father. Stay with me; do not fear; for whoever seeks my life seeks your life for standing with me you will be watched over.

CHAPTER 23

Then it was reported to Samuel saying “The Philistines are at war with Keilah and they are plundering the granaries. Then David enquired of the LORD saying “Shall I go and make a strike against these Philistines? *There is natural complexity in this issue because Keilah was formerly a Jewish city and David had a compact with Achish of Gath. So it mattered if this was a raiding party or if it was his friend Achish who was the opponent. The profound complexity was compounded by the main Philistine probe in the north which was simultaneous or followed the southern strike swiftly. The northern strike seems not to have been reported as early to David as to Saul (cf 23.27)*

(9) TEXTUAL GAP 23 1-2 WITH A “RATIONALE THEORY”

*The gap retailed by scribes suggests more information on “these” and “other” Philistines. There is no discontinuity of sense so it may be that as in several other cases there is an amalgamation of text from different scrolls at such points. **1 Samuel is a long book and it is not impossible that it was written on short documents or skins.** If this theory were correct the scroll beginning at 23.2b would end at 28.23 and the last one would run from 28.24 to 31.13. The theory a priori runs into some difficulty on the word “repair” and the proposal of **supplementary oral matter** in the margin—but this is surmountable as I shall explain! The theory does poor service in certain sectors of the book because gaps appear within the same story as in 19.21 and 20.18 (and in the case of the latter verse has a footnote that the “space” belongs to emphasis on the “**opening of the first year**”) which encloses but 21 verses. There are 3 spaces in Chapter 14 and all suggest “repair from oral” and between them with the next sequential space at 16.1 sections of only six, sixteen and forty-seven verses respectively would comprise each scroll whilst at 14.36 the story runs on. Of course there was no accounting when hide or papyrus would run out and overflow text may originally have been written on the back of the original less adequate autograph material and then later imported to a larger scroll capable of handling the entire text. This “gap rationale” theory has the distinct asset of being able to explain the word “repair” and the word “oral tradition” because at such gaps **the text is re-united or repaired** on subsequent scrolls and **the “tradition”** is the historic provenance of scrolls rather than text – **which helps to explain why there is little if anything textually to observe at the point where gaps appear!** On the other hand there is solid reason for pause and the Holy Spirit appears to have made no mistake as to where we should catch breath and survey developments within the books of Samuel. In this instance we are to contemplate how providential was the Ephod now accessible to David and that **he made doubly sure he was walking in the will of God.***

RESUMPTION OF TRANSLATION & COMMENTARY–VICTORY AT KEILAH 23.2B-6

And the LORD said to David “Go and defeat the Philistines and save Keilah!” And David’s mighties said to him “Look, we are in terror while here in Judah and it will be more so when we go against Keilah to the battle lines of the Philistines. So David added to still search with the LORD and the LORD answered saying “Arise, go down to Keilah for I have given the Philistines into your hand.” So David and his men went to Keilah and fought against the Philistines and drove away their cattle and struck them with a telling defeat so David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. Then **THE FACT IS** that when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah he came down with the ephod in his hand.

(8) SAUL APPRISED OF DAVID’S PRESENCE AT KEILAH-HIS EIGHTH PURSUIT TO KILL DAVID GETS UNDER WAY 7-9

And it was reported to Saul that David had gone to Keilah and Saul said “God has dissembled or made him err into my hand for he has shut himself in by going into a city with doors and bars. So Saul summoned the entire nation to go down to Keilah to war to press a siege against David and his mighties. *Saul only need siege Keilah to prize David out of the city as a hostage. This was his mind.*

DAVID’S FEAR OF A STRATEGEM WITH KEILAH’S LEADERS 9-10

But David was well aware that Saul was secretly devising [vrj] “the calamity” against him and he said to Abiathar the priest “Cause the ephod to be brought near”. Then David said “Lord God of Israel, your servant has definitely heard that Saul is striving to come to Keilah to destroy the city [yrwb[b] **in return for me**. Will the leaders of Keilah cause me to be delivered [Hiphil of rgs] into his hand? Will Saul come down as you servant has heard reported? O LORD God of Israel please make it known to your servant!” *David had worked out in his mind exactly the strategy Saul would employ but he did not trust to his sophisticated strategic mind alone. He sought God.*

(10) TEXTUAL GAP 23.11a

And the LORD said “He will come down” *There is absolutely no textual corruption to be urged in the received text. The gap if it does anything serves to demonstrate that the answer was a strait “Yes” but not a full explanation of what would happen to David himself! This incomplete answer does not entail a perceived corruption but emphasises an incomplete Hagidh or explanation. This gap shows the future is **not fully** ours to see.*

FULLER REVELATION IS NOT FINAL REVELATION 11b-12

So David said “Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said “They will imprison you!” *The word #rygsy is a Hiphil future simply speaking about “shutting David in prison” – were it a Niphal it would mean “deliver you up” so God was still hiding something. That something David did not further enquire about. **It was the fact that before the siege would reach its effective moment and a hostage could be obtained the Philistines would attack in the north and Saul would be gone.** The LORD withheld intelligence of the further future from David. It was not possible to conciliate Saul and the LORD was aware that Saul not David was for good reason shortly to face entrapment and calamity.*

(9) SAUL'S NINTH PURSUIT DAVID FLEES TO ZIPH 13-15

Then David and his men – about six hundred soldiers – arose from Keilah and kept marching through where they marched but it was reported to Saul that David had slipped out of Keilah and he declined to go to battle. But David dwelt in strongholds in the wilderness and lived at a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. *David had now put a further 20 mile march over the most inhospitable mountain terrain between him and Israel's armies despite which Saul drew far from his Gibeah base – at least 50 miles south in a cat and mouse quest of David.* So Saul was searching for him daily but God did not give him into his hand. So David saw that Saul was come out to search for his life and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in an entangling wood.

THE SUPPORTIVE VISIT OF JONATHAN 16-18

Then Jonathan son of Saul arose and went to David in the silent tangled wood [vrj] and strengthened his hand through the mighty God. For he said to him “Do not fear for the hand of Saul my father will not find you and you will reign over Israel and I will be for you as your second or support and my Father Saul is also aware of this basically. And they both made a covenant before the LORD but David lived in the tanglewood and Jonathan went to his house. *It seems essential to understand that David kept intelligence running toward Jonathan and it may well be that Saul's movements were also monitored by Jonathan for the benefit of David's safety. Jonathan was certainly not in cahoots with his father's chase after David.*

(9) ZIPHITE PERFIDY NECESSITATES A MOVE TO MAON – SAUL'S NINTH PURSUIT 19-26

Then the Ziphites went up to Gibeah to Saul to saying “Is not David hidden with us in strongholds in the tanglewoods at the hill of Hacilah. *[It is of interest that reference to “everlasting hills” in Genesis 49.26 and Job 15.7 refers not to their being “eternal” but their “birth “ [l#w] and “writhing at the creation”]* which is to the south of Jeshimon or toward the south of the Dead Sea. *The location would be roughly parallel with Engedi if not somewhat further south.* So now, O King, according to the whole desire of your heart to come down, come down and for our part we will render him confined to your power, O King. And Saul said “You are blessed ones of the LORD for you have shown me tender affection. Please go and establish still further gain intelligence and see where his fresh footprint is and who has seen him there for it is told me he is very, very cunning. So watch and get intelligence about all the hiding places where he will hide himself and return to me to establish the fact and I will go with you and it shall be if he exists in the land I will also search him out among all the thousands of Judah. *Saul expresses grave misgivings on the one hand of David's existence close to one of the most inhospitable areas of the world but he also proposes to engage in a chase among all David's countrymen of Judah.* And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul but David and his worthies were in the wilderness of Maon in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. *David had moved seven miles south to Maon near Carmel near modern Wadi El Mughara. This area offered food and water.* Saul and his men went to search for him there and they told David and he went down to Sela but dwelt in the wilderness of Maon [*“the rock” may have been the serried caves of which Engedi and Qumran farther north are fine examples.*] *This was his hide-out during his period of foraging in Maon.* But Saul heard about it and pursued David in the wilderness of Maon. So Saul was travelling on this side of the hill and David and his men on that side and David fled in alarm [zpj] to get away from the

face of Saul and Saul and his men who were surrounding David and his men to capture them.

THE PROVIDENTIAL MESSAGE THAT SAVED DAVID 27-29

But a messenger came to Saul saying “Hurry and come for the Philistines are pillaging over the land. So Saul returned from pursuit of David and went to engage the Philistines. For that reason they called that place “Sela Hammah Leqoth” [*Rock of “escape” or “different portions” or “The slippery rock of destiny”*]. This name marks two things: - (a) David’s escape and (b) the final allotment of the kingdom to David and calamity to Saul. At this time Saul’s crown was slipping away and David’s way to the throne was crystallising. This message may actually have come from Absalom in the palace or if he still remained loyal from Doeg the chief of the household. I prefer the former since Saul joined Jonathan and they fought side by side in this final conflict of his reign.

CHAPTER 24

(11) TEXTUAL GAP 24.1

This 11th textual gap after the reference to David at Engedi brings us back to the inexorable hatred of Saul –that even now with news of David by the Salt Sea he would set out to assail his son-in-law. He adventures on his 10th pursuit and makes himself an attempted murderer 10 times over. This was an all-out blitz on David. In those days there was no road by the sea—just defiles along the westward lip of the lake.

(10) SAUL UNWITTINGLY PUTS HIMSELF IN DEADLY DANGER DURING HIS 10TH PURSUIT 1-8

Then David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of Engedi. *There is a textual gap with a note on the lack of established or ordered opening.* And it happened as Saul returned from pursuing after the Philistines they apprised him saying “Behold David is in the wilderness of Engedi”. Then Saul took 3000 chosen men from all Israel and went to look for David and his men upon the slopes of the rocks of the wild goats or ibexes. And he came to the walled sheep-folds on the journey and there was a bare cave and Saul went to cover his feet and David and his men were living the long inner “thighs” of the cave. *The imagery is colourful. Saul’s legs are contrasted with the thighs of the cave in a contrast of strengths. Saul is toileting. David is in hiding. The coincidence is comic. Saul is not going to want to come back once he has relieved himself. David could not be more secure for the moment. Saul is going to overshoot David’s refuge in his push south.* Then the warriors of David said to him “Look, this is the day of which the LORD said “Behold I have given **your enemies** [*Qere “Your enemy” cf 26.8*] into your hand and you may **do to him** as seems good in your eyes.” Then David rose and cut the wing of the cloak of Saul secretly. But it happened after this that the heart of David defeated him because he had cut the wing of the garment of Saul. And he said to his mighties “Cursed am I of the LORD if I do this thing to my Lord the anointed of the LORD to put forth my hand against him for he is the “anointed of the LORD”. *This record demonstrates the righteousness of David and his recognition of the anointing of God.* So David chided and withheld his servants with these words and did not give them leave to rise against Saul and Saul rose from the cave and went on his way. Then, after this, David arose from the cave and called after Saul saying “My Lord the king!”

And Saul looked behind him and David bowed the crown of his head – face to the death and did reverence.

DAVID’S APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA 9-15 (English text 10-25)

Then David said to Saul “Why will you listen to the words of a man saying “Behold David is seeking your calamity” Look, today your eyes can see that the LORD gave you into my hand in the cave and they said to kill you but I spared you and said “I will not put forth my hand against my Lord for he is the anointed of the LORD.” “And, my father, **you must look** also – **you must look** at the wing of your robe for you were in my power when I cut the wing of your robe but I did not slaughter you. **You must understand–you must** see that there is no evil or transgression in my hand and I have not sinned against you yet you are hunting and ensnaring my life to take it away. The LORD will execute justice between me and you and the LORD avenge me of you **but my hand will not be against you!** As they say – the proverb that constantly comes to me – “from the violent comes violence.” **But my hand will not be against you!** After whom is the king of Israel come out? After what are you chasing? After a dead dog? After a single flea? And the judgment shall be the LORD’S and He will judge between me and you and He will see and He will plead my cause and defend me from your power.

Prophetic History shows that a soft answer turns away wrath (Proverbs 15. 1)

SAUL’S RESPONSE 16-22

And **THE FACT IS** when David concluded speaking these words of promise to Saul then Saul said “Is this your voice my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. Then he said to David “You are more righteous than me for you have done me great good and I have done you much wrong. And you have explained today what a good thing you have done for me when the LORD imprisoned me into your hand you did not slaughter me. For when a man finds his enemy will he send him on the way of prosperity so the LORD recompense you good because of what you did to me this day. And now behold I know that you will definitely reign and the kingdom of Israel will be firmly established in your hand. But you shall swear to me in the LORD that you will not cut my seed off after me nor destroy my name from the house of my father. So David swore to Saul and Saul went to his house and David and his men went up to the stronghold. *So ends the protracted 7th attempt on the life of David – a scheme that began at Keilah and moved along Jeshimon through Hacilah and Maon to the Slipper Rocks and the proverbial cave from which Saul escaped jeopardy. The speech David made brought Saul to tears but in his rueing his ways he stops short of true repentance.*

CHAPTER 25

THE DEATH AND LAMENTATION OVER SAMUEL 1-3

Then Samuel died. *This lull in hostilities between Saul and David enabled a unity of sorts at the great state funeral. And all Israel buried him and they mourned for him and gathered at his house in Ramah and went down to the desert of Paran [LXX “wilderness of Maon”]. And there was a man in Maon and his wealth was in Carmel and the man was very great and he had 3000 sheep and 1000 goats and he was at the shearing of his flock at Carmel. This wealth bears comparison with that of Job who had 7000 sheep.*

THE ENCOUNTER WITH NABAL 4-9

And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. So David sent 20 young servants and David said to the youths “Go up to Carmel and go to Nabal and ask him of his welfare in my name.” And you shall speak thus “To your substance and to yourself prosperity and prosperity to your house and may all yours prosper. I have heard that now your shearers are in action. Now to your shepherds that were with us we did not cause any injury and nothing whatever went missing of them all the days we were in Carmel. Ask the young servants and they will tell you and let the young men find favour in your eyes for we have come on a good day [*the Qere says “a day of need” rSj*] *It was a good day for Nabal but a day of privation for David who was in Paran.* Please give what is available in your hand to your servants and to your son David. And when the young servants of David came they spoke to Nabal in like manner all these words in the name of David and they paused.

THE REPLY OF NABAL & REACTION OF DAVID 10-13

But Nabal answered the servants of David and said “Who is David and who is the son of Jesse? Today servants are increased that as grown men break each man from the face of his master. And have I to take my bread and my water and my meat I have killed for the shearers and give to rude fighting men of whom I know nothing this or that way. Then the young men of David turned and went on their way and came and explained to him all these words. Then David told his trusty men they must gird on each man his sword and they girded on each his sword and David also girded on his sword and they went up after David about 400 men and two hundred stayed by the stuff.

ENTER ABIGAIL 14-17

But one youth from the young men apprised Abigail wife of Nabal saying “Behold David sent messengers from the wilderness to bless our master and he flew at them. But the men were good to us and we suffered no injury and did not miss anything whatever all the days we had been going with them when there were in the countryside. They were a wall over us night and day all the days we were with them shepherding the flock. And now be very aware and look to what you will do for the ruin to our master and upon his whole house is complete for he is a son of Belial to talk with.

Prophetic History shows God produces what we call coincidences

THE MEDIATION OF ABIGAIL 18-31

And Abigail hurried and took 100 loaves and two skins of wine and five of the flock prepared and five seahs of roasted corn and 100 of raisins and 200 cakes of dried figs and set them on asses. And she said to her young servants “Go on before me and look I will come after you. But she did not tell her husband Nabal. And **THE FACT IS** as she was riding on her ass *she came down through the hidden defile of the hill* and behold David and his men were going down to encounter her and she chanced upon them. And David said “It was definitely in vain that I kept watch on all that belonged to this man in the wilderness and nothing whatsoever went missing of all he had but he has returned me evil for good. Thus may the LORD do to the enemies of David and thus add if there is a remnant of all he has in the morning that lets out water against the wall. Then Abigail saw David and hastened and alighted from her ass and (1) she would fall on her face before David to the earth and (2) she would abase herself. Then she (3) would fall at his feet and (4) said “On me, my Lord, be the iniquity. And please let your handmaid speak in your ears and listen to the words of your handmaid.

Please let not my Lord set his heart towards this man of Belial because he is a fool for as his name so he is Nabal by name and folly is with him and I your handmaid did not see the young men of my Lord that you sent. But now my Lord as the LORD lives and as your soul lives because the LORD has restrained [*mm*] you from going to blood and from saving yourself with your own hand now let your enemies and those that are seeking evil for my Lord be as Nabal. *Abigail broadly refers to Saul with whom clearly Nabal has definite sympathies. Her expeditious kindness and utter humility saves the day. Her action shines light on the vicarious atonement of Christ. She would even lay down her life for her fool of a husband. Christ did for us whilst we were yet sinners. We stand at this high moment looking from the high ground of OT revelation to the high ground of the sacrificial death of Christ.*

***Bain and blessing, pain and pleasure by the cross are sanctified
Peace is there that knows no measure joys that through all time abide
In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.***

(Adapted from melody in Witt's Psalmodia Sacra by Gotha 1715 by John Bowring circa 1850)

And this that your handmaid has brought to my Lord should be given *as of right* to the young men who are fine footmen of my Lord. Please lift the burden of your handmaid's trespass for the LORD will certainly undertake to create for my Lord a sure and faithful house for my Lord is fighting the battles of the LORD. *It ever was important to engage in the right battles. Much debate has gone on over the last decade of the 20th century about wars in the middle-east and far-east – the question being “Should we have been engaged in them in the first place?” Notwithstanding such wars there is a spiritual warfare which by its nature involves contest for the right and valour and armour of a different sort and here we are not to be found wanting.*

And evil will not find hold in you during your days. *This is not an assessment of David's life thus far. Only God could make such judgment. This is a character observation projected ahead and derived from a life lived close to God on the principle of mercy. The verb is a Niphal future not a past tense as portrayed in the received text.*

But a man has risen to pursue you and to seek your life but (1) the soul of my Lord has been *bundled and kept together in the little purse of life with Yahweh* your God and the soul of your enemies *in the midst of the hand will be slung out* of the sling. *This is a choice image deriving from David's first conquest. Could it be that Abigail was one of the women who sang the triumphs of the young leader whom she so deeply admired?* (2) And it will come to pass that the LORD will undertake to do all the good that He promised about you and He will constitute you ruler over Israel. (3) And this shall not unsteady or stagger you [*qmp* “to waver to and fro” or “confuse” or “shatter”]. *Abigail predicted that the leadership of the nation was well within the competence of David.* (4) Nor will it be a cause of moral lapse or stumbling of heart to my Lord and belong to the needless shedding of blood or to my Lord's rescue of himself by *avenging* and (5) when the LORD has prospered my Lord remember your handmaid.

DAVID'S GRACIOUS REPLY 32-35

Then David said to Abigail “Blessed are you of the LORD God of Israel who sent you this day **to meet** and **to call me** to office.” [*arq* entails both notions] *The confirmation of David's coming enthronement was given him by this godly lady whom we might term a prophetess. Abigail's five predictions were like the five stones in David's sling.*

For the preacher this story of two saints meeting in a defile is worth telling to the world. It signals the solid character that the LORD had developed in the young leader and the recognition of his devotion and gifts by one of the great ladies of the day.

“And the LORD bless you and the blessing of your discernment or perception with which you made me end or languish inside from coming to spill blood this day and from avenging or saving myself.” David’s life was one deeply conscious of the ruin that revenge does to the soul. Saul was a vengeful man. David sought God’s vengeance but was dilatory to avenge. Jesus taught us “to turn the other cheek” and to avoid a “tit-for-tat” approach to life.

“And except as the LORD God of Israel lives that restrained me [[mm]] from doing evil hurt to you – for His sake and mine [y/w] you hastened and came to me to encounter me for would there have remained to Nabal till the light of morning one that lets out water by the wall.”

Then David received from her hand that which she had brought to him and he said to her “Go up in peace to your house; look I have listened and obeyed your call and I have lifted up your face.” There is something very personal in the affected speech of David which was accompanied by two actions. Every item David took from her hands – and finally he lifted up her head when it dropped low when she had given all. This is the tenderest touch of all.

Prophetic History asserts God brings the wicked to timely judgment

NABAL’S DRUNKENNESS AND DEATH 36-38

And Abigail went to Nabal and looked at him drinking in his house as at the banquet of a king and the heart of Nabal was happy over himself and he was very intoxicated and giddy [dam da rkv] and she did not acquaint him of a word great or small till the light of morning. And THE FACT IS in the morning at the going away of the effect of the wine from Nabal then his wife told him these words and his heart died in his midst and he became like a stone. And THE FACT IS in almost ten days the LORD touched Nabal and he died. It appears that Nabal had a serious incident immediately but what is spoken of in the bible as a “stroke” in this instance by the hand of God and Nabal died within ten days.

ABIGAIL GAINS DAVID’S HAND 39-43

Then David heard that Nabal had died and he said “Blessed is the LORD who has “shot the arrow” of the strife of my scorned abandonment [prj] is a word deriving from “plucked autumn fruit”] at the hand of Nabal and has restrained his servant from evil. In the LORD’S PRAYER one petition reads “deliver us from evil”. The stalled action of David is a plain case of God delivering him from evil by the intervention of Abigail. In prayer we are to ask God for “intervention”. And the LORD has returned the evil of Nabal on to his own head. And David sent and talked or gave promise to Abigail to take her to him as his wife. And she arose and reverently bowed her face to the ground and said “Behold your handmaid for your family to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.” And Abigail acted quickly and rose and mounted an ass and five of her young maidens that went with her on foot and she travelled after the messengers of David and became his wife. And David took Ahinoam from Jezreel and they both together became his wives. But Saul gave Michal his daughter the wife of David to Phalti [“deliverance of the LORD] the son of Laish who was from Gallim [“the fountains” – a Benjamite territory north of Jerusalem] A little humour occurs in the name of Phalti for whereas David was delivered of responsibility for Michal he

gained in Abigail a far more spiritual woman as his wife. Ahinoam “pleasantness” if she lived up to her name was equally sweet. The plurality of wives was common in O.T. times and though not God’s original plan it did not entail spiritual rebuke. Christ restored the single-mindedness of spouses and sanctified it with his doctrine of the Church as a spiritual bride even as He hallowed the first union in Eden.

CHAPTER 26

(11) SAUL’S FINAL ELEVENTH ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF DAVID 1-4

Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah saying “Is not David hiding in the hill of Hacilah above the flats or Jeshimon. So Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph and with him 3000 chosen men of Israel. And Saul camped in the hill of Hacilah which is above the flats of Jeshimon by the road and David was living in the wilderness and he saw that Saul was coming into the wilderness after him. So David sent spies on foot so that he would know exactly that Saul’s arrival was definite.

DAVID YET AGAIN SPARES SAUL 5-12

And David arose and came to the notable location where Saul had encamped and David saw the place where Saul lay and Abner son of Ner commander of his host and Saul lay among his war chariots and his army was encamped around him. Then David declared or called out and said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah brother to Joab saying “Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said “I will go down with you!” So David and Abishai went to the army at night and behold Saul lying asleep among the chariots and his javelin standing upright in the earth at his head. *In verses 7, 11 and 16 “heads” in the plural as confirmed by the Qere note is used as if the javelin was standing by his head and that of Abner also.* Also the army were lying around him. Then Abishai said to David “The LORD has shut up your enemy today within your power and now may I please strike him with the spear and into the ground – a single blow and I will not repeat it to him. But David said to Abishai “You shall not cause him to be destroyed for who has put forth his hand against the anointed of the LORD and been guiltless? *This question could have been answered in that Saul himself had struck Ahimelech and was guilty yet unpunished.* And David said “As the LORD lives either the LORD will strike him or his day will come and he will die or he will go down to battle and betake himself or perish [*hps*]. May I be cursed of the LORD from putting forth my hand against the anointed of the LORD so now please take the spear which is at the heads and the ample cruse of water and we – we will go. So David took the spear and the cruse of water from the heads of Saul and they went off with them and no-one saw and no-one knew and no-one awoke for they were all sleeping for a deep stupor or sluggishness from the LORD had fallen on them.

DAVID’S FINAL BOLD CHALLENGE TO SAUL 13-20

So David crossed to the side over against and stood on top of the hill at a great distance of space *lay* between them. And David called to the army and to Abner son of Ner saying “Abner, will you not answer?” Then Abner answered and said “Who are you calling the King?” Then David said “Are you not a soldier and who is like you in Israel? And why did you not guard your Lord the king for one of the people came to destroy your Lord the king? This thing you have done is not good for as the LORD lives you should die because you did not watch over your Lord – over the anointed of the LORD and now look where the spear of the king is and the cruse of

water that was at the heads!” And Saul would cause the voice of David to be recognised and he said “Is this the voice of my son David?” And David said “It is my voice my Lord the king!” Then he said “Why is this, my Lord, that you are chasing after your servant for what have I done and what evil is in my hand? And now please let my Lord the king listen to the words of his servant. If the LORD has caused you to be **urged or persuaded** [t#s] against me He will smell with pleasure an offering but if the sons of men have persuaded you they are cursed before the LORD for they have expelled me today from continuing to destroy the inheritance of the LORD saying “GO SERVE OTHER GODS”. *We touch a vital area of David’s contemplative understanding of the sinister backcloth to his enforced divorce form the royal family that was enabled by Doeg and those he brought in around Saul and also by army people and others who were pleased to expel him to the Philistine world and gods. These shadowy figures who remained in power for long years David called the “workers of evil”. We do well to notice this important reference to them.* But now my blood will not drip –drip-drip as it falls to earth in front of the very face of the LORD for the king of Israel is come to search for a flees when one pursues the partridge in the mountains.

THE FINAL CONVERSATIONS OF SAUL AND DAVID 21-25

Then Saul said “I have sinned, return my son David for I will not cause evil to you any farther on account of the fact that my soul was precious in your eyes this day. Behold I have been a fool and I have wandered [hgv “been apostate”] very greatly. Then David answered and said “Behold the spear of the king and one of the young men may come across and get it. And the LORD return to a man or soldier his righteousness and faithfulness for the LORD gave you into a hand today and I was not willing to put forth my hand against the anointed of the LORD. And behold as your soul was great in my eyes this day thus may my soul be great in the eyes of the LORD. [ldg “twisted around” –so the soul of Saul was great merely by its bonds with David and his God so David was great merely by his connection with the LORD] *There lies in this a lesson of what we are not in ourselves but through those with whom we walk and whose favour makes us what we are. We have nothing except what we received from the LORD. His is the greatness and the power and the glory for ever! He will also cause me to be delivered from all distress rivalry or anguish. David is full of faith and believes he will know victory through his unfailing faith link with the living God. Neither power of now or future days, neither tribulation nor loss and sorrow would hold him captive. Like Paul in his valiant spiritual song of Romans 8 he rejoices. The inseparable relationship with the LORD prevails.*

SAUL’S FINAL SINCERE PROPHECY 26.25

Then Saul said to David “Blessed are you, my son David. You are also creative and you will undertake and being an over-comer or enduring you will overcome. So David went for this pathway and Saul returned to his place. This phrase is used not alone in an historical sense but in a dynamic sense. King Saul had not moved an inch but David had grown in stature with every challenge and he was farther along the road of faith. Saul’s final words as ever never reject David as his son and his prophecy is generous and accurate.

*Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin
Each victory will help you some other to win
Fight manfully onward dark passions subdue
Look ever to Jesus He will carry you through.*

*Ask the Saviour to help you
Comfort, strengthen and keep you
He is willing to aid you He will carry you through.*

CHAPTER 27

ZIKLAG HIDEOUT 1-12

Then David said to his own heart “Now I shall perish [*hps*] one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should make my escape to Philistine country and Saul will have no hope and despond of finding me still within the territory of Israel so I will make my escape from his hand.

Then David arose and went over *the border* with 600 men with him to Achish son of Maoch king of Gath. And David lived with Achish in Gath, he and his men and each man had his family; David and both his wives Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. But it was told Saul “David has shot off to Gath” and he did not continue to seek him still.

And David said to Achish “If I have now found grace in your eyes give me a definite place in one city of the country and I will live there for why should your servant live in the capitol city of the king with you? So Achish gave him Ziklag that day.

Connected to this basic *request* Ziklag became the possession of the kings of Judah *to this day*. And historically the count of days that David lived in the land of the Philistines was *a year of days* and four months.

DAVID WIPES OUT THE AMALEKITES 8-12

Then David and his men went up and spread out to invade the Geshurites and Gezerites and the Amalekites for these were the inhabitants of the land that were from ages gone by as you go towards Shur and toward the land of Egypt and David struck the land and there was not a man or woman left alive and he captured flocks and herds and asses and camels and clothing and returned and came to Achish. And Achish said “Where have you pillaged today?” and David said “Over the south or Negev of Judah and over the Negev of the Jerahmeelites and near the Negev of the Kenites.

But David did not let a man or woman live to come to Gath to talk lest they might inform on us saying “David did thus and thus he will pillage all the days that he lives in the land of the Philistines. But Achish had confidence in David saying “He has made an utter disgrace of himself amongst his people and in Israel and he will be my servant for life (ever).” *David gave the impression that he had travelled well over one hundred miles to the south east though he had actually marauded through 70-80 miles of territory to the south west towards Egypt. In his conquest of Amalek David was in the will of God. As a military man he was certainly not allowing his forces to become rusty. His days as a virtual outlaw at home had yielded him mastery of Robin Hood survival tactics. David was living by his wits during these times. Scripture records his deceit and the truth that he knew without condemning him.*

CHAPTER 28

Prophetic History is the story of the separation of the righteous

ENDOR—ACHISH HAS FULL CONFIDENCE IN DAVID 1-2

THE FACT IS in those days when the Philistines gathered their hosts to make up an army for war with Israel Achish then said to David “You will be very aware that you and your men are to go out with me.” Then David said to Achish “You will well aware what your servant can make possible and Achish said to David “Therefore I will appoint you keeper of my head for life.”

SAUL SEEKS THE LORD WITHOUT SUCCESS 3-6

Then Samuel died and all Israel were lamenting him and they buried him at Ramah and in his city. Saul also had caused wizards and mediums to move from the land. But the Philistines gathered and came and encamped at Shunem and Saul and all Israel gathered together and camped at Gilboa. Then Saul saw the camp of the Philistines and he was afraid and his heart was seriously terrified so Saul enquired of the LORD but the LORD did not answer him neither by dreams or by the prophets.

THE ENDOR EPISODE 7-25

So Saul said to his servants “Search out a woman with a guardian or husband spirit of divination so that I may go to her and consult with her.” And his servants said to him “Look there is a woman with a guardian spirit in Endor. And Saul searched out or planned disguise and wore different clothing and he went and two men with him and they came to the woman at night. And he said “Please divine or awake for me with the familiar spirit and bring up for me the one of whom I tell you.” Then the woman said to him “You know what Saul has done – how he has cut out all necromancers and familiar spirits from the land and why do you entice or ensnare my soul to cause me to be put to death?” But Saul swore to her by the LORD saying “As Yahweh lives no evil shall happen [*hrq*] to you because of this matter.” So the woman said “Who shall I bring up for you?” And he said “You must bring up Samuel for me!” And the woman saw Samuel and she screeched out in a loud voice and the woman spoke to Saul saying “Why have you continued to deceive me for you are Saul? But the king said to her “Do not be frightened but what have you seen?” And the woman said to Saul “I have seen God coming up from the earth!” And he said “What is he like?” And she said “An old man is coming up and he is wrapping him in a long ephod” So Saul knew that it was Samuel and he bowed the crown of the heads to the ground and did reverence. *Saul made the men with him bow as well recognising that the man with the sleeveless ephod was Samuel.* And Samuel said to Saul “Why have you perturbed or agitated me to bring me up?” And Saul said “I have great adversity. The Philistines are warring against me and God is departed from me and will not any longer answer me either by the hand of the prophets or by dreams. So I have called for you to know what I should do”.

Then Samuel said “And why do you enquire from me when the LORD is forsaken you and is arrayed against you? So the LORD has done **to him** as he spoke by my hand and the LORD has torn the kingdom **from your hand** and given it to your companion or relative David.” *In this statement Samuel is speaking both in the third and the second person. He is speaking in the eternal realm and in the temporal at the same time.*

In accordance with when you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute the heat of his anger upon Amalek. On this account basically the LORD has done this thing to you this day. And the LORD has also given Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me and the LORD will give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. Then Saul was quick and fell his full length on the ground and feared terribly from the words of Samuel. There was not even strength in him for he had not eaten bread all day and all night. *Saul was fasting and using desperate measures but all to no avail.* Then the woman went to Saul when she saw that he was very terrified in himself and she said “Behold your handmaid has listened to your voice and put my life in my hand and obeyed your words which you spoke to me. So now will you please listen to the voice of your

handmaid and I will place before you a pleasant morsel of bread so eat and you will have strength that you may go on your way”. But he refused and said “I will not eat”. But his servants together with the woman broke him down or urged him [*xrp*] and he listened to their voice and rose from the ground and sat upon the couch *by the table*.

(12)TEXTUAL GAP 28.23

The significance is that he reclined to eat food. A rabbinic note attests that there was further communication. It was never easy to compel Saul to do anything. He would possibly rather have died there and then. The nemesis or inevitability of circumstance had compellingly affected his mind. We get a picture of the king sitting on the couch of the witch. The footnote alludes to part or even half of the book at being oral “opening of the lips” – though critics urge it means half of it is lost. I adjudge that since there is a balance of historical action and reported conversation we can fairly say that half the book is conversation and we perhaps do not possess half of what was discussed but we have its drift and all that we need to know to understand the lessons the LORD has preserved for our learning.

THE WITCH ENTERTAINS ROYALLY 24-25

So the woman had a calf of the stall or fattened calf and she hurried and sacrificed it and she took grain and kneaded it with strength [*vwl*] and she baked it [*hpa*] into Matzo bread. *The strange reality is that this woman was acting as if she were a priest. She did what the prodigal’s father did. She gave her best. She sacrificed the fattened calf. She made unleavened cakes.* Then she offered it in the presence of Saul and his servants and they ate and rose up and travelled through that whole night. *Mount Gilboa was but 15 miles south east of Endor but Shunem and the plain where the Philistines were encamped lay between. Saul had to skirt that wide-spreading camp and probably travelled at least 30 miles to rejoin his army.*

CHAPTER 29

A CURIOUS WITHDRAWAL 1-11

The Philistines then set all their armies in array at Aphek and Israel took military position at the well that is in Jezreel. *It appears both armies had moved about 5 miles North West with Israel pushing the Philistines who took up position under the high ground 5 miles to the west of Tabor. This withdrawal a priori seems to have been tactical enticing Israel, as it did, further along the Jezreel plain and giving greater use of Philistine chariot. It was a strategic tactic that possibly changed the course of battle in favour of the Philistines.*

Then the *five* lords of the Philistines crossed [*myrb*] the valley in hundreds and thousands but David and his men passed along in the rear with Achish. *David was now actually at the forefront of battle and could have dictated its course.*

But the commanders of the Philistines said “What are these “Hebrew crossers” *doing* [*myrb*] *there is but a vowel different between the words “withdrawal” and the word “Hebrew”*]. *The Philistine Lords did not question Achish but the strategists asked what was going on. It may be that David had actually disabled the Philistine chariots by setting them in the rear and locating on higher undulating ground. No wonder there were questions.* [*myrb*] Then Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines “**Is not** this David the servant of Saul King of Israel who has been with me these days or rather these years and I have not found in him a single *problem* of this or that sort since he fell away to me that day. But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him and the commanders of the Philistines said to him cause this man to go back

and cause him to return to his place which you appointed him to command there but he shall not go down with us into battle for us to become hostile [*literally “Satan”*] to us in battle. And with what means should this man regain the pleasure of his lord? **Is it not** with the heads of these fighting men? **Is not** this David of whom they sang in dances saying “Saul slew in thousands but David in myriads?”

DAVID’S DISMISSAL 6-11

Then Achish called to David and said to him “As the LORD lives though within the army your going out and coming in are straight or authentic and good in my eyes for I have found in you no wrong since the day you came to me until this day yet in the eyes of the Lords *of the Philistines* you are not pleasing. *This statement indicates that Achish had submitted the request of the commanders to the five lords and their objection was sustained so he had to dismiss David.*

So now return and go in peace and do not undertake evil in the eyes of the Lords of the Philistines. Then David said to Achish “But what have I done and what have you found in your servant from the day I dwelt in your presence to this day that I should not go and fight with the enemies of my Lord the king? *This statement may have been a query of the charge to “go back” for had David been able to remain engaged he might well have had opportunity to engage with Jonathan against the Lords who opposed Achish.*

Then Achish answered and said to David “I am very aware that you are pleasing in my eyes as a messenger of God; definitely the commanders of the Philistines said “He will not go down with us into battle.” So now rise in the morning and the servants of your lord that have come with you and cause them to rise when the light favours you then leave. So David and his men arose to go in the morning to depart to the land of the Philistines and the Philistines went up to Jezreel. *As David departed the Philistines moved out from where they were cooped up in Aphek and back across the valley to Jezreel to engage Israel.*

CHAPTER 30

Prophetic History abounds with providence attending the righteous.

DAVID STUNNED BY AMALEK’S ATTACK 1-2

And **THE FACT IS** in the coming of David and his fighting men to Ziklag on the third day *after leaving Aphek* the Amalekites *had* spread out in an invasion of the south and to Ziklag and struck Ziklag and sent it up in flames. They had also taken captive the wives that were in it. They did not put to death from the least to the greatest a man that was in it but drove or conducted them away [*ghn*] and went on their way.

DAVID SEEKS THE LORD 3-10

Then David and his men came to the city and behold it was burning with fire and their wives sons and daughters were taken prisoner or had given themselves up as prisoners (*Niphal active*)

And David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept till they had no strength to cry. And both wives of David Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite were gone captive. And David was very distressed [*rxyliterally thinking what to do – the term speaks of “a potter wondering how to rebuild a pot broken in his hands”*]. *His life had fallen apart*] for the people were speaking about stoning him for all the people were bitter of soul every man was bitter over his sons and over his daughters. Then David kept encouraging himself in the LORD his God. So David said to Abiathar the priest son of Ahimelech “Please cause

the Ephod to be offered or presented to me” and Abiathar presented the Ephod to David. Then David enquired close to the LORD saying “Shall I give chase after this troop and shall I come upon them? And He said to him “Pursue for overtaking you will come upon him and you will surely deliver *from him*”. So David went and 600 men that were with him and they came to the River Besor and the remainder stopped to minister to themselves.

THE SICK EGYPTIAN – A SIGN OF PROVIDENCE 11-20

Then they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David and they gave him bread and he ate and caused him to drink water. Then they gave him a slice of dried fig cake and two lots of dried grapes or raisins [*qmx*] and he ate and his spirit returned for he had neither eaten bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. *This little occurrence appeared coincidental but in the warp and woof of the pattern of events it was critical. The man was allowed to live and by kindness he was revived and proved a vital informant. The poor man was beside a stream but he was past himself and could not find the water. So many souls in life’s pathway are equally at a loss spiritually and cannot find the way to life.*

Deep in the human heart there lie thoughts that can be stirred to life by kindness.

Then David said to him “Who do you belong to and where *have you come* from this man?” And he said “I am an Egyptian youth - servant to an Amalekite soldier but my master left me because I was sick three days ago. We invaded the Negev of the Cherethites and up to where the land belongs to Judah and the Negev of Caleb and we burned Ziklag with fire.” Then David said to him “Can you have me brought down to this troop?” And he said “Swear by God to me that you will not put me to death or imprison me in the power of my lord and I will bring you down to this troop”. So he brought him down and behold they were abandoned or scattered over the face of the whole land eating and drinking and dancing through all the great booty which they took from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. But David smote them from the fresh breeze or dusk of evening [*pvn*] till the evening of the morrow and not a man of them slipped away except 400 young men that rode camels and they fled. So David delivered all that Amalek had taken and David delivered his two wives. And there was nothing missing that belonged to them from the least to the greatest from sons and daughters and from spoil even to all that they (the Amalekites) had taken for them David brought back in its entirety. So David took the entire flock and herd and they drove them in front of all that they had obtained and they said “This is the spoil of David!”

DAVID INTRODUCES THE PRINCIPLE OF SHARED SPOIL 21-25

So David came to the two hundred warriors that were weary from going with David so he made them turn back to the Besor stream so they went out to meet David and the people with him and David drew close to the people and enquired about their wellbeing. But every man of noxious and ill sort and the vile and worthless among the soldiers who went with David answered and said “Because they did not go with me we will not give them from the spoil that we have delivered but truly give every man his wife and son and they may lead them and go off. But David said “My brothers, you must not act thus with that which the LORD has given to us – He also watched over us and gave the troop that came against us into our hand. And who would listen to you on this matter for as the portion of the one who goes down to battle so also is the lot of the one who abides by the cooking utensils; they shall be apportioned as one. That was the history from that day forward and he established it as an ordinance

and judgment for Israel *to this day*. [The third such reference in the book] There is much to be gleaned from recognising the kindness of David's heart. He treated the worst men in his force as brothers but he was fair to every man in the nation. In this also he resembles the LORD who has no favourites when it comes to sharing the sunshine and rain but is good to all.

THE SHARING OF SPOIL ACCLAIMS DAVID'S GENEROSITY 26-31

Then David came to Ziklag gave a share from the spoil with the elders of Judah and he said "**Behold a blessing for you** from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD for **those who live in Bethel** and those in **south Ramoth** and for those in Jattir, for those *who live* in Aroer and in Siphmoth, for those in Rachal and in the cities of the Jerahmeelites and those in the cities of the Kenites, for those in Hormah and Borashan and those in Athach and for those in Hebron and for all *that live in* those places where David himself and his men have gone." *Thus David shared spoil with those who had been robbed in Judah – with people in a dozen places and more. His gift to Bethel (cf 1st Samuel 7 15-17) is the first gift and was probably a considerable gift for those who served the LORD in that place frequented by Samuel. It is notable that the ark had been located at Bethel after it was moved from Gilgal but in the days of the judges it was moved to Shiloh. Clearly Samuel built up Bethel as a spiritual centre presumably having regard for Jacob's vision. Elijah also established a prophetic school there.*

CHAPTER 31

SAUL FALLS ON HIS SWORD 1-6

So the Philistines gave themselves to fighting with Israel [*Niphal participle*] and the warriors of Israel took flight from the Philistine front and they fell as pierced victims in the hill of Gilboa. Then the Philistine stuck to the pursuit of Saul and his sons. Then the Philistines struck Jonathan and Abinadab and Melchi-Shua Saul's sons. But the battle was heavy or fierce against Saul and the men shooting with bows found him and he was wounded badly by the archers. So Saul said to the one who carried his armour "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and have me pierced over and over." But his armour bearer was unwilling for he was very frightened so taking his sword Saul fell upon it. So when his armour bearer saw that Saul was dead he also fell on his sword and died with him. So Saul died and his three sons and his armour bearer and all his men in that very day unitedly.

PHILISTINE TERRITORIAL RE-OCCUPANCY 7-12

So when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley and those that were on the other side of Jordan saw that the warriors of Israel fled and that Saul and his sons were dead they left the cities and fled and the Philistines came and lived in them. *Thus the land Joshua gave the tribes was repossessed by the Philistines if only for a temporary period.* And living history records that on the next day the Philistines also came to **strip** [*fvp*] the slain and they found Saul and his three sons fallen in the hill of Gilboa. And they cut off his head and stripped off his armour and they sent to the land of the Philistines all around to announce it in the house of the idols of their people. And they set his armour in the house of Ashtaroth and fixed his body with nails to the walls of Bethshan.

JABESH-GILEAD TO THE RESCUE 11-13

But when they reported to those of Jabesh Gilead that which the Philistines had done to Saul all the men of war then arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the walls of Bethshan and came to Jabesh and burned them there. And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk in Jabesh and they fasted seven days. *Thus in a final act of respect the men of Jabesh wrote the last chapter of Saul's life in heroics. I have stood by the wall of Bethshan which is something less than 15 miles across the Jordan from Jabesh. The Gileadites carried the four warriors home after unpinning their bodies. They did for Saul and his sons what Joseph of Arimathea did for our LORD. This was truly an act of brotherly love and deep respect.*

CONCLUSION OF FIRST SAMUEL