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# Chronological Bible Plan

## April



# APRIL



**“Every day I will bless you and praise  
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

April 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
April 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
April 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
April 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
April 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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April 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
April 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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## Outrage at Gibeah (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 19:1–28

### A Levite and His Concubine

1 In those days Israel had no king. There was a Levite living temporarily in the remote region of the Ephraimite hill country. He acquired a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.

2 However, she got angry at him and went home to her father's house in Bethlehem in Judah. When she had been there four months,

3 her husband came after her, hoping he could convince her to return. He brought with him his servant and a pair of donkeys. When she brought him into her father's house and the girl's father saw him, he greeted him warmly.

4 His father-in-law, the girl's father, persuaded him to stay with him for three days, and they ate and drank together, and spent the night there.

5 On the fourth day they woke up early and the Levite got ready to leave. But the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Have a bite to eat for some energy, then you can go."

6 So the two of them sat down and had a meal together. Then the girl's father said to the man, "Why not stay another night and have a good time!"

7 When the man got ready to leave, his father-in-law convinced him to stay another night.

8 He woke up early in the morning on the fifth day so he could leave, but the girl's father said, "Get some energy. Wait until later in the day to leave!" So they ate a meal together.

9 When the man got ready to leave with his concubine and his servant, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Look! The day is almost over! Stay another night! Since the day is over, stay another night here and have a good time. You can get up early tomorrow and start your trip home."

### A Fateful Decision

10 But the man did not want to stay another night. He left and traveled as far as Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a pair of saddled donkeys and his concubine.

11 When they got near Jebus, it was getting quite late and the servant said to his master, "Come on, let's stop at this Jebusite city and spend the night in it."

12 But his master said to him, "We should not stop at a foreign city where non-Israelites live. We will travel on to Gibeah."

13 He said to his servant, "Come on, we will go into one of the other towns and spend the night in Gibeah or Ramah."

14 So they traveled on, and the sun went down when they were near Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin.

15 They stopped there and decided to spend the night in Gibeah. They came into the city and sat down in the town square, but no one invited them to spend the night.

### An Ominous Warning

16 But then an old man passed by, returning at the end of the day from his work in the field. The man was from the Ephraimite hill country; he was living temporarily in Gibeah. (The residents of the town were Benjaminites.)

17 When he looked up and saw the traveler in the town square, the old man said, "Where are you heading? Where do you come from?"

18 The Levite said to him, "We are traveling from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote region of the Ephraimite hill country. That's where I'm from. I had business in Bethlehem in Judah, but now I'm heading home. But no one has invited me into their home.

19 We have enough straw and grain for our donkeys, and there is enough food and wine for me, your female servant, and the young man who is with your servants. We lack nothing."

20 The old man said, "Everything is just fine! I will take care of all your needs. But don't spend the night in the town square."

21 So he brought him to his house and fed the donkeys. They washed their feet and had a meal.

### Echoes of Sodom

22 They were having a good time, when suddenly some men of the city, some good-for-nothings, surrounded the house and kept beating on the door. They said to the old man who owned the house, "Send out the man who came to visit you so we can have sex with him."

23 The man who owned the house went outside and said to them, "No, my brothers! Don't do this wicked thing! After all, this man is a guest in my house. Don't do such a disgraceful thing!

24 Here are my virgin daughter and my guest's concubine. I will send them out and you can abuse them and do to them whatever you like. But don't do such a disgraceful thing to this man!"

25 The men refused to listen to him, so the Levite grabbed his concubine and made her go outside. They raped her and abused her all night long until morning. They let her go at dawn.

26 The woman arrived back at daybreak and was sprawled out on the doorstep of the house where her master was staying until it became light.

27 When her master got up in the morning, opened the doors of the house, and went outside to start on his journey, there was the

woman, his concubine, sprawled out on the doorstep of the house with her hands on the threshold.  
28 He said to her, “Get up, let’s leave!” But there was no response. He put her on the donkey and went home.

## A Call to Arms (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 19:29–20:13

### For Your Consideration

19:29 When he got home, he took a knife, grabbed his concubine, and carved her up into twelve pieces. Then he sent the pieces throughout Israel.

30 Everyone who saw the sight said, “Nothing like this has happened or been witnessed during the entire time since the Israelites left the land of Egypt! Take careful note of it! Discuss it and speak!”

### The Council of the Eleven Tribes

20:1 All the Israelites from Dan to Beer Sheba and from the land of Gilead left their homes and assembled together before the LORD at Mizpah.

2 The leaders of all the people from all the tribes of Israel took their places in the assembly of God’s people, which numbered four hundred thousand sword-wielding foot soldiers.

3 The Benjaminites heard that the Israelites had gone up to Mizpah. Then the Israelites said, “Explain how this wicked thing happened!”

4 The Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, spoke up, “I and my concubine stopped in Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin to spend the night.

5 The leaders of Gibeah attacked me and at night surrounded the house where I was staying. They wanted to kill me; instead they abused my concubine so badly that she died.

6 I grabbed hold of my concubine and carved her up and sent the pieces throughout the territory occupied by Israel, because they committed such an unthinkable atrocity in Israel.

7 All you Israelites, make a decision here!”

### The Verdict

8 All Israel rose up in unison and said, “Not one of us will go home! Not one of us will return to his house!

9 Now this is what we will do to Gibeah: We will attack the city as the lot dictates.

10 We will take ten of every group of a hundred men from all the tribes of Israel (and a hundred of every group of a thousand, and a thousand of every group of ten thousand) to get supplies for the army. When they arrive in Gibeah of Benjamin they will punish them for the atrocity which they committed in Israel.”

11 So all the men of Israel gathered together at the city as allies.

### Benjamin Refuses to Submit

12 The tribes of Israel sent men throughout the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “How could such a wicked thing take place?

13 Now, hand over the good-for-nothings in Gibeah so we can execute them and purge Israel of wickedness.” But the Benjaminites refused to listen to their Israelite brothers. [cf. [Deut 13:12–18](#)]

## Three Battles (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)

Judges 20:14–48

### Marshaling the Troops

14 The Benjaminites came from their cities and assembled at Gibeah to make war against the Israelites.

15 That day the Benjaminites mustered from their cities twenty-six thousand sword-wielding soldiers, besides seven hundred well-trained soldiers from Gibeah.

16 Among this army were seven hundred specially-trained left-handed soldiers. Each one could sling a stone and hit even the smallest target.

17 The men of Israel (not counting Benjamin) had mustered four hundred thousand sword-wielding soldiers, every one an experienced warrior.

### The First Battle—Benjamin Prevails

18 The Israelites went up to Bethel and asked God, “Who should lead the charge against the Benjaminites?” The LORD said, “Judah should lead.”

19 The Israelites got up the next morning and moved against Gibeah.

20 The men of Israel marched out to fight Benjamin; they arranged their battle lines against Gibeah.

21 The Benjaminites attacked from Gibeah and struck down twenty-two thousand Israelites that day.

**The Second Battle—Benjamin Again Prevails**

22 The Israelite army took heart and once more arranged their battle lines, in the same place where they had taken their positions the day before.

23 The Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until evening. They asked the LORD, “Should we again march out to fight the Benjaminites, our brothers?” The LORD said, “Attack them!”

24 So the Israelites marched toward the Benjaminites the next day.

25 The Benjaminites again attacked them from Gibeah and struck down eighteen thousand sword-wielding Israelite soldiers.

**The Third Battle—The LORD Prevails**

26 So all the Israelites, the whole army, went up to Bethel. They wept and sat there before the LORD; they did not eat anything that day until evening. They offered up burnt sacrifices and tokens of peace to the LORD.

27 The Israelites asked the LORD (for the ark of God’s covenant was there in those days;

28 Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, was serving the LORD in those days), “Should we once more march out to fight the Benjaminites our brothers, or should we quit?” The LORD said, “Attack, for tomorrow I will hand them over to you.”

29 So Israel hid men in ambush outside Gibeah.

30 The Israelites attacked the Benjaminites the next day; they took their positions against Gibeah just as they had done before.

31 The Benjaminites attacked the army, leaving the city unguarded. They began to strike down their enemy just as they had done before. On the main roads (one leads to Bethel, the other to Gibeah) and in the field, they struck down about thirty Israelites.

32 Then the Benjaminites said, “They are defeated just as before.” But the Israelites said, “Let’s retreat and lure them away from the city into the main roads.”

33 All the men of Israel got up from their places and took their positions at Baal Tamar, while the Israelites hiding in ambush jumped out of their places west of Gibeah.

34 Ten thousand men, well-trained soldiers from all Israel, then made a frontal assault against Gibeah—the battle was fierce. But the Benjaminites did not realize that disaster was at their doorstep.

35 The LORD annihilated Benjamin before Israel; the Israelites struck down that day 25,100 sword-wielding Benjaminites.

36 Then the Benjaminites saw they were defeated. The Israelites retreated before Benjamin, because they had confidence in the men they had hid in ambush outside Gibeah.

37 The men hiding in ambush made a mad dash to Gibeah. They attacked and put the sword to the entire city.

38 The Israelites and the men hiding in ambush had arranged a signal. When the men hiding in ambush sent up a smoke signal from the city,

39 the Israelites counterattacked. Benjamin had begun to strike down the Israelites; they struck down about thirty men. They said, “There’s no doubt about it! They are totally defeated as in the earlier battle.”

40 But when the signal, a pillar of smoke, began to rise up from the city, the Benjaminites turned around and saw the whole city going up in a cloud of smoke that rose high into the sky.

41 When the Israelites turned around, the Benjaminites panicked because they could see that disaster was on their doorstep.

42 They retreated before the Israelites, taking the road to the wilderness. But the battle overtook them as men from the surrounding cities struck them down.

43 They surrounded the Benjaminites, chased them from Nohah, and annihilated them all the way to a spot east of Geba.

44 Eighteen thousand Benjaminites, all of them capable warriors, fell dead.

45 The rest turned and ran toward the wilderness, heading toward the cliff of Rimmon. But the Israelites caught five thousand of them on the main roads. They stayed right on their heels all the way to Gidom and struck down two thousand more.

46 That day twenty-five thousand sword-wielding Benjaminites fell in battle, all of them capable warriors.

47 Six hundred survivors turned and ran away to the wilderness, to the cliff of Rimmon. They stayed there four months.

48 The Israelites returned to the Benjaminite towns and put the sword to them. They wiped out the cities, the animals, and everything they could find. They set fire to every city in their path.

**The Crisis (c. 1380 – c. 1340 BC)****Judges 21****Recognition of the Crisis**

1 The Israelites had taken an oath in Mizpah, saying, “Not one of us will allow his daughter to marry a Benjaminite.”

2 So the people came to Bethel and sat there before God until evening, weeping loudly and uncontrollably.

3 They said, “Why, O LORD God of Israel, has this happened in Israel?” An entire tribe has disappeared from Israel today!”

4 The next morning the people got up early and built an altar there. They offered up burnt sacrifices and token of peace.

**A Bloody Solution**

5 The Israelites asked, “Who from all the Israelite tribes has not assembled before the LORD?” They had made a solemn oath that whoever did not assemble before the LORD at Mizpah must certainly be executed.

- 6 The Israelites regretted what had happened to their brother Benjamin. They said, “Today we cut off an entire tribe from Israel!  
7 How can we find wives for those who are left? After all, we took an oath in the LORD’s name not to give them our daughters as wives.”  
8 So they asked, “Who from all the Israelite tribes did not assemble before the LORD at Mizpah?” Now it just so happened no one from Jabesh Gilead had come to the gathering.  
9 When they took roll call, they noticed none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were there.  
10 So the assembly sent 12,000 capable warriors against Jabesh Gilead. They commanded them, “Go and kill with your swords the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead, including the women and little children.  
11 Do this: exterminate every male, as well as every woman who has had sexual relations with a male. But spare the lives of any virgins.” So they did as instructed.  
12 They found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young girls who were virgins—they had never had sexual relations with a male. They brought them back to the camp at Shiloh in the land of Canaan.  
13 The entire assembly sent messengers to the Benjaminites at the cliff of Rimmon and assured them they would not be harmed.  
14 The Benjaminites returned at that time, and the Israelites gave to them the women they had spared from Jabesh Gilead. But there were not enough to go around.

**More Brides for Benjamin**

- 15 The people regretted what had happened to Benjamin because the LORD had weakened the Israelite tribes.  
16 The leaders of the assembly said, “How can we find wives for those who are left? After all, the Benjaminite women have been wiped out.  
17 The remnant of Benjamin must be preserved. An entire Israelite tribe should not be wiped out.  
18 But we can’t allow our daughters to marry them, for the Israelites took an oath, saying, ‘Whoever gives a woman to a Benjaminite will be destroyed!’  
19 However, there is an annual festival to the LORD in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel (east of the main road that goes up from Bethel to Shechem) and south of Lebonah.”  
20 So they commanded the Benjaminites, “Go hide in the vineyards,  
21 and keep your eyes open. When you see the daughters of Shiloh coming out to dance in the celebration, jump out from the vineyards. Each one of you, catch yourself a wife from among the daughters of Shiloh and then go home to the land of Benjamin.  
22 When their fathers or brothers come and protest to us, we’ll say to them, “Do us a favor and let them be, for we could not get each one a wife through battle. Don’t worry about breaking your oath! You would only be guilty if you had voluntarily given them wives.”  
23 The Benjaminites did as instructed. They abducted two hundred of the dancing girls to be their wives. They went home to their own territory, rebuilt their cities, and settled down.  
24 Then the Israelites dispersed from there to their respective tribal and clan territories. Each went from there to his own property.

**A Commentary on Judges (literary prelude to Samuel)**

- 25 In those days Israel had no king. Each man did what he considered to be right.

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### The Cycle of the Judges (c. 1365 BC)

Judges 2:7, 10–23

- 7 The people worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua’s lifetime and as long as the elderly men who outlived him remained alive. These men had witnessed all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.
- 10 That entire generation passed away; a new generation grew up that had not personally experienced the LORD’s presence or seen what he had done for Israel.
- 11 The Israelites did evil before the LORD by worshiping the Baals.
- 12 They abandoned the LORD God of their ancestors who brought them out of the land of Egypt. They followed other gods—the gods of the nations who lived around them. They worshiped them and made the LORD angry.
- 13 They abandoned the LORD and worshiped Baal and the Ashtars.
- 14 The LORD was furious with Israel and handed them over to robbers who plundered them. He turned them over to their enemies who lived around them. They could not withstand their enemies’ attacks.
- 15 Whenever they went out to fight, the LORD did them harm, just as he had warned and solemnly vowed he would do. They suffered greatly.
- 16 The LORD raised up leaders who delivered them from these robbers.
- 17 But they did not obey their leaders. Instead they prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. They quickly turned aside from the path their ancestors had walked. Their ancestors had obeyed the LORD’s commands, but they did not.
- 18 When the LORD raised up leaders for them, the LORD was with each leader and delivered the people from their enemies while the leader remained alive. The LORD felt sorry for them when they cried out in agony because of what their harsh oppressors did to them.
- 19 When a leader died, the next generation would again act more wickedly than the previous one. They would follow after other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They did not give up their practices or their stubborn ways.
- 20 The LORD was furious with Israel. He said, “This nation has violated the terms of the agreement I made with their ancestors by disobeying me.
- 21 So I will no longer remove before them any of the nations that Joshua left unconquered when he died.
- 22 Joshua left those nations to test Israel. I wanted to see whether or not the people would carefully walk in the path marked out by the LORD, as their ancestors were careful to do.”
- 23 This is why the LORD permitted these nations to remain and did not conquer them immediately; he did not hand them over to Joshua.

### The Testing of Israel (c. 1365 BC)

Judges 3:1–6

- 1 These were the nations the LORD permitted to remain so he could use them to test Israel—he wanted to test all those who had not experienced battle against the Canaanites.
- 2 He left those nations simply because he wanted to teach the subsequent generations of Israelites, who had not experienced the earlier battles, how to conduct holy war.
- 3 These were the nations: the five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo-Hamath.
- 4 They were left to test Israel, so the LORD would know if his people would obey the commands he gave their ancestors through Moses.
- 5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.
- 6 They took the Canaanites’ daughters as wives and gave their daughters to the Canaanites; they worshiped their gods as well.

### Mesopotamian Oppression (c. 1365 – c. 1357 BC)

Judges 3:7–8

- 7 The Israelites did evil in the LORD’s sight. They forgot the LORD their God and worshiped the Baals and the Asherahs.
- 8 The LORD was furious with Israel and turned them over to King Cushan-Rishathaim of Aram-Naharaim. They were Cushan-Rishathaim’s subjects for eight years.

### Rest Under Othniel (c. 1357 – c. 1317 BC)

Judges 3:9–11

- 9 When the Israelites cried out for help to the LORD, he raised up a deliverer for the Israelites who rescued them. His name was Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother.
- 10 The LORD’s spirit empowered him and he led Israel. When he went to do battle, the LORD handed over to him King Cushan-

Rishathaim of Aram and he overpowered him.  
11 The land had rest for forty years; then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

### Moabite Oppression (c. 1317 – c. 1299 BC)

Judges 3:12–14

12 The Israelites again did evil in the LORD's sight. The LORD gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel because they had done evil in the LORD's sight.  
13 Eglon formed alliances with the Ammonites and Amalekites. He came and defeated Israel, and they seized the City of Date Palm Trees.  
14 The Israelites were subject to King Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.

### Rest Under Ehud (c. 1299 – c. 1219 BC)

Judges 3:15–30

15 When the Israelites cried out for help to the LORD, he raised up a deliverer for them. His name was Ehud son of Gera the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The Israelites sent him to King Eglon of Moab with their tribute payment.  
16 Ehud made himself a sword—it had two edges and was eighteen inches long. He strapped it under his coat on his right thigh.  
17 He brought the tribute payment to King Eglon of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.)  
18 After Ehud brought the tribute payment, he dismissed the people who had carried it.  
19 But he went back once he reached the carved images at Gilgal. He said to Eglon, "I have a secret message for you, O king." Eglon said, "Be quiet!" All his attendants left.  
20 When Ehud approached him, he was sitting in his well-ventilated upper room all by himself. Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." When Eglon rose up from his seat,  
21 Ehud reached with his left hand, pulled the sword from his right thigh, and drove it into Eglon's belly.  
22 The handle went in after the blade, and the fat closed around the blade, for Ehud did not pull the sword out of his belly.  
23 As Ehud went out into the vestibule, he closed the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them.  
24 When Ehud had left, Eglon's servants came and saw the locked doors of the upper room. They said, "He must be relieving himself in the well-ventilated inner room."  
25 They waited so long they were embarrassed, but he still did not open the doors of the upper room. Finally they took the key and opened the doors. Right before their eyes was their master, sprawled out dead on the floor!  
26 Now Ehud had escaped while they were delaying. When he passed the carved images, he escaped to Seirah.  
27 When he reached Seirah, he blew a trumpet in the Ephraimite hill country. The Israelites went down with him from the hill country, with Ehud in the lead.  
28 He said to them, "Follow me, for the LORD is about to defeat your enemies, the Moabites!" They followed him, captured the fords of the Jordan River opposite Moab, and did not let anyone cross.  
29 That day they killed about ten thousand Moabites—all strong, capable warriors; not one escaped.  
30 Israel humiliated Moab that day, and the land had rest for eighty years.

### Shamgar and the Philistines (c. 1279 BC)

Judges 3:31

31 After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath; he killed six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad and, like Ehud, delivered Israel.

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#### Chronological Notes

- 1) The first oppression mentioned in Judges began c. 1365 BC. If we add all the years mentioned in Judges 3:7–16:31 (oppression years and judgeship years), we obtain a total of 410 years: 1365 BC - 410 = 955 BC. Clearly, we have a problem—this date conflicts with the relative certainty of the chronology of the reigns of Saul (c. 1050 – 1010 BC) and David (1010 – 970 BC). This means that there must be some overlap between one or more oppressions or judgeships.

## 2) The Samson/Philistine Overlap.

- A) Samson's 20-year judgeship took place during the Philistine oppression—"he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines" (Judg 15:20). This means we can subtract 20 years, bringing the total down from 410 years to 390 years.

## 3) The Philistine/Ammonite Overlap.

- A) The last foreign oppression of Israel mentioned in Judges is the forty year oppression of the Philistines. Judges 10:7 notes that this oppression coincided with the Ammonite oppression of the Transjordan tribes. The Ammonite oppression was broken by Jephthah in c. 1106 BC, some 300 years after the conquest of Sihon in 1406 BC (Judg 11:21–26). Since the Ammonite oppression lasted 18 years (Judg 10:8), it follows that the Ammonite oppression began in c. 1106 BC + 18 = c. 1124 BC.<sup>1</sup> The Philistine oppression was concurrent with the Ammonite oppression and thus lasted from c. 1124 BC to c. 1084 BC. This means we can subtract 40 years, bringing the total down from 390 years to 350 years.

- (1) Samson was born at the beginning of the Philistine oppression (Judg 13:1–3). His years of leadership fell within the forty-year span of Philistine rule (Judg 14:4) but apparently did not outlast it, for the Philistines seem to have been a threat for a short time after Samson pulled down the temple of Dagon (Samuel subdued them at Mizpah). Most likely, Samson began his heroic deeds about midway through the oppression, when he was around twenty years old, and after twenty years of judgeship he died just preceding the end of the oppression.<sup>2</sup>
- (2) It is interesting to note that the final blow against the Philistine incursion occurred under Samuel at Mizpah in c. 1084 BC (1 Sam 7:11, 13), some twenty years after the ark of the covenant had been taken by the Philistines (1 Sam 7:2).<sup>3</sup> The battle of Aphek, which resulted in the capture of the ark, therefore took place in c. 1104, or at the midpoint of the forty-year Philistine period.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that the capture of the ark provoked Samson to begin his judgeship.
- (3) Samuel was also born during the Philistine oppression. We derive this from 1 Samuel 8:1, 5 which says that Samuel was "old" when he anointed Saul as king of Israel. Merrill comments: "Admittedly, 'old' is a subjective term and one should not use it to establish chronological exactness. However, Eli, contemporary with Samuel, was 'very old' at age ninety-eight (1 Sam 2:22; cf. 4:15) and David was 'old' at seventy, so one may reasonably posit at least seventy as the age of Samuel at the time of Saul's coronation."<sup>5</sup> The corruption of the MT of 1 Samuel 13:1 means that we cannot date Saul's and David's reigns with the certainty of Solomon and the other kings. However, a date of c. 1050 BC for the beginning of Saul's reign will give us no more than a 1 or 2 year error. If we assume that Samuel was seventy in 1050 BC—that puts his birth in 1050 + 70 = c. 1120 BC, just a few years after Samson's birth and the beginning of the Philistine oppression.

## 4) The Ehud/Jabin/Deborah Overlap.

- A) The 18-year Moabite oppression and the 80-year rest under the judgeship of Ehud is focused on the central portion of Israel (see Jericho, "the city of the Palms," in Judg 3:13). Given the unusual length of the rest period, and the fact that Ehud's death is not directly connected to the end of the rest (Judg 4:1), it appears this period is a good candidate for an overlap.<sup>6</sup>
- B) The 20-year Canaanite (Jabin) oppression and the 40-year rest under the judgeship of Deborah is focused on the northern portion of Israel (see Hazor in Judg 4:2). If we assume Ehud lived for 20 years after defeating Eglon, the 60-year period of Jabin/Deborah might overlap with the last 60 years of the Ehud's 80-year rest. Thus Ehud's rest and Deborah's rest both come to an end with the Midianite invasion, and the time periods again connect in series. This would allow us to subtract 60

<sup>1</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 168. So also David M. Howard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*, (Moody Press, 1993), 103; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age Through the Jewish Wars*, (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 176; Israel P. Loken, *The Old Testament Historical Books: An Introduction*, (Xulon Press, 2008), 86.

<sup>2</sup> Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 168.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 10 (Waco: Word, 1983), 65–66.

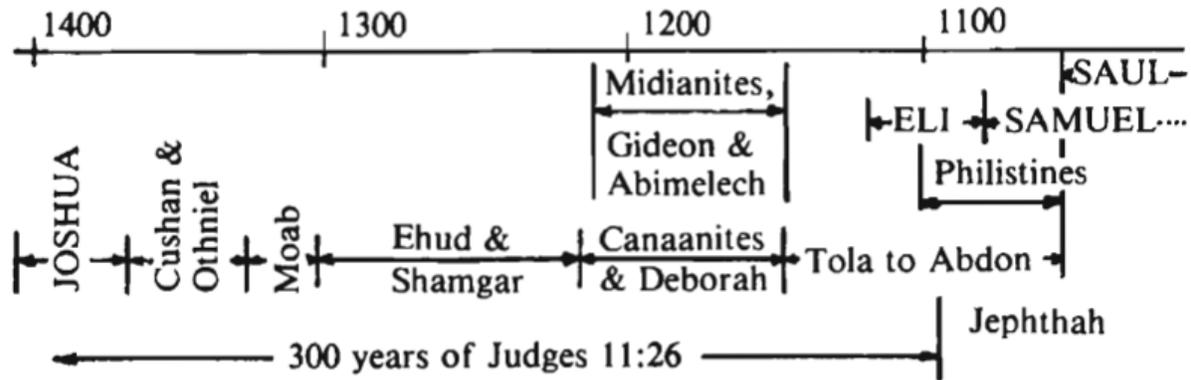
<sup>4</sup> Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 168.

<sup>5</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, "Paul's Use of 'About 450 Years' in Acts 13:20," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138:551 (July 1981): 251.

<sup>6</sup> J. W. Schmidt, *The Joshua-Judges Chronology* (Ph.D. diss., Central Baptist Theological Seminary, 1954). So also J. C. Whitcomb, *Chart of Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges* (Grace Theological Seminary, 1965).

years, bringing the total down from 350 years to 290 years.

- 5) The overlaps mentioned above allow us to reduce the total number of years in Judges from 410 years to 290 years. If we examine this length relative to our starting point of c. 1365 BC, we get c. 1365 BC - 290 = c. 1075 BC. This fits nicely within the chronological bookends of Joshua's death and Saul's anointing, and leaves enough time for Samuel to grow old and put his sons into power before the people demand a king in c. 1050 BC.
- A) Peet argues for an overlap between the Midianites/Gideon and the Canaanites/Deborah (as shown below).<sup>7</sup> Is this a better explanation of the data than the Ehud/Jabin/Deborah overlap? It's difficult to say—I remain open on the topic.



<sup>7</sup> J. H. John Peet, "The Chronology of the Judges," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* Vol. 9, No. 1&2 (Winter 1982–83): 216–242. The image is sourced from J. H. John Peet, "Biblical Chronology," *Foundations* No. 14 (Spring 1985): 19–29.

## Canaanite Oppression (c. 1279 – c. 1259 BC)

Judges 4:1–3

- 1 The Israelites again did evil in the LORD's sight after Ehud's death.
- 2 The LORD turned them over to King Jabin of Canaan, who ruled in Hazor. The general of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth Haggoyim.
- 3 The Israelites cried out for help to the LORD, because Sisera had nine hundred chariots with iron-rimmed wheels, and he cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years.

## Rest Under Deborah and Barak (c. 1259 – c. 1219 BC)

Judges 4:4–5:31

### Deborah as Judge

- 4:4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time.
- 5 She would sit under the Date Palm Tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the Ephraimite hill country. The Israelites would come up to her to have their disputes settled.
- 6 She summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali. She said to him, "Is it not true that the LORD God of Israel is commanding you? Go, march to Mount Tabor! Take with you ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun!
- 7 I will bring Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to you at the Kishon River, along with his chariots and huge army. I will hand him over to you."
- 8 Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go. But if you do not go with me, I will not go."
- 9 She said, "I will indeed go with you. But you will not gain fame on the expedition you are undertaking, for the LORD will turn Sisera over to a woman." Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh.

### The Battle Between Barak and Sisera

- 10 Barak summoned men from Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. Ten thousand men followed him; Deborah went up with him as well.
- 11 Now Heber the Kenite had moved away from the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses' father-in-law. He lived near the great tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh.
- 12 When Sisera heard that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor,
- 13 he ordered all his chariotry—nine hundred chariots with iron-rimmed wheels—and all the troops he had with him to go from Harosheth-Haggoyim to the River Kishon.
- 14 Deborah said to Barak, "Spring into action, for this is the day the LORD is handing Sisera over to you! Has the LORD not taken the lead?" Barak quickly went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.
- 15 The LORD routed Sisera, all his chariotry, and all his army with the edge of the sword. Sisera jumped out of his chariot and ran away on foot.
- 16 Now Barak chased the chariots and the army all the way to Harosheth Haggoyim. Sisera's whole army died by the edge of the sword; not even one survived!

### Jael Kills Sisera

- 17 Now Sisera ran away on foot to the tent of Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite, for King Jabin of Hazor and the family of Heber the Kenite had made a peace treaty.
- 18 Jael came out to welcome Sisera. She said to him, "Stop and rest, my lord. Stop and rest with me. Don't be afraid." So Sisera stopped to rest in her tent, and she put a blanket over him.
- 19 He said to her, "Give me a little water to drink, because I'm thirsty." She opened a goatskin container of milk and gave him some milk to drink. Then she covered him up again.
- 20 He said to her, "Stand watch at the entrance to the tent. If anyone comes along and asks you, 'Is there a man here?' say 'No.'"
- 21 Then Jael wife of Heber took a tent peg in one hand and a hammer in the other. She crept up on him, drove the tent peg through his temple into the ground while he was asleep from exhaustion, and he died.
- 22 Now Barak was chasing Sisera. Jael went out to welcome him. She said to him, "Come here and I will show you the man you are searching for." He went with her into the tent, and there he saw Sisera sprawled out dead with the tent peg in his temple.
- 23 That day God humiliated King Jabin of Canaan before the Israelites.
- 24 Israel's power continued to overwhelm King Jabin of Canaan until they did away with him.

### Deborah and Barak's Song

5:1 On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this victory song:

- 2 "When the leaders took the lead in Israel,  
When the people answered the call to war—

- Praise the LORD!  
3 Hear, O kings!  
Pay attention, O rulers!  
I will sing to the LORD!  
I will sing to the LORD God of Israel!
- 4 O LORD, when you departed from Seir,  
when you marched from Edom's plains,  
the earth shook, the heavens poured down,  
the clouds poured down rain.
- 5 The mountains trembled before the LORD, the God of Sinai;  
before the LORD God of Israel.
- 6 In the days of Shamgar son of Anath,  
in the days of Jael caravans disappeared;  
travelers had to go on winding side roads.
- 7 Warriors were scarce,  
they were scarce in Israel,  
until you arose, Deborah,  
until you arose as a motherly protector in Israel.
- 8 God chose new leaders,  
then fighters appeared in the city gates;  
but, I swear, not a shield or spear could be found,  
among forty military units in Israel.
- 9 My heart went out to Israel's leaders,  
to the people who answered the call to war.  
Praise the LORD!
- 10 You who ride on light-colored female donkeys,  
who sit on saddle blankets,  
you who walk on the road, pay attention!
- 11 Hear the sound of those who divide the sheep among the watering places;  
there they tell of the Lord's victorious deeds,  
the victorious deeds of his warriors in Israel.  
Then the LORD's people went down to the city gates—
- 12 Wake up, wake up, Deborah!  
Wake up, wake up, sing a song!  
Get up, Barak!  
Capture your prisoners of war, son of Abinoam!
- 13 Then the survivors came down to the mighty ones;  
the LORD's people came down to me as warriors.
- 14 They came from Ephraim, who uprooted Amalek,  
they follow after you, Benjamin, with your soldiers.  
From Makir leaders came down,  
from Zebulun came the ones who march carrying an officer's staff.
- 15 Issachar's leaders were with Deborah,  
the men of Issachar supported Barak;  
into the valley they were sent under Barak's command.  
Among the clans of Reuben there was intense heart searching.
- 16 Why do you remain among the sheepfolds,  
listening to the shepherds playing their pipes for their flocks?  
As for the clans of Reuben—there was intense searching of heart.
- 17 Gilead stayed put beyond the Jordan River.  
As for Dan—why did he seek temporary employment in the shipyards?  
Asher remained on the seacoast,  
he stayed by his harbors.
- 18 The men of Zebulun were not concerned about their lives;  
Naphtali charged on to the battlefields.
- 19 Kings came, they fought;  
the kings of Canaan fought,  
at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo,

- but they took no silver as plunder.
- 20 From the sky the stars fought,  
from their paths in the heavens they fought against Sisera.
- 21 The Kishon River carried them off;  
the river confronted them—the Kishon River.  
Step on the necks of the strong!
- 22 The horses' hooves pounded the ground;  
the stallions galloped madly.
- 23 'Call judgment down on Meroz,' says the LORD's angelic messenger;  
'Be sure to call judgment down on those who live there,  
because they did not come to help in the LORD's battle,  
to help in the LORD's battle against the warriors.'
- 24 The most rewarded of women should be Jael,  
the wife of Heber the Kenite!  
She should be the most rewarded of women who live in tents.
- 25 He asked for water,  
and she gave him milk;  
in a bowl fit for a king,  
she served him curds.
- 26 Her left hand reached for the tent peg,  
her right hand for the workmen's hammer.  
She "hammered" Sisera,  
she shattered his skull,  
she smashed his head,  
she drove the tent peg through his temple.
- 27 Between her feet he collapsed,  
he fell limp and was lifeless;  
between her feet he collapsed and fell limp,  
in the spot where he collapsed,  
there he fell limp—violently murdered!
- 28 Through the window she looked;  
Sisera's mother cried out through the lattice:  
'Why is his chariot so slow to return?  
Why are the hoofbeats of his chariot-horses delayed?'
- 29 The wisest of her ladies answer;  
indeed she even thinks to herself,
- 30 'No doubt they are gathering and dividing the plunder—  
a girl or two for each man to rape!  
Sisera is grabbing up colorful cloth,  
he is grabbing up colorful embroidered cloth,  
two pieces of colorful embroidered cloth,  
for the neck of the plunderer!'
- 31 May all your enemies perish like this, O LORD!  
But may those who love you shine  
like the rising sun at its brightest!"

And the land had rest for forty years.

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## Midianite Oppression (c. 1219 – c. 1212 BC)

Judges 6:1–10

### The Midianite Invasion

- 1 The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD turned them over to Midian for seven years.
- 2 The Midianites overwhelmed Israel. Because of Midian the Israelites made shelters for themselves in the hills, as well as caves and strongholds.
- 3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites, and the people from the east would attack them.
- 4 They invaded the land and devoured its crops all the way to Gaza. They left nothing for the Israelites to eat, and they took away the sheep, oxen, and donkeys.
- 5 When they invaded with their cattle and tents, they were as thick as locusts. Neither they nor their camels could be counted. They came to devour the land.
- 6 Israel was so severely weakened by Midian that the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.

### God Sends a Prophet to Urge the People to Repent

- 7 When the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help because of Midian,
- 8 he sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said to them, "This is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'I brought you up from Egypt and took you out of that place of slavery.'
- 9 I rescued you from Egypt's power and from the power of all who oppressed you. I drove them out before you and gave their land to you.
- 10 I said to you, "I am the LORD your God! Do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are now living!" But you have disobeyed me."

## Rest Under Gideon (c. 1212 – c. 1172 BC)

Judges 6:11–8:28

### God Calls Gideon (West Manasseh)

- 6:11 The LORD's angelic messenger came and sat down under the oak tree in Ophrah owned by Joash the Abiezrite. He arrived while Joash's son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress so he could hide it from the Midianites.
- 12 The LORD's messenger appeared and said to him, "The LORD is with you, courageous warrior!"
- 13 Gideon said to him, "Pardon me, but if the LORD is with us, why has such disaster overtaken us? Where are all his miraculous deeds our ancestors told us about? They said, 'Did the LORD not bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to Midian."
- 14 Then the LORD himself turned to him and said, "You have the strength. Deliver Israel from the power of the Midianites! Have I not sent you?"
- 15 Gideon said to him, "But Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Just look! My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my family."
- 16 The LORD said to him, "Ah, but I will be with you! You will strike down the whole Midianite army."
- 17 Gideon said to him, "If you really are pleased with me, then give me a sign as proof that it is really you speaking with me.
- 18 Do not leave this place until I come back with a gift and present it to you." The LORD said, "I will stay here until you come back."
- 19 Gideon went and prepared a young goat, along with unleavened bread made from an ephah of flour. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot. He brought the food to him under the oak tree and presented it to him.
- 20 God's messenger said to him, "Put the meat and unleavened bread on this rock, and pour out the broth." Gideon did as instructed.
- 21 The LORD's messenger touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of his staff. Fire flared up from the rock and consumed the meat and unleavened bread. The LORD's messenger then disappeared.
- 22 When Gideon realized that it was the LORD's messenger, he said, "Oh no! Master, LORD! I have seen the LORD's messenger face to face!"
- 23 The LORD said to him, "You are safe! Do not be afraid! You are not going to die!"
- 24 Gideon built an altar for the LORD there, and named it "The LORD is on friendly terms with me." To this day it is still there in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

### Gideon Tears Down His Father's Altar to Baal

- 25 That night the LORD said to him, "Take the bull from your father's herd, as well as a second bull, one that is seven years old. Pull down your father's Baal altar and cut down the nearby Asherah pole.
- 26 Then build an altar for the LORD your God on the top of this stronghold according to the proper pattern. Take the second bull and offer it as a burnt sacrifice on the wood from the Asherah pole that you cut down."
- 27 So Gideon took ten of his servants and did just as the LORD had told him. He was too afraid of his father's family and the men of

the city to do it in broad daylight, so he waited until nighttime.

28 When the men of the city got up the next morning, they saw the Baal altar pulled down, the nearby Asherah pole cut down, and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar.

29 They said to one another, “Who did this?” They investigated the matter thoroughly and concluded that Gideon son of Joash had done it.

30 The men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out your son, so we can execute him! He pulled down the Baal altar and cut down the nearby Asherah pole.”

31 But Joash said to all those who confronted him, “Must you fight Baal’s battles? Must you rescue him? Whoever takes up his cause will die by morning! If he really is a god, let him fight his own battles! After all, it was his altar that was pulled down.”

32 That very day Gideon’s father named him Jerub-Baal, because he had said, “Let Baal fight with him, for it was his altar that was pulled down.”

### **Gideon Prepares for Battle**

33 All the Midianites, Amalekites, and the people from the east assembled. They crossed the Jordan River and camped in the Jezreel Valley.

34 The LORD’s spirit took control of Gideon. He blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him.

35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh and summoned them to follow him as well. He also sent messengers throughout Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they came up to meet him.

### **Doubt Enters Gideon’s Mind**

36 Gideon said to God, “If you really intend to use me to deliver Israel, as you promised, then give me a sign as proof.

37 Look, I am putting a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece, and the ground around it is dry, then I will be sure that you will use me to deliver Israel, as you promised.”

38 The LORD did as he asked. When he got up the next morning, he squeezed the fleece, and enough dew dripped from it to fill a bowl.

39 Gideon said to God, “Please do not get angry at me, when I ask for just one more sign. Please allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make only the fleece dry, while the ground around it is covered with dew.”

40 That night God did as he asked. Only the fleece was dry and the ground around it was covered with dew.

### **Gideon’s Army is Reduced**

7:1 Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and his men got up the next morning and camped near the spring of Harod. The Midianites were camped north of them near the hill of Moreh in the valley.

2 The LORD said to Gideon, “You have too many men for me to hand Midian over to you. Israel might brag, ‘Our own strength has delivered us.’

3 Now, announce to the men, ‘Whoever is shaking with fear may turn around and leave Mount Gilead.’” Twenty-two thousand men went home; ten thousand remained. [[Deut 20:8](#)]

4 The LORD spoke to Gideon again, “There are still too many men. Bring them down to the water and I will thin the ranks some more. When I say, ‘This one should go with you,’ pick him to go; when I say, ‘This one should not go with you,’ do not take him.”

5 So he brought the men down to the water. Then the LORD said to Gideon, “Separate those who lap the water as a dog laps from those who kneel to drink.”

6 Three hundred men lapped; the rest of the men knelt to drink water.

7 The LORD said to Gideon, “With the three hundred men who lapped I will deliver the whole army and I will hand Midian over to you. The rest of the men should go home.”

8 The men who were chosen took supplies and their trumpets. Gideon sent all the men of Israel back to their homes; he kept only three hundred men. Now the Midianites were camped down below in the valley.

### **Gideon is Afraid**

9 That night the LORD said to Gideon, “Get up! Attack the camp, for I am handing it over to you.

10 But if you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with Purah your servant

11 and listen to what they are saying. Then you will be brave and attack the camp.” So he went down with Purah his servant to where the sentries were guarding the camp.

12 Now the Midianites, Amalekites, and the people from the east covered the valley like a swarm of locusts. Their camels could not be counted; they were as innumerable as the sand on the seashore.

13 When Gideon arrived, he heard a man telling another man about a dream he had. The man said, “Look! I had a dream. I saw a stale cake of barley bread rolling into the Midianite camp. It hit a tent so hard it knocked it over and turned it upside down. The tent just collapsed.”

14 The other man said, “Without a doubt this symbolizes the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God is handing Midian and all the army over to him.”

15 When Gideon heard the report of the dream and its interpretation, he praised God. Then he went back to the Israelite camp and said, "Get up, for the LORD is handing the Midianite army over to you!"

#### **God Gives Gideon and the 300 Men Victory**

16 He divided the three hundred men into three units. He gave them all trumpets and empty jars with torches inside them.

17 He said to them, "Watch me and do as I do. Watch closely! I am going to the edge of the camp. Do as I do!

18 When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, you also blow your trumpets all around the camp. Then say, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'"

19 Gideon took a hundred men to the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guards. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars they were carrying.

20 All three units blew their trumpets and broke their jars. They held the torches in their left hand and the trumpets in their right. Then they yelled, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

21 They stood in order all around the camp. The whole army ran away; they shouted as they scrambled away.

22a When the three hundred men blew their trumpets, the LORD caused the Midianites to attack one another with their swords throughout the camp.

#### **The Midianites Flee South Along the Jordan Toward Ephraimite Territory**

22b The army fled to Beth Shittah on the way to Zererah. They went to the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath.

23 Israelites from Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh answered the call and chased the Midianites.

#### **Ephraim Captures Oreb and Zeeb**

24 Now Gideon sent messengers throughout the Ephraimite hill country who announced, "Go down and head off the Midianites. Take control of the fords of the streams all the way to Beth Barah and the Jordan River." When all the Ephraimites had assembled, they took control of the fords all the way to Beth Barah and the Jordan River.

25 They captured the two Midianite generals, Oreb and Zeeb. They executed Oreb on the rock of Oreb and Zeeb in the winepress of Zeeb. They chased the Midianites and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was now on the other side of the Jordan River.

#### **Ephraim Resents Being Excluded from Gideon's Battle Plans**

8:1 The Ephraimites said to him, "Why have you done such a thing to us? You did not summon us when you went to fight the Midianites!" They argued vehemently with him.

2 He said to them, "Now what have I accomplished compared to you? Even Ephraim's leftover grapes are better quality than Abiezer's harvest!

3 It was to you that God handed over the Midianite generals, Oreb and Zeeb! What did I accomplish to rival that?" When he said this, they calmed down.

#### **Gideon Continues His Pursuit of the Kings of Midian**

4 Now Gideon and his three hundred men had crossed over the Jordan River, and even though they were exhausted, they were still chasing the Midianites.

#### **Succoth and Penuel Refuse Aid (Cities in the Transjordan Tribe of Gad, cf. Josh 13:27)**

5 He said to the men of Succoth, "Give some loaves of bread to the men who are following me, because they are exhausted. I am chasing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."

6 The officials of Succoth said, "You have not yet overpowered Zebah and Zalmunna. So why should we give bread to your army?"

7 Gideon said, "Since you will not help, after the LORD hands Zebah and Zalmunna over to me, I will thresh your skin with desert thorns and briers."

8 He went up from there to Penuel and made the same request. The men of Penuel responded the same way the men of Succoth had.

9 He also threatened the men of Penuel, warning, "When I return victoriously, I will tear down this tower."

#### **Gideon Captures the Kings of Midian**

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their armies. There were about fifteen thousand survivors from the army of the eastern peoples; a hundred and twenty thousand sword-wielding soldiers had been killed.

11 Gideon went up the road of the nomads east of Nobah and Jogbehah and ambushed the surprised army.

12 When Zebah and Zalmunna ran away, Gideon chased them and captured the two Midianite kings, Zebah and Zalmunna. He had surprised their entire army.

**Gideon's Vengeance on Succoth and Penuel**

13 Gideon son of Joash returned from the battle by the pass of Heres.

14 He captured a young man from Succoth and interrogated him. The young man wrote down for him the names of Succoth's officials and city leaders—seventy-seven men in all.

15 He approached the men of Succoth and said, "Look what I have! Zebah and Zalmunna! You insulted me, saying, 'You have not yet overpowered Zebah and Zalmunna. So why should we give bread to your exhausted men?'"

16 He seized the leaders of the city, along with some desert thorns and briers; he then "threshed" the men of Succoth with them.

17 He also tore down the tower of Penuel and executed the city's men.

**Gideon Executes Zebah and Zalmunna**

18 He said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "Describe for me the men you killed at Tabor." They said, "They were like you. Each one looked like a king's son."

19 He said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. I swear, as surely as the LORD is alive, if you had let them live, I would not kill you."

20 He ordered Jether his firstborn son, "Come on! Kill them!" But Jether was too afraid to draw his sword, because he was still young.

21 Zebah and Zalmunna said to Gideon, "Come on, you strike us, for a man is judged by his strength." So Gideon killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and he took the crescent-shaped ornaments which were on the necks of their camels.

**Gideon Refuses to Rule Israel**

22 The men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson. For you have delivered us from Midian's power."

23 Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD will rule over you."

24 Gideon continued, "I would like to make one request. Each of you give me an earring from the plunder you have taken." (The Midianites had gold earrings because they were Ishmaelites.)

25 They said, "We are happy to give you earrings." So they spread out a garment, and each one threw an earring from his plunder onto it.

26 The total weight of the gold earrings he requested came to seventeen hundred gold shekels. This was in addition to the crescent-shaped ornaments, jewelry, purple clothing worn by the Midianite kings, and the necklaces on the camels.

27 Gideon used all this to make an ephod, which he put in his hometown of Ophrah. All the Israelites prostituted themselves to it by worshiping it there. It became a snare to Gideon and his family.

28 The Israelites humiliated Midian; the Midianites' fighting spirit was broken. The land had rest for forty years during Gideon's time.

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## Abimelech's Illegitimate Rule (c. 1172 – c. 1169 BC)

Judges 8:29–9:57

### Gideon's Legacy—His Sons

8:29 Then Jerub-Baal son of Joash went home and settled down.

30 Gideon fathered seventy sons through his many wives.

31 His concubine, who lived in Shechem, also gave him a son, whom he named Abimelech.

32 Gideon son of Joash died at a very old age and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash located in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

### The Cycle of Idolatry Continues

33 After Gideon died, the Israelites again prostituted themselves to the Baals. They made Baal-Berith their god.

34 The Israelites did not remain true to the LORD their God, who had delivered them from all the enemies who lived around them.

35 They did not treat the family of Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) fairly in return for all the good he had done for Israel.

### Abimelech Kills His Step-Brothers and Seizes Power

9:1 Now Abimelech son of Jerub-Baal went to Shechem to see his mother's relatives. He said to them and to his mother's entire extended family,

2 "Tell all the leaders of Shechem this: 'Why would you want to have seventy men, all Jerub-Baal's sons, ruling over you, when you can have just one ruler? Recall that I am your own flesh and blood.'"

3 His mother's relatives spoke on his behalf to all the leaders of Shechem and reported his proposal. The leaders were drawn to Abimelech; they said, "He is our close relative."

4 They paid him seventy silver shekels out of the temple of Baal-Berith. Abimelech then used the silver to hire some lawless, dangerous men as his followers.

5 He went to his father's home in Ophrah and murdered his half-brothers, the seventy legitimate sons of Jerub-Baal, on one stone. Only Jotham, Jerub-Baal's youngest son, escaped, because he hid.

6 All the leaders of Shechem and Beth Millo assembled and then went and made Abimelech king by the oak near the pillar in Shechem.

### Jotham's Speech Against Abimelech's Crime

7 When Jotham heard the news, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim. He spoke loudly to the people below, "Listen to me, leaders of Shechem, so that God may listen to you!

8 "The trees were determined to go out and choose a king for themselves. They said to the olive tree, 'Be our king!'

9 But the olive tree said to them, 'I am not going to stop producing my oil, which is used to honor gods and men, just to sway above the other trees!'

10 "So the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and be our king!'

11 But the fig tree said to them, 'I am not going to stop producing my sweet figs, my excellent fruit, just to sway above the other trees!'

12 "So the trees said to the grapevine, 'You come and be our king!'

13 But the grapevine said to them, 'I am not going to stop producing my wine, which makes gods and men so happy, just to sway above the other trees!'

14 "So all the trees said to the thornbush, 'You come and be our king!'

15 The thornbush said to the trees, 'If you really want to choose me as your king, then come along, find safety under my branches! Otherwise may fire blaze from the thornbush and consume the cedars of Lebanon!'

16 "Now, if you have shown loyalty and integrity when you made Abimelech king, if you have done right to Jerub-Baal and his family, if you have properly repaid him—

17 my father fought for you; he risked his life and delivered you from Midian's power.

18 But you have attacked my father's family today. You murdered his seventy legitimate sons on one stone and made Abimelech, the son of his female slave, king over the leaders of Shechem, just because he is your close relative.

19 So if you have shown loyalty and integrity to Jerub-Baal and his family today, then may Abimelech bring you happiness and may you bring him happiness!

20 But if not, may fire blaze from Abimelech and consume the leaders of Shechem and Beth Millo! May fire also blaze from the leaders of Shechem and Beth Millo and consume Abimelech!"

21 Then Jotham ran away to Beer and lived there to escape from Abimelech his half-brother.

22 Abimelech commanded Israel for three years.

### God's Retribution on Abimelech

23 God sent a spirit to stir up hostility between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem. He made the leaders of Shechem disloyal to Abimelech.

24 He did this so the violent deaths of Jerub-Baal's seventy sons might be avenged and Abimelech, their half-brother who murdered

them, might have to pay for their spilled blood, along with the leaders of Shechem who helped him murder them.

25 The leaders of Shechem rebelled against Abimelech by putting bandits in the hills, who robbed everyone who traveled by on the road. But Abimelech found out about it.

### **Gaal's Conspiracy**

26 Gaal son of Ebed came through Shechem with his brothers. The leaders of Shechem transferred their loyalty to him.

27 They went out to the field, harvested their grapes, squeezed out the juice, and celebrated. They came to the temple of their god and ate, drank, and cursed Abimelech.

28 Gaal son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerub-Baal, and is not Zebul the deputy he appointed? Serve the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem! But why should we serve Abimelech?"

29 If only these men were under my command, I would get rid of Abimelech!" He challenged Abimelech, "Mustering your army and come out for battle!"

### **Abimelech Defeats the Leaders of Shechem**

30 When Zebul, the city commissioner, heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed, he was furious.

31 He sent messengers to Abimelech, who was in Arumah, reporting, "Beware! Gaal son of Ebed and his brothers are coming to Shechem and inciting the city to rebel against you.

32 Now, come up at night with your men and set an ambush in the field outside the city.

33 In the morning at sunrise quickly attack the city. When he and his men come out to fight you, do what you can to him."

34 So Abimelech and all his men came up at night and set an ambush outside Shechem—they divided into four units.

35 When Gaal son of Ebed came out and stood at the entrance to the city's gate, Abimelech and his men got up from their hiding places.

36 Gaal saw the men and said to Zebul, "Look, men are coming down from the tops of the hills." But Zebul said to him, "You are seeing the shadows on the hills—it just looks like men."

37 Gaal again said, "Look, men are coming down from the very center of the land. A unit is coming by way of the Oak Tree of the Diviners."

38 Zebul said to him, "Where now are your bragging words, 'Who is Abimelech that we should serve him?' Are these not the men you insulted? Go out now and fight them!"

39 So Gaal led the leaders of Shechem out and fought Abimelech.

40 Abimelech chased him, and Gaal ran from him. Many Shechemites fell wounded at the entrance of the gate.

41 Abimelech went back to Arumah; Zebul drove Gaal and his brothers out of Shechem.

42 The next day the Shechemites came out to the field. When Abimelech heard about it,

43 he took his men and divided them into three units and set an ambush in the field. When he saw the people coming out of the city, he attacked and struck them down.

44 Abimelech and his units attacked and blocked the entrance to the city's gate. Two units then attacked all the people in the field and struck them down.

45 Abimelech fought against the city all that day. He captured the city and killed all the people in it. Then he leveled the city and spread salt over it.

46 When all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem heard the news, they went to the stronghold of the temple of El-Berith.

47 Abimelech heard that all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem were in one place.

48 He and all his men went up on Mount Zalmon. He took an ax in his hand and cut off a tree branch. He put it on his shoulder and said to his men, "Quickly, do what you have just seen me do!"

49 So each of his men also cut off a branch and followed Abimelech. They put the branches against the stronghold and set fire to it. All the people of the Tower of Shechem died—about a thousand men and women.

### **Abimelech is Defeated**

50 Abimelech moved on to Thebez; he besieged and captured it.

51 There was a fortified tower in the center of the city, so all the men and women, as well as the city's leaders, ran into it and locked the entrance. Then they went up to the roof of the tower.

52 Abimelech came and attacked the tower. When he approached the entrance of the tower to set it on fire,

53 a woman threw an upper millstone down on his head and shattered his skull.

54 He quickly called to the young man who carried his weapons, "Draw your sword and kill me, so they will not say, 'A woman killed him.'" So the young man stabbed him and he died.

55 When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they went home.

56 God repaid Abimelech for the evil he did to his father by murdering his seventy half-brothers.

57 God also repaid the men of Shechem for their evil deeds. The curse spoken by Jotham son of Jerub-Baal fell on them.

**Judgeship of Tola (c. 1169 – c. 1146 BC)**

Judges 10:1–2

1 After Abimelech's death, Tola son of Puah, grandson of Dodo, from the tribe of Issachar, rose up to deliver Israel. He lived in Shamir in the Ephraimite hill country.

2 He led Israel for twenty-three years, then died and was buried in Shamir.

**Judgeship of Jair (c. 1146 – c. 1124 BC)**

Judges 10:3–5

3 Jair the Gileadite rose up after him; he led Israel for twenty-two years.

4 He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys and possessed thirty cities. To this day these towns are called Havvoth Jair—they are in the land of Gilead.

5 Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

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## The Story of Ruth (c. 1300 – c. 1100 BC)

### Ruth 1–4

#### Naomi is Widowed in Moab

1:1 During the time of the judges there was a famine in the land of Judah. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah went to live as a resident foreigner in the region of Moab, along with his wife and two sons.  
 2 (Now the man's name was Elimelech, his wife was Naomi, and his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were of the clan of Ephrath from Bethlehem in Judah.) They entered the region of Moab and settled there.  
 3 Sometime later Naomi's husband Elimelech died, so she and her two sons were left alone.  
 4 So her sons married Moabite women. (One was named Orpah and the other Ruth.) And they continued to live there about ten years.  
 5 Then Naomi's two sons, Mahlon and Kilion, also died. So the woman was left all alone—bereaved of her two children as well as her husband!

#### Ruth's Loyalty to Naomi

6 So she decided to return home from the region of Moab, accompanied by her daughters-in-law, because while she was living in Moab she had heard that the LORD had shown concern for his people, reversing the famine by providing abundant crops.  
 7 Now as she and her two daughters-in-law began to leave the place where she had been living to return to the land of Judah,  
 8 Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Listen to me! Each of you should return to your mother's home! May the LORD show you the same kind of devotion that you have shown to your deceased husbands and to me!  
 9 May the LORD enable each of you to find security in the home of a new husband!" Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept loudly.  
 10 But they said to her, "No! We will return with you to your people."  
 11 But Naomi replied, "Go back home, my daughters! There is no reason for you to return to Judah with me! I am no longer capable of giving birth to sons who might become your husbands!  
 12 Go back home, my daughters! For I am too old to get married again. Even if I thought that there was hope that I could get married tonight and conceive sons,  
 13 surely you would not want to wait until they were old enough to marry! Surely you would not remain unmarried all that time! No, my daughters, you must not return with me. For my intense suffering is too much for you to bear. For the LORD is afflicting me!"  
 14 Again they wept loudly. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung tightly to her.  
 15 So Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her god. Follow your sister-in-law back home!"  
 16 But Ruth replied, "Stop urging me to abandon you! For wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people will become my people, and your God will become my God.  
 17 Wherever you die, I will die—and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I do not keep my promise! Only death will be able to separate me from you!"  
 18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped trying to dissuade her.

#### Naomi and Ruth Arrive in Bethlehem

19 So the two of them journeyed together until they arrived in Bethlehem. When they entered Bethlehem, the whole village was excited about their arrival. The women of the village said, "Can this be Naomi?"  
 20 But she replied to them, "Don't call me 'Naomi'! Call me 'Mara' because the Sovereign One has treated me very harshly.  
 21 I left here full, but the LORD has caused me to return empty-handed. Why do you call me 'Naomi,' seeing that the LORD has opposed me, and the Sovereign One has caused me to suffer?"  
 22 So Naomi returned, accompanied by her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth, who came back with her from the region of Moab. (Now they arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.)

#### Ruth and Boaz Meet

2:1 Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side of the family named Boaz. He was a wealthy, prominent man from the clan of Elimelech.  
 2 One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields so I can gather grain behind whoever permits me to do so."  
 Naomi replied, "You may go, my daughter."  
 3 So Ruth went and gathered grain in the fields behind the harvesters. Now she just happened to end up in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech.  
 4 Now at that very moment, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "May the LORD be with you!" They replied, "May the LORD bless you!"  
 5 Boaz asked his servant in charge of the harvesters, "To whom does this young woman belong?"  
 6 The servant in charge of the harvesters replied, "She's the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the region of Moab.  
 7 She asked, 'May I follow the harvesters and gather grain among the bundles?' Since she arrived she has been working hard from

this morning until now—except for sitting in the resting hut a short time.”

8 So Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen carefully, my dear! Do not leave to gather grain in another field. You need not go beyond the limits of this field. You may go along beside my female workers.

9 Take note of the field where the men are harvesting and follow behind with the female workers. I will tell the men to leave you alone. When you are thirsty, you may go to the water jars and drink some of the water the servants draw.”

10 Ruth knelt before him with her forehead to the ground and said to him, “Why are you so kind and so attentive to me, even though I am a foreigner?”

11 Boaz replied to her, “I have been given a full report of all that you have done for your mother-in-law following the death of your husband—how you left your father and your mother, as well as your homeland, and came to live among people you did not know previously.

12 May the LORD reward your efforts! May your acts of kindness be repaid fully by the LORD God of Israel, from whom you have sought protection!”

13 She said, “You really are being kind to me, sir, for you have reassured and encouraged me, your servant, even though I am not one of your servants!”

14 Later during the mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here and have some food! Dip your bread in the vinegar!” So she sat down beside the harvesters. Then he handed her some roasted grain. She ate until she was full and saved the rest.

15 When she got up to gather grain, Boaz told his male servants, “Let her gather grain even among the bundles! Don’t chase her off!

16 Make sure you pull out ears of grain for her and drop them so she can gather them up. Don’t tell her not to!”

17 So she gathered grain in the field until evening. When she threshed what she had gathered, it came to about thirty pounds of barley!

### **Ruth Tells Naomi About Boaz**

18 She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much grain she had gathered. Then Ruth gave her the roasted grain she had saved from mealtime.

19 Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you gather grain today? Where did you work? May the one who took notice of you be rewarded!” So Ruth told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked. She said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.”

20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be rewarded by the LORD because he has shown loyalty to the living on behalf of the dead!” Then Naomi said to her, “This man is a close relative of ours; he is our guardian.”

21 Ruth the Moabite replied, “He even told me, ‘You may go along beside my servants until they have finished gathering all my harvest!’”

22 Naomi then said to her daughter-in-law Ruth, “It is good, my daughter, that you should go out to work with his female servants. That way you will not be harmed, which could happen in another field.”

23 So Ruth worked beside Boaz’s female servants, gathering grain until the end of the barley harvest as well as the wheat harvest. After that she stayed home with her mother-in-law.

### **Naomi Tells Ruth to Appeal to Boaz**

3:1 At that time, Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “My daughter, I must find a home for you so you will be secure.

2 Now Boaz, with whose female servants you worked, is our close relative. Look, tonight he is winnowing barley at the threshing floor.

3 So bathe yourself, rub on some perfumed oil, and get dressed up. Then go down to the threshing floor. But don’t let the man know you’re there until he finishes his meal.

4 When he gets ready to go to sleep, take careful notice of the place where he lies down. Then go, uncover his legs, and lie down beside him. He will tell you what you should do.”

5 Ruth replied to Naomi, “I will do everything you have told me to do.”

### **Ruth Asks Boaz to Be Her Kinsman-Redeemer**

6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law had instructed her to do.

7 When Boaz had finished his meal and was feeling satisfied, he lay down to sleep at the far end of the grain heap. Then Ruth crept up quietly, uncovered his legs, and lay down beside him.

8 In the middle of the night he was startled and turned over. Now he saw a woman lying beside him!

9 He said, “Who are you?” She replied, “I am Ruth, your servant. Marry your servant, for you are a guardian of the family interests.”

10 He said, “May you be rewarded by the LORD, my dear! This act of devotion is greater than what you did before. For you have not sought to marry one of the young men, whether rich or poor.

11 Now, my dear, don’t worry! I intend to do for you everything you propose, for everyone in the village knows that you are a worthy woman.

12 Now yes, it is true that I am a guardian, but there is another guardian who is a closer relative than I am.

13 Remain here tonight. Then in the morning, if he agrees to marry you, fine, let him do so. But if he does not want to do so, I

promise, as surely as the LORD lives, to marry you. Sleep here until morning.”

14 So she slept beside him until morning. She woke up while it was still dark. Boaz thought, “No one must know that a woman visited the threshing floor.”

15 Then he said, “Hold out the shawl you are wearing and grip it tightly.” As she held it tightly, he measured out about sixty pounds of barley into the shawl and put it on her shoulders. Then he went into town,

16 and she returned to her mother-in-law. When Ruth returned to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “How did things turn out for you, my daughter?” Ruth told her about all the man had done for her.

17 She said, “He gave me these sixty pounds of barley, for he said to me, ‘Do not go to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

18 Then Naomi said, “Stay put, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest until he has taken care of the matter today.”

### **Boaz Redeems Ruth**

4:1 Now Boaz went up to the village gate and sat there. Then along came the guardian whom Boaz had mentioned to Ruth! Boaz said, “Come here and sit down, ‘John Doe!’” So he came and sat down.

2 Boaz chose ten of the village leaders and said, “Sit down here!” So they sat down.

3 Then Boaz said to the guardian, “Naomi, who has returned from the region of Moab, is selling the portion of land that belongs to our relative Elimelech.

4 So I am legally informing you: Acquire it before those sitting here and before the leaders of my people! If you want to exercise your right to redeem it, then do so. But if not, then tell me so I will know. For you possess the first option to redeem it; I am next in line after you.” He replied, “I will redeem it.”

5 Then Boaz said, “When you acquire the field from Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the wife of our deceased relative, in order to preserve his family name by raising up a descendant who will inherit his property.”

6 The guardian said, “Then I am unable to redeem it, for I would ruin my own inheritance in that case. You may exercise my redemption option, for I am unable to redeem it.”

7 (Now this used to be the customary way to finalize a transaction involving redemption in Israel: A man would remove his sandal and give it to the other party. This was a legally binding act in Israel.)

8 So the guardian said to Boaz, “You may acquire it,” and he removed his sandal.

9 Then Boaz said to the leaders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I have acquired from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon.

10 I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife to raise up a descendant who will inherit his property so the name of the deceased might not disappear from among his relatives and from his village. You are witnesses today.”

11 All the people who were at the gate and the elders replied, “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is entering your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the house of Israel! May you prosper in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.

12 May your family become like the family of Perez—whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the descendants the LORD gives you by this young woman.”

### **Ruth Gives Birth to Obed**

13 So Boaz married Ruth and had sexual relations with her. The LORD enabled her to conceive and she gave birth to a son.

14 The village women said to Naomi, “May the LORD be praised because he has not left you without a guardian today! May he become famous in Israel!

15 He will encourage you and provide for you when you are old, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given him birth. She is better to you than seven sons!”

16 Naomi took the child and placed him on her lap; she became his caregiver.

17 The neighbor women named him, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. Now he became the father of Jesse—David’s father!

### **David’s Genealogy through Judah’s Son Perez**

18 These are the descendants of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron,

19 Hezron was the father of Ram, Ram was the father of Amminadab,

20 Amminadab was the father of Nachshon, Nachshon was the father of Salmah,

21 Salmon was the father of Boaz, Boaz was the father of Obed,

22 Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David.

**Chronological Notes**

- 1) The story of Ruth is said to have taken place “in the days when the judges ruled” (Ruth 1:1a). Any attempt to pinpoint a specific time within this period is purely speculative. The Davidic genealogy in Ruth 4:18–22 is compressed, making it difficult to use for chronological purposes.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, I have chosen to date Ruth rather broadly to c. 1300 – c. 1100 BC and place it after Gideon, Tola and Jair, but before Jephthah.

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<sup>1</sup> See Paul Ray, “The Story of Ruth: A Chronological and Genealogical Perspective,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 20/1 (2009): 3–18 and Zvi Ron, “The Genealogical List in the Book of Ruth: A Symbolic Approach,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 38.2 (2010): 85–92.

## Ammonite Oppression (c. 1124 – c. 1106 BC)

Judges 10:6–16

### The Cycle of Idolatry Continues

6 The Israelites again did evil in the LORD's sight. They worshiped the Baals and the Ashtars, as well as the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, the Ammonites, and the Philistines. They abandoned the LORD and did not worship him.

7 The LORD was furious with Israel and turned them over to the Philistines and Ammonites.

8 They ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites that eighteenth year—that is, all the Israelites living east of the Jordan in Amorite country in Gilead.

9 The Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight with Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim. Israel suffered greatly.

### Israel Cries Out to God for Help

10 The Israelites cried out for help to the LORD: "We have sinned against you. We abandoned our God and worshiped the Baals."

11 The LORD said to the Israelites, "Did I not deliver you from Egypt, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines,

12 the Sidonians, Amalek, and Midian when they oppressed you? You cried out for help to me, and I delivered you from their power.

13 But since you abandoned me and worshiped other gods, I will not deliver you again.

14 Go and cry for help to the gods you have chosen! Let them deliver you from trouble!"

15 But the Israelites said to the LORD, "We have sinned. You do to us as you see fit, but deliver us today!"

16 They threw away the foreign gods they owned and worshiped the LORD. Finally the LORD grew tired of seeing Israel suffer so much.

## Judgeship of Jephthah (c. 1106 – c. 1100 BC)

Judges 10:17–12:7

### The Winds of War

10:17 The Ammonites assembled and camped in Gilead; the Israelites gathered together and camped in Mizpah.

18 The leaders of Gilead said to one another, "Who is willing to lead the charge against the Ammonites? He will become the leader of all who live in Gilead!"

### The People Turn to Jephthah in Desperation

11:1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a brave warrior. His mother was a prostitute, but Gilead was his father.

2 Gilead's wife also gave him sons. When his wife's sons grew up, they made Jephthah leave and said to him, "You are not going to inherit any of our father's wealth, because you are another woman's son."

3 So Jephthah left his half-brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Lawless men joined Jephthah's gang and traveled with him.

4 It was some time after this when the Ammonites fought with Israel.

5 When the Ammonites attacked, the leaders of Gilead asked Jephthah to come back from the land of Tob.

6 They said, "Come, be our commander, so we can fight with the Ammonites."

7 Jephthah said to the leaders of Gilead, "But you hated me and made me leave my father's house. Why do you come to me now, when you are in trouble?"

8 The leaders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That may be true, but now we pledge to you our loyalty. Come with us and fight with the Ammonites. Then you will become the leader of all who live in Gilead."

9 Jephthah said to the leaders of Gilead, "All right! If you take me back to fight with the Ammonites and the LORD gives them to me, I will be your leader."

10 The leaders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will judge any grievance you have against us, if we do not do as you say."

11 So Jephthah went with the leaders of Gilead. The people made him their leader and commander. Jephthah repeated the terms of the agreement before the LORD in Mizpah.

### Jephthah's History Lesson

12 Jephthah sent messengers to the Ammonite king, saying, "Why have you come against me to attack my land?"

13 The Ammonite king said to Jephthah's messengers, "Because Israel stole my land when they came up from Egypt—from the Arnon River in the south to the Jabbok River in the north, and as far west as the Jordan. Now return it peaceably!"

14 Jephthah sent messengers back to the Ammonite king

15 and said to him, "This is what Jephthah says, 'Israel did not steal the land of Moab and the land of the Ammonites.

16 When they left Egypt, Israel traveled through the desert as far as the Red Sea and then came to Kadesh.

17 Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, "Please allow us to pass through your land." But the king of Edom rejected the request. Israel sent the same request to the king of Moab, but he was unwilling to cooperate. So Israel stayed at Kadesh.

18 Then Israel went through the desert and bypassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab. They traveled east of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of the Arnon River; they did not go through Moabite territory (the Arnon was Moab's border).

19 Israel sent messengers to King Sihon, the Amorite king who ruled in Heshbon, and said to him, "Please allow us to pass through

your land to our land.”

20 But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. He assembled his whole army, camped in Jahaz, and fought with Israel.

21 The LORD God of Israel handed Sihon and his whole army over to Israel and they defeated them. Israel took all the land of the Amorites who lived in that land.

22 They took all the Amorite territory from the Arnon River on the south to the Jabbok River on the north, from the desert in the east to the Jordan in the west.

23 Since the LORD God of Israel has driven out the Amorites before his people Israel, do you think you can just take it from them?

24 You have the right to take what Chemosh your god gives you, but we will take the land of all whom the LORD our God has driven out before us.

25 Are you really better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he dare to quarrel with Israel? Did he dare to fight with them?

26 Israel has been living in Heshbon and its nearby towns, in Aroer and its nearby towns, and in all the cities along the Arnon for three hundred years! Why did you not reclaim them during that time? [*Israel in Transjordan Territory from 1406 to 1106*]

27 I have not done you wrong, but you are doing wrong by attacking me. May the LORD, the Judge, judge this day between the Israelites and the Ammonites!”

### **Jephthah’s Rash Vow**

28 But the Ammonite king disregarded the message sent by Jephthah.

29 The LORD’s spirit empowered Jephthah. He passed through Gilead and Manasseh and went to Mizpah in Gilead. From there he approached the Ammonites.

30 Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, saying, “If you really do hand the Ammonites over to me,

31 then whoever is the first to come through the doors of my house to meet me when I return safely from fighting the Ammonites will belong to the LORD and I will offer him up as a burnt sacrifice.”

32 Jephthah approached the Ammonites to fight with them, and the LORD handed them over to him.

33 He defeated them from Aroer all the way to Minnith—twenty cities in all, even as far as Abel Keramim! He wiped them out! The Israelites humiliated the Ammonites.

34 When Jephthah came home to Mizpah, there was his daughter hurrying out to meet him, dancing to the rhythm of tambourines. She was his only child; except for her he had no son or daughter.

35 When he saw her, he ripped his clothes and said, “Oh no! My daughter! You have completely ruined me! You have brought me disaster! I made an oath to the LORD, and I cannot break it.”

36 She said to him, “My father, since you made an oath to the LORD, do to me as you promised. After all, the LORD vindicated you before your enemies, the Ammonites.”

37 She then said to her father, “Please grant me this one wish. For two months allow me to walk through the hills with my friends and mourn my virginity.”

38 He said, “You may go.” He permitted her to leave for two months. She went with her friends and mourned her virginity as she walked through the hills.

39 After two months she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed. She died a virgin. Her tragic death gave rise to a custom in Israel.

40 Every year Israelite women commemorate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite for four days.

### **Ephraim Confronts Jephthah (As They Had Gideon)**

12:1 The Ephraimites assembled and crossed over to Zaphon. They said to Jephthah, “Why did you go and fight with the Ammonites without asking us to go with you? We will burn your house down right over you!”

2 Jephthah said to them, “My people and I were entangled in controversy with the Ammonites. I asked for your help, but you did not deliver me from their power.

3 When I saw that you were not going to help, I risked my life and advanced against the Ammonites, and the LORD handed them over to me. Why have you come up to fight with me today?”

4 Jephthah assembled all the men of Gilead and they fought with Ephraim. The men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because the Ephraimites insulted them, saying, “You Gileadites are refugees in Ephraim, living within Ephraim’s and Manasseh’s territory.”

5 The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan River opposite Ephraim. Whenever an Ephraimite fugitive said, “Let me cross over,” the men of Gilead asked him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” If he said, “No,”

6 then they said to him, “Say ‘Shibboleth!’” If he said, “Sibboleth” (and could not pronounce the word correctly), they grabbed him and executed him right there at the fords of the Jordan. On that day forty-two thousand Ephraimites fell dead.

7 Jephthah led Israel for six years; then he died and was buried in his city in Gilead.

**Philistine Oppression / The Birth of Samson (c. 1124 – c. 1104 BC)****Judges 13****Samson's Birth Foretold**

- 1 The Israelites again did evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD handed them over to the Philistines for forty years.
- 2 There was a man named Manoah from Zorah, from the Danite tribe. His wife was infertile and childless.
- 3 The LORD's angelic messenger appeared to the woman and said to her, "You are infertile and childless, but you will conceive and have a son.
- 4 Now be careful! Do not drink wine or beer, and do not eat any food that will make you ritually unclean.
- 5 Look, you will conceive and have a son. You must never cut his hair, for the child will be dedicated to God from birth. He will begin to deliver Israel from the power of the Philistines."
- 6 The woman went and said to her husband, "A man sent from God came to me! He looked like God's angelic messenger—he was very awesome. I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name.
- 7 He said to me, 'Look, you will conceive and have a son. So now, do not drink wine or beer and do not eat any food that will make you ritually unclean. For the child will be dedicated to God from birth till the day he dies.'"
- 8 Manoah prayed to the LORD, "Please, Lord, allow the man sent from God to visit us again, so he can teach us how we should raise the child who will be born."
- 9 God answered Manoah's prayer. God's angelic messenger visited the woman again while she was sitting in the field. But her husband Manoah was not with her.
- 10 The woman ran at once and told her husband, "Come quickly, the man who visited me the other day has appeared to me!"
- 11 So Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he met the man, he said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?" He said, "Yes."
- 12 Manoah said, "Now, when your announcement comes true, how should the child be raised and what should he do?"
- 13 The LORD's messenger told Manoah, "Your wife should pay attention to everything I told her.
- 14 She should not drink anything that the grapevine produces. She must not drink wine or beer, and she must not eat any food that will make her ritually unclean. She should obey everything I commanded her to do."
- 15 Manoah said to the LORD's messenger, "Please stay here awhile, so we can prepare a young goat for you to eat."
- 16 The LORD's messenger said to Manoah, "If I stay, I will not eat your food. But if you want to make a burnt sacrifice to the LORD, you should offer it." (He said this because Manoah did not know that he was the LORD's messenger.)
- 17 Manoah said to the LORD's messenger, "Tell us your name, so we can honor you when your announcement comes true."
- 18 The LORD's messenger said to him, "You should not ask me my name, because you cannot comprehend it."
- 19 Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered them on a rock to the LORD. The LORD's messenger did an amazing thing as Manoah and his wife watched.
- 20 As the flame went up from the altar toward the sky, the LORD's messenger went up in it while Manoah and his wife watched. They fell facedown to the ground.
- 21 The LORD's messenger did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. After all this happened Manoah realized that the visitor had been the LORD's messenger.
- 22 Manoah said to his wife, "We will certainly die, because we have seen a supernatural being!"
- 23 But his wife said to him, "If the LORD wanted to kill us, he would not have accepted the burnt offering and the grain offering from us. He would not have shown us all these things, or have spoken to us like this just now."

**The Birth of Samson**

24a Manoah's wife gave birth to a son and named him Samson.

**Samson Grows Up**

- 24b The child grew and the LORD empowered him.
- 25 The LORD's spirit began to control him in Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

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## The Birth of Samuel (c. 1120 – c. 1117 BC)

1 Samuel 1:1–2:11

### Hannah and Peninnah—Rival Wives

1:1 There was a man from Ramathaim Zophim, from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.

2 He had two wives; the name of the first was Hannah and the name of the second was Peninnah. Now Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless.

3 Year after year this man would go up from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh. It was there that the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, served as the LORD's priests.

4 Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he used to give meat portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters.

5 But he would give a double portion to Hannah, because he especially loved her. Now the LORD had not enabled her to have children.

6 Her rival wife used to upset her and make her worry, for the LORD had not enabled her to have children.

7 Peninnah would behave this way year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the LORD's house, Peninnah would upset her so that she would weep and refuse to eat.

8 Finally her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep and not eat? Why are you so sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

### Hannah's Vow

9 On one occasion in Shiloh, after they had finished eating and drinking, Hannah got up. (Now at the time Eli the priest was sitting in his chair by the doorpost of the LORD's temple.)

10 She was very upset as she prayed to the LORD, and she was weeping uncontrollably.

11 She made a vow saying, "O LORD of hosts, if you will look with compassion on the suffering of your female servant, remembering me and not forgetting your servant, and give a male child to your servant, then I will dedicate him to the LORD all the days of his life. His hair will never be cut."

12 As she continued praying to the LORD, Eli was watching her mouth.

13 Now Hannah was speaking from her heart. Although her lips were moving, her voice was inaudible. Eli therefore thought she was drunk.

14 So he said to her, "How often do you intend to get drunk? Put away your wine!"

15 But Hannah replied, "That's not the way it is, my lord! I am under a great deal of stress. I have drunk neither wine nor beer. Rather, I have poured out my soul to the LORD.

16 Don't consider your servant a wicked woman, for until now I have spoken from my deep pain and anguish."

17 Eli replied, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the request that you have asked of him."

18 She said, "May I, your servant, find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and got something to eat. Her face no longer looked sad.

### Samuel's Birth and Dedication

19 They got up early the next morning and after worshiping the LORD, they returned to their home at Ramah. Elkanah had marital relations with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her.

20 After some time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, thinking, "I asked the LORD for him.

21 This man Elkanah went up with all his family to make the yearly sacrifice to the LORD and to keep his vow,

22 but Hannah did not go up with them. Instead she told her husband, "Once the boy is weaned, I will bring him and appear before the LORD, and he will remain there from then on."

23 So her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do what you think best. Stay until you have weaned him. May the LORD fulfill his promise." So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

24 Once she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, an ephah of flour, and a container of wine. She brought him to the LORD's house at Shiloh, even though he was young.

25 Once the bull had been slaughtered, they brought the boy to Eli.

26 She said, "Just as surely as you are alive, my lord, I am the woman who previously stood here with you in order to pray to the LORD.

27 I prayed for this boy, and the LORD has given me the request that I asked of him.

28 Now I dedicate him to the LORD. From this time on he is dedicated to the LORD." Then they worshiped the LORD there.

### Hannah's Prayer of Praise

2:1 Hannah prayed,

"My heart rejoices in the LORD;  
my horn is exalted high because of the LORD.

- I loudly denounce my enemies,  
for I am happy that you delivered me.
- 2 No one is holy like the LORD!  
There is no one other than you!  
There is no rock like our God!
- 3 Don't keep speaking so arrogantly,  
letting proud talk come out of your mouth!  
For the LORD is a God who knows;  
he evaluates what people do.
- 4 The bows of warriors are shattered,  
but those who stumble find their strength reinforced.
- 5 Those who are well-fed hire themselves out to earn food,  
but the hungry no longer lack.  
Even the barren woman gives birth to seven,  
but the one with many children withers away.
- 6 The LORD both kills and gives life;  
he brings down to the grave and raises up.
- 7 The LORD impoverishes and makes wealthy;  
he humbles and he exalts.
- 8 He lifts the weak from the dust;  
he raises the poor from the ash heap  
to seat them with princes  
and to bestow on them an honored position.  
The foundations of the earth belong to the LORD,  
and he has placed the world on them.
- 9 He watches over his holy ones,  
but the wicked are made speechless in the darkness,  
for it is not by one's own strength that one prevails.
- 10 The LORD shatters his adversaries;  
he thunders against them from the heavens.  
The LORD executes judgment to the ends of the earth.  
He will strengthen his king  
and exalt the power of his anointed one."

11 Then Elkanah went back home to Ramah. But the boy was serving the LORD under the supervision of Eli the priest.

### Samuel's Early Years (c. 1120 – c. 1104 BC)

1 Samuel 2:12–4:1a

#### Eli's Wicked Sons

2:12 The sons of Eli were wicked men. They did not recognize the LORD's authority.

13 Now the priests would always treat the people in the following way: Whenever anyone was making a sacrifice, while the meat was boiling, the priest's attendant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand.

14 He would jab it into the basin, kettle, caldron, or pot, and everything that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is what they used to do to all the Israelites when they came there to Shiloh.

15 Even before they burned the fat, the priest's attendant would come and say to the person who was making the sacrifice, "Hand over some meat for the priest to roast! He won't take boiled meat from you, but only raw."

16 If the individual said to him, "First let the fat be burned away, and then take for yourself whatever you wish," he would say, "No! Hand it over right now! If you don't, I will take it forcibly!"

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

#### Samuel Ministers Before Yahweh / Hannah Continues to Give Birth to Children

18 Now Samuel was ministering before the LORD. The boy was dressed in a linen ephod.

19 His mother used to make him a small robe and bring it up to him at regular intervals when she would go up with her husband to make the annual sacrifice.

20 Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife saying, "May the LORD raise up for you descendants from this woman to replace the one that she dedicated to the LORD." Then they would go to their home.

21 So the LORD graciously attended to Hannah, and she was able to conceive and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. The boy Samuel grew up at the LORD's sanctuary.

**Eli Rebukes His Sons but Does Not Remove Them From Service**

22 Now Eli was very old when he heard about everything that his sons used to do to all the people of Israel and how they used to have sex with the women who were stationed at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

23 He said to them, “Why do you behave in this way? For I hear about these evil things from all these people.

24 This ought not to be, my sons! For the report that I hear circulating among the LORD’s people is not good.

25 If a man sins against a man, one may appeal to God on his behalf. But if a man sins against the LORD, who then will intercede for him?” But Eli’s sons would not listen to their father, for the LORD had decided to kill them.

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

**Eli’s House is Judged**

27 A man of God came to Eli and said to him, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Did I not plainly reveal myself to your ancestor’s house when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharaoh?’

28 I chose your ancestor from all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer sacrifice on my altar, to burn incense, and to bear the ephod before me. I gave to your ancestor’s house all the fire offerings made by the Israelites.

29 Why are you scorning my sacrifice and my offering that I commanded for my dwelling place? You have honored your sons more than you have me by having made yourselves fat from the best parts of all the offerings of my people Israel.’

30 Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, says, ‘I really did say that your house and your ancestor’s house would serve me forever.’

But now the LORD says, ‘May it never be! For I will honor those who honor me, but those who despise me will be cursed!

31 In fact, days are coming when I will remove your strength and the strength of your father’s house. There will not be an old man in your house!

32 You will see trouble in my dwelling place! Israel will experience blessings, but there will not be an old man in your house for all time.

33 Any one of you that I do not cut off from my altar, I will cause your eyes to fail and will cause you grief. All of those born to your family will die in the prime of life.

34 This will be a confirming sign for you that will be fulfilled through your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: in a single day they both will die!

35 Then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest. He will do what is in my heart and soul. I will build for him a secure dynasty and he will serve my chosen one for all time.

36 Everyone who remains in your house will come to bow before him for a little money and for a scrap of bread. Each will say, ‘Assign me to a priestly task so I can eat a scrap of bread.’”

**God Calls Samuel**

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

2 Eli’s eyes had begun to fail, so that he was unable to see well. At that time he was lying down in his place,

3 and the lamp of God had not yet been extinguished. Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD as well; the ark of God was also there.

4 The LORD called to Samuel, and he replied, “Here I am!”

5 Then he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli said, “I didn’t call you. Go back and lie down.” So he went back and lay down.

6 The LORD again called, “Samuel!” So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But Eli said, “I didn’t call you, my son. Go back and lie down.”

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD; the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

8 Then the LORD called Samuel a third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me!” Eli then realized that it was the LORD who was calling the boy.

9 So Eli said to Samuel, “Go back and lie down. When he calls you, say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.” So Samuel went back and lay down in his place.

10 Then the LORD came and stood nearby, calling as he had previously done, “Samuel! Samuel!” Samuel replied, “Speak, for your servant is listening!”

11 The LORD said to Samuel, “Look! I am about to do something in Israel; when anyone hears about it, both of his ears will tingle.

12 On that day I will carry out against Eli everything that I spoke about his house—from start to finish!

13 You should tell him that I am about to judge his house forever because of the sin that he knew about. For his sons were cursing God, and he did not rebuke them.

14 Therefore I swore an oath to the house of Eli, ‘The sin of the house of Eli can never be forgiven by sacrifice or by grain offering.’”

15 So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the LORD’s house. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

16 However, Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son!” He replied, “Here I am.”

17 Eli said, “What message did he speak to you? Don’t conceal it from me. God will judge you severely if you conceal from me anything that he said to you!”

18 So Samuel told him everything. He did not hold back anything from him. Eli said, “The LORD will do what he pleases.”

### Samuel the Prophet

19 Samuel continued to grow, and the LORD was with him. None of his prophecies fell to the ground unfulfilled.

20 All Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba realized that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD.

21 Then the LORD again appeared in Shiloh, for it was in Shiloh that the LORD had revealed himself to Samuel through the word of the LORD.

4:1a Samuel revealed the word of the LORD to all Israel.

## Defeat at Aphek / The Death of Eli (c. 1104 BC)

1 Samuel 4:1b–22

### The Philistines Kill Eli’s Sons and Capture the Ark

1b Then the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines. They camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines camped at Aphek.

2 The Philistines arranged their forces to fight Israel. As the battle spread out, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men in the battle line in the field.

3 When the army came back to the camp, the elders of Israel said, “Why did the LORD let us be defeated today by the Philistines? Let’s take with us the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh. When it is with us, it will save us from the hand of our enemies.

4 So the army sent to Shiloh, and they took from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts who sits between the cherubim. Now the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 When the ark of the covenant of the LORD arrived at the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the ground shook.

6 When the Philistines heard the sound of the shout, they said, “What is this loud shout in the camp of the Hebrews?” Then they realized that the ark of the LORD had arrived at the camp.

7 The Philistines were scared because they thought that gods had come to the camp. They said, “Too bad for us! We’ve never seen anything like this!

8 Too bad for us! Who can deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all sorts of plagues in the desert!

9 Be strong and act like men, you Philistines, or else you will wind up serving the Hebrews the way they have served you! Act like men and fight!”

10 So the Philistines fought. Israel was defeated; they all ran home. The slaughter was very great; thirty thousand foot soldiers fell in battle.

11 The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were killed.

### Eli’s Death

12 On that day a Benjaminite ran from the battle lines and came to Shiloh. His clothes were torn and dirt was on his head.

13 When he arrived in Shiloh, Eli was sitting in his chair watching by the side of the road, for he was very worried about the ark of God. As the man entered the city to give his report, the whole city cried out.

14 When Eli heard the outcry, he said, “What is this commotion?” The man quickly came and told Eli.

15 Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes looked straight ahead; he was unable to see.

16 The man said to Eli, “I am the one who came from the battle lines! Just today I fled from the battle lines!” Eli asked, “How did things go, my son?”

17 The messenger replied, “Israel has fled from the Philistines! The army has suffered a great defeat! Your two sons, Hophni and Phineas, are dead! The ark of God has been captured!”

18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward from his chair beside the gate. He broke his neck and died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years.

### The Birth of Ichabod

19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phineas, was pregnant and close to giving birth. When she heard that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she doubled over and gave birth. But her labor pains were too much for her.

20 As she was dying, the women who were there with her said, “Don’t be afraid! You have given birth to a son!” But she did not reply or pay any attention.

21 She named the boy Ichabod, saying, “The glory has departed from Israel,” referring to the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband.

22 She said, “The glory has departed from Israel, because the ark of God has been captured.”

**The Ark and the Philistines (c. 1104 – c. 1103 BC)**

1 Samuel 5:1–7:2

**Ashdod**

5:1 Now the Philistines had captured the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod.

2 The Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the temple of Dagon, where they positioned it beside Dagon.

3 When the residents of Ashdod got up early the next day, Dagon was lying on the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set him back in his place.

4 But when they got up early the following day, Dagon was again lying on the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and his two hands were sheared off and were lying at the threshold. Only Dagon's body was left intact.

5 (For this reason, to this very day, neither Dagon's priests nor anyone else who enters Dagon's temple step on Dagon's threshold in Ashdod.)

6 The LORD attacked the residents of Ashdod severely, bringing devastation on them. He struck the people of both Ashdod and the surrounding area with sores.

7 When the people of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel should not remain with us, for he has attacked both us and our god Dagon!"

**Gath**

8 So they assembled all the leaders of the Philistines and asked, "What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" They replied, "The ark of the God of Israel should be moved to Gath." So they moved the ark of the God of Israel.

9 But after it had been moved the LORD attacked that city as well, causing a great deal of panic. He struck all the people of that city with sores.

**Ekron**

10 So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But when the ark of God arrived at Ekron, the residents of Ekron cried out saying, "They have brought the ark of the God of Israel here to kill our people!"

11 So they assembled all the leaders of the Philistines and said, "Get the ark of the God of Israel out of here! Let it go back to its own place so that it won't kill us and our people!" The terror of death was throughout the entire city; God was attacking them very severely there.

12 The people who did not die were struck with sores; the city's cry for help went all the way up to heaven.

**The Ark is Returned**

6:1 When the ark of the LORD had been in the land of the Philistines for seven months,

2 the Philistines called the priests and the omen readers, saying, "What should we do with the ark of the LORD? Advise us as to how we should send it back to its place."

3 They replied, "If you are going to send the ark of the God of Israel back, don't send it away empty. Be sure to return it with a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will understand why his hand is not removed from you."

4 They inquired, "What is the guilt offering that we should send to him?" They replied, "The Philistine leaders number five. So send five gold sores and five gold mice, for it is the same plague that has afflicted both you and your leaders.

5 You should make images of the sores and images of the mice that are destroying the land. You should honor the God of Israel. Perhaps he will release his grip on you, your gods, and your land.

6 Why harden your hearts like the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When God treated them harshly, didn't the Egyptians send the Israelites on their way?

7 So now go and make a new cart. Get two cows that have calves and that have never had a yoke placed on them. Harness the cows to the cart and take their calves from them back to their stalls.

8 Then take the ark of the LORD and place it on the cart, and put in a chest beside it the gold objects you are sending to him as a guilt offering. You should then send it on its way.

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

10 So the men did as instructed. They took two cows that had calves and harnessed them to a cart; they also removed their calves to their stalls.

11 They put the ark of the LORD on the cart, along with the chest, the gold mice, and the images of the sores.

12 Then the cows went directly on the road to Beth Shemesh. They went along, mooing as they went; they turned neither to the right nor to the left. The leaders of the Philistines were walking along behind them all the way to the border of Beth Shemesh.

**Beth-shemesh**

13 Now the residents of Beth Shemesh were harvesting wheat in the valley. When they looked up and saw the ark, they were pleased at the sight.

14 The cart was coming to the field of Joshua, who was from Beth Shemesh. It paused there near a big stone. Then they cut up the

wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD.

15 The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the chest that was with it, which contained the gold objects. They placed them near the big stone. At that time the people of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices to the LORD.

16 The five leaders of the Philistines watched what was happening and then returned to Ekron on the same day.

17 These are the gold sores that the Philistines brought as a guilt offering to the LORD—one for each of the following cities: Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron.

18 The gold mice corresponded in number to all the Philistine cities of the five leaders, from the fortified cities to hamlet villages, to greater Abel, where they positioned the ark of the LORD until this very day in the field of Joshua who was from Beth Shemesh.

19 But the LORD struck down some of the people of Beth Shemesh because they had looked into the ark of the LORD; he struck down 50,070 of the men. The people grieved because the LORD had struck the people with a hard blow.

20 The residents of Beth Shemesh asked, “Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from here?”

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

#### **Kiriath-jearim**

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

2 It was quite a long time—some twenty years in all—that the ark stayed at Kiriath Jearim. All the people of Israel longed for the LORD.

## **Judgeship of Samson (c. 1104 – c. 1084 BC)**

Judges 14–15

### **Seeking for an Opportunity Against the Philistines**

14:1 Samson went down to Timnah, where a Philistine girl caught his eye.

2 When he got home, he told his father and mother, “A Philistine girl in Timnah has caught my eye. Now get her for my wife.”

3 But his father and mother said to him, “Certainly you can find a wife among your relatives or among all our people! You should not have to go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines.” But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, because she is the right one for me.”

4 Now his father and mother did not realize this was the LORD’s doing, because he was looking for an opportunity to stir up trouble with the Philistines (for at that time the Philistines were ruling Israel).

### **Samson’s Riddle**

5 Samson went down to Timnah. When he approached the vineyards of Timnah, he saw a roaring young lion attacking him.

6 The LORD’s spirit empowered him and he tore the lion in two with his bare hands as easily as one would tear a young goat. But he did not tell his father or mother what he had done.

7 Samson continued on down to Timnah and spoke to the girl. In his opinion, she was just the right one.

8 Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to see the lion’s remains. He saw a swarm of bees in the lion’s carcass, as well as some honey.

9 He scooped it up with his hands and ate it as he walked along. When he returned to his father and mother, he offered them some and they ate it. But he did not tell them he had scooped the honey out of the lion’s carcass.

10 Then Samson’s father accompanied him to Timnah for the marriage. Samson hosted a party there, for this was customary for bridegrooms to do.

11 When the Philistines saw he had no attendants, they gave him thirty groomsmen who kept him company.

12 Samson said to them, “I will give you a riddle. If you really can solve it during the seven days the party lasts, I will give you thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes.

13 But if you cannot solve it, you will give me thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes.” They said to him, “Let us hear your riddle.”

14 He said to them,

“Out of the one who eats came something to eat;  
out of the strong one came something sweet.”

They could not solve the riddle for three days.

### **The Philistines Force Samson’s Wife to Reveal the Answer**

15 On the fourth day they said to Samson’s bride, “Trick your husband into giving the solution to the riddle. If you refuse, we will

burn up you and your father's family. Did you invite us here to make us poor?"

16 So Samson's bride cried on his shoulder and said, "You must hate me; you do not love me! You told the young men a riddle, but you have not told me the solution." He said to her, "Look, I have not even told my father or mother. Do you really expect me to tell you?"

17 She cried on his shoulder until the party was almost over. Finally, on the seventh day, he told her because she had nagged him so much. Then she told the young men the solution to the riddle.

18a On the seventh day, before the sun set, the men of the city said to him,

"What is sweeter than honey?

What is stronger than a lion?"

#### **Samson Feels Justified in Attacking the Philistines**

18b He said to them,

"If you had not plowed with my heifer,

you would not have solved my riddle!"

19 The LORD's spirit empowered him. He went down to Ashkelon and murdered thirty men. He took their clothes and gave them to the men who had solved the riddle. He was furious as he went back home.

#### **The Philistine Father Gives Samson's Wife to Another Man**

20 Samson's bride was then given to his best man.

15:1 Sometime later, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a gift and went to visit his bride. He said to her father, "I want to have sex with my bride in her bedroom!" But her father would not let him enter.

2 Her father said, "I really thought you absolutely despised her, so I gave her to your best man. Her younger sister is more attractive than she is. Take her instead!"

#### **Samson Again Feels Justified in Taking Revenge**

3 Samson said to them, "This time I am justified in doing the Philistines harm!"

4 Samson went and captured three hundred jackals and got some torches. He tied the jackals in pairs by their tails and then tied a torch to each pair.

5 He lit the torches and set the jackals loose in the Philistines' standing grain. He burned up the grain heaps and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.

#### **The Philistines Retaliate**

6 The Philistines asked, "Who did this?" They were told, "Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, because the Timnite took Samson's bride and gave her to his best man." So the Philistines went up and burned her and her father.

#### **Samson Takes Revenge Once Again**

7 Samson said to them, "Because you did this, I will get revenge against you before I quit fighting."

8 He struck them down and defeated them. Then he went down and lived for a time in the cave in the cliff of Etam.

#### **The Philistines Decide to Eliminate Samson Permanently**

9 The Philistines went up and invaded Judah. They arrayed themselves for battle in Lehi.

10 The men of Judah said, "Why are you attacking us?" The Philistines said, "We have come up to take Samson prisoner so we can do to him what he has done to us."

11 Three thousand men of Judah went down to the cave in the cliff of Etam and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? Why have you done this to us?" He said to them, "I have only done to them what they have done to me."

12 They said to him, "We have come down to take you prisoner so we can hand you over to the Philistines." Samson said to them, "Promise me you will not kill me."

13 They said to him, "We promise! We will only take you prisoner and hand you over to them. We promise not to kill you." They tied him up with two brand new ropes and led him up from the cliff.

#### **Samson Kills an Entire Philistine Battalion**

14 When he arrived in Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they approached him. But the LORD's spirit empowered him. The ropes around his arms were like flax dissolving in fire, and they melted away from his hands.

15 He happened to see a solid jawbone of a donkey. He grabbed it and struck down a thousand men.

16 Samson then said,

“With the jawbone of a donkey  
I have left them in heaps;  
with the jawbone of a donkey  
I have struck down a thousand men!”

17 When he finished speaking, he threw the jawbone down and named that place Ramath Lehi.

18 He was very thirsty, so he cried out to the LORD and said, “You have given your servant this great victory. But now must I die of thirst and fall into hands of the Philistines?”

19 So God split open the basin at Lehi and water flowed out from it. When he took a drink, his strength was restored and he revived. For this reason he named the spring En Hakkore. It remains in Lehi to this very day.

20 Samson led Israel for twenty years during the days of Philistine prominence.

### Judgeship of Ibzan (c. 1100 – c. 1093 BC)

Judges 12:8–10

8 After him [Jephthah] Ibzan of Bethlehem led Israel.

9 He had thirty sons. He arranged for thirty of his daughters to be married outside his extended family, and he arranged for thirty young women to be brought from outside as wives for his sons. Ibzan led Israel for seven years;

10 then he died and was buried in Bethlehem.

### Judgeship of Elon (c. 1093 – c. 1083 BC)

Judges 12:11–12

11 After him [Ibzan] Elon the Zebulunite led Israel for ten years.

12 Then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

### The Death of Samson (c. 1084 BC)

Judges 16

#### Samson Carries the Gaza City Gates 38 Miles Uphill to Hebron

1 Samson went to Gaza. There he saw a prostitute and went in to have sex with her.

2 The Gazites were told, “Samson has come here!” So they surrounded the town and hid all night at the city gate, waiting for him to leave. They relaxed all night, thinking, “He will not leave until morning comes; then we will kill him!”

3 Samson spent half the night with the prostitute; then he got up in the middle of the night and left. He grabbed the doors of the city gate, as well as the two posts, and pulled them right off, bar and all. He put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of a hill east of Hebron.

#### Samson and Delilah

4 After this Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, who lived in the Sorek Valley.

5 The rulers of the Philistines went up to visit her and said to her, “Trick him! Find out what makes him so strong and how we can subdue him and humiliate him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred silver pieces.”

6 So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me what makes you so strong and how you can be subdued and humiliated.”

7 Samson said to her, “If they tie me up with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I will become weak and be just like any other man.”

8 So the rulers of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings which had not been dried and they tied him up with them.

9 They hid in the bedroom and then she said to him, “The Philistines are here, Samson!” He snapped the bowstrings as easily as a thread of yarn snaps when it is put close to fire. The secret of his strength was not discovered.

10 Delilah said to Samson, “Look, you deceived me and told me lies! Now tell me how you can be subdued.”

11 He said to her, “If they tie me tightly with brand new ropes that have never been used, I will become weak and be just like any other man.”

12 So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them and said to him, “The Philistines are here, Samson!” (The Philistines were hiding in the bedroom.) But he tore the ropes from his arms as if they were a piece of thread.

13 Delilah said to Samson, “Up to now you have deceived me and told me lies. Tell me how you can be subdued.” He said to her, “If you weave the seven braids of my hair into the fabric on the loom and secure it with the pin, I will become weak and be like any other man.”

14 So she made him go to sleep, wove the seven braids of his hair into the fabric on the loom, fastened it with the pin, and said to

him, “The Philistines are here, Samson!” He woke up and tore away the pin of the loom and the fabric.

15 She said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you will not share your secret with me? Three times you have deceived me and have not told me what makes you so strong.”

16 She nagged him every day and pressured him until he was sick to death of it.

17 Finally he told her his secret. He said to her, “My hair has never been cut, for I have been dedicated to God from the time I was conceived. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me; I would become weak, and be just like all other men.”

18 When Delilah saw that he had told her his secret, she sent for the rulers of the Philistines, saying, “Come up here again, for he has told me his secret.” So the rulers of the Philistines went up to visit her, bringing the silver in their hands.

19 She made him go to sleep on her lap and then called a man in to shave off the seven braids of his hair. She made him vulnerable and his strength left him.

20 She said, “The Philistines are here, Samson!” He woke up and thought, “I will do as I did before and shake myself free.” But he did not realize that the LORD had left him.

21 The Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him in bronze chains. He became a grinder in the prison.

22 His hair began to grow back after it had been shaved off.

### **Samson’s Final Act of Faith**

23 The rulers of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate. They said, “Our god has handed Samson, our enemy, over to us.”

24 When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, “Our god has handed our enemy over to us, the one who ruined our land and killed so many of us!”

25 When they really started celebrating, they said, “Call for Samson so he can entertain us!” So they summoned Samson from the prison and he entertained them. They made him stand between two pillars.

26 Samson said to the young man who held his hand, “Position me so I can touch the pillars that support the temple. Then I can lean on them.”

27 Now the temple was filled with men and women, and all the rulers of the Philistines were there. There were three thousand men and women on the roof watching Samson entertain.

28 Samson called to the LORD, “O Master, LORD, remember me! Strengthen me just one more time, O God, so I can get swift revenge against the Philistines for my two eyes!”

29 Samson took hold of the two middle pillars that supported the temple and he leaned against them, with his right hand on one and his left hand on the other.

30 Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” He pushed hard and the temple collapsed on the rulers and all the people in it. He killed many more people in his death than he had killed during his life. [[Heb 11:32](#)]

31 His brothers and all his family went down and brought him back. They buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had led Israel for twenty years.

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## Victory at Mizpah (c. 1084 BC)

1 Samuel 7:2–14

- 2 It was quite a long time—some twenty years in all—that the ark stayed at Kiriath Jearim. All the people of Israel longed for the LORD.
- 3 Samuel said to all the people of Israel, “If you are really turning to the LORD with all your hearts, remove from among you the foreign gods and the images of Ashtoreth. Give your hearts to the LORD and serve only him. Then he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.”
- 4 So the Israelites removed the Baals and images of Ashtoreth. They served only the LORD.
- 5 Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD on your behalf.”
- 6 After they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD. They fasted on that day, and they confessed there, “We have sinned against the LORD.” So Samuel led the people of Israel at Mizpah.
- 7 When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the leaders of the Philistines went up against Israel. When the Israelites heard about this, they were afraid of the Philistines.
- 8 The Israelites said to Samuel, “Keep crying out to the LORD our God so that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines!”
- 9 So Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. Samuel cried out to the LORD on Israel’s behalf, and the LORD answered him.
- 10 As Samuel was offering burnt offerings, the Philistines approached to do battle with Israel. But on that day the LORD thundered loudly against the Philistines. He caused them to panic, and they were defeated by Israel.
- 11 Then the men of Israel left Mizpah and chased the Philistines, striking them down all the way to an area below Beth Car.
- 12 Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, “Up to here the LORD has helped us.”
- 13 So the Philistines were defeated; they did not invade Israel again. The hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.
- 14 The cities that the Philistines had captured from Israel were returned to Israel, from Ekron to Gath. Israel also delivered their territory from the control of the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites.

## Judgeship of Abdon (c. 1083 – c. 1075 BC)

Judges 12:13–15

- 13 After him [*Elon*] Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite led Israel.
- 14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons who rode on seventy donkeys. He led Israel for eight years.
- 15 Then Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

## Judgeship of Samuel (c. 1084 – c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 7:15–17

- 15 So Samuel led Israel all the days of his life.
- 16 Year after year he used to travel the circuit of Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; he used to judge Israel in all of these places.
- 17 Then he would return to Ramah, because his home was there. He also judged Israel there and built an altar to the LORD there.

## Israel Rejects Yahweh as Their King (c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 8

### Samuel Repeats Eli’s Mistake

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

### The People Want a King

- 4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and approached Samuel at Ramah.
- 5 They said to him, “Look, you are old, and your sons don’t follow your ways. So now appoint over us a king to lead us, just like all the other nations have.”
- 6 But this request displeased Samuel, for they said, “Give us a king to lead us.” So Samuel prayed to the LORD.
- 7 The LORD said to Samuel, “Do everything the people request of you. For it is not you that they have rejected, but it is me that they have rejected as their king.
- 8 Just as they have done from the day that I brought them up from Egypt until this very day, they have rejected me and have served other gods. This is what they are also doing to you.

9 So now do as they say. But seriously warn them and make them aware of the policies of the king who will rule over them.”

### **Samuel Warns the People**

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

11 He said, “Here are the policies of the king who will rule over you: He will conscript your sons and put them in his chariot forces and in his cavalry; they will run in front of his chariot.

12 He will appoint for himself leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties, as well as those who plow his ground, reap his harvest, and make his weapons of war and his chariot equipment.

13 He will take your daughters to be ointment makers, cooks, and bakers.

14 He will take your best fields and vineyards and give them to his own servants.

15 He will demand a tenth of your seed and of the produce of your vineyards and give it to his administrators and his servants.

16 He will take your male and female servants, as well as your best cattle and your donkeys, and assign them for his own use.

17 He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will be his servants.

18 In that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD won't answer you in that day.”

### **The People Refuse to Listen**

19 But the people refused to heed Samuel's warning. Instead they said, “No! There will be a king over us!

20 We will be like all the other nations. Our king will judge us and lead us and fight our battles.”

21 So Samuel listened to everything the people said and then reported it to the LORD.

22 The LORD said to Samuel, “Do as they say and install a king over them.” Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Each of you go back to his own city.”

## **Samuel Anoints Saul King of Israel (c. 1050 BC)**

### **1 Samuel 9–10**

#### **Introduction to Saul**

9:1 There was a Benjaminite man named Kish son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin. He was a prominent person.

2 He had a son named Saul, a handsome young man. There was no one among the Israelites more handsome than he was; he stood head and shoulders above all the people.

#### **God Uses Lost Donkeys to Bring Saul to Samuel**

3 The donkeys of Saul's father Kish wandered off, so Kish said to his son Saul, “Take one of the servants with you and go look for the donkeys.”

4 So Saul crossed through the hill country of Ephraim, passing through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. So they crossed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he crossed through the land of Benjamin, and still they did not find them.

5 When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come on, let's head back before my father quits worrying about the donkeys and becomes anxious about us!”

6 But the servant said to him, “Look, there is a man of God in this town. He is highly respected. Everything that he says really happens. Now let's go there. Perhaps he will tell us where we should go from here.”

7 So Saul said to his servant, “All right, we can go. But what can we bring the man, since the food in our bags is used up? We have no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?”

8 The servant went on to answer Saul, “Look, I happen to have in my hand a quarter shekel of silver. I will give it to the man of God and he will tell us where we should go.”

9 (Now it used to be in Israel that whenever someone went to inquire of God he would say, “Come on, let's go to the seer.” For today's prophet used to be called a seer.)

10 So Saul said to his servant, “That's a good idea! Come on. Let's go.” So they went to the town where the man of God was.

11 As they were going up the ascent to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water. They said to them, “Is this where the seer is?”

12 They replied, “Yes, straight ahead! But hurry now, for he came to the town today, and the people are making a sacrifice at the high place.

13 When you enter the town, you can find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people won't eat until he arrives, for he must bless the sacrifice. Once that happens, those who have been invited will eat. Now go on up, for this is the time when you can find him!”

14 So they went up to the town. As they were heading for the middle of the town, Samuel was coming in their direction to go up to the high place.

**God Chooses Saul to be Israel's King**

15 Now the day before Saul arrived, the LORD had told Samuel:

16 "At this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin. You must consecrate him as a leader over my people Israel. He will save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have looked with favor on my people. Their cry has reached me!"

17 When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "Here is the man that I told you about! He will rule over my people."

18 As Saul approached Samuel in the middle of the gate, he said, "Please tell me where the seer's house is."

19 Samuel replied to Saul, "I am the seer! Go up in front of me to the high place! Today you will eat with me and in the morning I will send you away. I will tell you everything that you are thinking.

20 Don't be concerned about the donkeys that you lost three days ago, for they have been found. Whom does all Israel desire? Is it not you, and all your father's family?"

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

22 Then Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the room and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited. There were about thirty people present.

23 Samuel said to the cook, "Give me the portion of meat that I gave to you—the one I asked you to keep with you."

24 So the cook picked up the leg and brought it and set it in front of Saul. Samuel said, "What was kept is now set before you! Eat, for it has been kept for you for this meeting time, from the time I said, 'I have invited the people.'" So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

25 When they came down from the high place to the town, Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof.

26 They got up at dawn and Samuel called to Saul on the roof, "Get up, so I can send you on your way." So Saul got up and the two of them—he and Samuel—went outside.

27 While they were going down to the edge of town, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." So he did. Samuel then said, "You remain here awhile, so I can inform you of God's message."

**Samuel Privately Anoints Saul as King**

10:1a Then Samuel took a small container of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. Samuel kissed him and said, "The LORD has chosen you to lead his people Israel! You will rule over the LORD's people and you will deliver them from the power of the enemies who surround them.

**The Signs of Saul's Kingship**

1b This will be your sign that the LORD has chosen you as leader over his inheritance.

2 When you leave me today, you will find two men near Rachel's tomb at Zelzah on Benjamin's border. They will say to you, 'The donkeys you have gone looking for have been found. Your father is no longer concerned about the donkeys but has become anxious about you two! He is asking, "What should I do about my son?"'

3 "As you continue on from there, you will come to the tall tree of Tabor. At that point three men who are going up to God at Bethel will meet you. One of them will be carrying three young goats, one of them will be carrying three round loaves of bread, and one of them will be carrying a container of wine.

4 They will ask you how you're doing and will give you two loaves of bread. You will accept them.

5 Afterward you will go to Gibeah of God, where there are Philistine officials. When you enter the town, you will meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place. They will have harps, tambourines, flutes, and lyres, and they will be prophesying.

6 Then the spirit of the LORD will rush upon you and you will prophesy with them. You will be changed into a different person.

7 "When these signs have taken place, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God will be with you.

8 You will go down to Gilgal before me. I am going to join you there to offer burnt offerings and to make peace offerings. You should wait for seven days, until I arrive and tell you what to do."

**God Gives Saul a New Heart**

9a As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed his inmost person.

**God Confirms the Signs Given by Samuel**

9b All these signs happened on that very day.

10 When Saul and his servant arrived at Gibeah, a company of prophets was coming out to meet him. Then the spirit of God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied among them.

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

12 A man who was from there replied, "And who is their father?" Therefore this became a proverb: "Is even Saul among the prophets?"

13 When Saul had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

#### **Saul Conceals His Anointing and Empowerment**

14 Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?" Saul replied, "To look for the donkeys. But when we realized they were lost, we went to Samuel."

15 Saul's uncle said, "Tell me what Samuel said to you."

16 Saul said to his uncle, "He assured us that the donkeys had been found." But Saul did not tell him what Samuel had said about the matter of kingship.

#### **Samuel Publicly Proclaims Saul as King**

17 Then Samuel called the people together before the LORD at Mizpah.

18 He said to the Israelites, "This is what the LORD God of Israel says, 'I brought Israel up from Egypt and I delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that oppressed you.'

19 But today you have rejected your God who saves you from all your trouble and distress. You have said, "No! Appoint a king over us." Now take your positions before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

20 Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen by lot.

21 Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the family of Matri was chosen by lot. At last Saul son of Kish was chosen by lot. But when they looked for him, he was nowhere to be found.

22 So they inquired again of the LORD, "Has the man arrived here yet?" The LORD said, "He has hidden himself among the equipment."

23 So they ran and brought him from there. When he took his position among the people, he stood head and shoulders above them all.

24 Then Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? Indeed, there is no one like him among all the people!" All the people shouted out, "Long live the king!"

25 Then Samuel talked to the people about how the kingship would work. He wrote it all down on a scroll and set it before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people away to their homes.

26 Even Saul went to his home in Gibeah. With him went some brave men whose hearts God had touched.

27 But some wicked men said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and did not even bring him a gift. But Saul said nothing about it.

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## Saul's Kingship Established (c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 11

### Saul Defeats the Ammonites

1 Nahash the Ammonite marched against Jabesh Gilead. All the men of Jabesh Gilead said to Nahash, "Make a treaty with us and we will serve you."

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

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

4 When the messengers went to Gibeah (where Saul lived) and informed the people of these matters, all the people wept loudly.

5 Now Saul was walking behind the oxen as he came from the field. Saul asked, "What has happened to the people? Why are they weeping?" So they told him about the men of Jabesh.

6 The Spirit of God rushed upon Saul when he heard these words, and he became very angry.

7 He took a pair of oxen and cut them up. Then he sent the pieces throughout the territory of Israel by the hand of messengers, who said, "Whoever does not go out after Saul and after Samuel should expect this to be done to his oxen!" Then the terror of the LORD fell on the people, and they went out as one army.

8 When Saul counted them at Bezek, the Israelites were 300,000 strong and the men of Judah numbered 30,000.

9 They said to the messengers who had come, "Here's what you should say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: 'Tomorrow deliverance will come to you when the sun is fully up.'" When the messengers went and told the men of Jabesh Gilead, they were happy.

10 The men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you and you can do with us whatever you wish."

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

### Samuel and the People Reaffirm Saul's Kingship

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

13 But Saul said, "No one will be killed on this day. For today the LORD has given Israel a victory!"

14 Samuel said to the people, "Come on! Let's go to Gilgal and renew the kingship there."

15 So all the people went to Gilgal, where they established Saul as king in the LORD's presence. They offered up peace offerings there in the LORD's presence. Saul and all the Israelites were very happy.

## Samuel's Farewell Speech (c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 12

### Samuel Affirms His Integrity

1 Samuel said to all Israel, "I have done everything you requested. I have given you a king.

2 Now look! This king walks before you. As for me, I am old and gray, though my sons are here with you. I have walked before you from the time of my youth till the present day.

3 Here I am. Bring a charge against me before the LORD and before his chosen king. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I wronged? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe so that I would overlook something? Tell me, and I will return it to you!"

4 They replied, "You have not wronged us or oppressed us. You have not taken anything from the hand of anyone."

5 He said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and his chosen king is witness this day, that you have not found any reason to accuse me." They said, "He is witness!"

### Samuel Warns Israel Not to Forget God

6 Samuel said to the people, "The LORD is the one who chose Moses and Aaron and who brought your ancestors up from the land of Egypt.

7 Now take your positions, so I may confront you before the LORD regarding all the LORD's just actions toward you and your ancestors.

8 When Jacob entered Egypt, your ancestors cried out to the LORD. The LORD sent Moses and Aaron, and they led your ancestors out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

9 "But they forgot the LORD their God, so he gave them into the hand of Sisera, the general in command of Hazor's army, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 Then they cried out to the LORD and admitted, 'We have sinned, for we have forsaken the LORD and have served the Baals and the images of Ashtoreth. Now deliver us from the hand of our enemies so that we may serve you.'

11 So the LORD sent Jerub-Baal, Barak, Jephthah, and Samuel, and he delivered you from the hand of the enemies all around you, and you were able to live securely.

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

#### **Yahweh’s Sign Confirming the People’s Wickedness in Seeking a King**

- 16 “So now, take your positions and watch this great thing that the LORD is about to do in your sight.
- 17 Is this not the time of the wheat harvest? I will call on the LORD so that he makes it thunder and rain. Realize and see what a great sin you have committed before the LORD by asking for a king for yourselves.”
- 18 So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD made it thunder and rain that day. All the people were very afraid of both the LORD and Samuel.
- 19 All the people said to Samuel, “Pray to the LORD your God on behalf of us—your servants—so we won’t die, for we have added to all our sins by asking for a king.”
- 20 Then Samuel said to the people, “Don’t be afraid. You have indeed sinned. However, don’t turn aside from the LORD. Serve the LORD with all your heart.
- 21 You should not turn aside after empty things that can’t profit and can’t deliver, since they are empty.
- 22 The LORD will not abandon his people because he wants to uphold his great reputation. The LORD was pleased to make you his own people.
- 23 As far as I am concerned, far be it from me to sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you! I will instruct you in the way that is good and upright.
- 24 However, fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. Just look at the great things he has done for you!
- 25 But if you continue to do evil, both you and your king will be swept away.”

### **Saul’s First Sin (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)**

1 Samuel 13:1–15a

#### **Saul and Jonathan Strike the First Blow Against the Philistines**

- 1 Saul was *thirty* years old when he began to reign; he ruled over Israel for *forty* years. [cf. [Acts 13:21](#)]
- 2 Saul selected for himself three thousand men from Israel. Two thousand of these were with Saul at Micmash and in the hill country of Bethel; the remaining thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin. He sent all the rest of the people back home.
- 3 Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost that was at Geba and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul alerted all the land saying, “Let the Hebrews pay attention!”
- 4 All Israel heard this message, “Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel is repulsive to the Philistines!” So the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.

#### **The Philistines Prepare to Retaliate**

- 5 For the battle with Israel the Philistines had amassed 3,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and an army as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven.
- 6 The men of Israel realized they had a problem because their army was hard pressed. So the army hid in caves, thickets, cliffs, strongholds, and cisterns.
- 7 Some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan River to the land of Gad and Gilead. But Saul stayed at Gilgal; the entire army that was with him was terrified.

#### **Saul’s Unlawful Sacrifice**

- 8 He waited for seven days, the time period indicated by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the army began to abandon Saul.
- 9 So Saul said, “Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings.” Then he offered a burnt offering.
- 10 Just when he had finished offering the burnt offering, Samuel appeared on the scene. Saul went out to meet him and to greet him.
- 11 But Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul replied, “When I saw that the army had started to abandon me and that you didn’t come at the appointed time and that the Philistines had assembled at Micmash,
- 12 I thought, ‘Now the Philistines will come down on me at Gilgal and I have not sought the LORD’s favor.’ So I felt obligated to offer the burnt offering.”
- 13 Then Samuel said to Saul, “You have made a foolish choice! You have not obeyed the commandment that the LORD your God gave you. Had you done that, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever!

14 But now your kingdom will not continue! The LORD has sought out for himself a man who is loyal to him and the LORD has appointed him to be leader over his people, for you have not obeyed what the LORD commanded you.”

15a Then Samuel set out and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin.

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### **Chronological Notes**

#### 1) Saul's Reign.<sup>1</sup>

- A) At precisely the place that one might expect the usual formula summarizing a king's reign—1 Samuel 13:1—there is a textual corruption: “Saul was ... years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel two years.” Besides the lacuna concerning his age, it is impossible to squeeze all the events of Saul's reign into two short years. Two solutions are commonly offered: (1) “Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years” (thus the NIV); and (2) “Saul was thirty years old when he became king. When he had reigned for two years ...” The former has in its favor that it follows the pattern of the usual formula (cf. 2 Sam 5:4) and essentially agrees with Paul's round figure of forty years.
- B) Against this reconstruction, however, is the fact that both “thirty” and “forty-two” must be supplied, the former from a few late manuscripts of the Septuagint and the latter by conjecture. “Thirty” appears to be incorrect, since Jonathan, Saul's son, was a leader of men at the very beginning of Saul's reign (1 Sam 13:2–3) and could hardly have been the son of a thirty-year-old man. “Forty-two,” it is usually argued, is necessary in order to account for Paul's datum and to explain the unusual plural, rather than dual, form of the “two” in the Hebrew text. Paul's information, however, could well be the result of the deductive process we are about to pursue, and the plural form of “two” is not without grammatical support elsewhere. The best reading, then, would appear to be, “Saul was [forty] years old when he began to reign. When he had reigned for two years ...” “Forty” is a reasonable suggestion, given that Saul had an adult son at the time.
- C) In support of Paul's statement that Saul ruled for forty years is the fact that Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul who succeeded him as king, was forty when he began to reign (2 Sam 2:10) and yet was not born until after Saul ascended Israel's throne. This is clear from a comparison of the list of Saul's sons in the earliest years of his reign (1 Sam 14:47–51) and the list of all his sons (1 Chron 8:33; 9:39). The former names Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-shua, and the latter Jonathan, Malki-shua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. Esh-Baal is identical to Ish-Bosheth, and Abinadab is presumably another name for Ishvi (see 1 Chron 10:2). When Saul was slain by the Philistines, his three sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-shua died with him (1 Sam 31:2). Since Ish-bosheth survived, he obviously was not Abinadab as some scholars maintain.
- D) Another factor of importance is the apparent interregnum between Saul and Ish-Bosheth, during which time Abner maintained control (2 Sam 2:8–11). For reasons not specified, Ish-Bosheth did not immediately follow Saul, as is clear from the fact that he reigned only two years before he was assassinated. In the year of Ish-Bosheth's death, David seized power over Saul's kingdom, and yet he had already been reigning in Hebron for more than seven years (1:1; 2:4; 5:1–5). This means that Abner held the power in the north for about five years before he appointed Ish-Bosheth as king. Ish-Bosheth, forty years old at the time, was therefore born thirty-five years before Saul's death, or around 1046. This further explains why his name does not appear in the list of Saul's children during the earliest part of his reign.
- E) In any case, if Ish-Bosheth was thirty-five at the time of Saul's death and yet was not born until after the commencement of Saul's reign, Saul must have been king for more than thirty-five years, a figure compatible with Paul's “forty.” A date of c. 1050 – c. 1010 is therefore most likely.

<sup>1</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 209–212.

## Saul's Foolish Vow (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 13:15b–14:46

### The Philistines Mobilize Their Forces

13:15b Saul mustered the army that remained with him; there were about six hundred men.

16 Saul, his son Jonathan, and the army that remained with them stayed in Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin, while the Philistines camped in Micmash.

17 Raiding bands went out from the camp of the Philistines in three groups. One band turned toward the road leading to Ophrah by the land of Shual;

18 another band turned toward the road leading to Beth Horon; and yet another band turned toward the road leading to the border that overlooks the valley of Zeboim in the direction of the desert.

### Explanation of Disparity in Armaments Between Israel and Philistia

19 A blacksmith could not be found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines had said, "This will prevent the Hebrews from making swords and spears."

20 So all Israel had to go down to the Philistines in order to get their plowshares, cutting instruments, axes, and sickles sharpened.

21 They charged two-thirds of a shekel to sharpen plowshares and cutting instruments, and a third of a shekel to sharpen picks and axes, and to set ox goads.

22 So on the day of the battle no sword or spear was to be found in the hand of anyone in the army that was with Saul and Jonathan. No one but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

### Jonathan and His Armor Bearer Attack a Philistine Garrison

23 A garrison of the Philistines had gone out to the pass at Micmash.

14:1 Then one day Jonathan son of Saul said to his armor bearer, "Come on, let's go over to the Philistine garrison that is opposite us." But he did not let his father know.

2 Now Saul was sitting under a pomegranate tree in Migron, on the outskirts of Gibeah. The army that was with him numbered about six hundred men.

3 Now Ahijah was carrying an ephod. He was the son of Ahitub, who was the brother of Ithobal and a son of Phineas, son of Eli, the priest of the LORD in Shiloh. The army was unaware that Jonathan had left.

4 Now there was a steep cliff on each side of the pass through which Jonathan intended to go to reach the Philistine garrison. One cliff was named Bozez, the other Seneh.

5 The cliff to the north was closer to Micmash, the one to the south closer to Geba.

6 Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come on, let's go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised men. Perhaps the LORD will intervene for us. Nothing can prevent the LORD from delivering, whether by many or by a few."

7 His armor bearer said to him, "Do everything that is on your mind. Do as you're inclined. I'm with you all the way!"

8 Jonathan replied, "All right! We'll go over to these men and fight them.

9 If they say to us, 'Stay put until we approach you,' we will stay right there and not go up to them.

10 But if they say, 'Come up against us,' we will go up. For in that case the LORD has given them into our hand—it will be a sign to us."

11 When they made themselves known to the Philistine garrison, the Philistines said, "Look! The Hebrews are coming out of the holes in which they hid themselves."

12 Then the men of the garrison said to Jonathan and his armor bearer, "Come on up to us so we can teach you a thing or two!"

Then Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up behind me, for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel!"

13 Jonathan crawled up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer following behind him. Jonathan struck down the Philistines, while his armor bearer came along behind him and killed them.

14 In this initial skirmish Jonathan and his armor bearer struck down about twenty men in an area that measured half an acre.

### God Strikes the Philistines / Saul, After Much Hesitation, Attacks

15 Then fear overwhelmed those who were in the camp, those who were in the field, all the army in the garrison, and the raiding bands. They trembled and the ground shook. This fear was caused by God.

16 Saul's watchmen at Gibeah in the territory of Benjamin looked on as the crowd of soldiers seemed to melt away first in one direction and then in another.

17 So Saul said to the army that was with him, "Mustering the troops and see who is no longer with us." When they mustered the troops, Jonathan and his armor bearer were not there.

18 So Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring near the ephod," for he was at that time wearing the ephod.

19 While Saul spoke to the priest, the panic in the Philistines' camp was becoming greater and greater. So Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand!"

20 Saul and all the army that was with him assembled and marched into battle, where they found the Philistines in total panic killing one another with their swords.

21 The Hebrews who had earlier gone over to the Philistine side joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan.

22 When all the Israelites who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, they too pursued them in battle.

23 So the LORD delivered Israel that day, and the battle shifted over to Beth Aven.

#### **Saul's Rash Oath**

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

25 Now the whole army entered the forest and there was honey on the ground.

26 When the army entered the forest, they saw the honey flowing, but no one ate any of it, for the army was afraid of the oath.

27 But Jonathan had not heard about the oath his father had made the army take. He extended the end of his staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. When he ate it, his eyes gleamed.

28 Then someone from the army informed him, "Your father put the army under a strict oath saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food today!' That is why the army is tired."

29 Then Jonathan said, "My father has caused trouble for the land. See how my eyes gleamed when I tasted just a little of this honey.

30 Certainly if the army had eaten some of the enemies' provisions that they came across today, would not the slaughter of the Philistines have been even greater?"

#### **The Sin of the Troops**

31 On that day the army struck down the Philistines from Micmash to Aijalon, and they became very tired.

32 So the army rushed greedily on the plunder, confiscating sheep, cattle, and calves. They slaughtered them right on the ground, and the army ate them blood and all.

33 Now it was reported to Saul, "Look, the army is sinning against the LORD by eating even the blood." He said, "All of you have broken the covenant! Roll a large stone over here to me."

34 Then Saul said, "Scatter out among the army and say to them, 'Each of you bring to me your ox and sheep and slaughter them in this spot and eat. But don't sin against the LORD by eating the blood.'" So that night each one brought his ox and slaughtered it there.

35 Then Saul built an altar for the LORD; it was the first time he had built an altar for the LORD.

#### **Saul Inquires of the Lord**

36 Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines at night; we will rout them until the break of day. We won't leave any of them alive!" They replied, "Do whatever seems best to you." But the priest said, "Let's approach God here."

37 So Saul asked God, "Should I go down after the Philistines? Will you deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day.

38 Then Saul said, "All you leaders of the army come here. Find out how this sin occurred today.

39 For as surely as the LORD, the deliverer of Israel, lives, even if it turns out to be my own son Jonathan, he will certainly die!" But no one from the army said anything.

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

41 Then Saul said, "O LORD God of Israel! If this sin has been committed by me or by my son Jonathan, then, O LORD God of Israel, respond with Urim. But if this sin has been committed by your people Israel, respond with Thummim." Then Jonathan and Saul were indicated by lot, while the army was exonerated.

42 Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan!" Jonathan was indicated by lot.

43 So Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." Jonathan told him, "I used the end of the staff that was in my hand to taste a little honey. I must die!"

44 Saul said, "God will punish me severely if Jonathan doesn't die!"

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

46 Then Saul stopped chasing the Philistines, and the Philistines went back home.

### **Saul's Wars (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)**

1 Samuel 14:47–48, 52; 1 Chronicles 5:10, 18–22

#### **Saul Has Victory Over Israel's Enemies**

1 Sam 14:47 After Saul had secured his royal position over Israel, he fought against all their enemies on all sides—the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. In every direction that he turned he was victorious.

48 He fought bravely, striking down the Amalekites and delivering Israel from the hand of its enemies.

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

### War With the Hagrites

1 Chr 5:10 During the time of Saul they [the Transjordan tribes] attacked the Hagrites and defeated them. They took over their territory in the entire eastern region of Gilead.

18 The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had 44,760 men in their combined armies, warriors who carried shields and swords, were equipped with bows, and were trained for war.

19 They attacked the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.

20 They received divine help in fighting them, and the Hagrites and all their allies were handed over to them. They cried out to God during the battle; he responded to their prayers because they trusted in him.

21 They seized the Hagrites' animals, including 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, and 2,000 donkeys. They also took captive 100,000 people.

22 Because God fought for them, they killed many of the enemy. They dispossessed the Hagrites and lived in their land until the exile.

### Saul's Family (c. 1050 – c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 14:49–51	2 Samuel 21:8a	1 Chronicles 9:39
<p>49 The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-Shua. He had two daughters; the older one was named Merab and the younger Michal.</p> <p>50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the general in command of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle.</p> <p>51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.</p>	<p>8a So the king [David] took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Aiah's daughter Rizpah whom she had born to Saul</p>	<p>39 Ner was the father of Kish, and Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.</p>

### God Rejects Saul (c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 15

#### God Commissions Saul to Destroy Amalek

1 Then Samuel said to Saul, "I was the one the LORD sent to anoint you as king over his people Israel. Now listen to what the LORD says.

2 Here is what the LORD of hosts says: 'I carefully observed how the Amalekites opposed Israel along the way when Israel came up from Egypt.

3 So go now and strike down the Amalekites. Destroy everything that they have. Don't spare them. Put them to death—man, woman, child, infant, ox, sheep, camel, and donkey alike.'"

#### Amalek Defeated

4 So Saul assembled the army and mustered them at Telaim. There were 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah.

5 Saul proceeded to the city of Amalek, where he set an ambush in the wadi.

6 Saul said to the Kenites, "Go on and leave! Go down from among the Amalekites! Otherwise I will sweep you away with them! After all, you were kind to all the Israelites when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from among the Amalekites.

7 Then Saul struck down the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, which is next to Egypt.

#### Saul Disobeys

8 He captured King Agag of the Amalekites alive, but he executed all Agag's people with the sword.

9 However, Saul and the army spared Agag, along with the best of the flock, the cattle, the fatlings, and the lambs, as well as everything else that was of value. They were not willing to slaughter them. But they did slaughter everything that was despised and worthless.

#### God Rejects Saul as King

10 Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel:

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

12 Then Samuel got up early to meet Saul the next morning. But Samuel was informed, “Saul has gone to Carmel where he is setting up a monument for himself. Then Samuel left and went down to Gilgal.”

13 When Samuel came to him, Saul said to him, “May the LORD bless you! I have done what the LORD said.”

14 Samuel replied, “If that is the case, then what is this sound of sheep in my ears and the sound of cattle that I hear?”

15 Saul said, “They were brought from the Amalekites; the army spared the best of the flocks and cattle to sacrifice to the LORD our God. But everything else we slaughtered.”

16 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Wait a minute! Let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.” Saul said to him, “Tell me.”

17 Samuel said, “Is it not true that when you were insignificant in your own eyes, you became head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD chose you as king over Israel.

18 The LORD sent you on a campaign saying, ‘Go and exterminate those sinful Amalekites! Fight against them until you have destroyed them.’

19 Why haven’t you obeyed the LORD? Instead you have greedily rushed upon the plunder! You have done what is wrong in the LORD’s estimation.”

20 Then Saul said to Samuel, “But I have obeyed the LORD! I went on the campaign the LORD sent me on. I brought back King Agag of the Amalekites after exterminating the Amalekites.

21 But the army took from the plunder some of the sheep and cattle—the best of what was to be slaughtered—to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.”

22 Then Samuel said,

“Does the LORD take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices

as much as he does in obedience?

Certainly, obedience is better than sacrifice;

paying attention is better than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination,

and presumption is like the evil of idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,

he has rejected you as king.”

### **Saul’s False Repentance**

24 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have disobeyed what the LORD commanded and what you said as well. For I was afraid of the army, and I followed their wishes.

25 Now please forgive my sin! Go back with me so I can worship the LORD.”

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

27 When Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed the edge of his robe and it tore.

28 Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to one of your colleagues who is better than you!

29 The Preeminent One of Israel does not go back on his word or change his mind, for he is not a human being who changes his mind.”

30 Saul again replied, “I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel. Go back with me so I may worship the LORD your God.”

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

### **Samuel Kills Agag**

32 Then Samuel said, “Bring me King Agag of the Amalekites.” So Agag came to him trembling, thinking to himself, “Surely death is bitter!”

33 Samuel said, “Just as your sword left women childless, so your mother will be the most bereaved among women!” Then Samuel hacked Agag to pieces there in Gilgal before the LORD.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah, while Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul.

35 Until the day he died Samuel did not see Saul again. Samuel did, however, mourn for Saul, but the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

## David Secretly Anointed as King (c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 16

### God Sends Samuel to Jesse the Bethlehemite

- 1 The LORD said to Samuel, “How long do you intend to mourn for Saul? I have rejected him as king over Israel. Fill your horn with olive oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem, for I have selected a king for myself from among his sons.”
- 2 Samuel replied, “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me!” But the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’”
- 3 Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you should do. You will anoint for me the one I point out to you.”
- 4 Samuel did what the LORD told him. When he arrived in Bethlehem, the elders of the city were afraid to meet him. They said, “Do you come in peace?”
- 5 He replied, “Yes, in peace. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” So he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.
- 6 When they arrived, Samuel noticed Eliab and said to himself, “Surely, here before the LORD stands his chosen king!”
- 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Don’t be impressed by his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. God does not view things the way men do. People look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”
- 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one, either.”
- 9 Then Jesse presented Shammah. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.”
- 10 Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.”

### God Chooses David as King

- 11 Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Is that all of the young men?” Jesse replied, “There is still the youngest one, but he’s taking care of the flock.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and get him, for we cannot turn our attention to other things until he comes here.”
- 12 So Jesse had him brought in. Now he was ruddy, with attractive eyes and a handsome appearance. The LORD said, “Go and anoint him. This is the one!”
- 13 So Samuel took the horn full of olive oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day onward. Then Samuel got up and went to Ramah.

### God Sends a Spirit to Torment Saul

- 14 Now the Spirit of the LORD had turned away from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.
- 15 Then Saul’s servants said to him, “Look, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you!”
- 16 Let our lord instruct his servants who are here before you to look for a man who knows how to play the lyre. Then whenever the evil spirit from God comes upon you, he can play the lyre and you will feel better.”
- 17 So Saul said to his servants, “Find me a man who plays well and bring him to me.”
- 18 One of his attendants replied, “I have seen a son of Jesse in Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is a brave warrior and is articulate and handsome, for the LORD is with him.”
- 19 So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me your son David, who is out with the sheep.”
- 20 So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a container of wine, and a young goat and sent them to Saul with his son David.
- 21 David came to Saul and stood before him. Saul liked him a great deal, and he became his armor bearer.
- 22 Then Saul sent word to Jesse saying, “Let David be my servant, for I really like him.”
- 23 So whenever the spirit from God would come upon Saul, David would take his lyre and play it. This would bring relief to Saul and make him feel better. Then the evil spirit would leave him alone.

## David and Goliath (c. 1022 BC)

1 Samuel 17:1–54

### Goliath of Gath

- 1 The Philistines gathered their troops for battle. They assembled at Socoh in Judah. They camped in Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.
- 2 Saul and the Israelite army assembled and camped in the valley of Elah, where they arranged their battle lines to fight against the Philistines.
- 3 The Philistines were standing on one hill, and the Israelites on another hill, with the valley between them.
- 4 Then a champion came out from the camp of the Philistines. His name was Goliath; he was from Gath. He was close to seven feet tall.
- 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and was wearing scale body armor. The weight of his bronze body armor was five thousand shekels.
- 6 He had bronze shin guards on his legs, and a bronze javelin was slung over his shoulders.
- 7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and the iron point of his spear weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer was walking before him.

8 Goliath stood and called to Israel's troops, "Why do you come out to prepare for battle? Am I not the Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose for yourselves a man so he may come down to me!

9 If he is able to fight with me and strike me down, we will become your servants. But if I prevail against him and strike him down, you will become our servants and will serve us."

10 Then the Philistine said, "I defy Israel's troops this day! Give me a man so we can fight each other!"

11 When Saul and all the Israelites heard these words of the Philistine, they were upset and very afraid.

#### **Jesse Sends David to Check on His Brothers**

12 Now David was the son of this Ephrathite named Jesse from Bethlehem in Judah. He had eight sons, and in Saul's days he was old and well advanced in years.

13 Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to war. The names of the three sons who went to war were Eliab, his firstborn, Abinadab, the second oldest, and Shammah, the third oldest.

14 Now David was the youngest. While the three oldest sons followed Saul,

15 David was going back and forth from Saul in order to care for his father's sheep in Bethlehem.

16 Meanwhile for forty days the Philistine approached every morning and evening and took his position.

17 Jesse said to his son David, "Take your brothers this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread; go quickly to the camp to your brothers.

18 Also take these ten portions of cheese to their commanding officer. Find out how your brothers are doing and bring back their pledge that they received the goods.

19 They are with Saul and the whole Israelite army in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines."

20 So David got up early in the morning and entrusted the flock to someone else who would watch over it. After loading up, he went just as Jesse had instructed him. He arrived at the camp as the army was going out to the battle lines shouting its battle cry.

21 Israel and the Philistines drew up their battle lines opposite one another.

22 After David had entrusted his cargo to the care of the supply officer, he ran to the battlefield. When he arrived, he asked his brothers how they were doing.

#### **David Learns of Goliath**

23 As he was speaking with them, the champion named Goliath, the Philistine from Gath, was coming up from the battle lines of the Philistines. He spoke the way he usually did, and David heard it.

24 When all the men of Israel saw this man, they retreated from his presence and were very afraid.

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

26 David asked the men who were standing near him, "What will be done for the man who strikes down this Philistine and frees Israel from this humiliation? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he defies the armies of the living God?"

27 The soldiers told him what had been promised, saying, "This is what will be done for the man who can strike him down."

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

29 David replied, "What have I done now? Can't I say anything?"

30 Then he turned from those who were nearby to someone else and asked the same question, but they gave him the same answer as before.

#### **Saul Sends for David**

31 When David's words were overheard and reported to Saul, he called for him.

32 David said to Saul, "Don't let anyone be discouraged. Your servant will go and fight this Philistine!"

33 But Saul replied to David, "You aren't able to go against this Philistine and fight him! You're just a boy! He has been a warrior from his youth!"

34 David replied to Saul, "Your servant has been a shepherd for his father's flock. Whenever a lion or bear would come and carry off a sheep from the flock,

35 I would go out after it, strike it down, and rescue the sheep from its mouth. If it rose up against me, I would grab it by its jaw, strike it, and kill it.

36 Your servant has struck down both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be just like one of them. For he has defied the armies of the living God!"

37 David went on to say, "The LORD who delivered me from the lion and the bear will also deliver me from the hand of this Philistine!" Then Saul said to David, "Go! The LORD will be with you."

38 Then Saul clothed David with his own fighting attire and put a bronze helmet on his head. He also put body armor on him.

39 David strapped on his sword over his fighting attire and tried to walk around, but he was not used to them. David said to Saul, "I

can't walk in these things, for I'm not used to them." So David removed them.

### **David Confronts Goliath**

40 He took his staff in his hand, picked out five smooth stones from the stream, placed them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag, took his sling in hand, and approached the Philistine.

41 The Philistine kept coming closer to David, with his shield bearer walking in front of him.

42 When the Philistine looked carefully at David, he despised him, for he was only a ruddy and handsome boy.

43 The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you are coming after me with sticks?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 The Philistine said to David, "Come here to me, so I can give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the field!"

45 But David replied to the Philistine, "You are coming against me with sword and spear and javelin. But I am coming against you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel's armies, whom you have defied!

46 This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand! I will strike you down and cut off your head. This day I will give the corpses of the Philistine army to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the land. Then all the land will realize that Israel has a God

47 and all this assembly will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves! For the battle is the LORD's, and he will deliver you into our hand."

### **David Kills Goliath**

48 The Philistine drew steadily closer to David to attack him, while David quickly ran toward the battle line to attack the Philistine.

49 David reached his hand into the bag and took out a stone. He slung it, striking the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank deeply into his forehead, and he fell down with his face to the ground.

50 David prevailed over the Philistine with just the sling and the stone. He struck down the Philistine and killed him. David did not even have a sword in his hand.

51 David ran and stood over the Philistine. He grabbed Goliath's sword, drew it from its sheath, killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they ran away.

52 Then the men of Israel and Judah charged forward, shouting a battle cry. They chased the Philistines to the valley and to the very gates of Ekron. The Philistine corpses lay fallen along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron.

53 When the Israelites returned from their hot pursuit of the Philistines, they looted their camp.

54 David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put Goliath's weapons in his tent.

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### **Textual Notes**

- 1) For a detailed consideration of the textual critical issues related to Goliath's height (1 Sam 17:4), see J. Daniel Hays, "Reconsidering the Height of Goliath," *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005): 701–14.

## Saul and David (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 17:55–19:11a

### David's Heroism Brings Him to Saul's Attention

17:55 Now as Saul watched David going out to fight the Philistine, he asked Abner, the general in command of the army, "Whose son is this young man, Abner?" Abner replied, "As surely as you live, O king, I don't know."

56 The king said, "Find out whose son this boy is!"

57 So when David returned from striking down the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul. He still had the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David replied, "I am the son of your servant Jesse in Bethlehem."

### Jonathan and David Become Close Friends

18:1 When David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan and David became bound together in close friendship. Jonathan loved David as much as he did his own life.

2 Saul retained David on that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house.

3 Jonathan made a covenant with David, for he loved him as much as he did his own life.

4 Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with the rest of his gear, including his sword, his bow, and even his belt.

### The Rift Between Saul and David Begins

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

6 When the men arrived after David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women from all the cities of Israel came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul. They were happy as they played their tambourines and three-stringed instruments.

7 The women who were playing the music sang,

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

8 This made Saul very angry. The statement displeased him and he thought, "They have attributed to David tens of thousands, but to me they have attributed only thousands. What does he lack, except the kingdom?"

9 So Saul was keeping an eye on David from that day onward.

### Saul Tries to Kill David

10 The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within his house. Now David was playing the lyre that day. There was a spear in Saul's hand,

11 and Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I'll nail David to the wall!" But David escaped from him on two different occasions.

12 So Saul feared David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

### God Gives David Success

13 Saul removed David from his presence and made him a commanding officer. David led the army out to battle and back.

14 Now David achieved success in all he did, for the LORD was with him.

15 When Saul saw how very successful he was, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he was the one leading them out to battle and back.

### Saul Schemes to Eliminate David

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

18 David said to Saul, "Who am I? Who are my relatives or the clan of my father in Israel that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

19 When the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she instead was given in marriage to Adriel, who was from Meholah.

20 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul about this, it pleased him.

21 Saul said, "I will give her to him so that she may become a snare to him and the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Today is the second time for you to become my son-in-law."

22 Then Saul instructed his servants, "Tell David secretly, 'The king is pleased with you, and all his servants like you. So now become the king's son-in-law.'"

23 So Saul's servants spoke these words privately to David. David replied, "Is becoming the king's son-in-law something insignificant to you? I'm just a poor and lightly-esteemed man!"

24 When Saul's servants reported what David had said,

25 Saul replied, “Here is what you should say to David: ‘There is nothing that the king wants as a price for the bride except a hundred Philistine foreskins, so that he can be avenged of his enemies.’” (Now Saul was thinking that he could kill David by the hand of the Philistines.)

26 So his servants told David these things and David agreed to become the king’s son-in-law. Now the specified time had not yet expired

27 when David, along with his men, went out and struck down two hundred Philistine men. David brought their foreskins and presented all of them to the king so he could become the king’s son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

28 When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David,

29 Saul became even more afraid of him. Saul continued to be at odds with David from then on.

30 Then the leaders of the Philistines would march out, and as often as they did so, David achieved more success than all of Saul’s servants. His name was held in high esteem.

#### **Jonathan Persuades Saul to Stop Trying to Kill David**

19:1 Then Saul told his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. But Saul’s son Jonathan liked David very much.

2 So Jonathan told David, “My father Saul is trying to kill you. So be careful tomorrow morning. Find a hiding place and stay in seclusion.

3 I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are. I will speak about you to my father. When I find out what the problem is, I will let you know.”

4 So Jonathan spoke on David’s behalf to his father Saul. He said to him, “The king should not sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you. On the contrary, his actions have been very beneficial for you.

5 He risked his life when he struck down the Philistine and the LORD gave all Israel a great victory. When you saw it, you were happy. So why would you sin against innocent blood by putting David to death for no reason?”

6 Saul accepted Jonathan’s advice and took an oath, “As surely as the LORD lives, he will not be put to death.”

7 Then Jonathan called David and told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as he had done formerly.

#### **Saul Again Tries to Kill David**

8 Now once again there was war. So David went out to fight the Philistines. He defeated them thoroughly and they ran away from him.

9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul. He was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing the lyre.

10 Saul tried to nail David to the wall with the spear, but he escaped from Saul’s presence and the spear drove into the wall. David escaped quickly that night.

11a Saul sent messengers to David’s house to guard it and to kill him in the morning.

## **Deliver Me From My Enemies (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

Psalm 59

*For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;*

**A prayer of David, written when Saul sent men to surround his house and murder him.**

1 Deliver me from my enemies, my God!  
Protect me from those who attack me!

2 Deliver me from evildoers!  
Rescue me from violent men!

3 For look, they wait to ambush me;  
powerful men stalk me,  
but not because I have rebelled or sinned, O LORD.

4 Though I have done nothing wrong, they are anxious to attack.  
Spring into action and help me! Take notice of me!

5 You, O LORD God, the invincible warrior, the God of Israel,  
rouse yourself and punish all the nations!  
Have no mercy on any treacherous evildoers! (Selah)

6 They return in the evening;  
they growl like a dog  
and prowl around outside the city.

7 Look, they hurl insults at me  
and openly threaten to kill me,  
for they say, “Who hears?”

8 But you, O LORD, laugh in disgust at them;

- you taunt all the nations.
- 9 You are my source of strength! I will wait for you!  
For God is my refuge.
- 10 The God who loves me will help me;  
God will enable me to triumph over my enemies.
- 11 Do not strike them dead suddenly,  
because then my people might forget the lesson.  
Use your power to make them homeless vagabonds and then bring them down,  
O Lord who shields us!
- 12 They speak sinful words.  
So let them be trapped by their own pride  
and by the curses and lies they speak!
- 13 Angriily wipe them out! Wipe them out so they vanish!  
Let them know that God rules  
in Jacob and to the ends of the earth! (Selah)
- 14 They return in the evening;  
they growl like a dog  
and prowl around outside the city.
- 15 They wander around looking for something to eat;  
they refuse to sleep until they are full.
- 16 As for me, I will sing about your strength;  
I will praise your loyal love in the morning.  
For you are my refuge  
and my place of shelter when I face trouble.
- 17 You are my source of strength! I will sing praises to you!  
For God is my refuge, the God who loves me.

### David On the Run (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 19:11b–24

#### David's Wife Michal (Saul's Youngest Daughter) Helps Him Escape

- 11b Then David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save yourself tonight, tomorrow you will be dead!"
- 12 So Michal lowered David through the window, and he ran away and escaped.
- 13 Then Michal took a household idol and put it on the bed. She put a quilt made of goat's hair over its head and then covered the idol with a garment.
- 14 When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, "He's sick."
- 15 Then Saul sent the messengers back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on his bed so I can kill him."
- 16 When the messengers came, they found only the idol on the bed and the quilt made of goat's hair at its head.
- 17 Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me this way by sending my enemy away? Now he has escaped!" Michal replied to Saul, "He said to me, 'Help me get away or else I will kill you!'"

#### David Flees to Samuel

- 18 Now David had run away and escaped. He went to Samuel in Ramah and told him everything that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth.
- 19 It was reported to Saul saying, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."
- 20 So Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw a company of prophets prophesying with Samuel standing there as their leader, the spirit of God came upon Saul's messengers, and they also prophesied.
- 21 When it was reported to Saul, he sent more messengers, but they prophesied too. So Saul sent messengers a third time, but they also prophesied.
- 22 Finally Saul himself went to Ramah. When he arrived at the large cistern that is in Secu, he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" They said, "At Naioth in Ramah."
- 23 So Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. The Spirit of God came upon him as well, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.
- 24 He even stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel. He lay there naked all that day and night. (For that reason it is asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?")

### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) Several of the Psalms written by David have headings or titles that link them to a specific event in David's life. These Psalms have been included in the reading in their respective contexts. In chronological order, these Psalms are:
  - Psalm 59—when Saul sent men to watch David's house in order to kill him.
  - Psalm 56—when the Philistines captured him in Gath.
  - Psalm 34—when David pretended to be insane before Abimelech.
  - Psalm 142—when David was "in the cave" (assumed to be the Cave of Adullam mentioned in 1 Sam 22:1–2).
  - Psalm 52—when Doeg the Edomite betrayed David to Saul.
  - Psalm 54—after David was betrayed by the Ziphites.
  - Psalm 57—when David fled from Saul "into the cave" (assumed to be the caves of En Gedi in 1 Sam 23:26–24:2).
  - Psalm 51—when Nathan confronted David about his affair with Bathsheba.
  - Psalm 60—when David fought against Aram Naharaim, Aram Zobah and Edom (2 Sam 8:1–14; 10:16; 1 Chr 18:1–13).
  - Psalm 18—when God had rescued David from the power of all his enemies, including Saul (placed after David's wars).
  - Psalm 63—when David was in the Judean wilderness (assumed to be David's flight toward the Jordan during Absalom's revolt).
  - Psalm 3—when David fled from his son Absalom.
  
- 2) The following Psalms also having headings that link them to a specific event in David's life—however, there is not enough data to ensure certainty on a date:
  - Psalm 7—concerning a Benjaminite named Cush.
  - Psalm 30—a psalm which was used at the dedication of the "house" (often assumed to refer to the temple).

**A Sad Parting (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)****1 Samuel 20****David Questions Jonathan**

- 1 David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came to Jonathan and asked, “What have I done? What is my offense? How have I sinned before your father? For he is seeking my life!”
- 2 Jonathan said to him, “By no means are you going to die! My father does nothing large or small without making me aware of it. Why would my father hide this matter from me? It just won’t happen!”
- 3 Taking an oath, David again said, “Your father is very much aware of the fact that I have found favor with you, and he has thought, ‘Don’t let Jonathan know about this, or he will be upset.’ But as surely as the LORD lives and you live, there is about one step between me and death!”
- 4 Jonathan replied to David, “Tell me what I can do for you.”

**The Test**

- 5 David said to Jonathan, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am certainly expected to join the king for a meal. You must send me away so I can hide in the field until the third evening from now.
- 6 If your father happens to miss me, you should say, ‘David urgently requested me to let him go to his city Bethlehem, for there is an annual sacrifice there for his entire family.’
- 7 If he should then say, ‘That’s fine,’ then your servant is safe. But if he becomes very angry, be assured that he has decided to harm me.
- 8 You must be loyal to your servant, for you have made a covenant with your servant in the LORD’s name. If I am guilty, you yourself kill me! Why bother taking me to your father?”
- 9 Jonathan said, “Far be it from you to suggest this! If I were at all aware that my father had decided to harm you, wouldn’t I tell you about it?”
- 10 David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?”
- 11 Jonathan said to David, “Come on. Let’s go out to the field.” When the two of them had gone out into the field,

**Jonathan’s Covenant With David**

- 12 Jonathan said to David, “The LORD God of Israel is my witness. I will feel out my father about this time the day after tomorrow. If he is favorably inclined toward David, will I not then send word to you and let you know?
- 13 But if my father intends to do you harm, may the LORD do all this and more to Jonathan, if I don’t let you know and send word to you so you can go safely on your way. May the LORD be with you, as he was with my father.
- 14 While I am still alive, extend to me the loyalty of the LORD, or else I will die!
- 15 Don’t ever cut off your loyalty to my family, not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth
- 16 and called David’s enemies to account.” So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David.
- 17 Jonathan once again took an oath with David, because he loved him. In fact Jonathan loved him as much as he did his own life.

**Jonathan Arranges to Convey the Outcome of the Test**

- 18 Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty.
- 19 On the third day you should go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself the day this all started. Stay near the stone Ezel.
- 20 I will shoot three arrows near it, as though I were shooting at a target.
- 21 When I send a boy after them, I will say, “Go and find the arrows.” If I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them,’ then come back. For as surely as the LORD lives, you will be safe and there will no problem.
- 22 But if I say to the boy, “Look, the arrows are on the other side of you,’ get away. For in that case the LORD has sent you away.
- 23 With regard to the matter that you and I discussed, the LORD is the witness between us forever!”
- 24a So David hid in the field.

**Saul Tries to Kill Jonathan**

- 24b When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat his meal.
- 25 The king sat down in his usual place by the wall, with Jonathan opposite him and Abner at his side. But David’s place was vacant.
- 26 However, Saul said nothing about it that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to make him ceremonially unclean. Yes, he must be unclean.”
- 27 But the next morning, the second day of the new moon, David’s place was still vacant. So Saul said to his son Jonathan, “Why has Jesse’s son not come to the meal yesterday or today?”
- 28 Jonathan replied to Saul, “David urgently requested that he be allowed to go to Bethlehem.
- 29 He said, ‘Permit me to go, for we are having a family sacrifice in the city, and my brother urged me to be there. So now, if I have found favor with you, let me go to see my brothers.’ For that reason he has not come to the king’s table.”

30 Saul became angry with Jonathan and said to him, “You stupid traitor! Don’t I realize that to your own disgrace and to the disgrace of your mother’s nakedness you have chosen this son of Jesse?”

31 For as long as this son of Jesse is alive on the earth, you and your kingdom will not be established. Now, send some men and bring him to me. For he is as good as dead!”

32 Jonathan responded to his father Saul, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?”

33 Then Saul threw his spear at Jonathan in order to strike him down. So Jonathan was convinced that his father had decided to kill David.

### **Jonathan and David’s Parting**

34 Jonathan got up from the table enraged. He did not eat any food on that second day of the new moon, for he was upset that his father had humiliated David.

35 The next morning Jonathan, along with a young servant, went out to the field to meet David.

36 He said to his servant, “Run, find the arrows that I am about to shoot.” As the servant ran, Jonathan shot the arrow beyond him.

37 When the servant came to the place where Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan called out to the servant, “Isn’t the arrow further beyond you?”

38 Jonathan called out to the servant, “Hurry! Go faster! Don’t delay!” Jonathan’s servant retrieved the arrow and came back to his master.

39 (Now the servant did not understand any of this. Only Jonathan and David knew what was going on.)

40 Then Jonathan gave his equipment to the servant who was with him. He said to him, “Go, take these things back to the city.”

41 When the servant had left, David got up from beside the mound, knelt with his face to the ground, and bowed three times. Then they kissed each other and they both wept, especially David.

42 Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, for the two of us have sworn together in the name of the LORD saying, ‘The LORD will be between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.’” Then David got up and left, while Jonathan went back to the city.

## Ahimelech the Priest Helps David (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 21:1–12

### **David and His Men Eat the Holy Bread**

1 David went to Ahimelech the priest in Nob. Ahimelech was shaking with fear when he met David, and said to him, “Why are you by yourself with no one accompanying you?”

2 David replied to Ahimelech the priest, “The king instructed me to do something, but he said to me, ‘Don’t let anyone know the reason I am sending you or the instructions I have given you.’ I have told my soldiers to wait at a certain place.

3 Now what do you have at your disposal? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever can be found.”

4 The priest replied to David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread at my disposal. Only holy bread is available, and then only if your soldiers have abstained from sexual relations with women.”

5 David said to the priest, “Certainly women have been kept away from us, just as on previous occasions when I have set out. The soldiers’ equipment is holy, even on an ordinary journey. How much more so will they be holy today, along with their equipment!”

6 So the priest gave him holy bread, for there was no bread there other than the bread of the Presence. It had been removed from before the LORD in order to replace it with hot bread on the day it had been taken away. [\[Matt 12:3–4\]](#)

7 (One of Saul’s servants was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, who was in charge of Saul’s shepherds.)

8 David said to Ahimelech, “Is there no sword or spear here at your disposal? I don’t have my own sword or equipment in hand due to the urgency of the king’s instructions.”

9 The priest replied, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the valley of Elah, is wrapped in a garment behind the ephod. If you wish, take it for yourself. Other than that, there’s nothing here.” David said, “There’s nothing like it! Give it to me!”

### **David Flees to Gath**

10 So on that day David arose and fled from Saul. He went to King Achish of Gath.

11 The servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one that they sing about when they dance, saying,

‘Saul struck down his thousands,  
But David his tens of thousands?’”

12 David thought about what they said and was very afraid of King Achish of Gath.

**In God I Trust (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

Psalm 56

*For the music director; according to the yonath-elem-rechovim style;***A prayer of David, written when the Philistines captured him in Gath.**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, for men are attacking me!  
All day long hostile enemies are tormenting me.
- 2 Those who anticipate my defeat attack me all day long.  
Indeed, many are fighting against me, O Exalted One.
- 3 When I am afraid,  
I trust in you.
- 4 In God—I boast in his promise—  
in God I trust, I am not afraid.  
What can mere men do to me?
- 5 All day long they cause me trouble;  
they make a habit of plotting my demise.
- 6 They stalk and lurk;  
they watch my every step,  
as they prepare to take my life.
- 7 Because they are bent on violence, do not let them escape!  
In your anger bring down the nations, O God!
- 8 You keep track of my misery.  
Put my tears in your leather container!  
Are they not recorded in your scroll?
- 9 My enemies will turn back when I cry out to you for help;  
I know that God is on my side.
- 10 In God—I boast in his promise—  
in the LORD—I boast in his promise—
- 11 in God I trust, I am not afraid.  
What can mere men do to me?
- 12 I am obligated to fulfill the vows I made to you, O God;  
I will give you the thank-offerings you deserve,  
13 when you deliver my life from death.  
You keep my feet from stumbling,  
so that I might serve God as I enjoy life.

**David Escapes Gath By Feigning Insanity (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

1 Samuel 21:13–15

- 13 He altered his behavior in their presence. Since he was in their power, he pretended to be insane, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard.
- 14 Achish said to his servants, “Look at this madman! Why did you bring him to me?”
- 15 Do I have a shortage of fools, that you have brought me this man to display his insanity in front of me? Should this man enter my house?”

**I Will Bless the Lord at All Times (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

Psalm 34

**Written by David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, causing the king to send him away.**

- 1 I will praise the LORD at all times;  
my mouth will continually praise him.
- 2 I will boast in the LORD;  
let the oppressed hear and rejoice!
- 3 Magnify the LORD with me!  
Let’s praise his name together!
- 4 I sought the LORD’s help and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 Those who look to him for help are happy;

- their faces are not ashamed.
- 6 This oppressed man cried out and the LORD heard;  
he saved him from all his troubles.
- 7 The LORD's angel camps around  
the LORD's loyal followers and delivers them.
- 8 Taste and see that the LORD is good! [cf. [1 Pet 2:3](#)]  
How blessed is the one who takes shelter in him!
- 9 Remain loyal to the LORD, you chosen people of his,  
for his loyal followers lack nothing!
- 10 Even young lions sometimes lack food and are hungry,  
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- 11 Come children! Listen to me!  
I will teach you what it means to fear the LORD.
- 12 Do you want to really live?  
Would you love to live a long, happy life?
- 13 Then make sure you don't speak evil words  
or use deceptive speech!
- 14 Turn away from evil and do what is right!  
Strive for peace and promote it!
- 15 The LORD pays attention to the godly  
and hears their cry for help.
- 16 But the LORD opposes evildoers  
and wipes out all memory of them from the earth. [[1 Pet 3:10–12](#)]
- 17 The godly cry out and the LORD hears;  
he saves them from all their troubles.
- 18 The LORD is near the brokenhearted;  
he delivers those who are discouraged.
- 19 The godly face many dangers,  
but the LORD saves them from each one of them.
- 20 He protects all his bones;  
not one of them is broken. [[John 19:36](#); cf. [Exod 12:46](#); [Num 9:12](#)]
- 21 Evil people self-destruct;  
those who hate the godly are punished.
- 22 The LORD rescues his servants;  
all who take shelter in him escape punishment.

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## The Cave of Adullam (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 22:1–2

- 1 So David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and the rest of his father's family learned about it, they went down there to him.
- 2 All those who were in trouble or owed someone money or were discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. He had about four hundred men with him.

## You Are My Refuge (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

Psalm 142

**A well-written song by David, when he was in the cave; a prayer.**

- 1 To the LORD I cry out;  
to the LORD I plead for mercy.
- 2 I pour out my lament before him;  
I tell him about my troubles.
- 3 Even when my strength leaves me,  
you watch my footsteps.  
In the path where I walk  
they have hidden a trap for me.
- 4 Look to the right and see!  
No one cares about me.  
I have nowhere to run;  
no one is concerned about my life.
- 5 I cry out to you, O LORD;  
I say, "You are my shelter,  
my security in the land of the living."
- 6 Listen to my cry for help,  
for I am in serious trouble!  
Rescue me from those who chase me,  
for they are stronger than I am.
- 7 Free me from prison,  
that I may give thanks to your name.  
Because of me the godly will assemble,  
for you will vindicate me.

## Saul Slaughters the Priests of Nob (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 22:3–23

**David Moves His Parents to Safety in Moab**

3 Then David went from there to Mizpah in Moab, where he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother stay with you until I know what God is going to do for me."

4 So he had them stay with the king of Moab; they stayed with him the whole time that David was in the stronghold.

5 Then Gad the prophet said to David, "Don't stay in the stronghold. Go to the land of Judah." So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

**Saul Complains of Treachery**

6 But Saul found out the whereabouts of David and the men who were with him. Now Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree at an elevated location with his spear in hand and all his servants stationed around him.

7 Saul said to his servants who were stationed around him, "Listen up, you Benjaminites! Is Jesse's son giving fields and vineyards to all of you? Or is he making all of you commanders and officers?"

8 For all of you have conspired against me! No one informs me when my own son makes an agreement with this son of Jesse! Not one of you feels sorry for me or informs me that my own son has commissioned my own servant to hide in ambush against me, as is the case today!"

9 But Doeg the Edomite, who had stationed himself with the servants of Saul, replied, "I saw this son of Jesse come to Ahimelech son of Ahitub at Nob.

10 He inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions. He also gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

**Saul Sends for the Priests of Nob**

11 Then the king arranged for a meeting with the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and all the priests of his father's house who were at Nob. They all came to the king.

12 Then Saul said, "Listen, son of Ahitub." He replied, "Here I am, my lord."

13 Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and this son of Jesse? You gave him bread and a sword and inquired of God on his behalf, so that he opposes me and waits in ambush, as is the case today!"

14 Ahimelech replied to the king, "Who among all your servants is faithful like David? He is the king's son-in-law, the leader of your bodyguard, and honored in your house!

15 Was it just today that I began to inquire of God on his behalf? Far be it from me! The king should not accuse his servant or any of my father's house. For your servant is not aware of all this—not in whole or in part!"

**Saul Slaughters the Priests and the Entire City of Nob**

16 But the king said, "You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house!

17 Then the king said to the messengers who were stationed beside him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, for they too have sided with David! They knew he was fleeing, but they did not inform me." But the king's servants refused to harm the priests of the LORD.

18 Then the king said to Doeg, "You turn and strike down the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the priests. He killed on that day eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.

19 As for Nob, the city of the priests, he struck down with the sword men and women, children and infants, oxen, donkeys, and sheep—all with the sword.

**Abiathar Escapes to David**

20 But one of the sons of Ahimelech son of Ahitub escaped and fled to David. His name was Abiathar.

21 Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD.

22 Then David said to Abiathar, "I knew that day when Doeg the Edomite was there that he would certainly tell Saul! I am guilty of all the deaths in your father's house!

23 Stay with me. Don't be afraid! Whoever seeks my life is seeking your life as well. You are secure with me."

**The Steadfast Love of God Endures (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)**

## Psalm 52

*For the music director;*

**A well-written song by David. It was written when Doeg the Edomite went and informed Saul: "David has arrived at the home of Ahimelech."**

- 1 Why do you boast about your evil plans, O powerful man?  
God's loyal love protects me all day long!
- 2 Your tongue carries out your destructive plans;  
it is as effective as a sharp razor, O deceiver.
- 3 You love evil more than good,  
lies more than speaking the truth. (Selah)
- 4 You love to use all the words that destroy,  
and the tongue that deceives.
- 5 Yet God will make you a permanent heap of ruins.  
He will scoop you up and remove you from your home;  
he will uproot you from the land of the living. (Selah)
- 6 When the godly see this, they will be filled with awe,  
and will mock the evildoer, saying:
- 7 "Look, here is the man who would not make God his protector!  
He trusted in his great wealth  
and was confident about his plans to destroy others."
- 8 But I am like a flourishing olive tree in the house of God;  
I continually trust in God's loyal love.
- 9 I will continually thank you when you execute judgment;  
I will rely on you, for your loyal followers know you are good.

## No Good Deed (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 23:1–13

1 They told David, “The Philistines are fighting in Keilah and are looting the threshing floors.”

2 So David asked the LORD, “Should I go and strike down these Philistines?” The LORD said to David, “Go, strike down the Philistines and deliver Keilah.”

3 But David’s men said to him, “We are afraid while we are still here in Judah! What will it be like if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?”

4 So David asked the LORD once again. But again the LORD replied, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.”

5 So David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines. He took away their cattle and thoroughly defeated them. David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 Now when Abiathar son of Ahimelech had fled to David at Keilah, he had brought with him an ephod.

7 When Saul was told that David had come to Keilah, Saul said, “God has delivered him into my hand, for he has boxed himself into a corner by entering a city with two barred gates.”

8 So Saul mustered all his army to go down to Keilah and besiege David and his men.

9 When David realized that Saul was planning to harm him, he told Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod!”

10 Then David said, “O LORD God of Israel, your servant has clearly heard that Saul is planning to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me.

11 Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, please inform your servant!” Then the LORD said, “He will come down.”

12 David asked, “Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me and my men into Saul’s hand?” The LORD said, “They will deliver you over.”

13 So David and his men, who numbered about six hundred, set out and left Keilah; they moved around from one place to another. When told that David had escaped from Keilah, Saul called a halt to his expedition.

## The Wilderness of Ziph (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 23:14–25

### David Hides in the Wilderness of Ziph

14 David stayed in the strongholds that were in the desert and in the hill country of the desert of Ziph. Saul looked for him all the time, but God did not deliver David into his hand.

15 David realized that Saul had come out to seek his life; at that time David was in Horesh in the desert of Ziph.

### Jonathan Visits David at Horesh

16 Then Jonathan son of Saul left and went to David at Horesh. He encouraged him through God.

17 He said to him, “Don’t be afraid! For the hand of my father Saul cannot find you. You will rule over Israel, and I will be your second in command. Even my father Saul realizes this.”

18 When the two of them had made a covenant before the LORD, David stayed on at Horesh, but Jonathan went to his house.

### The Ziphites Betray David

19 Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Isn’t David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh on the hill of Hakilah, south of Jeshimon?”

20 Now at your own discretion, O king, come down. Delivering him into the king’s hand will be our responsibility.”

21 Saul replied, “May you be blessed by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me.

22 Go and make further arrangements. Determine precisely where he is and who has seen him there, for I am told that he is extremely cunning.

23 Locate precisely all the places where he hides and return to me with dependable information. Then I will go with you. If he is in the land, I will find him among all the thousands of Judah.”

24 So they left and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the desert of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon.

25 Saul and his men went to look for him. But David was informed and went down to the rock and stayed in the desert of Maon.

When Saul heard about it, he pursued David in the desert of Maon.

## The Lord Upholds My Life (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

Psalm 54

*For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments;*

**A well-written song by David. It was written when the Ziphites came and informed Saul: "David is hiding with us."**

- 1 O God, deliver me by your name!  
Vindicate me by your power!
- 2 O God, listen to my prayer!  
Pay attention to what I say!
- 3 For foreigners attack me;  
ruthless men, who do not respect God, seek my life. (Selah)
- 4 Look, God is my deliverer!  
The Lord is among those who support me.
- 5 May those who wait to ambush me be repaid for their evil!  
As a demonstration of your faithfulness, destroy them!
- 6 With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you!  
I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good!
- 7 Surely he rescues me from all trouble,  
and I triumph over my enemies.

## The Strongholds of En Gedi (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 23:26–29

26 Saul went on one side of the mountain, while David and his men went on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, but Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men so they could capture them.

27 But a messenger came to Saul saying, "Come quickly, for the Philistines have raided the land!"

28 So Saul stopped pursuing David and went to confront the Philistines. Therefore that place is called Sela Hammahlekoth.

29 Then David went up from there and stayed in the strongholds of En Gedi.

## Let Your Glory Be Over All the Earth (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

Psalm 57

*For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style;*

**A prayer of David, written when he fled from Saul into the cave.**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God! Have mercy on me!  
For in you I have taken shelter.  
In the shadow of your wings I take shelter  
until trouble passes.
- 2 I cry out for help to the sovereign God,  
to the God who vindicates me.
- 3 May he send help from heaven and deliver me  
from my enemies who hurl insults! (Selah)  
May God send his loyal love and faithfulness!
- 4 I am surrounded by lions;  
I lie down among those who want to devour me;  
men whose teeth are spears and arrows,  
whose tongues are a sharp sword.
- 5 Rise up above the sky, O God!  
May your splendor cover the whole earth!
- 6 They have prepared a net to trap me;  
I am discouraged.  
They have dug a pit for me.  
They will fall into it! (Selah)
- 7 I am determined, O God! I am determined!  
I will sing and praise you!
- 8 Awake, my soul!  
Awake, O stringed instrument and harp!  
I will wake up at dawn!

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 9  | I will give you thanks before the nations, O Master!<br>I will sing praises to you before foreigners! |
| 10 | For your loyal love extends beyond the sky,<br>and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.              |
| 11 | Rise up above the sky, O God!<br>May your splendor cover the whole earth!                             |

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## David Spares Saul's Life (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

### 1 Samuel 24

- 1 When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, they told him, "Look, David is in the desert of En Gedi."
- 2 So Saul took three thousand select men from all Israel and went to find David and his men in the region of the rocks of the mountain goats.
- 3 He came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave. Saul went into it to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the recesses of the cave.
- 4 David's men said to him, "This is the day about which the LORD said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you can do to him whatever seems appropriate to you.'" So David got up and quietly cut off an edge of Saul's robe.
- 5 Afterward David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off an edge of Saul's robe.
- 6 He said to his men, "May the LORD keep me far away from doing such a thing to my lord, who is the LORD's chosen one, by extending my hand against him. After all, he is the LORD's chosen one."
- 7 David restrained his men with these words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and started down the road.
- 8 Afterward David got up and went out of the cave. He called out after Saul, "My lord, O king!" When Saul looked behind him, David kneeled down and bowed with his face to the ground.
- 9 David said to Saul, "Why do you pay attention when men say, 'David is seeking to do you harm'?"
- 10 Today your own eyes see how the LORD delivered you—this very day—into my hands in the cave. Some told me to kill you, but I had pity on you and said, 'I will not extend my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's chosen one.'
- 11 Look, my father, and see the edge of your robe in my hand! When I cut off the edge of your robe, I didn't kill you. So realize and understand that I am not planning evil or rebellion. Even though I have not sinned against you, you are waiting in ambush to take my life.
- 12 May the LORD judge between the two of us, and may the LORD vindicate me over you, but my hand will not be against you.
- 13 It's like the old proverb says: 'From evil people evil proceeds.' But my hand will not be against you.
- 14 Who has the king of Israel come out after? Who is it that you are pursuing? A dead dog? A single flea?
- 15 May the LORD be our judge and arbiter. May he see and arbitrate my case and deliver me from your hands!"
- 16 When David finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" Then Saul wept loudly.
- 17 He said to David, "You are more innocent than I, for you have treated me well, even though I have tried to harm you!
- 18 You have explained today how you have treated me well. The LORD delivered me into your hand, but you did not kill me.
- 19 Now if a man finds his enemy, does he send him on his way in good shape? May the LORD repay you with good this day for what you have done to me.
- 20 Now look, I realize that you will in fact be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand.
- 21 So now swear to me in the LORD's name that you will not kill my descendants after me or destroy my name from the house of my father."
- 22 David promised Saul this on oath. Then Saul went to his house, and David and his men went up to the stronghold.

## Mighty Warriors Join David (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

### 1 Chronicles 12:8–18

- 8 Some of the Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the desert. They were warriors who were trained for battle; they carried shields and spears. They were as fierce as lions and could run as quickly as gazelles across the hills.
- 9 Ezer was the leader, Obadiah the second in command, Eliab the third,
- 10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,
- 11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,
- 12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,
- 13 Jeremiah the tenth, and Machbannai the eleventh.
- 14 These Gadites were military leaders; the least led a hundred men, the greatest a thousand.
- 15 They crossed the Jordan River in the first month, when it was overflowing its banks, and routed those living in all the valleys to the east and west.
- 16 Some from Benjamin and Judah also came to David's stronghold.
- 17 David went out to meet them and said, "If you come to me in peace and want to help me, then I will make an alliance with you. But if you come to betray me to my enemies when I have not harmed you, may the God of our ancestors take notice and judge!"
- 18 But a spirit empowered Amasai, the leader of the thirty warriors, and he said: "We are yours, O David! We support you, O son of Jesse! May you greatly prosper! May those who help you prosper! Indeed your God helps you!" So David accepted them and made them leaders of raiding bands.

**David and Abigail (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)****1 Samuel 25****The Death of Samuel**

1 Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned him. They buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David left and went down to the desert of Paran.

**Nabal and Abigail**

2 There was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. This man was very wealthy; he owned three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. At that time he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 The man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. She was both wise and beautiful, but the man was harsh and his deeds were evil. He was a Calebite.

**Nabal Treats David's Men With Contempt**

4 When David heard in the desert that Nabal was shearing his sheep,

5 he sent ten servants, saying to them, "Go up to Carmel to see Nabal and give him greetings in my name.

6 Then you will say to my brother, "Peace to you and your house! Peace to all that is yours!

7 Now I hear that they are shearing sheep for you. When your shepherds were with us, we neither insulted them nor harmed them the whole time they were in Carmel.

8 Ask your own servants; they can tell you! May my servants find favor in your sight, for we have come at the time of a holiday. Please provide us—your servants and your son David—with whatever you can spare."

9 So David's servants went and spoke all these words to Nabal in David's name. Then they paused.

10 But Nabal responded to David's servants, "Who is David, and who is this son of Jesse? This is a time when many servants are breaking away from their masters!

11 Should I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers and give them to these men? I don't even know where they came from!"

**David is Furious**

12 So David's servants went on their way. When they had returned, they came and told David all these things.

13 Then David instructed his men, "Each of you strap on your sword!" So each one strapped on his sword, and David also strapped on his sword. About four hundred men followed David up, while two hundred stayed behind with the equipment.

**Nabal's Servants Tell Abigail**

14 But one of the servants told Nabal's wife Abigail, "David sent messengers from the desert to greet our lord, but he screamed at them.

15 These men were very good to us. They did not insult us, nor did we sustain any loss during the entire time we were together in the field.

16 Both night and day they were a protective wall for us the entire time we were with them, while we were tending our flocks.

17 Now be aware of this, and see what you can do. For disaster has been planned for our lord and his entire household. He is such a wicked person that no one tells him anything!"

**Abigail Intervenes**

18 So Abigail quickly took two hundred loaves of bread, two containers of wine, five prepared sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred bunches of raisins, and two hundred lumps of pressed figs. She loaded them on donkeys

19 and said to her servants, "Go on ahead of me. I will come after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

20 Riding on her donkey, she went down under cover of the mountain. David and his men were coming down to meet her, and she encountered them.

21 Now David had been thinking, "In vain I guarded everything that belonged to this man in the desert. I didn't take anything from him. But he has repaid my good with evil.

22 God will severely punish David, if I leave alive until morning even one male from all those who belong to him!"

23 When Abigail saw David, she got down quickly from the donkey, threw herself down before David, and bowed to the ground.

24 Falling at his feet, she said, "My lord, I accept all the guilt! But please let your female servant speak with my lord! Please listen to the words of your servant!

25 My lord should not pay attention to this wicked man Nabal. He simply lives up to his name! His name means 'fool,' and he is indeed foolish! But I, your servant, did not see the servants my lord sent.

26 "Now, my lord, as surely as the LORD lives and as surely as you live, it is the LORD who has kept you from shedding blood and taking matters into your own hands. Now may your enemies and those who seek to harm my lord be like Nabal.

27 Now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the servants who follow my lord.

28 Please forgive the sin of your servant, for the LORD will certainly establish the house of my lord, because my lord fights the battles

of the LORD. May no evil be found in you all your days!

29 When someone sets out to chase you and to take your life, the life of my lord will be wrapped securely in the bag of the living by the LORD your God. But he will sling away the lives of your enemies from the sling's pocket!

30 The LORD will do for my lord everything that he promised you, and he will make you a leader over Israel.

31 Your conscience will not be overwhelmed with guilt for having poured out innocent blood and for having taken matters into your own hands. When the LORD has granted my lord success, please remember your servant."

32 Then David said to Abigail, "Praised be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you this day to meet me!

33 Praised be your good judgment! May you yourself be rewarded for having prevented me this day from shedding blood and taking matters into my own hands!

34 Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives—he who has prevented me from harming you—if you had not come so quickly to meet me, by morning's light not even one male belonging to Nabal would have remained alive!"

35 Then David took from her hand what she had brought to him. He said to her, "Go back to your home in peace. Be assured that I have listened to you and responded favorably."

### God Strikes Nabal

36 When Abigail went back to Nabal, he was holding a banquet in his house like that of the king. Nabal was having a good time and was very intoxicated. She told him absolutely nothing until morning's light.

37 In the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him about these matters. He had a stroke and was paralyzed.

38 After about ten days the LORD struck Nabal down and he died.

### David Marries Abigail

39 When David heard that Nabal had died, he said, "Praised be the LORD who has vindicated me and avenged the insult that I suffered from Nabal! The LORD has kept his servant from doing evil, and he has repaid Nabal for his evil deeds." Then David sent word to Abigail and asked her to become his wife.

40 So the servants of David went to Abigail at Carmel and said to her, "David has sent us to you to bring you back to be his wife."

41 She arose, bowed her face toward the ground, and said, "Your female servant, like a lowly servant, will wash the feet of the servants of my lord."

42 Then Abigail quickly went and mounted her donkey, with five of her female servants accompanying her. She followed David's messengers and became his wife.

43 David had also married Ahinoam from Jezreel; the two of them became his wives.

44 (Now Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was from Gallim.)

## David Again Spares Saul's Life (c. 1022 – c. 1012 BC)

1 Samuel 26

### The Ziphites Betray David a Second Time

1 The Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Isn't David hiding on the hill of Hakilah near Jeshimon?"

2 So Saul arose and went down to the desert of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand select men of Israel, to look for David in the desert of Ziph.

3a Saul camped by the road on the hill of Hakilah near Jeshimon, but David was staying in the desert.

### David Sneaks Into Saul's Camp

3b When he realized that Saul had come to the desert to find him,

4 David sent scouts and verified that Saul had indeed arrived.

5 So David set out and went to the place where Saul was camped. David saw the place where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the general in command of his army, were sleeping. Now Saul was lying in the entrenchment, and the army was camped all around him.

6 David said to Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" Abishai replied, "I will go down with you."

7 So David and Abishai approached the army at night and found Saul lying asleep in the entrenchment with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. Abner and the army were lying all around him.

8 Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me drive the spear right through him into the ground with one swift jab! A second jab won't be necessary!"

9 But David said to Abishai, "Don't kill him! Who can extend his hand against the LORD's chosen one and remain guiltless?"

10 David went on to say, "As the LORD lives, the LORD himself will strike him down. Either his day will come and he will die, or he will go down into battle and be swept away.

11 But may the LORD prevent me from extending my hand against the LORD's chosen one! Now take the spear by Saul's head and the jug of water, and let's get out of here!"

12 So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got out of there. No one saw them or was aware of their

presence or woke up. All of them were asleep, for the LORD had caused a deep sleep to fall on them.

#### **David Confronts Abner and Saul**

13 Then David crossed to the other side and stood on the top of the hill some distance away; there was a considerable distance between them.

14 David called to the army and to Abner son of Ner, “Won’t you answer, Abner?” Abner replied, “Who are you, that you have called to the king?”

15 David said to Abner, “Aren’t you a man? After all, who is like you in Israel? Why then haven’t you protected your lord the king? One of the soldiers came to kill your lord the king.

16 This failure on your part isn’t good! As surely as the LORD lives, you people who have not protected your lord, the LORD’s chosen one, are as good as dead! Now look where the king’s spear and the jug of water that was by his head are!”

17 When Saul recognized David’s voice, he said, “Is that your voice, my son David?” David replied, “Yes, it’s my voice, my lord the king.”

18 He went on to say, “Why is my lord chasing his servant? What have I done? What wrong have I done?”

19 So let my lord the king now listen to the words of his servant. If the LORD has incited you against me, may he take delight in an offering. But if men have instigated this, may they be cursed before the LORD! For they have driven me away this day from being united with the LORD’s inheritance, saying, ‘Go on, serve other gods!’

20 Now don’t let my blood fall to the ground away from the LORD’s presence, for the king of Israel has gone out to look for a flea the way one looks for a partridge in the hill country.”

#### **Saul’s Last Words to David**

21 Saul replied, “I have sinned. Come back, my son David. I won’t harm you, for you treated my life with value this day. I have behaved foolishly and have made a very terrible mistake!”

22 David replied, “Here is the king’s spear! Let one of your servants cross over and get it.

23 The LORD rewards each man for his integrity and loyalty. Even though today the LORD delivered you into my hand, I was not willing to extend my hand against the LORD’s chosen one.

24 In the same way that I valued your life this day, may the LORD value my life and deliver me from all danger.”

25 Saul replied to David, “May you be rewarded, my son David! You will without question be successful!” So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

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## David Hides With the Philistines (c. 1011 – c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 27:1–12; 1 Chronicles 12:1–7

### David Does Not Trust Saul's Change of Heart

1 Sam 27:1 David thought to himself, "One of these days I'm going to be swept away by the hand of Saul! There is nothing better for me than to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of searching for me through all the territory of Israel and I will escape from his hand."

2 So David left and crossed over to King Achish son of Maach of Gath accompanied by his six hundred men.

3 David settled with Achish in Gath, along with his men and their families. David had with him his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's widow.

4 When Saul learned that David had fled to Gath, he did not mount a new search for him.

5 David said to Achish, "If I have found favor with you, let me be given a place in one of the country towns so that I can live there. Why should your servant settle in the royal city with you?"

6 So Achish gave him Ziklag on that day. (For that reason Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah until this very day.)

7 The length of time that David lived in the Philistine countryside was a year and four months.

### Saul's Own Kinsmen Join David in Ziklag

1 Chr 12:1 These were the men who joined David in Ziklag, when he was banished from the presence of Saul son of Kish. (They were among the warriors who assisted him in battle.)

2 They were armed with bows and could shoot arrows or sling stones right or left-handed. They were fellow tribesmen of Saul from Benjamin.) These were:

3 Ahiezer, the leader, and Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite; Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Berachah, Jehu the Anathothite,

4 Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, one of the thirty warriors and their leader, Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad the Gederathite,

5 Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Haruphite,

6 Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, who were Korahites,

7 and Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham from Gedor.

### David Tricks Achish Again

1 Sam 27:8 Then David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. (They had been living in that land for a long time, from the approach to Shur as far as the land of Egypt.)

9 When David would attack a district, he would leave neither man nor woman alive. He would take sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing and would then go back to Achish.

10 When Achish would ask, "Where did you raid today?" David would say, "The Negev of Judah" or "The Negev of Jeharmel" or "The Negev of the Kenites."

11 Neither man nor woman would David leave alive so as to bring them back to Gath. He was thinking, "This way they can't tell on us, saying, 'This is what David did.'" Such was his practice the entire time that he lived in the country of the Philistines.

12 So Achish trusted David, thinking to himself, "He is really hated among his own people in Israel! From now on he will be my servant."

## The Philistines Prepare for War With Israel (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 28:1–2; 29:1–11; 1 Chronicles 12:19–22

### Achish Makes David His Personal Bodyguard

1 Sam 28:1 In those days the Philistines gathered their troops for war in order to fight Israel. Achish said to David, "You should fully understand that you and your men must go with me into the battle."

2 David replied to Achish, "That being the case, you will come to know what your servant can do!" Achish said to David, "Then I will make you my bodyguard from now on."

### The Commanders of the Philistines Do Not Trust David

1 Sam 29:1 The Philistines assembled all their troops at Aphek, while Israel camped at the spring that is in Jezreel.

2 When the leaders of the Philistines were passing in review at the head of their units of hundreds and thousands, David and his men were passing in review in the rear with Achish.

3 The leaders of the Philistines asked, "What about these Hebrews?" Achish said to the leaders of the Philistines, "Isn't this David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me for quite some time? I have found no fault with him from the day of his defection until the present time!"

4 But the leaders of the Philistines became angry with him and said to him, "Send the man back! Let him return to the place that you assigned him! Don't let him go down with us into the battle, for he might become our adversary in the battle. What better way to please his lord than with the heads of these men?"

5 Isn't this David, of whom they sang as they danced,

'Saul has struck down his thousands,  
but David his tens of thousands?'

6 So Achish summoned David and said to him, "As surely as the LORD lives, you are an honest man, and I am glad to have you serving with me in the army. I have found no fault with you from the day that you first came to me until the present time. But in the opinion of the leaders, you are not reliable.

7 So turn and leave in peace. You must not do anything that the leaders of the Philistines consider improper!"

8 But David said to Achish, "What have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day that I first came into your presence until the present time, that I shouldn't go and fight the enemies of my lord the king?"

9 Achish replied to David, "I am convinced that you are as reliable as the angel of God! However, the leaders of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us in the battle.'

10 So get up early in the morning along with the servants of your lord who have come with you. When you get up early in the morning, as soon as it is light enough to see, leave."

11 So David and his men got up early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines, but the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

#### **Men from Manasseh Desert Saul to Join David**

1 Chr 12:19 Some men from Manasseh joined David when he went with the Philistines to fight against Saul. (But in the end they did not help the Philistines because, after taking counsel, the Philistine lords sent David away, saying: "It would be disastrous for us if he deserts to his master Saul.")

20 When David went to Ziklag, the men of Manasseh who joined him were Adnach, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, leaders of a thousand soldiers each in the tribe of Manasseh.

21 They helped David fight against raiding bands, for all of them were warriors and leaders in the army.

22 Each day men came to help David until his army became very large.

## Saul and the Medium of En-dor (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 28:3–25

#### **Saul Fears the Philistine Army**

4 The Philistines assembled; they came and camped at Shunem. Saul mustered all Israel and camped at Gilboa.

5 When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was absolutely terrified.

6 So Saul inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him—not by dreams nor by Urim nor by the prophets.

#### **Saul Goes to the Medium at En-dor**

3 (Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him, and they had buried him in Ramah, his *own* city. And Saul had expelled the mediums and the soothsayers from the land.)

7 So Saul instructed his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go to her and inquire of her." His servants replied to him, "There is a woman who is a medium in Endor."

8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothing and left, accompanied by two of his men. They came to the woman at night and said, "Use your ritual pit to conjure up for me the one I tell you."

9 But the woman said to him, "Look, you are aware of what Saul has done; he has removed the mediums and magicians from the land! Why are you trapping me so you can put me to death?"

10 But Saul swore an oath to her by the LORD, "As surely as the LORD lives, you will not incur guilt in this matter!"

11 The woman replied, "Who is it that I should bring up for you?" He said, "Bring up for me Samuel."

#### **Samuel Appears**

12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out loudly. The woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!"

13 The king said to her, "Don't be afraid! What have you seen?" The woman replied to Saul, "I have seen one like a god coming up from the ground!"

14 He said to her, "What about his appearance?" She said, "An old man is coming up! He is wrapped in a robe!" Then Saul realized it was Samuel, and he bowed his face toward the ground and kneeled down.

15 Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" Saul replied, "I am terribly troubled! The Philistines are fighting against me and God has turned away from me. He does not answer me—not by the prophets nor by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what I should do."

**Samuel's Final Prophecy**

16 Samuel said, "Why are you asking me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and has become your enemy?"

17 The LORD has done exactly as I prophesied! The LORD has torn the kingdom from your hand and has given it to your neighbor David!

18 Since you did not obey the LORD and did not carry out his fierce anger against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this thing to you today.

19 The LORD will hand you and Israel over to the Philistines! Tomorrow both you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also hand the army of Israel over to the Philistines!"

**Saul Still Refuses to Repent**

20 Saul quickly fell full length on the ground and was very afraid because of Samuel's words. He was completely drained of energy, not having eaten anything all that day and night.

21 When the woman came to Saul and saw how terrified he was, she said to him, "Your servant has done what you asked. I took my life into my own hands and did what you told me.

22 Now it's your turn to listen to your servant! Let me set before you a bit of bread so that you can eat. When you regain your strength, you can go on your way."

23 But he refused, saying, "I won't eat!" Both his servants and the woman urged him to eat, so he gave in. He got up from the ground and sat down on the bed.

24 Now the woman had a well-fed calf at her home that she quickly slaughtered. Taking some flour, she kneaded bread and baked it without leaven.

25 She brought it to Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they arose and left that same night.

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**Chronological Notes**

1) The order of events surrounding Saul's death follows the arrangement suggested by Bergen.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Bergen, "1, 2 Samuel," *New American Commentary*, 285.

## Ziklag is Raided by the Amalekites (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 30:1–25

### David Returns to Find Ziklag in Ruins

- 1 On the third day David and his men came to Ziklag. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They attacked Ziklag and burned it.
- 2 They took captive the women who were in it, from the youngest to the oldest, but they did not kill anyone. They simply carried them off and went on their way.
- 3 When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned. Their wives, sons, and daughters had been taken captive.
- 4 Then David and the men who were with him wept loudly until they could weep no more.
- 5 David's two wives had been taken captive—Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's widow.

### David Pursues the Raiders

- 6 David was very upset, for the men were thinking of stoning him; each man grieved bitterly over his sons and daughters. But David drew strength from the LORD his God.
- 7 Then David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.
- 8 David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Should I pursue this raiding band? Will I overtake them?" He said to him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them and carry out a rescue!"
- 9 So David went, accompanied by his six hundred men. When he came to the Wadi Besor, those who were in the rear stayed there.
- 10 David and four hundred men continued the pursuit, but two hundred men who were too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor stayed there.
- 11 Then they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David. They gave him bread to eat and water to drink.
- 12 They gave him a slice of pressed figs and two bunches of raisins to eat. This greatly refreshed him, for he had not eaten food or drunk water for three days and three nights.
- 13 David said to him, "To whom do you belong, and where are you from?" The young man said, "I am an Egyptian, the servant of an Amalekite man. My master abandoned me when I was ill for three days.
- 14 We conducted a raid on the Negev of the Kerethites, on the area of Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb. We burned Ziklag."
- 15 David said to him, "Can you take us down to this raiding party?" He said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to this raiding party."
- 16 So he took David down, and they found them spread out over the land. They were eating and drinking and enjoying themselves because of all the loot they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.

### David Defeats the Amalekites

- 17 But David struck them down from twilight until the following evening. None of them escaped, with the exception of four hundred young men who got away on camels.
- 18 David retrieved everything the Amalekites had taken; he also rescued his two wives.
- 19 There was nothing missing, whether small or great. He retrieved sons and daughters, the plunder, and everything else they had taken. David brought everything back.
- 20 David took all the flocks and herds and drove them in front of the rest of the animals. People were saying, "This is David's plunder!"

### David Shares With Those Who Stayed Behind

- 21 Then David approached the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to go with him, those whom they had left at the Wadi Besor. They went out to meet David and the people who were with him. When David approached the people, he asked how they were doing.
- 22 But all the evil and worthless men among those who had gone with David said, "Since they didn't go with us, we won't give them any of the loot we retrieved! They may take only their wives and children. Let them lead them away and be gone!"
- 23 But David said, "No! You shouldn't do this, my brothers. Look at what the LORD has given us! He has protected us and has delivered into our hands the raiding party that came against us.
- 24 Who will listen to you in this matter? The portion of the one who went down into the battle will be the same as the portion of the one who remained with the equipment! Let their portions be the same!"
- 25 From that time onward it was a binding ordinance for Israel, right up to the present time.

## Saul's Last Battle (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 31

1 Chronicles 10

1 Now the Philistines were fighting against Israel. The men of Israel fled from the Philistines and many of them fell dead on Mount Gilboa.

2 The Philistines stayed right on the heels of Saul and his sons.

1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel. The Israelites fled before the Philistines and many of them fell dead on Mount Gilboa.

2 The Philistines stayed right on the heels of Saul and his sons.

<p>They struck down Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua.  3 Saul himself was in the thick of the battle; the archers spotted him and wounded him severely.  4 Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and stab me with it! Otherwise these uncircumcised people will come, stab me, and torture me." But his armor bearer refused to do it, because he was very afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it.  5 When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his own sword and died with him.  6 So Saul, his three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men died together that day.  7 When the men of Israel who were in the valley and across the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned the cities and fled. The Philistines came and occupied them.  8 The next day, when the Philistines came to strip loot from the corpses, they discovered Saul and his three sons lying dead on Mount Gilboa.  9 They cut off Saul's head and stripped him of his armor. They sent messengers to announce the news in the temple of their idols and among their people throughout the surrounding land of the Philistines.  10 They placed Saul's armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and hung his corpse on the city wall of Beth Shan.  11 When the residents of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul,  12 all their warriors set out and traveled throughout the night. They took Saul's corpse and the corpses of his sons from the city wall of Beth Shan and went to Jabesh, where they burned them.  13 They took the bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh; then they fasted for seven days.</p>	<p>They struck down Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua.  3 The battle was thick around Saul; the archers spotted him and wounded him.  4 Saul told his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and stab me with it. Otherwise these uncircumcised people will come and torture me." But his armor bearer refused to do it, because he was very afraid. So Saul took the sword and fell on it.  5 When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died.  6 So Saul and his three sons died; his whole household died together.  7 When all the Israelites who were in the valley saw that the army had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. The Philistines came and occupied them.  8 The next day, when the Philistines came to strip loot from the corpses, they discovered Saul and his sons lying dead on Mount Gilboa.  9 They stripped his corpse, and then carried off his head and his armor. They sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines proclaiming the news to their idols and their people.  10 They placed his armor in the temple of their gods and hung his head in the temple of Dagon.  11 When all the residents of Jabesh Gilead heard about everything the Philistines had done to Saul,  12 all the warriors went and recovered the bodies of Saul and his sons and brought them to Jabesh.  They buried their remains under the oak tree in Jabesh and fasted for seven days.  13 So Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD and did not obey the LORD's instructions; he even tried to conjure up underworld spirits.  14 He did not seek the LORD's guidance, so the LORD killed him and transferred the kingdom to David son of Jesse.</p>
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### David Learns of Saul's Death (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 30:26–31; 2 Samuel 1:1–27; 4:4

#### Jonathan's Son Mephibosheth is Crippled

2 Sam 4:4 Now Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan arrived from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but in her haste to get away, he fell and was injured. Mephibosheth was his name.

#### David Gives Spoils of War to Judah in Gratitude

1 Sam 30:26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah who were his friends, saying, "Here's a gift for you from the looting of the LORD's enemies!"

27 The gift was for those in the following locations: for those in Bethel, Ramoth Negev, and Jattir;

28 for those in Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa,

29 and Racal; for those in the cities of the Jerahmeelites and Kenites;

30 for those in Hormah, Bor Ashan, Athach,

31 and Hebron; and for those in whatever other places David and his men had traveled.

#### David Told of Saul and Jonathan's Death

2 Sam 1:1 After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, he stayed at Ziklag for two days.

2 On the third day a man arrived from the camp of Saul with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. When he approached David, the

man threw himself to the ground.

3 David asked him, “Where are you coming from?” He replied, “I have escaped from the camp of Israel.”

4 David inquired, “How were things going? Tell me!” He replied, “The people fled from the battle and many of them fell dead. Even Saul and his son Jonathan are dead!”

5 David said to the young man who was telling him this, “How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?”

6 The young man who was telling him this said, “I just happened to be on Mount Gilboa and came across Saul leaning on his spear for support. The chariots and leaders of the horsemen were in hot pursuit of him.

7 When he turned around and saw me, he called out to me. I answered, ‘Here I am!’

8 He asked me, ‘Who are you?’ I told him, ‘I’m an Amalekite.’

9 He said to me, ‘Stand over me and finish me off! I’m very dizzy, even though I’m still alive.’

10 So I stood over him and put him to death, since I knew that he couldn’t live in such a condition. Then I took the crown which was on his head and the bracelet which was on his arm. I have brought them here to my lord.”

11 David then grabbed his own clothes and tore them, as did all the men who were with him.

12 They lamented and wept and fasted until evening because Saul, his son Jonathan, the LORD’s people, and the house of Israel had fallen by the sword.

13 David said to the young man who told this to him, “Where are you from?” He replied, “I am an Amalekite, the son of a resident foreigner.”

14 David replied to him, “How is it that you were not afraid to reach out your hand to destroy the LORD’s anointed?”

15 Then David called one of the soldiers and said, “Come here and strike him down!” So he struck him down, and he died.

16 David said to him, “Your blood be on your own head! Your own mouth has testified against you, saying ‘I have put the LORD’s anointed to death.’”

#### **David’s Lament for Saul and Jonathan**

17 Then David chanted this lament over Saul and his son Jonathan.

18 (He gave instructions that the people of Judah should be taught “The Bow.” Indeed, it is written down in the Book of Yashar.)

19 The beauty of Israel lies slain on your high places!

How the mighty have fallen!

20 Don’t report it in Gath,

don’t spread the news in the streets of Ashkelon,  
or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice,  
the daughters of the uncircumcised will celebrate!

21 O mountains of Gilboa,

may there be no dew or rain on you, nor fields of grain offerings!  
For it was there that the shield of warriors was defiled;  
the shield of Saul lies neglected without oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of warriors,  
the bow of Jonathan was not turned away.

The sword of Saul never returned empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan were greatly loved during their lives,  
and not even in their deaths were they separated.

They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.

24 O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,

who clothed you in scarlet as well as jewelry,  
who put gold jewelry on your clothes.

25 How the warriors have fallen

in the midst of battle!

Jonathan lies slain on your high places!

26 I grieve over you, my brother Jonathan!

You were very dear to me.

Your love was more special to me than the love of women.

27 How the warriors have fallen!

The weapons of war are destroyed!

## David Anointed King of Judah (c. 1010 – c. 1003 BC)

2 Samuel 2:1–7

### Judah Anoints David King at Hebron

1 Afterward David inquired of the LORD, “Should I go up to one of the cities of Judah?” The LORD told him, “Go up.” David asked, “Where should I go?” The LORD replied, “To Hebron.”

2 So David went up, along with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail, formerly the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

3 David also brought along the men who were with him, each with his family. They settled in the cities of Hebron.

4a The men of Judah came and there they anointed David as king over the people of Judah.

### David Reaches Out to Saul’s Supporters

4b David was told, “The people of Jabesh Gilead are the ones who buried Saul.”

5 So David sent messengers to the people of Jabesh Gilead and told them, “May you be blessed by the LORD because you have shown this kindness to your lord Saul by burying him.

6 Now may the LORD show you true kindness! I also will reward you, because you have done this deed.

7 Now be courageous and prove to be valiant warriors, for your lord Saul is dead. The people of Judah have anointed me as king over them.”

## David’s Sons Born at Hebron (c. 1010 – c. 1003 BC)

2 Samuel 3:2–5

1 Chronicles 3:1–4a

2 Now sons were born to David in Hebron. His firstborn was Amnon, born to Ahinoam the Jezreelite.

3 His second son was Kileab, born to Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.

His third son was Absalom, the son of Maacah daughter of King Talmai of Geshur.

4 His fourth son was Adonijah, the son of Haggith.

His fifth son was Shephatiah, the son of Abigail.

5 His sixth son was Ithream, born to David’s wife Eglah.

These sons were all born to David in Hebron.

1 These were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: The firstborn was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel;

the second was Daniel, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel;

2 the third was Absalom

whose mother was Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur;

the fourth was Adonijah,

whose mother was Haggith;

3 the fifth was Shephatiah,

whose mother was Abigail;

the sixth was Ithream,

whose mother was Eglah.

4a These six were born to David in Hebron,

## Game of Thrones (c. 1004 – c. 1003 BC)

2 Samuel 2:8–32; 3:1, 6–39

### Abner Makes Saul’s Son Ish-bosheth (Abner’s Nephew) King Over Israel

2:8 Now Abner son of Ner, the general in command of Saul’s army, had taken Saul’s son Ish-bosheth and had brought him to Mahanaim.

9 He appointed him king over Gilead, the Geshurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and all Israel.

10 Ish-bosheth son of Saul was forty years old when he began to rule over Israel. He ruled two years. However, the people of Judah followed David.

11 David was king in Hebron over the people of Judah for seven and a half years.

### Conflict Erupts at Gibeon

12 Then Abner son of Ner and the servants of Ish-bosheth son of Saul went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

13 Joab son of Zeruiah and the servants of David also went out and confronted them at the pool of Gibeon. One group stationed themselves on one side of the pool, and the other group on the other side of the pool.

14 Abner said to Joab, “Let the soldiers get up and fight before us.” Joab said, “So be it!”

15 So they got up and crossed over by number: twelve belonging to Benjamin and to Ish-bosheth son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David.

16 As they grappled with one another, each one stabbed his opponent with his sword and they fell dead together. So that place is called the Field of Flints; it is in Gibeon.

17 Now the battle was very severe that day; Abner and the men of Israel were overcome by David’s soldiers.

**Abner Kills Joab's Brother Asahel**

18 The three sons of Zeruiah were there—Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. (Now Asahel was as quick on his feet as one of the gazelles in the field.)

19 Asahel chased Abner, without turning to the right or to the left as he followed Abner.

20 Then Abner turned and asked, "Is that you, Asahel?" He replied, "Yes it is!"

21 Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right or to your left. Capture one of the soldiers and take his equipment for yourself!" But Asahel was not willing to turn aside from following him.

22 So Abner spoke again to Asahel, "Turn aside from following me! I do not want to strike you to the ground. How then could I show my face in the presence of Joab your brother?"

23 But Asahel refused to turn aside. So Abner struck him in the abdomen with the back end of his spear. The spear came out his back; Asahel collapsed on the spot and died there right before Abner. Everyone who now comes to the place where Asahel fell dead pauses in respect.

24 So Joab and Abishai chased Abner. At sunset they came to the hill of Ammah near Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon.

**Abner Appeals to Joab to End the Battle**

25 The Benjaminites formed their ranks behind Abner and were like a single army, standing at the top of a certain hill.

26 Then Abner called out to Joab, "Must the sword devour forever? Don't you realize that this will turn bitter in the end? When will you tell the people to turn aside from pursuing their brothers?"

27 Joab replied, "As surely as God lives, if you had not said this, it would have been morning before the people would have abandoned pursuit of their brothers!"

28 Then Joab blew the ram's horn and all the people stopped in their tracks. They stopped chasing Israel and ceased fighting.

29 Abner and his men went through the Arabah all that night. They crossed the Jordan River and went through the whole region of Bitron and came to Mahanaim.

30 Now Joab returned from chasing Abner and assembled all the people. Nineteen of David's soldiers were missing, in addition to Asahel.

31 But David's soldiers had slaughtered the Benjaminites and Abner's men—in all, 360 men had died!

32 They took Asahel's body and buried him in his father's tomb at Bethlehem. Joab and his men then traveled all that night and reached Hebron by dawn.

**Conflict Between Ish-bosheth and Abner**

3:1 However, the war was prolonged between the house of Saul and the house of David. David was becoming steadily stronger, while the house of Saul was becoming increasingly weaker.

6 As the war continued between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was becoming more influential in the house of Saul.

7 Now Saul had a concubine named Rizpah daughter of Aiah. Ish-bosheth said to Abner, "Why did you have sexual relations with my father's concubine?"

8 These words of Ish-bosheth really angered Abner and he said, "Am I the head of a dog that belongs to Judah? This very day I am demonstrating loyalty to the house of Saul your father and to his relatives and his friends! I have not betrayed you into the hand of David. Yet you have accused me of sinning with this woman today!

9 God will severely judge Abner if I do not do for David exactly what the LORD has promised him,

10 namely, to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to establish the throne of David over Israel and over Judah all the way from Dan to Beer Sheba!"

11 Ish-bosheth was unable to answer Abner with even a single word because he was afraid of him.

**Abner Offers to Hand the Throne of Israel Over to David**

12 Then Abner sent messengers to David saying, "To whom does the land belong? Make an agreement with me, and I will do whatever I can to cause all Israel to turn to you."

13 So David said, "Good! I will make an agreement with you. I ask only one thing from you. You will not see my face unless you bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to visit me."

14 David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth son of Saul with this demand: "Give me my wife Michal whom I acquired for a hundred Philistine foreskins."

15 So Ish-bosheth took her from her husband Paltiel son of Laish.

16 Her husband went along behind her, weeping all the way to Bahurim. Finally Abner said to him, "Go back!" So he returned home.

17 Abner advised the elders of Israel, "Previously you were wanting David to be your king.

18 Act now! For the LORD has said to David, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the Philistines and from all their enemies.'"

19 Then Abner spoke privately with the Benjaminites. Abner also went to Hebron to inform David privately of all that Israel and the entire house of Benjamin had agreed to.

20 When Abner, accompanied by twenty men, came to David in Hebron, David prepared a banquet for Abner and the men who were with him.

21 Abner said to David, "Let me leave so that I may go and gather all Israel to my lord the king so that they may make an agreement with you. Then you will rule over all that you desire." So David sent Abner away, and he left in peace.

#### **Joab Murders Abner**

22 Now David's soldiers and Joab were coming back from a raid, bringing a great deal of plunder with them. Abner was no longer with David in Hebron, for David had sent him away and he had left in peace.

23 When Joab and all the army that was with him arrived, Joab was told: "Abner the son of Ner came to the king; he sent him away, and he left in peace!"

24 So Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Abner has come to you! Why would you send him away? Now he's gone on his way!"

25 You know Abner the son of Ner! Surely he came here to spy on you and to determine when you leave and when you return and to discover everything that you are doing!"

26 Then Joab left David and sent messengers after Abner. They brought him back from the well of Sirah. (But David was not aware of it.)

27 When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside at the gate as if to speak privately with him. Joab then stabbed him in the abdomen and killed him, avenging the shed blood of his brother Asahel.

#### **David Proves His Innocence Concerning Abner's Death**

28 When David later heard about this, he said, "I and my kingdom are forever innocent before the LORD of the shed blood of Abner son of Ner!"

29 May his blood whirl over the head of Joab and the entire house of his father! May the males of Joab's house never cease to have someone with a running sore or a skin disease or one who works at the spindle or one who falls by the sword or one who lacks food!"

30 So Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel in Gibeon during the battle.

31 David instructed Joab and all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes! Put on sackcloth! Lament before Abner!" Now King David followed behind the funeral bier.

32 So they buried Abner in Hebron. The king cried loudly over Abner's grave and all the people wept too.

33 The king chanted the following lament for Abner:

"Should Abner have died like a fool?

34 Your hands were not bound,  
and your feet were not put into irons.  
You fell the way one falls before criminals."

All the people wept over him again.

35 Then all the people came and encouraged David to eat food while it was still day. But David took an oath saying, "God will punish me severely if I taste bread or anything whatsoever before the sun sets!"

36 All the people noticed this and it pleased them. In fact, everything the king did pleased all the people.

37 All the people and all Israel realized on that day that the killing of Abner son of Ner was not done at the king's instigation.

38 Then the king said to his servants, "Do you not realize that a great leader has fallen this day in Israel?"

39 Today I am weak, even though I am anointed as king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too much for me to bear! May the LORD punish appropriately the one who has done this evil thing!"

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#### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) "At the age of forty Ish-Bosheth would have been qualified to have fought in the fateful battle against the Philistines on Mount Gilboa with his father and three brothers (cf. 1 Sam 31; Num 1:36). Perhaps he had been purposely exempted, however, in order to assure a direct heir to the throne in case of a battlefield catastrophe like the one that actually occurred. Ish-Bosheth laid claim to Israel's throne 'two years' before he was murdered. These two years may correspond to the sixth and seventh years of David's reign at Hebron. Two textual reasons support this contention: first, David was said to have ruled over only the house of Judah while he lived in Hebron (v. 11; 5:4); and second, 5:1–9 suggests that David moved his capital city to Jerusalem

almost immediately after being anointed as king over all Israel. If the tribes of Israel apart from Judah were in fact without a king for more than five years, this would suggest that the Philistines controlled the region completely enough during that time to prevent the rise of any Israelite to the throne. In this scenario Abner, as the leading military figure in the northern tribes, would have functioned as the de facto head of state. Yet instead of installing himself as king, he—nobly—put a direct descendant of Saul on the throne when he sensed Israel’s situation had sufficiently improved. Ish-Bosheth’s kingship was not recognized in the territory of Judah because they ‘followed David.’ After all, David was one of their own and had made the southern Judahite town of Hebron his capital city. In fact, Hebron remained David’s royal city for ‘seven years and six months’ (v. 11), apparently the amount of time it took for David to gain undisputed control of all Israel as well as to conquer Jerusalem.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Bergen, “1, 2 Samuel,” *New American Commentary*, 300.

**Ish-bosheth is Murdered (c. 1003 BC)**

2 Samuel 4:1–3, 5–12

1 When Ish-bosheth the son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he was very disheartened, and all Israel was afraid.  
 2 Now Saul's son had two men who were in charge of raiding units; one was named Baanah and the other Recab. They were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, who was a Benjaminite. (Beeroth is regarded as belonging to Benjamin,  
 3 for the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have remained there as resident foreigners until the present time.)  
 5 Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite—Recab and Baanah—went at the hottest part of the day to the home of Ish-bosheth, as he was enjoying his midday rest.  
 6 They entered the house under the pretense of getting wheat and mortally wounded him in the stomach. Then Recab and his brother Baanah escaped.  
 7 They had entered the house while Ish-bosheth was resting on his bed in his bedroom. They mortally wounded him and then cut off his head. Taking his head, they traveled on the way of the Arabah all that night.  
 8 They brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David in Hebron, saying to the king, "Look! The head of Ish-bosheth son of Saul, your enemy who sought your life! The LORD has granted vengeance to my lord the king this day against Saul and his descendants!"  
 9 David replied to Recab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered my life from all adversity,  
 10 when someone told me that Saul was dead—even though he thought he was bringing good news—I seized him and killed him in Ziklag. That was the good news I gave to him!  
 11 Surely when wicked men have killed an innocent man as he slept in his own house, should I not now require his blood from your hands and remove you from the earth?"  
 12 So David issued orders to the soldiers and they put them to death. Then they cut off their hands and feet and hung them near the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner in Hebron.

**David Anointed King of Israel (c. 1003 – c. 969t BC)**

2 Samuel 5:1–5

1 Chronicles 3:4b; 11:1–3

1 All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron saying,  
 "Look, we are your very flesh and blood!  
 2 In the past, when Saul was our king,  
 you were the real leader in Israel.  
 The LORD said to you,  
 'You will shepherd my people Israel;  
 you will rule over Israel.'" [\[Matt 2:6; cf. Mic 5:2\]](#)  
 3 When all the leaders of Israel came to the king at Hebron,  
 King David made an agreement with them in Hebron  
 before the LORD. They designated David as king over Israel.  
 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign  
 and he reigned for forty years.  
 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six  
 months, and in Jerusalem he reigned for thirty-three years  
 over all Israel and Judah.

11:1 All Israel joined David at Hebron and said,  
 "Look, we are your very flesh and blood!  
 2 In the past, even when Saul was king,  
 you were Israel's commanding general.  
 The LORD your God said to you,  
 'You will shepherd my people Israel;  
 you will rule over my people Israel.'"  
 3 When all the leaders of Israel came to the king at Hebron,  
 David made an agreement with them in Hebron  
 before the LORD. They anointed David king over Israel,  
 just as the LORD had announced through Samuel.  
 3:4b where he ruled for seven years and six  
 months. He ruled thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

**Tribal Support for David's Kingship (c. 1003 BC)**

1 Chronicles 12:23–40

23 The following is a record of the armed warriors who came with their leaders and joined David in Hebron in order to make David king in Saul's place, in accordance with the LORD's decree:  
 24 From Judah came 6,800 trained warriors carrying shields and spears.  
 25 From Simeon there were 7,100 warriors.  
 26 From Levi there were 4,600.  
 27 Jehoiada, the leader of Aaron's descendants, brought 3,700 men with him,  
 28 along with Zadok, a young warrior, and twenty-two leaders from his family.  
 29 From Benjamin, Saul's tribe, there were 3,000, most of whom, up to that time, had been loyal to Saul.  
 30 From Ephraim there were 20,800 warriors, who had brought fame to their families.  
 31 From the half tribe of Manasseh there were 18,000 who had been designated by name to come and make David king.  
 32 From Issachar there were 200 leaders and all their relatives at their command—they understood the times and knew what Israel

should do.

33 From Zebulun there were 50,000 warriors who were prepared for battle, equipped with all kinds of weapons, and ready to give their undivided loyalty.

34 From Naphtali there were 1,000 officers, along with 37,000 men carrying shields and spears.

35 From Dan there were 28,600 men prepared for battle.

36 From Asher there were 40,000 warriors prepared for battle.

37 From the other side of the Jordan, from Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, there were 120,000 men armed with all kinds of weapons.

38 All these men were warriors who were ready to march. They came to Hebron to make David king over all Israel by acclamation; all the rest of the Israelites also were in agreement that David should become king.

39 They spent three days feasting there with David, for their relatives had given them provisions.

40 Also their neighbors, from as far away as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, were bringing food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen. There were large supplies of flour, fig cakes, raisins, wine, olive oil, beef, and lamb, for Israel was celebrating.

### David's Mighty Men (c. 1003 – c. 969t BC)

2 Samuel 23:8–12, 18–39

1 Chr 11:10–14, 20–47

#### The Three

8 These are the names of David's warriors:

Josheb-Basshebeth, a Tahkemonite, was head of the officers.

He killed eight hundred men with his spear in one battle.

9 Next in command was Eleazar son of Dodo, the son of Ahohi.

He was one of the three warriors

who were with David when they defied the Philistines who were assembled there for battle.

When the men of Israel retreated,

10 he stood his ground and fought the Philistines until his hand grew so tired that it seemed stuck to his sword. The LORD gave a great victory on that day. When the army returned to him, the only thing left to do was to plunder the corpses.

11 Next in command was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite.

When the Philistines assembled at Lehi,

where there happened to be an area of a field that was full of lentils, the army retreated before the Philistines.

12 But he made a stand in the middle of that area.

He defended it and defeated the Philistines; the LORD gave them a great victory.

#### The Thirty—Special Mention to Abishai and Benaiah

18 Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was head of the three. He killed three hundred men with his spear and gained fame among the three.

19 From the three he was given honor and he became their officer, even though he was not one of the three.

20 Benaiah son of Jehoida was a brave warrior from Kabzeel who performed great exploits. He struck down the two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a cistern on a snowy day.

21 He also killed an impressive-looking Egyptian.

The Egyptian wielded a spear,

while Benaiah attacked him with a club. He grabbed the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

22 Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoida, who gained fame among the three elite warriors.

10 These were the leaders of David's warriors

who helped establish and stabilize his rule over all Israel, in accordance with the LORD's word.

11 This is the list of David's warriors:

Jashobeam, a Hacmonite, was head of the officers.

He killed three hundred men with his spear in a single battle.

12 Next in command was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite.

He was one of the three elite warriors.

13 He was with David in Pas Dammim when the Philistines assembled there for battle.

In an area of the field that was full of

barley, the army retreated before the Philistines,

14 but then they made a stand in the middle of that area.

They defended it and defeated the Philistines; the LORD gave them a great victory.

20 Abishai the brother of Joab was head of the three elite warriors. He killed three hundred men with his spear and gained fame along with the three elite warriors.

21 From the three he was given double honor and he became their officer, even though he was not one of them.

22 Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a brave warrior from Kabzeel who performed great exploits. He struck down the two sons of Ariel of Moab; he also went down and killed a lion inside a cistern on a snowy day.

23 He even killed an Egyptian who was seven and a half feet tall.

The Egyptian had a spear

as big as the crossbeam of a weaver's loom;

Benaiah attacked him with a club. He grabbed the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

24 Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, who gained fame along with the three elite warriors.

23 He received honor from the thirty warriors, though he was not one of the three elite warriors. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

#### **The Thirty—Other Notable Warriors**

24 Included with the thirty were the following:

Asahel the brother of Joab,

Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem,

25 Shammah the Harodite,

Elika the Harodite,

26 Helez the Paltite,

Ira son of Ikkes from Tekoa,

27 Abiezer the Anathothite,

Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite,

Maharai the Netophathite,

29 Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,

Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah in Benjamin,

30 Benaiah the Pirathonite,

Hiddai from the wadis of Gaash,

31 Abi-Albon the Arbathite,

Azmaveth the Barhumite,

32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

the sons of Jashen,

Jonathan

33 son of Shammah the Hararite,

Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maacathite,

Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

35 Hezrai the Carmelite,

Paarai the Arbite,

36 Igal son of Nathan from Zobah,

Bani the Gadite,

37 Zelek the Ammonite,

Naharai the Beerothite

(the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah),

38 Ira the Ithrite,

Gareb the Ithrite

39 and Uriah the Hittite.

Altogether there were thirty-seven.

25 He received honor from the thirty warriors, though he was not one of the three elite warriors. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

26 The mighty warriors were:

Asahel the brother of Joab,

Elhanan son of Dodo, from Bethlehem,

27 Shammoth the Harorite,

Helez the Pelonite,

28 Ira son of Ikkes the Tekoite,

Abiezer the Anathothite,

29 Sibbekai the Hushathite,

Ilai the Ahohite,

30 Maharai the Netophathite,

Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,

31 Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah in Benjaminite territory,

Benaiah the Pirathonite,

32 Hurai from the valleys of Gaash,

Abiel the Arbathite,

33 Azmaveth the Baharumite,

Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

34 the sons of Hashem the Gizonite,

Jonathan

son of Shageh the Hararite,

35 Ahiam son of Sakar the Hararite,

Eliphal son of Ur,

36 Hopher the Mekerathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

37 Hezro the Carmelite,

Naarai son of Ezbai,

38 Joel the brother of Nathan,

Mibhar son of Hagri,

39 Zelek the Ammonite,

Naharai the Beerothite,

the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah,

40 Ira the Ithrite,

Gareb the Ithrite,

41 Uriah the Hittite,

Zabad son of Achli,

42 Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, leader of the Reubenites and the thirty warriors with him,

43 Hanan son of Maacah, Joshaphat the Mithnite,

44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel, the sons of Hotham the Aroerite,

45 Jediel son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,

46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,

47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

### The Philistines Immediately Try to Kill David (c. 1003/1002 BC)

2 Samuel 5:17–18	1 Chronicles 14:8–9
<p>17 When the Philistines heard that David had been designated king over Israel, they all went up to search for David. When David heard about it, he went down to the fortress.</p> <p>18 Now the Philistines had arrived and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.</p>	<p>8 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king of all Israel, all the Philistines marched up to confront him. When David heard about it, he marched out against them.</p> <p>9 Now the Philistines had come and raided the Valley of Rephaim.</p>

### “The Three” Risk Their Lives (c. 1003/1002 BC)

2 Samuel 23:13–17	1 Chronicles 11:15–19
<p>13 At the time of the harvest three of the thirty leaders went down to David at the cave of Adullam. A band of Philistines was camped in the valley of Rephaim.</p> <p>14 David was in the stronghold at the time, while a Philistine garrison was in Bethlehem.</p> <p>15 David was thirsty and said, “How I wish someone would give me some water to drink from the cistern in Bethlehem near the gate!”</p> <p>16 So the three elite warriors broke through the Philistine forces and drew some water from the cistern in Bethlehem near the gate. They carried it back to David, but he refused to drink it. He poured it out as a drink offering to the LORD</p> <p>17 and said, “O LORD, I will not do this! It is equivalent to the blood of the men who risked their lives by going.”</p> <p>So he refused to drink it. Such were the exploits of the three elite warriors.</p>	<p>15 Three of the thirty leaders went down to David at the rocky cliff at the cave of Adullam, while a Philistine force was camped in the Valley of Rephaim.</p> <p>16 David was in the stronghold at the time, while a Philistine garrison was in Bethlehem.</p> <p>17 David was thirsty and said, “How I wish someone would give me some water to drink from the cistern in Bethlehem near the city gate!”</p> <p>18 So the three elite warriors broke through the Philistine forces and drew some water from the cistern in Bethlehem near the city gate. They carried it back to David, but David refused to drink it. He poured it out as a drink offering to the LORD</p> <p>19 and said, “God forbid that I should do this! Should I drink the blood of these men who risked their lives?” Because they risked their lives to bring it to him, he refused to drink it. Such were the exploits of the three elite warriors.</p>

### David Defeats the Philistines (c. 1003/1002 BC)

2 Samuel 5:19–25	1 Chronicles 14:10–17
<p>19 So David asked the LORD, “Should I march up against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?” The LORD said to David, “March up, for I will indeed hand the Philistines over to you.”</p> <p>20 So David marched against Baal Perazim and defeated them there. Then he said, “The LORD has burst out against my enemies like water bursts out.” So he called the name of that place Baal Perazim.</p> <p>21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men picked them up.</p> <p>22 The Philistines again came up and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.</p> <p>23 So David asked the LORD what he should do. This time the LORD said to him, “Don’t march straight up. Instead, circle around behind them and come against them opposite the trees.</p> <p>24 When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, act decisively. For at that moment the LORD is going before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”</p> <p>25 David did just as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines from Gibeon all the way to Gezer.</p>	<p>10 David asked God, “Should I march up against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?” The LORD said to him, “March up! I will hand them over to you!”</p> <p>11 So they marched against Baal Perazim and David defeated them there. David said, “Using me as his instrument, God has burst out against my enemies like water bursts out.” So that place is called Baal Perazim.</p> <p>12 The Philistines left their idols there, so David ordered that they be burned.</p> <p>13 The Philistines again raided the valley.</p> <p>14 So David again asked God what he should do. This time God told him, “Don’t march up after them; circle around them and come against them in front of the trees.</p> <p>15 When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, then attack. For at that moment the LORD is going before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”</p> <p>16 David did just as God commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer.</p> <p>17 So David became famous in all the lands; the LORD caused all the nations to fear him.</p>

### David Captures Jerusalem (c. 1003/1002 BC)

2 Samuel 5:6–9a	1 Chronicles 11:4–7
<p>6 Then the king and his men advanced to Jerusalem against the Jebusites who lived in the land. The Jebusites said to David, “You cannot invade this place! Even the blind and the lame will turn you back, saying, ‘David cannot invade this place!’”</p> <p>7 But David captured the fortress of Zion (that is, the city of David).</p> <p>8 David said on that day, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites must approach the ‘lame’ and the ‘blind’ who are David’s enemies by going through the water tunnel.” For this reason it is said, “The blind and the lame cannot enter the palace.”</p> <p>9a So David lived in the fortress and called it the City of David.</p>	<p>4 David and the whole Israelite army advanced to Jerusalem (that is, Jebus). (The Jebusites, the land’s original inhabitants, lived there.)</p> <p>5 The residents of Jebus said to David, “You cannot invade this place!”</p> <p>But David captured the fortress of Zion (that is, the City of David).</p> <p>6 David said, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites first will become commanding general!” So Joab son of Zeruiah attacked first and became commander.</p> <p>7 David lived in the fortress; for this reason it is called the City of David.</p>

### David’s Building Programs (c. 1002 – c. 998 BC)

2 Samuel 5:9b–12	1 Chronicles 11:8–9; 14:1–2; 15:1a
<p>9b David built all around it, from the terrace inwards.</p> <p>10 David’s power grew steadily, for the LORD God who commands armies was with him.</p> <p>11 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, carpenters, and stonemasons. They built a palace for David.</p> <p>12 David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and that he had elevated his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.</p>	<p>11:8 He built up the city around it, from the terrace to the surrounding walls; Joab restored the rest of the city.</p> <p>9 David’s power steadily grew, for the LORD who commands armies was with him.</p> <p>14:1 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, stonemasons, and carpenters to build a palace for him.</p> <p>2 David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and that he had elevated his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.</p> <p>15:1a David constructed buildings in the City of David;</p>

### David Prepares to Bring the Ark to Jerusalem (c. 998 BC)

1 Chronicles 13:1–4; 15:1b
<p>15:1b he then prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it.</p> <p>13:1 David consulted with his military officers, including those who led groups of a thousand and those who led groups of a hundred.</p> <p>2 David said to the whole Israelite assembly, “If you so desire and the LORD our God approves, let’s spread the word to our brothers who remain in all the regions of Israel, and to the priests and Levites in their cities, so they may join us.</p> <p>3 Let’s move the ark of our God back here, for we did not seek his will throughout Saul’s reign.”</p> <p>4 The whole assembly agreed to do this, for the proposal seemed right to all the people.</p>

### The Death of Uzzah (c. 998 BC)

2 Samuel 6:1–11	1 Chronicles 13:5–14
<p>1 David again assembled all the best men in Israel, thirty thousand in number.</p> <p>2 David and all the men who were with him traveled to Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts, who sits enthroned between the</p>	<p>5 So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor River in Egypt to Lebo Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim.</p> <p>6 David and all Israel went up to Baalah (that is, Kiriath Jearim) in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God the LORD, who sits enthroned between the cherubim—the ark that is called by his</p>

<p>cherubim that are on it.</p> <p>3 They loaded the ark of God on a new cart and carried it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart.</p> <p>4 They brought it with the ark of God up from the house of Abinadab on the hill. Ahio was walking in front of the ark,</p> <p>5 while David and all Israel were energetically celebrating before the LORD, singing and playing various stringed instruments, tambourines, rattles, and cymbals.</p> <p>6 When they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and grabbed hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled.</p> <p>7 The LORD was so furious with Uzzah, he killed him on the spot for his negligence. He died right there beside the ark of God.</p> <p>8 David was angry because the LORD attacked Uzzah; so he called that place Perez Uzzah, which remains its name to this very day.</p> <p>9 David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, "How will the ark of the LORD ever come to me?"</p> <p>10 So David was no longer willing to bring the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. David left it in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.</p> <p>11 The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months. The LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his family.</p>	<p>name.</p> <p>7 They transported the ark on a new cart from the house of Abinadab; Uzzah and Ahio were guiding the cart,</p> <p>8 while David and all Israel were energetically celebrating before God, singing and playing various stringed instruments, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets.</p> <p>9 When they arrived at the threshing floor of Kidon, Uzzah reached out his hand to take hold of the ark, because the oxen stumbled.</p> <p>10 The LORD was so furious with Uzzah, he killed him, because he reached out his hand and touched the ark. He died right there before God.</p> <p>11 David was angry because the LORD attacked Uzzah; so he called that place Perez Uzzah, which remains its name to this very day.</p> <p>12 David was afraid of God that day and said, "How will I ever be able to bring the ark of God up here?"</p> <p>13 So David did not move the ark to the City of David; he left it in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.</p> <p>14 The ark of God remained in Obed-Edom's house for three months; the LORD blessed Obed-Edom's family and everything that belonged to him.</p>
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### David Learns an Important Lesson (c. 998 BC)

2 Samuel 6:12a; 1 Chronicles 15:2–15

2 Sam 6:12a David was told, "The LORD has blessed the family of Obed-Edom and everything he owns because of the ark of God."

1 Chr 15:2 Then David said, "Only the Levites may carry the ark of God, for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of the LORD and to serve before him perpetually.

3 David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring the ark of the LORD up to the place he had prepared for it.

4 David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites:

5 From the descendants of Kohath: Uriel the leader and 120 of his relatives.

6 From the descendants of Merari: Asaiah the leader and 220 of his relatives.

7 From the descendants of Gershon: Joel the leader and 130 of his relatives.

8 From the descendants of Elizaphan: Shemaiah the leader and 200 of his relatives.

9 From the descendants of Hebron: Eliel the leader and 80 of his relatives.

10 From the descendants of Uzziel: Amminadab the leader and 112 of his relatives.

11 David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, along with the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab.

12 He told them: "You are the leaders of the Levites' families. You and your relatives must consecrate yourselves and bring the ark of the LORD God of Israel up to the place I have prepared for it.

13 The first time you did not carry it; that is why the LORD God attacked us, because we did not ask him about the proper way to carry it."

14 The priests and Levites consecrated themselves so they could bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

15 The descendants of Levi carried the ark of God on their shoulders with poles, just as Moses had ordered according to the divine command.

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### Chronological Notes

1. I understand 2 Samuel 5:17–25 to be a flashback in the narrative to the beginning of David’s reign over Israel—thus in today’s reading the attack by the Philistines is placed prior to the capture of Jerusalem. I base my decision on two points from v. 17: a) the motive for the Philistine military mobilization is attributed to David being crowned king over Israel, not to David’s capture of Jerusalem, and b) the Philistines went up “to search” for David, something that would have been unnecessary had David established himself in Jerusalem as 2 Samuel 5:6–10 indicates.<sup>1</sup>
2. I inserted the story of 2 Samuel 23:13–17 into the narrative of David’s defeat of the Philistines just after his crowning. Both Gordon<sup>2</sup> and Merrill<sup>3</sup> concur on this as the proper context (contra those who place it with 1 Samuel 22:4ff.). Note that, having connected the “stronghold/fortress” of 2 Samuel 5:17 with the “cave of Adullam” of 2 Samuel 23:13, Merrill asks, “Why would David be at Adullam at all if he had begun to live in Jerusalem? 2 Samuel 5:17 says that the Philistines ‘went up to search for David,’ their objective being Hebron, but David had left there and had gone to the ‘stronghold,’ that is, the cave at Adullam (cf. 2 Sam 23:13–14).”<sup>4</sup>
3. I left the narrative of David and Hiram in its original 2 Samuel 5 context (c. 1003/1002 BC). However, Merrill argues that the earliest Hiram’s reign could have begun was 980 BC and places the narrative late in David’s reign.<sup>5</sup> I remain unconvinced at this time (although I’m open to being persuaded). Currently I follow Green’s position that Hiram did indeed come to power early in David’s reign.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, “Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel,” *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, 584–85. See also Richard G. Smith, *The Fate of Justice and Righteousness during David’s Reign: Narrative Ethics and Rereading the Court History according to 2 Samuel 8:15–20:26*, 68, n. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Robert P. Gordon, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, 229.

<sup>3</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 237–38.

<sup>4</sup> Merrill, 238, n. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, “The ‘Ascension Year’ and Davidic Chronology,” *JANES* 19 (1989) 101–12. Steinmann and Young agree with Merrill on this point and have great confidence in the accuracy of Josephus’ Tyrian king list (cf. Rodger Young, “Correlation of Select Classical Sources Related to the Trojan War with Assyrian and Biblical Chronologies,” *JESOT*, 1.2 (2012): 223–48).

<sup>6</sup> Alberto R. Green, “David’s Relations with Hiram: Biblical and Josephan Evidence for Tyrian Chronology,” in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth* (eds. Carol L. Meyers and Michael P. O’Connor; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 373–97. See also Bruno Kolberg, “Redating the Hebrew Kings,” Appendix I, 343. Online: <http://www.redatedkings.com/download/Redating.pdf>.

### Musicians for the Procession (c. 998 BC)

1 Chronicles 15:16–24

16 David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint some of their relatives as musicians; they were to play various instruments, including stringed instruments and cymbals, and to sing loudly and joyfully.

17 So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; one of his relatives, Asaph son of Berechiah; one of the descendants of Merari, Ethan son of Kushaiah;

18 along with some of their relatives who were second in rank, including Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers.

19 The musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals;

20 Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play the harps according to the alamothe style;

21 Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azariah were to play the lyres according to the sheminith style, as led by the director;

22 Kenaniah, the leader of the Levites, was in charge of transport, for he was well-informed on this matter;

23 Berechiah and Elkanah were guardians of the ark;

24 Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer the priests were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God; Obed-Edom and Jehiel were also guardians of the ark.

### David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem (c. 998 BC)

2 Samuel 6:12b-19a

1 Chronicles 15:25–16:3

<p>12b So David went and joyfully brought the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David.</p> <p>13 Those who carried the ark of the LORD took six steps and then David sacrificed an ox and a fatling calf.</p> <p>14 Now David, wearing a linen ephod, was dancing with all his strength before the LORD.</p> <p>15 David and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD, shouting and blowing trumpets.</p> <p>16 As the ark of the LORD entered the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked out the window. When she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him.</p> <p>17 They brought the ark of the LORD and put it in its place in the middle of the tent that David had pitched for it. Then David offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before the LORD.</p> <p>18 When David finished offering the burnt sacrifices and peace offerings, he pronounced a blessing over the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.</p> <p>19a He then handed out to each member of the entire assembly of Israel, both men and women, a portion of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake.</p>	<p>15:25 So David, the leaders of Israel, and the commanders of units of a thousand went to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from the house of Obed-Edom with celebration.</p> <p>26 When God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the LORD's covenant, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.</p> <p>27 David was wrapped in a linen robe, as were all the Levites carrying the ark, the musicians, and Kenaniah the supervisor of transport and the musicians; David also wore a linen ephod.</p> <p>28 All Israel brought up the ark of the LORD's covenant; they were shouting, blowing trumpets, sounding cymbals, and playing stringed instruments.</p> <p>29 As the ark of the LORD's covenant entered the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked out the window. When she saw King David jumping and celebrating, she despised him.</p> <p>16:1 They brought the ark of God and put it in the middle of the tent David had pitched for it. Then they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.</p> <p>2 When David finished offering burnt sacrifices and peace offerings, he pronounced a blessing over the people in the LORD's name.</p> <p>3 He then handed out to each Israelite man and woman a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake.</p>
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### David Appoints Levites to Minister Before the Ark (c. 998 BC)

1 Chronicles 16:4–7

4 He appointed some of the Levites to serve before the ark of the LORD, to offer prayers, songs of thanks, and hymns to the LORD God of Israel.

5 Asaph was the leader and Zechariah second in command, followed by Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel. They were to play stringed instruments; Asaph was to sound the cymbals;

6 and the priests Benaiah and Jahaziel were to blow trumpets regularly before the ark of God's covenant.

7 That day David first gave to Asaph and his colleagues this song of thanks to the LORD:

### Tell of All His Wonderful Works (c. 998 BC)

Psalm 105	1 Chronicles 16:8–22
1 Give thanks to the LORD! Call on his name! Make known his accomplishments among the nations!	8 Give thanks to the LORD! Call on his name! Make known his accomplishments among the nations!
2 Sing to him! Make music to him! Tell about all his miraculous deeds!	9 Sing to him! Make music to him! Tell about all his miraculous deeds!
3 Boast about his holy name! Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!	10 Boast about his holy name! Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!
4 Seek the LORD and the strength he gives! Seek his presence continually!	11 Seek the LORD and the strength he gives! Seek his presence continually!
5 Recall the miraculous deeds he performed, his mighty acts and the judgments he decreed,	12 Recall the miraculous deeds he performed, his mighty acts and the judgments he decreed,
6 O children of Abraham, God's servant, you descendants of Jacob, God's chosen ones!	13 O children of Israel, God's servant, you descendants of Jacob, God's chosen ones!
7 He is the LORD our God; he carries out judgment throughout the earth.	14 He is the LORD our God; he carries out judgment throughout the earth.
8 He always remembers his covenantal decree, the promise he made to a thousand generations—	15 Remember continually his covenantal decree, the promise he made to a thousand generations—
9 the promise he made to Abraham, the promise he made by oath to Isaac!	16 the promise he made to Abraham, the promise he made by oath to Isaac!
10 He gave it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as a lasting promise,	17 He gave it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as a lasting promise,
11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance."	18 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance."
12 When they were few in number, just a very few, and resident aliens within it,	19 When they were few in number, just a very few, and foreign residents within it,
13 they wandered from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another.	20 they wandered from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another.
14 He let no one oppress them; he disciplined kings for their sake,	21 He let no one oppress them, he disciplined kings for their sake,
15 saying, "Don't touch my chosen ones! Don't harm my prophets!"	22 saying, "Don't touch my anointed ones! Don't harm my prophets!"
16 He called down a famine upon the earth; he cut off all the food supply.	
17 He sent a man ahead of them— Joseph was sold as a servant.	
18 The shackles hurt his feet; his neck was placed in an iron collar,	
19 until the time when his prediction came true. The LORD's word proved him right.	
20 The king authorized his release; the ruler of nations set him free.	
21 He put him in charge of his palace, and made him manager of all his property,	
22 giving him authority to imprison his officials and to teach his advisers.	
23 Israel moved to Egypt; Jacob lived for a time in the land of Ham.	
24 The LORD made his people very fruitful, and made them more numerous than their enemies.	
25 He caused them to hate his people, and to mistreat his servants.	

- 26 He sent his servant Moses,  
and Aaron, whom he had chosen.
- 27 They executed his miraculous signs among them,  
and his amazing deeds in the land of Ham.
- 28 He made it dark;  
they did not disobey his orders.
- 29 He turned their water into blood,  
and killed their fish.
- 30 Their land was overrun by frogs,  
which even got into the rooms of their kings.
- 31 He ordered flies to come;  
gnats invaded their whole territory.
- 32 He sent hail along with the rain;  
there was lightning in their land.
- 33 He destroyed their vines and fig trees,  
and broke the trees throughout their territory.
- 34 He ordered locusts to come,  
innumerable grasshoppers.
- 35 They ate all the vegetation in their land,  
and devoured the crops of their fields.
- 36 He struck down all the firstborn in their land,  
the firstfruits of their reproductive power.
- 37 He brought his people out enriched with silver and gold;  
none of his tribes stumbled.
- 38 Egypt was happy when they left,  
for they were afraid of them.
- 39 He spread out a cloud for a cover,  
and provided a fire to light up the night.
- 40 They asked for food, and he sent quails;  
he satisfied them with food from the sky.
- 41 He opened up a rock and water flowed out;  
a river ran through dry regions.
- 42 Yes, he remembered the sacred promise  
he made to Abraham his servant.
- 43 When he led his people out, they rejoiced;  
his chosen ones shouted with joy.
- 44 He handed the territory of nations over to them,  
and they took possession of what other peoples had produced,
- 45 so that they might keep his commands  
and obey his laws.
- Praise the LORD!

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### Sing to the LORD, All the Earth (c. 998 BC)

Sing to the LORD, All the Earth (c. 998 BC)	
Psalm 96	1 Chronicles 16:23–33
<p>1 Sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth!</p> <p>2 Sing to the LORD! Praise his name! Announce every day how he delivers!</p> <p>3 Tell the nations about his splendor! Tell all the nations about his amazing deeds!</p> <p>4 For the LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise; he is more awesome than all gods.</p> <p>5 For all the gods of the nations are worthless, but the LORD made the sky.</p> <p>6 Majestic splendor emanates from him; his sanctuary is firmly established and beautiful.</p> <p>7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the nations, ascribe to the LORD splendor and strength!</p> <p>8 Ascribe to the LORD the splendor he deserves! Bring an offering and enter his courts!</p> <p>9 Worship the LORD in holy attire! Tremble before him, all the earth!</p> <p>10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! The world is established, it cannot be moved. He judges the nations fairly."</p> <p>11 Let the sky rejoice, and the earth be happy!</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Let the sea and everything in it shout!</p> <p>12 Let the fields and everything in them celebrate! Then let the trees of the forest shout with joy before the LORD, for he comes! For he comes to judge the earth! He judges the world fairly, and the nations in accordance with his justice.</p>	<p>23 Sing to the LORD, all the earth!</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Announce every day how he delivers!</p> <p>24 Tell the nations about his splendor, tell all the nations about his miraculous deeds!</p> <p>25 For the LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise, he is more awesome than all gods.</p> <p>26 For all the gods of the nations are worthless, but the LORD made the heavens.</p> <p>27 Majestic splendor emanates from him, he is the source of strength and joy.</p> <p>28 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the nations, ascribe to the LORD splendor and strength!</p> <p>29 Ascribe to the LORD the splendor he deserves! Bring an offering and enter his presence! Worship the LORD in holy attire!</p> <p>30 Tremble before him, all the earth!</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The world is established, it cannot be moved.</p> <p>31 Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be happy! Let the nations say, 'The LORD reigns!'</p> <p>32 Let the sea and everything in it shout! Let the fields and everything in them celebrate!</p> <p>33 Then let the trees of the forest shout with joy before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth!</p>

### Give Thanks to the LORD, for He is Good (c. 998 BC)

Give Thanks to the LORD, for He is Good (c. 998 BC)	
Psalm 106	1 Chronicles 16:34–36
<p>1 Praise the LORD! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!</p> <p>2 Who can adequately recount the LORD's mighty acts, or relate all his praiseworthy deeds?</p> <p>3 How blessed are those who promote justice, and do what is right all the time!</p> <p>4 Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people! Pay attention to me, when you deliver, so I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, rejoice along with your nation, and boast along with the people who belong to you.</p> <p>6 We have sinned like our ancestors; we have done wrong, we have done evil.</p> <p>7 Our ancestors in Egypt failed to appreciate your miraculous deeds, they failed to remember your many acts of loyal love, and they rebelled at the sea, by the Red Sea.</p> <p>8 Yet he delivered them for the sake of his reputation, that he might reveal his power.</p> <p>9 He shouted at the Red Sea and it dried up; he led them through the deep water as if it were a desert.</p> <p>10 He delivered them from the power of the one who hated them,</p>	<p>34 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good and his loyal love endures.</p>

- and rescued them from the power of the enemy.
- 11 The water covered their enemies;  
not even one of them survived.
- 12 They believed his promises;  
they sang praises to him.
- 13 They quickly forgot what he had done;  
they did not wait for his instructions.
- 14 In the wilderness they had an insatiable craving for meat;  
they challenged God in the desert.
- 15 He granted their request,  
then struck them with a disease.
- 16 In the camp they resented Moses,  
and Aaron, the LORD's holy priest.
- 17 The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan;  
it engulfed the group led by Abiram.
- 18 Fire burned their group;  
the flames scorched the wicked.
- 19 They made an image of a calf at Horeb,  
and worshiped a metal idol.
- 20 They traded their majestic God  
for the image of an ox that eats grass.
- 21 They rejected the God who delivered them,  
the one who performed great deeds in Egypt,  
amazing feats in the land of Ham,  
mighty acts by the Red Sea.
- 22 He threatened to destroy them,  
but Moses, his chosen one, interceded with him  
and turned back his destructive anger.
- 24 They rejected the fruitful land;  
they did not believe his promise.
- 25 They grumbled in their tents;  
they did not obey the LORD.
- 26 So he made a solemn vow  
that he would make them die in the desert,  
make their descendants die among the nations,  
and scatter them among foreign lands.
- 28 They worshiped Baal of Peor,  
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.
- 29 They made the LORD angry by their actions,  
and a plague broke out among them.
- 30 Phinehas took a stand and intervened,  
and the plague subsided.
- 31 This brought him a reward,  
an eternal gift.
- 32 They made him angry by the waters of Meribah,  
and Moses suffered because of them,
- 33 for they aroused his temper,  
and he spoke rashly.
- 34 They did not destroy the nations,  
as the LORD had commanded them to do.
- 35 They mixed in with the nations  
and learned their ways.
- 36 They worshiped their idols,  
which became a snare to them.
- 37 They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons.
- 38 They shed innocent blood—  
the blood of their sons and daughters,  
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan.

<p>The land was polluted by bloodshed.</p> <p>39 They were defiled by their deeds, and unfaithful in their actions.</p> <p>40 So the LORD was angry with his people and despised the people who belong to him.</p> <p>41 He handed them over to the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.</p> <p>42 Their enemies oppressed them; they were subject to their authority.</p> <p>43 Many times he delivered them, but they had a rebellious attitude, and degraded themselves by their sin.</p> <p>44 Yet he took notice of their distress, when he heard their cry for help.</p> <p>45 He remembered his covenant with them, and relented because of his great loyal love.</p> <p>46 He caused all their conquerors to have pity on them.</p>	
<p>47 Deliver us, O LORD, our God! Gather us from among the nations! Then we will give thanks to your holy name, and boast about your praiseworthy deeds.</p> <p>48 The LORD God of Israel deserves praise, in the future and forevermore. Let all the people say, "We agree! Praise the LORD!"</p>	<p>35 Say this prayer: "Deliver us, O God who delivers us! Gather us! Rescue us from the nations! Then we will give thanks to your holy name, and boast about your praiseworthy deeds."</p> <p>36 May the LORD God of Israel be praised, in the future and forevermore. Then all the people said, "We agree! Praise the LORD!"</p>

### Arrangements for Regular Worship at Jerusalem (c. 998 BC)

1 Chronicles 6:31–49; 16:37–42

#### Asaph Cares for the Ark in Jerusalem

16:37 David left Asaph and his colleagues there before the ark of the LORD's covenant to serve before the ark regularly and fulfill each day's requirements,

38 including Obed-Edom and sixty-eight colleagues. Obed-Edom son of Jeduthun and Hosah were gatekeepers.

#### Zadok Cares for the Tabernacle at Gibeon

39 Zadok the priest and his fellow priests served before the LORD's tabernacle at the worship center in Gibeon,  
40 regularly offering burnt sacrifices to the LORD on the altar for burnt sacrifice, morning and evening, according to what is prescribed in the law of the LORD which he charged Israel to observe.

#### David's Music Ministers

41 Joining them were Heman, Jeduthun, and the rest of those chosen and designated by name to give thanks to the LORD. (For his loyal love endures!)

42 Heman and Jeduthun were in charge of the music, including the trumpets, cymbals, and the other musical instruments used in praising God. The sons of Jeduthun guarded the entrance.

#### Ancestry of David's Music Ministers

6:31 These are the men David put in charge of music in the LORD's sanctuary, after the ark was placed there.

32 They performed music before the sanctuary of the meeting tent until Solomon built the LORD's temple in Jerusalem. They carried out their tasks according to regulations.

33 These are the ones who served along with their sons: From the Kohathites: Heman the musician, son of Joel, son of Samuel,

34 son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah,

35 son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai,

36 son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah,

37 son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah,

38 son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel.

39 Serving beside him was his fellow Levite Asaph, son of Berechiah, son of Shimea,

40 son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malkijah,

41 son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah,

42 son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei,  
 43 son of Jahath, son of Gershom, son of Levi.  
 44 Serving beside them were their fellow Levites, the descendants of Merari, led by Ethan, son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch,  
 45 son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiyah,  
 46 son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer,  
 47 son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi.

#### **Distinction Between Levites and Priests Maintained**

48 The rest of their fellow Levites were assigned to perform the remaining tasks at God's sanctuary.

49 But Aaron and his descendants offered sacrifices on the altar for burnt offerings and on the altar for incense as they had been assigned to do in the most holy sanctuary. They made atonement for Israel, just as God's servant Moses had ordered.

### **Michal Accuses David of Acting Shamefully (c. 998 BC)**

2 Samuel 6:19b–23

19b Then all the people went home.  
 20 When David went home to pronounce a blessing on his own house,  
 Michal, Saul's daughter, came out to meet him. She said,  
 "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself this day!  
 He has exposed himself today before his servants' slave girls the way a vulgar fool might do!"  
 21 David replied to Michal, "It was before the LORD! I was celebrating before the LORD, who chose me over your father and his entire family and appointed me as leader over the LORD's people Israel.  
 22 I am willing to shame and humiliate myself even more than this! But with the slave girls whom you mentioned let me be distinguished!"  
 23 Now Michal, Saul's daughter, had no children to the day of her death.

1 Chronicles 16:43

43 Then all the people returned to their homes,  
 and David went to pronounce a blessing on his family.

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## David's Kindness Toward Mephibosheth (c. 998 BC)

### 2 Samuel 9

- 1 Then David asked, "Is anyone still left from the family of Saul, so that I may extend kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan?"
- 2 Now there was a servant from Saul's house named Ziba, so he was summoned to David. The king asked him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "At your service."
- 3 The king asked, "Is there not someone left from Saul's family, that I may extend God's kindness to him?" Ziba said to the king, "One of Jonathan's sons is left; both of his feet are crippled."
- 4 The king asked him, "Where is he?" Ziba told the king, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."
- 5 So King David had him brought from the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.
- 6 When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed low with his face toward the ground. David said, "Mephibosheth?" He replied, "Yes, at your service."
- 7 David said to him, "Don't be afraid, because I will certainly extend kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan your father. You will be a regular guest at my table."
- 8 Then Mephibosheth bowed and said, "Of what importance am I, your servant, that you show regard for a dead dog like me?"
- 9 Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's attendant, and said to him, "Everything that belonged to Saul and to his entire house I hereby give to your master's grandson."
- 10 You will cultivate the land for him—you and your sons and your servants. You will bring its produce and it will be food for your master's grandson to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will be a regular guest at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)
- 11 Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do everything that my lord the king has instructed his servant to do." So Mephibosheth was a regular guest at David's table, just as though he were one of the king's sons.
- 12 Now Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. All the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.
- 13 Mephibosheth was living in Jerusalem, for he was a regular guest at the king's table. But both his feet were crippled.

## Hanun of Ammon Provokes a War (c. 997 BC)

### 2 Samuel 10

- 1 Later the king of the Ammonites died and his son Hanun succeeded him.
- 2 David said, "I will express my loyalty to Hanun son of Nahash just as his father was loyal to me." So David sent his servants with a message expressing sympathy over his father's death. When David's servants entered the land of the Ammonites,
- 3 the Ammonite officials said to their lord Hanun, "Do you really think David is trying to honor your father by sending these messengers to express his sympathy? No, David has sent his servants to you to get information about the city and spy on it so they can overthrow it!"
- 4 So Hanun seized David's servants and shaved off half of each one's beard. He cut the lower part of their robes off so that their buttocks were exposed, and then sent them away.
- 5 Messengers told David what had happened, so he summoned them, for the men were thoroughly humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards have grown again; then you may come back."
- 6a When the Ammonites realized that David was disgusted with them, they sent and hired
- 20,000 foot soldiers from Aram Beth Rehob and Aram Zobah,
- 6c and 12,000 men from Ish-tob.
- 6b in addition to 1,000 men from the king of Maacah

### 1 Chronicles 19

- 1 Later King Nahash of the Ammonites died and his son succeeded him.
- 2 David said, "I will express my loyalty to Hanun son of Nahash, for his father was loyal to me." So David sent messengers to express his sympathy over his father's death. When David's servants entered Ammonite territory to visit Hanun and express the king's sympathy,
- 3 the Ammonite officials said to Hanun, "Do you really think David is trying to honor your father by sending these messengers to express his sympathy? No, his servants have come to you so they can get information and spy out the land!"
- 4 So Hanun seized David's servants and shaved their beards off. He cut off the lower part of their robes so that their buttocks were exposed and then sent them away.
- 5 Messengers came and told David what had happened to the men, so he summoned them, for the men were thoroughly humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow again; then you may come back."
- 6 When the Ammonites realized that David was disgusted with them, Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire chariots and charioteers from Aram Naharaim, Aram Maacah, and Zobah.
- 7 They hired 32,000 chariots, along with the king of Maacah and his army, who came and camped in front of Medeba. The Ammonites also assembled from their cities and marched out to do battle.

<p>7 When David heard the news, he sent Joab and the entire army to meet them.</p> <p>8 The Ammonites marched out and were deployed for battle at the entrance of the city gate, while the men from Aram Zobah, Rehob, Ish-tob, and Maacah were by themselves in the field.</p> <p>9 When Joab saw that the battle would be fought on two fronts, he chose some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans.</p> <p>10 He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the army and they were deployed against the Ammonites.</p> <p>11 Joab said, "If the Arameans start to overpower me, you come to my rescue. If the Ammonites start to overpower you, I will come to your rescue.</p> <p>12 Be strong! Let's fight bravely for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! The LORD will do what he decides is best!"</p> <p>13 So Joab and his men marched out to do battle with the Arameans, and they fled before him.</p> <p>14 When the Ammonites saw the Arameans flee, they fled before his brother Abishai and went into the city. Joab withdrew from fighting the Ammonites and returned to Jerusalem.</p> <p>15 When the Arameans realized that they had been defeated by Israel, they consolidated their forces.</p> <p>16 Then Hadadezer sent for Arameans from beyond the Euphrates River, and they came to Helam. Shobach, the general in command of Hadadezer's army, led them.</p> <p>17 When David was informed, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan River, and came to Helam. The Arameans deployed their forces against David and fought with him.</p> <p>18 The Arameans fled before Israel. David killed 700 Aramean charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers. He also struck down Shobach, the general in command of the army, who died there.</p> <p>19 When all the kings who were subject to Hadadezer saw they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subjects of Israel. The Arameans were no longer willing to help the Ammonites.</p>	<p>8 When David heard the news, he sent Joab and the entire army to meet them.</p> <p>9 The Ammonites marched out and were deployed for battle at the entrance to the city, while the kings who had come were by themselves in the field.</p> <p>10 When Joab saw that the battle would be fought on two fronts, he chose some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans.</p> <p>11 He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the army and they were deployed against the Ammonites.</p> <p>12 Joab said, "If the Arameans start to overpower me, you come to my rescue. If the Ammonites start to overpower you, I will come to your rescue.</p> <p>13 Be strong! Let's fight bravely for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! The LORD will do what he decides is best!"</p> <p>14 So Joab and his men marched toward the Arameans to do battle, and they fled before him.</p> <p>15 When the Ammonites saw the Arameans flee, they fled before Joab's brother Abishai and withdrew into the city. Joab went back to Jerusalem.</p> <p>16 When the Arameans realized they had been defeated by Israel, they sent for reinforcements from beyond the Euphrates River, led by Shophach the commanding general of Hadadezer's army.</p> <p>17 When David was informed, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan River, and marched against them. David deployed his army against the Arameans for battle and they fought against him.</p> <p>18 The Arameans fled before Israel. David killed 7,000 Aramean charioteers and 40,000 infantrymen; he also killed Shophach the commanding general.</p> <p>19 When Hadadezer's subjects saw they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his subjects. The Arameans were no longer willing to help the Ammonites.</p>
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### The Siege of Rabbah in Ammon (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:1	1 Chronicles 20:1a
<p>1 In the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, David sent out Joab with his officers and the entire Israelite army. They defeated the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1a In the spring, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, Joab led the army into battle and devastated the land of the Ammonites. He went and besieged Rabbah, while David stayed in Jerusalem.</p>

### David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba and Murders Uriah the Hittite (c. 997 BC)

2 Samuel 11:2–27
<p>2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. Now this woman was very attractive.</p> <p>3 So David sent someone to inquire about the woman. The messenger said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"</p>

4 David sent some messengers to get her. She came to him and he had sexual relations with her. (Now at that time she was in the process of purifying herself from her menstrual uncleanness.) Then she returned to her home.

5 The woman conceived and then sent word to David saying, "I'm pregnant."

6 So David sent a message to Joab that said, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked about how Joab and the army were doing and how the campaign was going.

8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your home and relax." When Uriah left the palace, the king sent a gift to him.

9 But Uriah stayed at the door of the palace with all the servants of his lord. He did not go down to his house.

10 So they informed David, "Uriah has not gone down to his house." So David said to Uriah, "Haven't you just arrived from a journey? Why haven't you gone down to your house?"

11 Uriah replied to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah reside in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and my LORD's soldiers are camping in the open field. Should I go to my house to eat and drink and have marital relations with my wife? As surely as you are alive, I will not do this thing!"

12 So David said to Uriah, "Stay here another day. Tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem both that day and the following one.

13 Then David summoned him. He ate and drank with him, and got him drunk. But in the evening he went out to sleep on his bed with the servants of his lord; he did not go down to his own house.

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

15 In the letter he wrote: "Station Uriah in the thick of the battle and then withdraw from him so he will be cut down and killed."

16 So as Joab kept watch on the city, he stationed Uriah at the place where he knew the best enemy soldiers were.

17 When the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, some of David's soldiers fell in battle. Uriah the Hittite also died.

18 Then Joab sent a full battle report to David.

19 He instructed the messenger as follows: "When you finish giving the battle report to the king,

20 if the king becomes angry and asks you, 'Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Didn't you realize they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn't a woman throw an upper millstone down on him from the wall so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go so close to the wall?' just say to him, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.'"

22 So the messenger departed. When he arrived, he informed David of all the news that Joab had sent with him.

23 The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and attacked us in the field. But we forced them to retreat all the way to the door of the city gate.

24 Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall and some of the king's soldiers died. Your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead."

25 David said to the messenger, "Tell Joab, 'Don't let this thing upset you. There is no way to anticipate whom the sword will cut down. Press the battle against the city and conquer it.' Encourage him with these words."

26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for him.

27 When the time of mourning passed, David had her brought to his palace. She became his wife and she bore him a son. But what David had done upset the LORD.

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### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) David's kindness toward Mephibosheth is best placed early in his reign over Israel, since David's war with Saul's house was finally at an end and he had loved Jonathan dearly. The comment in 2 Samuel 21:7 points to 2 Samuel 9 happening before the famine, since in 2 Samuel 9:1, David is unaware of the existence of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (how could he spare someone he didn't know was alive?).
- 2) I placed 2 Samuel 9–12 prior to 2 Samuel 8 (and 2 Samuel 7, cf. 7:1). This is due to the fact that Hanun's disrespect to David's ambassadors make the most sense when placed early in David's reign—prior to him defeating the surrounding nations and becoming powerful (2 Sam 8).<sup>1</sup> In addition, Hanun was the son of Nahash who attacked Jabesh Gilead at the beginning of Saul's reign. If Hanun's disrespect to David occurred in the chronological sequence given in 2 Samuel 5–24, then Nahash would have had to reign for almost 80 years.<sup>2</sup> Youngblood comments, "It is probably best, however, to understand 8:3–12 as a record of

<sup>1</sup> Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, 117–118; cf. also Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 244.

<sup>2</sup> Note that this perspective on Nahash's reign assumes that Hiram of Tyre built David's palace at the *end* of David's reign (2 Sam 5). Most scholars (but not all; cf. Alberto R. Green's article "David's Relations with Hiram") view Hiram's interaction with David as having

battles that occurred after the campaigns reported in chapters 10–12.”<sup>3</sup> Anderson comments, “If anything, David’s defeat of Hadadezer and its sequel in 8:3–12 may have been the final episode in a more prolonged hostilities, and therefore after the events narrated in 10:6–19.”<sup>4</sup>

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to take place late in David’s reign due to the Tyrian king list (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.116–26; cf. Merrill’s 1989 article “The ‘Accession Year’ and Davidic Chronology”).

<sup>3</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, “1, 2 Samuel,” *EBC*, Rev. Ed., 402.

<sup>4</sup> A. A. Anderson, “2 Samuel,” *WBC*, 130–31.

## Nathan the Prophet Confronts David (c. 996 BC)

2 Samuel 12:1–15a

- 1 So the LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to David, Nathan said, “There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor.
- 2 The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.
- 3 But the poor man had nothing except for a little lamb he had acquired. He raised it, and it grew up alongside him and his children. It used to eat his food, drink from his cup, and sleep in his arms. It was just like a daughter to him.
- 4 “When a traveler arrived at the rich man’s home, he did not want to use one of his own sheep or cattle to feed the traveler who had come to visit him. Instead, he took the poor man’s lamb and cooked it for the man who had come to visit him.”
- 5 Then David became very angry at this man. He said to Nathan, “As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!
- 6 Because he committed this cold-hearted crime, he must pay for the lamb four times over!”
- 7 Nathan said to David, “You are that man! This is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘I chose you to be king over Israel and I rescued you from the hand of Saul.
- 8 I gave you your master’s house, and put your master’s wives into your arms. I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all that somehow seems insignificant, I would have given you so much more as well!
- 9 Why have you shown contempt for the word of the LORD by doing evil in my sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and you have taken his wife as your own! You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.
- 10 So now the sword will never depart from your house. For you have despised me by taking the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your own!’
- 11 This is what the LORD says: ‘I am about to bring disaster on you from inside your own household! Right before your eyes I will take your wives and hand them over to your companion. He will have sexual relations with your wives in broad daylight!
- 12 Although you have acted in secret, I will do this thing before all Israel, and in broad daylight.’”
- 13 Then David exclaimed to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD!” Nathan replied to David, “Yes, and the LORD has forgiven your sin. You are not going to die.
- 14 Nonetheless, because you have treated the LORD with such contempt in this matter, the son who has been born to you will certainly die.”
- 15a Then Nathan went to his home.

## Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God (c. 996 BC)

Psalm 51

*For the music director;*

**A psalm of David, written when Nathan the prophet confronted him after David’s affair with Bathsheba.**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, because of your loyal love!  
Because of your great compassion, wipe away my rebellious acts!
- 2 Wash away my wrongdoing!  
Cleanse me of my sin!
- 3 For I am aware of my rebellious acts;  
I am forever conscious of my sin.
- 4 Against you—you above all—I have sinned;  
I have done what is evil in your sight.  
So you are just when you confront me; you are right when you condemn me. [\[Rom 3:4\]](#)
- 5 Look, I was guilty of sin from birth,  
a sinner the moment my mother conceived me.
- 6 Look, you desire integrity in the inner man;  
you want me to possess wisdom.
- 7 Sprinkle me with water and I will be pure;  
wash me and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8 Grant me the ultimate joy of being forgiven!  
May the bones you crushed rejoice!
- 9 Hide your face from my sins!  
Wipe away all my guilt!
- 10 Create for me a pure heart, O God!  
Renew a resolute spirit within me!
- 11 Do not reject me!  
Do not take your Holy Spirit away from me!
- 12 Let me again experience the joy of your deliverance!  
Sustain me by giving me the desire to obey!

- 13 Then I will teach rebels your merciful ways,  
and sinners will turn to you.
- 14 Rescue me from the guilt of murder, O God, the God who delivers me!  
Then my tongue will shout for joy because of your deliverance.
- 15 O Lord, give me the words!  
Then my mouth will praise you.
- 16 Certainly you do not want a sacrifice, or else I would offer it;  
you do not desire a burnt sacrifice.
- 17 The sacrifices God desires are a humble spirit—  
O God, a humble and repentant heart you will not reject.
- 18 Because you favor Zion, do what is good for her!  
Fortify the walls of Jerusalem!
- 19 Then you will accept the proper sacrifices, burnt sacrifices and whole offerings;  
then bulls will be sacrificed on your altar.

### Blessed Are the Forgiven (c. 996 BC)

Psalm 32

#### By David; a well-written song.

- 1 How blessed is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven,  
whose sin is pardoned! [[Rom 4:7](#)]
- 2 How blessed is the one whose wrongdoing the LORD does not punish,  
in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- 3 When I refused to confess my sin,  
my whole body wasted away,  
while I groaned in pain all day long.
- 4 For day and night you tormented me;  
you tried to destroy me in the intense heat of summer. (Selah)
- 5 Then I confessed my sin;  
I no longer covered up my wrongdoing.  
I said, "I will confess my rebellious acts to the LORD."  
And then you forgave my sins. (Selah)
- 6 For this reason every one of your faithful followers should pray to you  
while there is a window of opportunity.  
Certainly when the surging water rises,  
it will not reach them.
- 7 You are my hiding place;  
you protect me from distress.  
You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance. (Selah)
- 8 I will instruct and teach you about how you should live.  
I will advise you as I look you in the eye.
- 9 Do not be like an unintelligent horse or mule,  
which will not obey you  
unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit.
- 10 An evil person suffers much pain,  
but the LORD's faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him.
- 11 Rejoice in the LORD and be happy, you who are godly!  
Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright!

### The Death of David and Bathsheba's First Son (c. 996 BC)

2 Samuel 12:15b–24a

- 15b The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and the child became very ill.
- 16 Then David prayed to God for the child and fasted. He would even go and spend the night lying on the ground.
- 17 The elders of his house stood over him and tried to lift him from the ground, but he was unwilling, and refused to eat food with them.
- 18 On the seventh day the child died. But the servants of David were afraid to inform him that the child had died, for they said, "While the child was still alive he would not listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He will do

himself harm!”

19 When David saw that his servants were whispering to one another, he realized that the child was dead. So David asked his servants, “Is the child dead?” They replied, “Yes, he’s dead.”

20 So David got up from the ground, bathed, put on oil, and changed his clothes. He went to the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then, when he entered his palace, he requested that food be brought to him, and he ate.

21 His servants said to him, “What is this that you have done? While the child was still alive, you fasted and wept. Once the child was dead you got up and ate food!”

22 He replied, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept because I thought, ‘Perhaps the LORD will show pity and the child will live.’

23 But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Am I able to bring him back? I will go to him, but he cannot return to me!”

24a So David comforted his wife Bathsheba.

### The Capture of Rabbah in Ammon (c. 996 BC)

2 Samuel 12:26–31	1 Chronicles 20:1b–3
<p>26 So Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal city.</p> <p>27 Joab then sent messengers to David, saying, “I have fought against Rabbah and have captured the water supply of the city.</p> <p>28 So now assemble the rest of the army and besiege the city and capture it. Otherwise I will capture the city and it will be named for me.”</p> <p>29 So David assembled all the army and went to Rabbah and fought against it and captured it.</p> <p>30 He took the crown of their king from his head— it was gold, weighed about seventy-five pounds, and held a precious stone— and it was placed on David’s head. He also took from the city a great deal of plunder.</p> <p>31 He removed the people who were in it and made them do hard labor with saws, iron picks, and iron axes, putting them to work at the brick kiln. This was his policy with all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1b Joab defeated Rabbah and tore it down.</p> <p>2 David took the crown from the head of their king and wore it (its weight was a talent of gold and it was set with precious stones).</p> <p>He took a large amount of plunder from the city.</p> <p>3 He removed the city’s residents and made them do hard labor with saws, iron picks, and axes.</p> <p>This was his policy with all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.</p>

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## A Summary of David's Wars and His Administration (c. 1003 – c. 995 BC)

2 Samuel 8:1–18; 21:15–22

### The Philistines

8:1 Later David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. David took Metheg Ammah from the Philistines.

21:15 Another battle was fought between the Philistines and Israel. So David went down with his soldiers and fought the Philistines. David became exhausted.

16 Now Ishbi-Benob, one of the descendants of Rapha, had a spear that weighed three hundred bronze shekels, and he was armed with a new weapon. He had said that he would kill David.

17 But Abishai the son of Zeruah came to David's aid, striking the Philistine down and killing him. Then David's men took an oath saying, "You will not go out to battle with us again! You must not extinguish the lamp of Israel!"

18 Later there was another battle with the Philistines, this time in Gob.

On that occasion Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of Rapha.

19 Yet another battle occurred with the Philistines in Gob.

On that occasion Elhanan the son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

20 Yet another battle occurred in Gath.

On that occasion there was a large man who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all! He too was a descendant of Rapha.

21 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan, the son of David's brother Shimeah, killed him.

22 These four were the descendants of Rapha who lived in Gath; they were killed by David and his soldiers.

### The Moabites

8:2 He defeated the Moabites.

He made them lie on the ground and then used a rope to measure them off. He put two-thirds of them to death and spared the other third.

The Moabites became David's subjects and brought tribute.

### The Arameans (Syrians)

3 David defeated King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah when he came to reestablish his authority over the Euphrates River.

4 David seized from him 1,700 charioteers and 20,000 infantrymen. David cut the hamstrings of all but a hundred of the chariot horses.

5 The Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, but David killed 22,000 of the Arameans.

6 David placed garrisons in the territory of the Arameans of Damascus; the Arameans became David's subjects and brought tribute. The LORD protected David wherever he campaigned.

7 David took the golden shields that belonged to Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 From Tebah and Berothai, Hadadezer's cities, King David took a great deal of bronze.

1 Chronicles 18:1–17; 20:4–8

18:1 Later David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. He took Gath and its surrounding towns away from the Philistines.

20:4 Later there was a battle with the Philistines in Gezer.

At that time Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rephaim, and the Philistines were subdued.

5 There was another battle with the Philistines in which Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear had a shaft as big as the crossbeam of a weaver's loom.

6 In a battle in Gath there was a large man who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—twenty-four in all! He too was a descendant of Rapha.

7 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

8 These were the descendants of Rapha who lived in Gath; they were killed by the hand of David and his soldiers.

18:2 He defeated the Moabites;

the Moabites became David's subjects and brought tribute.

3 David defeated King Hadadezer of Zobah as far as Hamath, when he went to extend his authority to the Euphrates River.

4 David seized from him 1,000 chariots, 7,000 charioteers, and 20,000 infantrymen. David cut the hamstrings of all but a hundred of Hadadezer's chariot horses.

5 The Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, but David killed 22,000 of the Arameans.

6 David placed garrisons in the territory of the Arameans of Damascus; the Arameans became David's subjects and brought tribute. The LORD protected David wherever he campaigned.

7 David took the golden shields which Hadadezer's servants had carried and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 From Tibhath and Kun, Hadadezer's cities, David took a great deal of bronze.

(Solomon used it to make the big bronze basin called "The Sea," the pillars, and other bronze items.)

9 When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of Hadadezer,  
 10 he sent his son Joram to King David to extend his best wishes and to pronounce a blessing on him for his victory over Hadadezer, for Toi had been at war with Hadadezer. He brought with him various items made of silver, gold, and bronze.  
 11 King David dedicated these things to the LORD, along with the dedicated silver and gold that he had taken from all the nations that he had subdued,  
 12 including Aram, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.  
 This also included some of the plunder taken from King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah.

#### The Edomites

13 David became famous when he returned from defeating the Arameans in the Valley of Salt, he defeated 18,000 in all.  
 14 He placed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became David's subjects. The LORD protected David wherever he campaigned.

#### David's Administration

15 David reigned over all Israel; he guaranteed justice for all his people.  
 16 Joab son of Zeruiah was general in command of the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary;  
 17 Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was scribe;  
 18 Benaiah son of Jehoida supervised the Kerithites and Pelethites; and David's sons were priests.

9 When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of King Hadadezer of Zobah,  
 10 he sent his son Hadoram to King David to extend his best wishes and to pronounce a blessing on him for his victory over Hadadezer, for Tou had been at war with Hadadezer. He also sent various items made of gold, silver, and bronze.  
 11 King David dedicated these things to the LORD, along with the silver and gold which he had carried off from all the nations,  
 including Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

12 Abishai son of Zeruiah killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.  
 13 He placed garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's subjects. The LORD protected David wherever he campaigned.

14 David reigned over all Israel; he guaranteed justice for all his people.  
 15 Joab son of Zeruiah was commanding general of the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary;  
 16 Zadok son of Ahitub and Abimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was scribe;  
 17 Benaiah son of Jehoiada supervised the Kerethites and Pelethites; and David's sons were the king's leading officials.

### David's Wars Produce Two Future Foes of Solomon (c. 995 BC)

1 Kings 11:14b–18, 23b–24

#### Hadad the Edomite

14b Hadad the Edomite, a descendant of the Edomite king.  
 15 During David's campaign against Edom, Joab, the commander of the army, while on a mission to bury the dead, killed every male in Edom.  
 16 For six months Joab and the entire Israelite army stayed there until they had exterminated every male in Edom.  
 17 Hadad, who was only a small boy at the time, escaped with some of his father's Edomite servants and headed for Egypt.  
 18 They went from Midian to Paran; they took some men from Paran and went to Egypt. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, supplied him with a house and food and even assigned him some land.

#### Rezon the Aramean

23b Rezon son of Eliada who had run away from his master, King Hadadezer of Zobah.  
 24 He gathered some men and organized a raiding band. When David tried to kill them, they went to Damascus, where they settled down and gained control of the city.

### He Will Tread Down Our Foes (c. 995 BC)

Psalms 60

*For the music director; according to the shushan-eduth style;*

**A prayer of David written to instruct others. It was written when he fought against Aram Naharaim and Aram-Zobah. That was when Joab turned back and struck down 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.**

- 1 O God, you have rejected us.  
 You suddenly turned on us in your anger.  
 Please restore us!
- 2 You made the earth quake; you split it open.

	Repair its breaches, for it is ready to fall.
3	You have made your people experience hard times; you have made us drink intoxicating wine.
4	You have given your loyal followers a rallying flag, so that they might seek safety from the bow. (Selah)
5	Deliver by your power and answer me, so that the ones you love may be safe.
6	God has spoken in his sanctuary: “I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem; the Valley of Succoth I will measure off.
7	Gilead belongs to me, as does Manasseh! Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my royal scepter.
8	Moab is my washbasin. I will make Edom serve me. I will shout in triumph over Philistia.”
9	Who will lead me into the fortified city? Who will bring me to Edom?
10	Have you not rejected us, O God? O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.
11	Give us help against the enemy, for any help men might offer is futile.
12	By God’s power we will conquer; he will trample down our enemies.

### David Praises God for Delivering Him from All His Enemies (c. 995 BC)

2 Samuel 22	Psalm 18
<p>1 David sang to the LORD the words of this song when the LORD rescued him from the power of all his enemies, including Saul.</p> <p>2 He said:</p> <p>“The LORD is my high ridge, my stronghold, my deliverer.</p> <p>3 My God is my rocky summit where I take shelter, my shield, the horn that saves me, my stronghold, my refuge, my savior. You save me from violence!</p> <p>4 I called to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I was delivered from my enemies.</p> <p>5 The waves of death engulfed me; the currents of chaos overwhelmed me.</p> <p>6 The ropes of Sheol tightened around me; the snares of death trapped me.</p> <p>7 In my distress I called to the LORD; I called to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help.</p> <p>8 The earth heaved and shook; the foundations of the sky trembled. They heaved because he was angry.</p> <p>9 Smoke ascended from his nose; fire devoured as it came from his mouth; he hurled down fiery coals.</p> <p>10 He made the sky sink as he descended; a thick cloud was under his feet.</p>	<p><i>For the music director;</i> <b>By the LORD’s servant David, who sang to the LORD the words of this song when the LORD rescued him from the power of all his enemies, including Saul.</b></p> <p>1 He said:</p> <p>“I love you, LORD, my source of strength!</p> <p>2 The LORD is my high ridge, my stronghold, my deliverer. My God is my rocky summit where I take shelter, my shield, the horn that saves me, and my refuge.</p> <p>3 I called to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I was delivered from my enemies.</p> <p>4 The waves of death engulfed me, the currents of chaos overwhelmed me.</p> <p>5 The ropes of Sheol tightened around me, the snares of death trapped me.</p> <p>6 In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried out to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help.</p> <p>7 The earth heaved and shook; the roots of the mountains trembled; they heaved because he was angry.</p> <p>8 Smoke ascended from his nose; fire devoured as it came from his mouth; he hurled down fiery coals.</p> <p>9 He made the sky sink as he descended; a thick cloud was under his feet.</p>

11	He mounted a winged angel and flew; he glided on the wings of the wind.	10	He mounted a winged angel and flew; he glided on the wings of the wind.
12	He shrouded himself in darkness, in thick rain clouds.	11	He shrouded himself in darkness, in thick rain clouds.
13	From the brightness in front of him came coals of fire.	12	From the brightness in front of him came hail and fiery coals.
14	The LORD thundered from the sky; the sovereign One shouted loudly.	13	The LORD thundered in the sky; the sovereign One shouted.
15	He shot arrows and scattered them, lightning and routed them.	14	He shot his arrows and scattered them, many lightning bolts and routed them.
16	The depths of the sea were exposed; the inner regions of the world were uncovered by the LORD's battle cry, by the powerful breath from his nose.	15	The depths of the sea were exposed; the inner regions of the world were uncovered by your battle cry, LORD, by the powerful breath from your nose.
17	He reached down from above and grabbed me; he pulled me from the surging water.	16	He reached down from above and took hold of me; he pulled me from the surging water.
18	He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me, for they were too strong for me.	17	He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me, for they were too strong for me.
19	They confronted me in my day of calamity, but the LORD helped me.	18	They confronted me in my day of calamity, but the LORD helped me.
20	He brought me out into a wide open place; he delivered me because he was pleased with me.	19	He brought me out into a wide open place; he delivered me because he was pleased with me.
21	The LORD repaid me for my godly deeds; he rewarded my blameless behavior.	20	The LORD repaid me for my godly deeds; he rewarded my blameless behavior.
22	For I have obeyed the LORD's commands; I have not rebelled against my God.	21	For I have obeyed the LORD's commands; I have not rebelled against my God.
23	For I am aware of all his regulations, and I do not reject his rules.	22	For I am aware of all his regulations, and I do not reject his rules.
24	I was blameless before him; I kept myself from sinning.	23	I was innocent before him, and kept myself from sinning.
25	The LORD rewarded me for my godly deeds; he took notice of my blameless behavior.	24	The LORD rewarded me for my godly deeds; he took notice of my blameless behavior.
26	You prove to be loyal to one who is faithful; you prove to be trustworthy to one who is innocent.	25	You prove to be loyal to one who is faithful; you prove to be trustworthy to one who is innocent.
27	You prove to be reliable to one who is blameless, but you prove to be deceptive to one who is perverse.	26	You prove to be reliable to one who is blameless, but you prove to be deceptive to one who is perverse.
28	You deliver oppressed people, but you watch the proud and bring them down.	27	For you deliver oppressed people, but you bring down those who have a proud look.
29	Indeed, you are my lamp, LORD. The LORD illumines the darkness around me.	28	Indeed, you are my lamp, LORD. My God illuminates the darkness around me.
30	Indeed, with your help I can charge against an army; by my God's power I can jump over a wall.	29	Indeed, with your help I can charge against an army; by my God's power I can jump over a wall.
31	The one true God acts in a faithful manner; the LORD's promise is reliable; he is a shield to all who take shelter in him.	30	The one true God acts in a faithful manner; the LORD's promise is reliable; he is a shield to all who take shelter in him.
32	Indeed, who is God besides the LORD? Who is a protector besides our God?	31	Indeed, who is God besides the LORD? Who is a protector besides our God?
33	The one true God is my mighty refuge; he removes the obstacles in my way.	32	The one true God gives me strength; he removes the obstacles in my way.
34	He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain.	33	He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain.
35	He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend even the strongest bow.	34	He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend even the strongest bow.
36	You give me your protective shield;  your willingness to help enables me to prevail.	35	You give me your protective shield;  your right hand supports me; your willingness to help enables me to prevail.
37	You widen my path;	36	You widen my path;

<p>my feet do not slip.</p> <p>38 I chase my enemies and destroy them; I do not turn back until I wipe them out.</p> <p>39 I wipe them out and beat them to death; they cannot get up; they fall at my feet.</p> <p>40 You give me strength for battle; you make my foes kneel before me.</p> <p>41 You make my enemies retreat; I destroy those who hate me.</p> <p>42 They cry out, but there is no one to help them; they cry out to the LORD, but he does not answer them.</p> <p>43 I grind them as fine as the dust of the ground; I crush them and stomp on them like clay in the streets.</p> <p>44 You rescue me from a hostile army; you preserve me as a leader of nations; people over whom I had no authority are now my subjects.</p> <p>45 Foreigners are powerless before me; when they hear of my exploits, they submit to me.</p> <p>46 Foreigners lose their courage; they shake with fear as they leave their strongholds.</p> <p>47 The LORD is alive! My protector is praiseworthy! The God who delivers me is exalted as king!</p> <p>48 The one true God completely vindicates me; he makes nations submit to me.</p> <p>49 He delivers me from my enemies; you snatch me away from those who attack me; you rescue me from violent men.</p> <p>50 So I will give you thanks, O LORD, before the nations! I will sing praises to you. <a href="#">[Rom 15:9]</a></p> <p>51 He gives his chosen king magnificent victories; he is faithful to his chosen ruler, to David and to his descendants forever!"</p>	<p>my feet do not slip.</p> <p>37 I chase my enemies and catch them; I do not turn back until I wipe them out.</p> <p>38 I beat them to death; they fall at my feet.</p> <p>39 You give me strength for battle; you make my foes kneel before me.</p> <p>40 You make my enemies retreat; I destroy those who hate me.</p> <p>41 They cry out, but there is no one to help them; they cry out to the LORD, but he does not answer them.</p> <p>42 I grind them as fine windblown dust; I beat them underfoot like clay in the streets.</p> <p>43 You rescue me from a hostile army; you make me a leader of nations; people over whom I had no authority are now my subjects.</p> <p>44 When they hear of my exploits, they submit to me. Foreigners are powerless before me;</p> <p>45 foreigners lose their courage; they shake with fear as they leave their strongholds.</p> <p>46 The LORD is alive! My protector is praiseworthy! The God who delivers me is exalted as king!</p> <p>47 The one true God completely vindicates me; he makes nations submit to me.</p> <p>48 He delivers me from my enemies; you snatch me away from those who attack me; you rescue me from violent men.</p> <p>49 So I will give you thanks before the nations, O LORD! I will sing praises to you!</p> <p>50 He gives his chosen king magnificent victories; he is faithful to his chosen ruler, to David and his descendants forever."</p>
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## The Davidic Covenant (c. 995 BC)

### 2 Samuel 7

#### **God's Promise to David**

1 The king settled into his palace, for the LORD gave him relief from all his enemies on all sides.

2 The king said to Nathan the prophet, "Look! I am living in a palace made from cedar, while the ark of God sits in the middle of a tent."

3 Nathan replied to the king, "You should go and do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you."

4 That night the LORD told Nathan,

5 "Go, tell my servant David: 'This is what the LORD says: Do you really intend to build a house for me to live in?'

6 I have not lived in a house from the time I brought the Israelites up from Egypt to the present day. Instead, I was traveling with them and living in a tent.

7 Wherever I moved among all the Israelites, I did not say to any of the leaders whom I appointed to care for my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house made from cedar?'"

8 "So now, say this to my servant David: 'This is what the LORD of hosts says: I took you from the pasture and from your work as a shepherd to make you leader of my people Israel.

9 I was with you wherever you went, and I defeated all your enemies before you. Now I will make you as famous as the great men of the earth.

10 I will establish a place for my people Israel and settle them there; they will live there and not be disturbed any more. Violent men will not oppress them again, as they did in the beginning

11 and during the time when I appointed judges to lead my people Israel. Instead, I will give you relief from all your enemies. The LORD declares to you that he himself will build a dynastic house for you.

12 When the time comes for you to die, I will raise up your descendant, one of your own sons, to succeed you, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He will build a house for my name, and I will make his dynasty permanent.

14 I will become his father and he will become my son. [\[Heb 1:5\]](#) When he sins, I will correct him with the rod of men and with wounds inflicted by human beings.

15 But my loyal love will not be removed from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

16 Your house and your kingdom will stand before me permanently; your dynasty will be permanent.'"

17 Nathan told David all these words that were revealed to him.

#### **David's Response to God**

18 King David went in, sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my family, that you should have brought me to this point?"

19 And you didn't stop there, O LORD God! You have also spoken about the future of your servant's family. Is this your usual way of dealing with men, O LORD God?

20 What more can David say to you?

You have given your servant special recognition, O LORD God!

21 For the sake of your promise and according to your

### 1 Chronicles 17

1 When David had settled into his palace, he said to Nathan the prophet,

"Look, I am living in a palace made from cedar, while the ark of the LORD's covenant is under a tent."

2 Nathan said to David, "You should do whatever you have in mind, for God is with you."

3 That night God told Nathan the prophet,

4 "Go, tell my servant David: 'This is what the LORD says: 'You must not build me a house in which to live.

5 For I have not lived in a house from the time I brought Israel up from Egypt to the present day. I have lived in a tent that has been in various places.

6 Wherever I moved throughout Israel, I did not say to any of the leaders whom I appointed to care for my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house made from cedar?'"

7 "So now, say this to my servant David: 'This is what the LORD who commands armies says: "I took you from the pasture and from your work as a shepherd to make you a leader of my people Israel.

8 I was with you wherever you went and I defeated all your enemies before you. Now I will make you as famous as the great men of the earth.

9 I will establish a place for my people Israel and settle them there; they will live there and not be disturbed anymore. Violent men will not oppress them again, as they did in the beginning

10 and during the time when I appointed judges to lead my people Israel. I will subdue all your enemies.

"I declare to you that the LORD will build a dynastic house for you!

11 When the time comes for you to die, I will raise up your descendant, one of your own sons, to succeed you, and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He will build me a house, and I will make his dynasty permanent.

13 I will become his father and he will become my son.

I will never withhold my loyal love from him, as I withheld it from the one who ruled before you.

14 I will put him in permanent charge of my house and my kingdom; his dynasty will be permanent.'"

15 Nathan told David all these words that were revealed to him.

16 David went in, sat before the LORD, and said: "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my family, that you should have brought me to this point?"

17 And you did not stop there, O God! You have also spoken about the future of your servant's family. You have revealed to me what men long to know, O LORD God.

18 What more can David say to you? You have honored your servant; you have given your servant special recognition.

19 O LORD, for the sake of your servant and according to your

<p>purpose you have done this great thing in order to reveal it to your servant.</p> <p>22 Therefore you are great, O LORD God, for there is none like you! There is no God besides you! What we have heard is true!</p> <p>23 Who is like your people, Israel, a unique nation on the earth? Their God went to claim a nation for himself and to make a name for himself! You did great and awesome acts for your land, before your people whom you delivered for yourself from the Egyptian empire and its gods.</p> <p>24 You made Israel your very own people for all time. You, O LORD, became their God.</p> <p>25 So now, O LORD God, make this promise you have made about your servant and his family a permanent reality. Do as you promised,</p> <p>26 so you may gain lasting fame, as people say, ‘The LORD of hosts is God over Israel!’ The dynasty of your servant David will be established before you,</p> <p>27 for you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have told your servant, ‘I will build you a dynastic house.’ That is why your servant has had the courage to pray this prayer to you.</p> <p>28 Now, O sovereign LORD, you are the true God! May your words prove to be true!</p> <p>You have made this good promise to your servant!</p> <p>29 Now be willing to bless your servant’s dynasty so that it may stand permanently before you, for you, O sovereign LORD, have spoken. By your blessing may your servant’s dynasty be blessed on into the future!”</p>	<p>will, you have done this great thing in order to reveal your greatness.</p> <p>20 O LORD, there is none like you; there is no God besides you! What we heard is true!</p> <p>21 And who is like your people, Israel, a unique nation in the earth? Their God went to claim a nation for himself! You made a name for yourself by doing great and awesome deeds when you drove out nations before your people whom you had delivered from the Egyptian empire and its gods.</p> <p>22 You made Israel your very own nation for all time. You, O LORD, became their God.</p> <p>23 So now, O LORD, may the promise you made about your servant and his family become a permanent reality! Do as you promised,</p> <p>24 so it may become a reality and you may gain lasting fame, as people say, ‘The LORD who commands armies is the God of Israel.’ David’s dynasty will be established before you,</p> <p>25 for you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build a dynasty for him. That is why your servant has had the courage to pray to you.</p> <p>26 Now, O LORD, you are the true God;</p> <p>you have made this good promise to your servant.</p> <p>27 Now you are willing to bless your servant’s dynasty so that it may stand permanently before you, for you, O LORD, have blessed it and it will be blessed from now on into the future.”</p>
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### The Birth of Solomon (c. 994 BC)

2 Samuel 12:24b–25

24b He went to her and had marital relations with her. She gave birth to a son, and David named him Solomon. Now the LORD loved the child

25 and sent word through Nathan the prophet that he should be named Jedidiah for the LORD’s sake.

### David’s Sons Born at Jerusalem (c. 1003 – c. 990 BC)

2 Samuel 5:13–16

13 David married more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he arrived from Hebron.

Even more sons and daughters were born to David.

14 These are the names of children born to him in Jerusalem:

Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

15 Ibhar, Elishua,

Nepheg, Japhia,

16 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

1 Chronicles 14:3–7

3 In Jerusalem David married more wives and

fathered more sons and daughters.

4 These are the names of children born to him in Jerusalem:

Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

5 Ibhar, Elishua,

Elpelet,

6 Nogah,

Nepheg, Japhia,

7 Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

**Chronological Notes**

- 1) I placed 2 Samuel 7 here in the reading plan due to the comment in 7:1 that God had given David “relief from all his enemies on all sides” (NET). This indicates that more than the Philistines are in view, since the Amalekites, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites and Arameans were all enemies of Israel.
- 2) I placed the birth of Solomon after the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7 for two reasons: a) it seems doubtful that the siege of Rabbah lasted for almost another full year after the death of David and Bathsheba’s first son (cf. 12:26), and b) the tenor of the message from Nathan suggests that the son who would build God’s house after David was not yet born (cf. David’s charge to Solomon in 1 Chr 22:9).

## Saul's Blood-guilt Brings Famine upon Israel (c. 995 – c. 992 BC)

2 Samuel 21:1–14

- 1 During David's reign there was a famine for three consecutive years. So David inquired of the LORD. The LORD said, "It is because of Saul and his bloodstained family, because he murdered the Gibeonites."
- 2 So the king summoned the Gibeonites and spoke with them. (Now the Gibeonites were not descendants of Israel; they were a remnant of the Amorites. The Israelites had made a promise to them, but Saul tried to kill them because of his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.)
- 3 David said to the Gibeonites, "What can I do for you, and how can I make amends so that you will bless the LORD's inheritance?"
- 4 The Gibeonites said to him, "We have no claim to silver or gold from Saul or from his family, nor would we be justified in putting to death anyone in Israel." David asked, "What then are you asking me to do for you?"
- 5 They replied to the king, "As for this man who exterminated us and who schemed against us so that we were destroyed and left without status throughout all the borders of Israel—
- 6 let seven of his male descendants be turned over to us, and we will execute them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, who was the LORD's chosen one." The king replied, "I will turn them over."
- 7 The king had mercy on Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, in light of the LORD's oath that had been taken between David and Jonathan son of Saul.
- 8 So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Aiah's daughter Rizpah whom she had born to Saul, and the five sons of Saul's daughter Merab whom she had born to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite.
- 9 He turned them over to the Gibeonites, and they executed them on a hill before the LORD. The seven of them died together; they were put to death during harvest time—during the first days of the beginning of the barley harvest.
- 10 Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on a rock. From the beginning of the harvest until the rain fell on them, she did not allow the birds of the air to feed on them by day, nor the wild animals by night.
- 11 When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, Saul's concubine, had done,
- 12 he went and took the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan from the leaders of Jabesh Gilead. (They had secretly taken them from the plaza at Beth Shan. It was there that Philistines publicly exposed their corpses after they had killed Saul at Gilboa.)
- 13 David brought the bones of Saul and of Jonathan his son from there; they also gathered up the bones of those who had been executed.
- 14 They buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin at Zela in the grave of his father Kish. After they had done everything that the king had commanded, God responded to their prayers for the land.

## David's Oldest Son Amnon Rapes His Half-Sister Tamar (c. 986 BC)

2 Samuel 13:1–22

- 1 Now David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar. In the course of time David's son Amnon fell madly in love with her.
- 2 But Amnon became frustrated because he was so lovesick over his sister Tamar. For she was a virgin, and to Amnon it seemed out of the question to do anything to her.
- 3 Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah. Jonadab was a very crafty man.
- 4 He asked Amnon, "Why are you, the king's son, so depressed every morning? Can't you tell me?" So Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar the sister of my brother Absalom."
- 5 Jonadab replied to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be sick. When your father comes in to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come in so she can fix some food for me. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I can watch. Then I will eat from her hand.'"
- 6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick. When the king came in to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come in so she can make a couple of cakes in my sight. Then I will eat from her hand."
- 7 So David sent Tamar to the house saying, "Please go to the house of Amnon your brother and prepare some food for him."
- 8 So Tamar went to the house of Amnon her brother, who was lying down. She took the dough, kneaded it, made some cakes while he watched, and baked them.
- 9 But when she took the pan and set it before him, he refused to eat. Instead Amnon said, "Get everyone out of here!" So everyone left.
- 10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the cakes into the bedroom; then I will eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes that she had prepared and brought them to her brother Amnon in the bedroom.
- 11 As she brought them to him to eat, he grabbed her and said to her, "Come on! Get in bed with me, my sister!"
- 12 But she said to him, "No, my brother! Don't humiliate me! This just isn't done in Israel! Don't do this foolish thing!"
- 13 How could I ever be rid of my humiliation? And you would be considered one of the fools [wicked pervert] in Israel! Just speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you."
- 14 But he refused to listen to her. He overpowered her and humiliated her by raping her.
- 15 Then Amnon greatly despised her. His disdain toward her surpassed the love he had previously felt toward her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and leave!"

16 But she said to him, “No I won’t, for sending me away now would be worse than what you did to me earlier!” But he refused to listen to her.

17 He called his personal attendant and said to him, “Take this woman out of my sight and lock the door behind her!”

18 (Now she was wearing a long robe, for this is what the king’s virgin daughters used to wear.) So Amnon’s attendant removed her and bolted the door behind her.

19 Then Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went on her way, wailing as she went.

20 Her brother Absalom said to her, “Was Amnon your brother with you? Now be quiet, my sister. He is your brother. Don’t take it so seriously!” Tamar, devastated, lived in the house of her brother Absalom.

21 Now King David heard about all these things and was very angry.

22 But Absalom said nothing to Amnon, either bad or good, yet Absalom hated Amnon because he had humiliated his sister Tamar.

### Absalom, Tamar’s Brother, Murders Amnon (c. 983 BC)

2 Samuel 13:23–39

23 Two years later Absalom’s sheepshearers were in Baal Hazor, near Ephraim. Absalom invited all the king’s sons.

24 Then Absalom went to the king and said, “My shearers have begun their work. Let the king and his servants go with me.”

25 But the king said to Absalom, “No, my son. We shouldn’t all go. We shouldn’t burden you in that way.” Though Absalom pressed him, the king was not willing to go. Instead, David blessed him.

26 Then Absalom said, “If you will not go, then let my brother Amnon go with us.” The king replied to him, “Why should he go with you?”

27 But when Absalom pressed him, he sent Amnon and all the king’s sons along with him.

28 Absalom instructed his servants, “Look! When Amnon is drunk and I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon down,’ kill him then and there. Don’t fear! Is it not I who have given you these instructions? Be strong and courageous!”

29 So Absalom’s servants did to Amnon exactly what Absalom had instructed. Then all the king’s sons got up; each one rode away on his mule and fled.

30 While they were still on their way, the following report reached David: “Absalom has killed all the king’s sons; not one of them is left!”

31 Then the king stood up and tore his garments and lay down on the ground. All his servants were standing there with torn garments as well.

32 Jonadab, the son of David’s brother Shimeah, said, “My lord should not say, ‘They have killed all the young men who are the king’s sons.’ For only Amnon is dead. This is what Absalom has talked about from the day that Amnon humiliated his sister Tamar.

33 Now don’t let my lord the king be concerned about the report that has come saying, ‘All the king’s sons are dead.’ It is only Amnon who is dead.”

34 In the meantime Absalom fled. When the servant who was the watchman looked up, he saw many people coming from the west on a road beside the hill.

35 Jonadab said to the king, “Look! The king’s sons have come! It’s just as I said!”

36 Just as he finished speaking, the king’s sons arrived, wailing and weeping. The king and all his servants wept loudly as well.

37 But Absalom fled and went to [his mother’s father] King Talmai son of Ammihud of Geshur. And David grieved over his son every day.

38 After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he remained there for three years.

39 The king longed to go to Absalom, for he had since been consoled over the death of Amnon.

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#### Chronological Notes

- 1) There is no indication of when during David’s reign the famine of 2 Samuel 21:1–14 occurred. It was most likely after Mephibosheth had come under David’s protection in Jerusalem (cf. 9:1–13) and before Absalom’s rebellion (cf. 16:7–8).<sup>1</sup> Dale Ralph Davis comments, “Our passage begins by reporting a famine ‘in the days of David’ (v. 1)—sometime during David’s reign. By this very general time reference the writer keeps us from assuming that the episode of 21:1–14 followed chronologically the events of 2 Samuel 20. He does not place the famine in any tight time sequence; the famine, he says, happened sometime during David’s reign. The writer does drop one hint. Verse 7 suggests that David had already brought Mephibosheth, Jonathan’s

<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Bergen, “1, 2 Samuel,” *NAC*, 443–44. So also A. F. Kirkpatrick, “The Second Book of Samuel,” *CBC*, 192.

son, to Jerusalem before the famine and/or executions reported here. Hence 21:1–14 takes place after 2 Samuel 9. Those wanting to scour the depths of this matter may search elsewhere.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See the lucid discussion in Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 252–54; also M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Authorship and Other Biblical Studies*, 193–94. For a differing view, cf. R. A. Carlson, *David, the Chosen King*, 199–200.

**Absalom Returns from Exile (c. 980 BC)**

2 Samuel 14:1–27

**Joab's Plan**

1 Now Joab son of Zeruah realized that the king longed to see Absalom.

2 So Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a wise woman. He told her, "Pretend to be in mourning and put on garments for mourning. Don't anoint yourself with oil. Instead, act like a woman who has been mourning for the dead for some time.

3 Go to the king and speak to him in the following fashion." Then Joab told her what to say.

**The Wise Woman's Story**

4 So the Tekoan woman went to the king. She bowed down with her face to the ground in deference to him and said, "Please help me, O king!"

5 The king replied to her, "What do you want?" She answered, "I am a widow; my husband is dead.

6 Your servant has two sons. When the two of them got into a fight in the field, there was no one present who could intervene. One of them struck the other and killed him.

7 Now the entire family has risen up against your servant, saying, 'Turn over the one who struck down his brother, so that we can execute him and avenge the death of his brother whom he killed. In so doing we will also destroy the heir.' They want to extinguish my remaining coal, leaving no one on the face of the earth to carry on the name of my husband."

8 Then the king told the woman, "Go to your home. I will give instructions concerning your situation."

9 The Tekoan woman said to the king, "My lord the king, let any blame fall on me and on the house of my father. But let the king and his throne be innocent!"

10 The king said, "Bring to me whoever speaks to you, and he won't bother you again!"

11 She replied, "In that case, let the king invoke the name of the LORD your God so that the avenger of blood may not kill! Then they will not destroy my son!" He replied, "As surely as the LORD lives, not a single hair of your son's head will fall to the ground."

**The Wise Woman Reveals Her True Intention**

12 Then the woman said, "Please permit your servant to speak to my lord the king about another matter." He replied, "Tell me."

13 The woman said, "Why have you devised something like this against God's people? When the king speaks in this fashion, he makes himself guilty, for the king has not brought back the one he has banished.

14 Certainly we must die, and are like water spilled on the ground that cannot be gathered up again. But God does not take away life; instead he devises ways for the banished to be restored.

15 I have now come to speak with my lord the king about this matter, because the people have made me fearful. But your servant said, 'I will speak to the king! Perhaps the king will do what his female servant asks.

16 Yes! The king may listen and deliver his female servant from the hand of the man who seeks to remove both me and my son from the inheritance God has given us!'

17 So your servant said, 'May the word of my lord the king be my security, for my lord the king is like the angel of God when it comes to deciding between right and wrong! May the LORD your God be with you!'"

**David Suspects Joab's Involvement**

18 Then the king replied to the woman, "Don't hide any information from me when I question you." The woman said, "Let my lord the king speak!"

19 The king said, "Did Joab put you up to all of this?" The woman answered, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, there is no deviation to the right or to the left from all that my lord the king has said. For your servant Joab gave me instructions. He has put all these words in your servant's mouth.

20 Your servant Joab did this so as to change this situation. But my lord has wisdom like that of the angel of God, and knows everything that is happening in the land."

**David Allows Absalom to Return to Jerusalem but Refuses to See Him**

21 Then the king said to Joab, "All right! I will do this thing! Go and bring back the young man Absalom!"

22 Then Joab bowed down with his face toward the ground and thanked the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, because the king has granted the request of your servant!"

23 So Joab got up and went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem.

24 But the king said, "Let him go over to his own house. He may not see my face." So Absalom went over to his own house; he did not see the king's face.

**Absalom's Appearance**

25 Now in all Israel everyone acknowledged that there was no man as handsome as Absalom. From the sole of his feet to the top of his head he was perfect in appearance.

26 When he would shave his head—at the end of every year he used to shave his head, for it grew too long and he would shave it—

he used to weigh the hair of his head at three pounds according to the king's weight.

### **Absalom Names His Daughter after His Desolate and Humiliated Sister—Tamar**

27 Absalom had three sons and one daughter, whose name was Tamar. She was a very attractive woman.

### **Absalom Reunited with David (c. 978 BC)**

2 Samuel 14:28–33

28 Absalom lived in Jerusalem for two years without seeing the king's face.

29 Then Absalom sent a message to Joab asking him to send him to the king, but Joab was not willing to come to him. So he sent a second message to him, but he still was not willing to come.

30 So he said to his servants, "Look, Joab has a portion of field adjacent to mine and he has some barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set Joab's portion of the field on fire.

31 Then Joab got up and came to Absalom's house. He said to him, "Why did your servants set my portion of field on fire?"

32 Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent a message to you saying, 'Come here so that I can send you to the king with this message: "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there."' Let me now see the face of the king. If I am at fault, let him put me to death!"

33 So Joab went to the king and informed him. The king summoned Absalom, and he came to the king. Absalom bowed down before the king with his face toward the ground and the king kissed him.

### **Absalom Begins to Steal the Hearts of Israel (c. 978 BC)**

2 Samuel 15:1–6

1 Some time later Absalom managed to acquire a chariot and horses, as well as fifty men to serve as his royal guard.

2 Now Absalom used to get up early and stand beside the road that led to the city gate. Whenever anyone came by who had a complaint to bring to the king for arbitration, Absalom would call out to him, "What city are you from?" The person would answer, "I, your servant, am from one of the tribes of Israel."

3 Absalom would then say to him, "Look, your claims are legitimate and appropriate. But there is no representative of the king who will listen to you."

4 Absalom would then say, "If only they would make me a judge in the land! Then everyone who had a judicial complaint could come to me and I would make sure he receives a just settlement."

5 When someone approached to bow before him, Absalom would extend his hand and embrace him and kiss him.

6 Absalom acted this way toward everyone in Israel who came to the king for justice. In this way Absalom won the loyalty of the citizens of Israel.

### **Absalom Leads a Treasonous Revolt Against David (c. 974 BC)**

2 Samuel 15:7–12

7 After four years Absalom said to the king, "Let me go and repay my vow that I made to the LORD while I was in Hebron.

8 For I made this vow when I was living in Geshur in Aram: 'If the LORD really does allow me to return to Jerusalem, I will serve the LORD.'"

9 The king replied to him, "Go in peace." So Absalom got up and went to Hebron.

10 Then Absalom sent spies through all the tribes of Israel who said, "When you hear the sound of the horn, you may assume that Absalom rules in Hebron."

11 Now two hundred men had gone with Absalom from Jerusalem. Since they were invited, they went naively and were unaware of what Absalom was planning.

12 While he was offering sacrifices, Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's adviser, to come from his city, Giloh. The conspiracy was gaining momentum, and the people were starting to side with Absalom.

### **David Flees Across the Jordan River (c. 974 BC)**

2 Samuel 15:13–16:14

#### **David Flees from Jerusalem**

15:13 Then a messenger came to David and reported, "The men of Israel are loyal to Absalom!"

14 So David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come on! Let's escape! Otherwise no one will be delivered from Absalom! Go immediately, or else he will quickly overtake us and bring disaster on us and kill the city's residents with the sword."

15 The king's servants replied to the king, "We will do whatever our lord the king decides."

16 So the king and all the members of his royal court set out on foot, though the king left behind ten concubines to attend to the palace.

17 The king and all the people set out on foot, pausing at a spot some distance away.

#### **David Tests the Loyalty of the Philistines**

18 All his servants were leaving with him, along with all the Kerethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites—some six hundred men who had come on foot from Gath. They were leaving with the king.

19 Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you come with us? Go back and stay with the new king, for you are a foreigner and an exile from your own country.

20 It seems like you arrived just yesterday. Today should I make you wander around by going with us? I go where I must go. But as for you, go back and take your men with you. May genuine loyal love protect you!"

21 But Ittai replied to the king, "As surely as the LORD lives and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king is, whether dead or alive, there I will be as well!"

22 So David said to Ittai, "Come along then." So Ittai the Gittite went along, accompanied by all his men and all the dependents who were with him.

23 All the land was weeping loudly as all these people were leaving. As the king was crossing over the Kidron Valley, all the people were leaving on the road that leads to the desert.

#### **David Sends Zadok and the Ark Back to Jerusalem**

24 Zadok and all the Levites who were with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. When they positioned the ark of God, Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving the city.

25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's sight he will bring me back and enable me to see both it and his dwelling place again.

26 However, if he should say, 'I do not take pleasure in you,' then he will deal with me in a way that he considers appropriate."

27 The king said to Zadok the priest, "Are you a seer? Go back to the city in peace! Your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan may go with you and Abiathar.

28 Look, I will be waiting at the fords of the desert until word from you reaches me."

29 So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem and remained there.

#### **David Commissions Hushai as a Spy**

30 As David was going up the Mount of Olives, he was weeping as he went; his head was covered and his feet were bare. All the people who were with him also had their heads covered and were weeping as they went up.

31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel has sided with the conspirators who are with Absalom. So David prayed, "Make the advice of Ahithophel foolish, O LORD!"

32 When David reached the summit, where he used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite met him with his clothes torn and dirt on his head.

33 David said to him, "If you leave with me you will be a burden to me.

34 But you will be able to counter the advice of Ahithophel if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king! Previously I was your father's servant, and now I will be your servant.'

35 Zadok and Abiathar the priests will be there with you. Everything you hear in the king's palace you must tell Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Furthermore, their two sons are there with them, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan. You must send them to me with any information you hear."

37 So David's friend Hushai arrived in the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

#### **Ziba Accuses Mephibosheth of Treason and David Makes a Snap Decision**

16:1 When David had gone a short way beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth was there to meet him. He had a couple of donkeys that were saddled, and on them were two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred raisin cakes, a hundred baskets of summer fruit, and a container of wine.

2 The king asked Ziba, "Why did you bring these things?" Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the king's family to ride on, the loaves of bread and the summer fruit are for the attendants to eat, and the wine is for those who get exhausted in the desert."

3 The king asked, "Where is your master's grandson?" Ziba replied to the king, "He remains in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give back to me my grandfather's kingdom.'"

4 The king said to Ziba, "Everything that was Mephibosheth's now belongs to you." Ziba replied, "I bow before you. May I find favor in your sight, my lord the king."

**Shimei the Benjamite, a Relative of Saul, Curses David**

5 Then King David reached Bahurim. There a man from Saul's extended family named Shimei son of Gera came out, yelling curses as he approached.

6 He threw stones at David and all of King David's servants, as well as all the people and the soldiers who were on his right and on his left.

7 As he yelled curses, Shimei said, "Leave! Leave! You man of bloodshed, you wicked man!

8 The LORD has punished you for all the spilled blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you rule. Now the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. Disaster has overtaken you, for you are a man of bloodshed!"

9 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head!" [[Exod 22:28](#)]

10 But the king said, "What do we have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? If he curses because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David!', who can say to him, 'Why have you done this?'"

11 Then David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "My own son, my very own flesh and blood, is trying to take my life. So also now this Benjaminite! Leave him alone so that he can curse, for the LORD has spoken to him.

12 Perhaps the LORD will notice my affliction and this day grant me good in place of his curse."

13 So David and his men went on their way. But Shimei kept going along the side of the hill opposite him, yelling curses as he threw stones and dirt at them.

14 The king and all the people who were with him arrived exhausted at their destination, where David refreshed himself.

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