

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 Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, “Know assuredly that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men.”

2 David said to Achish, “Very well, you shall know what your servant can do.” So Achish said to David, “Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.”

The Commanders of the Philistines Do Not Trust David

1 Sam 29:1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring which is in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines were proceeding on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were proceeding on in the rear with Achish.

3 Then the commanders of the Philistines said, “What *are* these Hebrews *doing here*?” And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, “Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or *rather* these years, and I have found no fault in him from the day he deserted *to me* to this day?”

4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him, and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, “Make the man go back, that he may return to his place where you have assigned him, and do not let him go down to battle with us, or in the battle he may become an adversary to us. For with what could this *man* make himself acceptable to his lord? *Would it not be* with the heads of these men?”

5 Is this not David, of whom they sing in the dances, saying,

‘Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands?’”

6 Then Achish called David and said to him, “As the LORD lives, you *have been* upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army are pleasing in my sight; for I have not found evil in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, you are not pleasing in the sight of the lords.

7 Now therefore return and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.”

8 David said to Achish, “But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant from the day when I came before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”

9 But Achish replied to David, “I know that you are pleasing in my sight, like an angel of God; nevertheless the commanders of the Philistines have said, ‘He must not go up with us to the battle.’”

10 Now then arise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you, and as soon as you have arisen early in the morning and have light, depart.”

11 So David arose early, he and his men, to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

Men from Manasseh Desert Saul to Join David

1 Chr 12:19 From Manasseh also some defected to David when he was about to go to battle with the Philistines against Saul. But they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines after consultation sent him away, saying, “At *the cost of* our heads he may defect to his master Saul.”

20 As he went to Ziklag there defected to him from Manasseh: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu and Zillethai, captains of thousands who belonged to Manasseh.

21 They helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor, and were captains in the army.

22 For day by day *men* came to David to help him, until there was a great army like the army of God.

Saul and the Medium of En-dor (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 28:3–25

Saul Fears the Philistine Army

4 So the Philistines gathered together and came and camped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together and they camped in Gilboa.

5 When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly.

6 When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.

Saul Goes to the Medium at En-dor

3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. And Saul had removed from the land those who were mediums and spiritists.

7 Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at En-dor.”

8 Then Saul disguised himself by putting on other clothes, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said, “Conjure up for me, please, and bring up for me whom I shall name to you.”

9 But the woman said to him, “Behold, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off those who are mediums and spiritists from the land. Why are you then laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?”

10 Saul vowed to her by the LORD, saying, “As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.”

11 Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” And he said, “Bring up Samuel for me.”

Samuel Appears

12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, “Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul.”

13 The king said to her, “Do not be afraid; but what do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a divine being coming up out of the earth.”

14 He said to her, “What is his form?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped with a robe.” And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and did homage.

15 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” And Saul answered, “I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has departed from me and no longer answers me, either through prophets or by dreams; therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I should do.”

Samuel’s Final Prophecy

16 Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has departed from you and has become your adversary?”

17 The LORD has done accordingly as He spoke through me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, to David.

18 As you did not obey the LORD and did not execute His fierce wrath on Amalek, so the LORD has done this thing to you this day.

19 Moreover the LORD will also give over Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines, therefore tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Indeed the LORD will give over the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines!”

Saul Still Refuses to Repent

20 Then Saul immediately fell full length upon the ground and was very afraid because of the words of Samuel; also there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day and all night.

21 The woman came to Saul and saw that he was terrified, and said to him, “Behold, your maidservant has obeyed you, and I have taken my life in my hand and have listened to your words which you spoke to me.

22 So now also, please listen to the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you that *you may* eat and have strength when you go on *your way*.”

23 But he refused and said, “I will not eat.” However, his servants together with the woman urged him, and he listened to them. So he arose from the ground and sat on the bed.

24 The woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she quickly slaughtered it; and she took flour, kneaded it and baked unleavened bread from it.

25 She brought *it* before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they arose and went away that night.

Ziklag Is Raided by the Amalekites (c. 1010 BC)

1 Samuel 30:1–25

David Returns to Find Ziklag in Ruins

1 Then it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire;

2 and they took captive the women *and all* who were in it, both small and great, without killing anyone, and carried *them* off and went their way.

3 When David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive.

4 Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep.

5 Now David’s two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.

David Pursues the Raiders

6 Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

7 Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, “Please bring me the ephod.” So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.

8 David inquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?” And He said to him, “Pursue, for you will surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue *all*.”

9 So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the brook Besor, *where* those left behind remained.

10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor remained *behind*.

11 Now they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David, and gave him bread and he ate, and they provided him water to drink.

12 They gave him a piece of fig cake and two clusters of raisins, and he ate; then his spirit revived. For he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights.

13 David said to him, “To whom do you belong? And where are you from?” And he said, “I am a young man of Egypt, a servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind when I fell sick three days ago.

14 We made a raid on the Negev of the Cherethites, and on that which belongs to Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire.”

15 Then David said to him, “Will you bring me down to this band?” And he said, “Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring you down to this band.”

16 When he had brought him down, behold, they were spread over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.

David Defeats the Amalekites

17 David slaughtered them from the twilight until the evening of the next day; and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled.

18 So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives.

19 But nothing of theirs was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that they had taken for themselves; David brought *it* all back.

20 So David had captured all the sheep and the cattle *which the people* drove ahead of the *other* livestock, and they said, “This is David’s spoil.”

David Shares With Those Who Stayed Behind

21 When David came to the two hundred men who were too exhausted to follow David, who had also been left at the brook Besor, and they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him, then David approached the people and greeted them.

22 Then all the wicked and worthless men among those who went with David said, “Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away and depart.”

23 Then David said, “You must not do so, my brothers, with what the LORD has given us, who has kept us and delivered into our hand the band that came against us.

24 And who will listen to you in this matter? For as his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike.”

25 So it has been from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

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Chronological Notes

1) The order of events surrounding Saul’s death follows the arrangement suggested by Bergen.¹

¹ Robert D. Bergen, “1, 2 Samuel,” *New American Commentary*, 285.