

STUDIES IN SAMUEL AND KINGS

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INTRODUCTION

The Background of the Book

A. The books of First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings were originally one book.

a. They were known to the Jews as *The Book of Kingdoms*.

b. It was not until the translating of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek in the second to third centuries B.C. (the Septuagint) that the books of Samuel and Kings were divided as we have them today.

c. The reason for the division was a logistical one in that the book was too long to put on a single length scroll in Greek as they were used in that day. Thus they split it into four parts so that they would fit onto the scrolls better and be more useful.

d. However, throughout the centuries men have failed to recognize the unity of the four books and have approached them as separate entities instead of four parts of the same account; such should not be so.

B. The author of the book.

a. Ultimately, the author is the giver of divine inspiration – God himself.

b. As to the human penman of the book(s), it is unknown.

c. Though many have tried to attribute authorship to Samuel, this is impossible because he died long before the conclusion of the events contained within its pages.

d. Some have surmised Ezra the scribe to be the author, others various other prophets. We have no way of knowing for sure; nor does it matter in the grand scheme of things. The books have been proven over and over again to be inspired, thus the ultimate authorship is all that matters.

C. The dating of the book.

a. As with the authorship, the dating of these works is unknown.

b. It is clear from the time-frame included in the writings that it would have to have been at least after the Babylonian captivity began (609 B.C.), but beyond that it is impossible to

nail down a hard and fast date, other than to say we know it was written by 400 B.C. because of the manuscripts and historical data available.

The Purpose of the Book

A. These books are historical in nature and exhibit a record of the history of the Israelite nation from the time of Eli until the time of Babylonian captivity.

B. These books cover a period of approximately 500 years of history (from about 1100 B.C. to 600 B.C.).

C. Because of their historical nature, the books portray both the good and bad of the people involved. There are not definitive statements of “God approved this” or “God despised this” in every case, though often God’s feelings and reactions to a given situation are made quite clear. One should not consider all, or even most, of the events that occur in the books to be pleasing to God or according to his will; but they are accurate records of what occurred.

D. The books cover the period of kings in Israel. Samuel begins with the last of the judges (Eli and Samuel) and relates how Israel came to be under the kings.

a. The book of First Samuel relates the rise and reign of Saul, as well as the preparations for David to take the throne.

b. Second Samuel focuses on the reign of David and the downfall of his family.

c. First Kings emphasizes the development of two parts of the Israelite nation, from a united kingdom to a northern kingdom (Israel) and a southern kingdom (Judah).

d. Second Kings continues the accounts of the divided kingdom, following the kings until God brings judgment upon Judah through the Babylonians.

A Brief Overview of the Book(s)

A. First Samuel

a. Eli as Judge (Ch. 1-4)

b. Samuel Judges Israel (Ch. 5-8)

c. The First King – Saul (Ch. 9-15)

- d. David is Prepared to be the Next King. (Ch. 16-18)
 - e. Saul vs. David. (Ch. 19-31)
- B. Second Samuel
- a. The First Seven Years of David's Reign. (Ch. 1-5)
 - b. David's Reign in Jerusalem and the Rebellions of his Family. (Ch. 6-24)
- C. First Kings
- a. The Death of David. (Ch. 1-2)
 - b. Solomon becomes King and Builds the Temple. (Ch. 3-10)
 - c. Solomon's Fall and the Dividing of the Kingdom. (Ch. 11-13)
 - d. The Kings of Israel and Judah. (Ch. 14-16)
 - e. The works of Elijah the Prophet and the reign of Ahab. (Ch. 17-22)
- D. Second Kings
- a. Elijah and Elisha. (Ch. 1-9)
 - b. The final kings of the Northern Kingdom and the Assyrian Captivity. (Ch. 10-17)
 - c. The reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah. (Ch. 18-23)
 - d. The Babylonian Captivity and fall of Judah. (Ch. 24-25)

FIRST SAMUEL CHAPTER 1

Hannah's Barrenness. (Vs. 1-8)

- A. Samuel begins with an introduction to the family of the man for whom the book is named.
- B. Elkanah is a man from the land of Mount Ephraim. (Vs. 1)
- C. Though described as an Ephrathite (Ephraimite in some translations) he is not from the tribe of Ephraim.
 - a. 1 Chronicles 6:33-38 clearly shows that Elkanah is a Levite of the portion known as the Kohathites.
 - b. Therefore, the intention of the statement is that Elkanah is a Levite living among the Ephraimites and thereby included as being one of them.
 - c. Joshua 21 records there being a city at Mount Ephraim that was one of the 48 cities given to the Levites; this is likely the city around which Elkanah lived.
- D. Elkanah has two wives. (Vs. 2)
 - a. Hannah, who was barren.
 - b. Peninnah, who had children.
- E. As a part of the Law of Moses, the children of Israel were required to gather at certain times of the year for sacrifices. It was on one of those occasions that the events of the remainder of the chapter occur. (Vs. 3-4)
- F. When the offering was made, portions of the offering were returned to the family for their consumption. (Vs. 4-5)
 - a. When these portions were divided, Peninnah and her children were given their portions.
 - b. However, Hannah was given a double portion, showing the favor she carried with Elkanah even though she was barren.

G. There becomes a rivalry between Hannah and Peninnah. While one is able to bear children, the other receives the favor of the husband. So Peninnah provokes, chides, and angers Hannah over her inability to have children. (Vs. 6-7)

- a. This is not a momentary or incidental occurrence.
- b. This occurs year after year until Hannah cannot eat and weeps continuously.

H. Elkanah's attempts to console his wife are fruitless. (Vs. 8)

- a. Elkanah offers her the consolation that he is better than 10 sons.
- b. Unfortunately, in a society where the ability to bear children is a sign of success and value among women, this is no consolation whatsoever and shows a great deal of insensitivity on Elkanah's part.

Hannah's Prayer. (Vs. 9-18)

A. After the eating and drinking of portions was completed, Hannah went up to the temple to pray. (Vs. 9-11)

- a. Hannah is bitter and weeping over her situation that vexes her constantly. (Vs. 10)
- b. As she prays to God she makes a vow. (Vs. 11)
 - 1) If God will give her a son, she will give him to the Lord all the days of his life.
 - 2) He would have no razor touch his head (indicating a Nazarite vow).

B. As she continues praying, Eli sees her from his seat by a post of the temple. (Vs. 9, 12-18)

- a. While Hannah is praying, she does so silently – from her heart. Her lips are moving, but silence fills the air. (Vs. 12-13)
- b. Eli believes her to be drunk, so he calls upon her to put away her wine. (Vs. 13-14)
- c. Hannah responds that she is not drunk, but sorrowful in spirit and pouring out her soul before the Lord. (Vs. 15-16)
- d. Eli tells her to go in peace and that God would grant her request. (Vs. 17)
- e. Hannah returns to her lodging, eats and is no longer sad, for her request has been heard.

Hannah Fulfills her Vow. (Vs. 19-28)

- A. In the morning they rise up and worship God because going home. (Vs. 19)
- B. When they return home, Hannah becomes pregnant with a son. (Vs. 19-20)
 - a. There is no indication this is some sort of miraculous pregnancy.
 - b. This is evidence of God's ability to answer prayers within the realm of nature.
 - c. When the boy is born, Hannah names him "Samuel" meaning: "his name is El (God)."
- C. When the time comes for Elkanah to go offer sacrifices, Hannah does not go with him, telling him she will not go until Samuel is weaned, because then he will be handed over to the Lord for good. (Vs. 21-23)
 - a. Elkanah leaves the decision in her hands.
 - b. So Hannah does not go to the temple until Samuel is weaned, which was generally 4-5 years in those days.
- D. When he had been weaned, Hannah took Samuel, three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a bottle of grape juice to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. (Vs. 24-28)
 - a. They slew one of the bulls as a sacrifice and brought Samuel before Eli. (Vs. 25)
 - b. Hannah introduces herself to Eli as the woman who had been praying for a child before the temple years earlier. (Vs. 26-27)
 - c. She then explains the promise that she had made to God and Eli worships the Lord. (Vs. 28)

CHAPTER 2

Hannah's Prayer. (Vs. 1-11)

A. When Hannah leaves her son with Eli to begin his service to God and fulfill her promise, she prays this prayer.

B. The holiness of God. (Vs. 1-3)

a. Hannah rejoices in the blessings of God. (Vs. 1)

1) She has been made to rejoice by the Lord.

2) Her horn (strength) is exalted, her mouth is enlarged (her speech) above her enemies.

3) The salvation under consideration is not salvation from sin, but salvation from the shame she had endured.

b. The knowledge and holiness of God extolled. (Vs. 2-3)

1) God is in a league all his own. (Vs. 2)

2) There is nothing God does not know, his judgments are weighed with knowledge. (Vs. 3)

C. The power of God. (Vs. 4-7)

a. This is an instance of Hebrew parallelism – in this instance, paralleling the opposite ends of the spectrum: this is known as antithetic parallelism. Each of these is meant to show the full spectrum of what God has the power to do.

b. God breaks the bows of the righteous, but give strength to those who stumble. (Vs. 4)

c. Those who were full of food beg bread, but the hungry are now full. (Vs. 5)

d. Those who were barren have seven children (number of perfection meaning sufficient, enough), she that had children is now feeble (wanting more but unable to have). (Vs. 5)

- e. The Lord kills, but also makes alive. (Vs. 6)
 - f. The Lord makes men poor, but he also makes men rich. (Vs. 7)
 - g. The Lord humbles, but also exalts. (Vs. 7)
- D. The protection of God. (Vs. 8-10)
- a. Hannah's prayer concludes by acknowledging how God takes care of his people.
 - b. He exalts the poor to sit among princes and inherit the throne of glory. (Vs. 8)
 - c. He keeps the feet of his saints and keeps the wicked in darkness and a man's own strength will never prevail against him. (Vs. 9)
 - d. He will destroy his enemies and give strength to his king. (Vs. 10)
- E. After dropping off Samuel and Hannah offering her prayer of thanks to God, Elkanah returns home with his family, but Samuel stays to serve the Lord with Eli. (Vs. 11)

Eli's Thieving Sons. (Vs. 12-17)

- A. The first description we receive of Eli's sons is that they are sons of Belial and did not know (recognize as authoritative) the Lord. (Vs. 12)
- a. The Hebrew word *Belial* is a word that means "worthlessness, good for nothing, unprofitable."
 - b. Therefore, the description of Eli's sons is that they were worthless, good for nothing, and ignored the authority of God; certainly an apt description considering their actions.
- B. The violations of God's law perpetrated by Eli's sons. (Vs. 13-17)
- a. These priests would send a servant with a three-pronged flesh hook and would strike it into whatever pot the offering was being prepared, and whatever was brought out was claimed by the priests. (Vs. 13-14)
 - b. Compare those actions with God's ordinances in Leviticus 7:29-34 and there is no similarity between what God commanded and what they were doing.
 - c. Their abuses went further by stealing from the sacrifices of the people. (Vs. 15-16)
 - 1) They would take flesh from the sacrifice before it was ready again violating numerous ordinances of the Levitical law. (Vs. 15)

2) They would take more than their share; and if it was not offered “freely” it would be taken by force. (Vs. 16)

d. The grievous violations were so bad that the people actually despised having to bring offerings before God. (Vs. 17)

God Blesses Samuel’s Family. (Vs. 18-21)

A. Samuel served the Lord, even though he was still a child. (Vs. 18)

a. He did not serve as a priest, he was not old enough.

b. However, the indication is that he did work around the tabernacle and fulfilled other responsibilities. (3:3)

B. Hannah continued to take care of her son and show her love for him each year when they came for sacrifices. (Vs. 19)

C. Eli blesses Elkanah and Hannah for their actions with Samuel and she will have three more sons and two daughters. (Vs. 20-21)

God’s Judgment on Eli’s Family. (Vs. 22-36)

A. By the time of these actions in chapter two, Eli is described as a very old man. (Vs. 22)

B. However, his sons sins were not just of a procedural nature, they were morally corrupt as well. (Vs. 22)

a. It was reported that to Eli that they were committing fornication with women at the door of the tabernacle.

b. It is also known that at least one of these sons was married at this time. (1 Sam. 4:19)

C. The punishment for such actions should, at the very least, have been removal from their positions and at most the argument could be made for their death for commission of adultery.

D. Instead, they are given a punitive reprimand by Eli and allowed to continue with their duties having been “warned” that they were on dangerous ground with God. (Vs. 23-25)

E. In the midst of these evil actions Samuel continues to grow in favor with both God and man. He is not complicit in the actions of these two sons of Eli. (Vs. 26)

- F. God sends a man to Eli bringing his judgment upon Eli's family. (Vs. 27-36)
- a. God reminds Eli of the selection of his ancestors (Aaron and his family) and their responsibilities in his service. (Vs. 27-28)
 - b. He then asks Eli why he has kicked at his sacrifices (shown disdain for them) by regarding his sons over the sanctity of the sacrifices of God. (Vs. 29)
 - c. God is not going to allow this to continue, but will judge Eli's family by cutting the arm of Eli's family off of the body of Aaron's descendants (his family will no longer serve as priests). (Vs. 30-34)
 - 1) There will not be an old man in Eli's house again. (Vs. 32)
 - 2) Any descendants of his family will die at a young age. (Vs. 33)
 - 3) Hophni and Phinehas will die on the same day. (Vs. 34)
 - d. God then tells Eli he will raise up a faithful priest who will serve him appropriately, and what is left of Eli's family will come to him begging for care to be given to them. (Vs. 35-36)

CHAPTER 3

God Calls Samuel. (Vs. 1-10)

- A. By the beginning of chapter three, Samuel is serving the Lord as the personal assistant of Eli. (Vs. 1)
 - a. It is estimated by some biblical scholars that he was about 12 years old at this time, an age that would not be out of sorts for the events that occur.
 - b. Eli is now old and has become, for all intents and purposes, blind and needs constant assistance. (Vs. 2)
- B. Though it is often believed that God was constantly in contact with his people during the Old Testament, verse one shows us that was not always the case.
 - a. The word of the Lord is precious (from the Hebrew word meaning – valuable, rare) in these days.
 - b. God is not in constant contact with the people, even with his priests. There is no “open vision” – no constant visions or prophecies being sent from God at this time.
 - c. In essence, there was no place the people of Israel could go to get direct revelation from God about various issues and problems. This could certainly be a direct effect of the actions of Hophni and Phinehas and Eli’s unwillingness to deal with them.
- C. Samuel is sleeping when the Lord calls him. (Vs. 3-10)
 - a. It was the time of night just before the candlesticks in the tabernacle went out. (Vs. 3)

1) These lamps were to burn from the beginning of evening until morning. (Lev. 24:2-3)

2) The indication is not that Samuel was sleeping in the tabernacle where the candlestick was, but rather that it was this time of night and Samuel was sleeping in his tent or room (which would have been close by Eli because of his duties as his attendant).

b. When the Lord calls him, Samuel believes it is Eli and goes to see what is needed, but Eli tells him to lie back down. (Vs. 4-6)

c. To this point, Samuel had not received the word of the Lord directly, nor had he been utilized as a prophet or spokesman. Therefore, it is no wonder Samuel did not recognize the voice of the Lord. (Vs. 7)

d. The third time the Lord calls, Eli understands that the Lord is calling Samuel. He tells Samuel when it happens again to reply, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." (Vs. 8-9)

e. When God calls again, Samuel responds as commanded by Eli. What follows will begin the work of one of the greatest prophets in the history of Israel. (Vs. 10)

The Lord Begins Using Samuel as a Prophet. (Vs. 11-21)

A. God's message to Samuel. (Vs. 11-14)

a. God tells Samuel he will do something in Israel that will cause everyone's ears to tingle. (Vs. 11)

1) The word translated "tingle" means "to quiver in fear."

2) This statement is not one like the tickling of the ears in joy or warm sentiments; rather it is a statement that when the Israelites hear of it they will quiver in fear at the very sound of what occurred.

b. On that day, God will do everything he promised Eli from beginning to end. (Vs. 12)

1) Indications are it has been a few years since God's initial promise to Eli.

2) However, God says he will both begin and finish the promised punishments on Eli's family the same day.

c. God reiterates the promised judgment upon Eli's family. (Vs. 13-14)

1) The indictment is the vileness of Eli's sons and Eli's unwillingness to restrain them. (Vs. 13)

2) Their iniquity has gone so far sacrifices and offerings will not be enough to save them. (Vs. 14)

a) This is not to say that God would not accept repentance if offered.

b) However, God knows the hearts of the sons of Eli. They have had years to change their ways, they have been warned by God on multiple occasions, yet they have not changed their hearts or actions. Therefore, any sacrifices offered at this point would be disingenuous.

B. Samuel tells Eli of God's message. (Vs. 15-18)

a. When God is finished delivering his message, Samuel lies down again until morning when he goes and opens the doors of the tabernacle. (Vs. 15)

b. Samuel is afraid to tell Eli what was given him the previous night. (Vs. 15)

c. Eli calls Samuel that morning and tells him to relate the message. (Vs. 16-17)

1) It is not a request, it is an order.

2) Eli also tells Samuel that if he hides anything from him of what God said that God would do whatever he had said to him as well.

3) While this seems a rather harsh statement from Eli, consider two things:

a) It seems that Eli already knows the tenor of the sentiments of the message, thus the statement of God doing whatever he said to Samuel as well.

b) It seems Eli is preparing Samuel for part of his duties as a prophet. Samuel will not be able to pick and choose the parts he is going to tell, nor to whom they should be told. Therefore, Samuel must be willing to declare the entire message of God to whomever it is intended.

d. Samuel tells Eli everything God said, to which Eli replies that since he is the Lord, he will do what he deems to be right. (Vs. 18)

C. Samuel the prophet. (Vs. 19-21)

a. As Samuel grows up, his role as a prophet increases. (Vs. 19)

1) The Lord is with him in all he does.

2) Nothing that Samuel said was allowed to fall to the ground, i.e. nothing that Samuel said failed to come to pass; thereby showing him to be a true prophet of God. (Deu. 18:20-22)

b. All Israel knows that Samuel is a prophet of the Lord, and the Lord continued to appear to Samuel at Shiloh. (Vs. 20-21)

CHAPTER 4

The Ark of the Covenant is taken into Battle. (Vs. 1-11)

A. The first verse of the chapter has an oddity with its beginning because it is the conclusion of the statement in 3:21. The actual beginning of the new subject is with the second phrase of the verse.

B. Israel and the Philistines come together to do battle around Aphek. (Vs. 1)

a. Aphek (Meaning “fortress”) is situated about 35 miles northwest of Jerusalem, at the northern edge of Philistine territory by its border with Israel.

b. Ebenezer (Meaning “stone of help”) is located close by, though the exact location is unknown, and is the place of the Israelite encampment.

C. When the Philistines and Israelites do battle Israel is soundly defeated, losing about 4,000 men. (Vs. 2)

D. When the soldiers return to the camp the elders of Israel decide the problem was that the Ark of the Covenant is not with them. (Vs. 3)

a. They have acquired the Canaanite philosophy that God is only with them when that which contains his presence is with them.

b. Thus the argument is made that if the ark is with them next time “it” will save them.

- E. The Ark of the Covenant is brought to the camp of the Israelite army from Shiloh, and Hophni and Phinehas come with it. (Vs. 4-5)
- a. Shiloh is about 25 miles east of Aphek. It would have taken the better part of two days for them to get the ark to the Israelite camp.
 - b. When the ark is brought into the camp there is a great shout from the Israelites.
 - c. They believe that with the ark present God is now with them.
- F. The Philistines become afraid when they hear of the coming of the ark. (Vs. 6-9)
- a. At first they are confused as to the meaning of the shout, but when they understand they fear the perceived presence of God. (Vs. 6-7)
 - b. They remember the power of God over the Egyptians and in the wilderness. (Vs. 7-8)
 - c. However, instead of making them run, their fear causes them to summon more courage to be strong and fight like men. They are determined not to become the servants of the Israelites. (Vs. 9)
- G. So the Philistines and Israelites fight again, and again Israel is defeated. (Vs. 10-11)
- a. This time the defeat is a rout and Israel loses 30,000 men. (Vs. 10)
 - b. The Israelites flee to their homes and the Ark of the Covenant is captured by the Philistines.
 - c. Additionally, Hophni and Phinehas are killed in the battle, fulfilling the prophecy that they would both die on the same day. (2:34)
 - d. The problem for Israel was not that they had placed their trust in God and God had failed them, but that they put their faith in the ark of the covenant and never went to God in the first place.

The Death of Eli. (Vs. 12-18)

- A. One of the soldiers from the tribe of Benjamin comes to Shiloh the day of the battle; his clothes are tattered and he is covered in dirt. (Vs. 12)
- B. When the soldier comes, Eli is sitting by the roadside worrying about the ark and what will happen to it. (Vs. 13)
- C. When he hears the commotion in the city he inquires as to the nature of it. (Vs. 14-17)

- a. Eli is 98 years old and essentially blind. (Vs. 15)
- b. The soldier comes to where Eli is and begins to tell him what happened. (Vs. 16-17)
 - 1) He tells Eli he was in the army.
 - 2) He then tells him of the routing of the army, the death of Eli's two sons, and the capturing of the ark.
- D. When Eli hears what has happened to the ark, he falls backward out of his seat (it has no backing to it) breaks his neck and dies. (Vs. 18)
 - a. At his age and in his condition he is old, heavy, and feeble.
 - b. This also fulfills the prophecy of God that an old man would not be in his household. (2:31)
- E. At the time of his death Eli had judged Israel 40 years. (Vs.18)

Phinehas' Wife Delivers her Son. (Vs. 19-22)

- A. The wife of Phinehas is pregnant and close to the time of being due. (Vs. 19)
- B. When she hears of all that has occurred she goes into labor and gives birth to a son; however, she will not live long past his birth. (Vs. 20)
- C. As she names her son before her death, she names him Ichabod (meaning "no glory") because she perceives there is no glory left in Israel with the Ark of the Covenant gone. (Vs. 21-22)

CHAPTER 5

The Ark Brought to Ashdod. (Vs. 1-7)

- A. The Philistines bring the ark to Ashdod, one of the five main cities of the Philistines. (Vs. 1-2)
 - a. The other main cities were Gath, Ekron, Ashkelon, and Gaza.
 - b. Ashdod was the home of the temple to Dagon, the main god of the Philistines who was considered “the father of Baal” and the grain god by the Philistines.
 - c. They place the ark in the temple of Dagon as a sign of conquest: the god of the Philistines defeating the God of Israel.
- B. When the people of Ashdod enter the temple over the next two mornings the idol of Dagon is found on the ground. (Vs. 3-5)
 - a. The first morning, the idol is found fallen over on its face toward the ark. (Vs. 3)
 - b. Immediately, the people put the idol back in place and leave, thinking the problem is resolved.
 - c. The second morning the idol is in pieces, having fallen over once again; but this time the head and hands of Dagon have been broken off, all that remains is the base of the idol. (Vs. 4)

- d. From that point forward the priests of Dagon and other worshipers would not walk on the threshold where the head and hands had fallen. (Vs. 5)
- C. In addition to the problems with their idol, God brought physical pain upon the Philistines as well. (Vs. 6-7)
 - a. The people of Ashdod were struck with tumors or hemorrhoids (emerods – KJV). (Vs. 6)
 - b. The men of Ashdod decide the punishment is too severe for the ark of God to remain in Ashdod, so they begin looking for a remedy to their situation. (Vs. 7)

The Ark Sent to Gath and Ekron. (Vs. 8-12)

- A. The lords of the Philistines gather after the people of Ashdod complain and decide to send the ark to Gath. (Vs. 8-9)
 - a. When the ark arrives, God does the same thing to the people of Gath as was done in Ashdod.
 - b. No man, regardless of their status, was spared the discomfort of God's persecution.
- B. The ark is then sent to Ekron and when it arrives the people refuse to accept it. (Vs. 10-12)
 - a. They have heard about what has happened in Ashdod and Gath, thus they want nothing to do with the ark; even claiming that the lords of the Philistines are trying to kill them. (Vs. 10)
 - b. Finally, the lords of the Philistines decide the ark is not such a valuable sign of victory after all and agree to send it back to the Israelites. (Vs. 11-12)

CHAPTER 6

The Philistines Decide what to do with the Ark. (Vs. 1-9)

A. In spite of all the hardships retaining it has caused, the ark has been in the hands of the Philistines for seven months. (Vs. 1)

B. Finally, the Philistines call for their priests and diviners to tell them what to do with the ark. (Vs. 2-9)

a. Their first recommendation is to not send it back empty (with nothing) but send a trespass offering with it. In other words send it back with an apology. (Vs. 3)

b. The Philistines ask what kind of offering to send. (Vs. 4-6)

1) 5 golden tumors

2) 5 golden mice

3) These are to be made by the Philistines and are to represent each of the five major cities and the five lords of the Philistines; they are also intended to give glory to God, remembering how God dealt with the Egyptians.

c. Next, the discussion turns to the transporting of the ark. (Vs. 7-9)

1) The priests advise to build a new cart and yoke two milk cows to it that have never been yoked before. (Vs. 7)

2) Then they are to take the ark and the offerings and place them on the cart. (Vs. 8)

3) If the cart goes to Beth-shemesh, they will know God was responsible for what happened, if not, it was merely coincidence that the ark's arrival and the plagues happened at the same time. (Vs. 9)

The Ark Delivered back to Israel. (Vs. 10-18)

A. The Philistines do all that the priests and diviners say to do. (Vs. 10-11)

B. As soon as the cows are released they begin to go down the road to Beth-shemesh (a city of the Levites – Josh. 21:13-16), not wavering to the right or left. However, the lords of the Philistines follow the cart all the way to the border of Beth-shemesh to see exactly where it goes. (Vs. 12)

C. The people of Beth-shemesh were in the midst of bringing in their wheat harvest when the cart arrives in the town. (Vs. 13-18)

a. They rejoice at the sight of what is on the cart. (Vs. 13)

b. They then cut the cart into pieces in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite, and build an altar upon which they offer the two cows as sacrifices to God. (Vs. 14)

c. The Levites then place the ark and the coffer with the Philistine offerings around the altar as well. (Vs. 15-18)

d. When the five lords of the Philistines see the Israelites' reaction they return to Ekron. (Vs. 16)

God Strikes down the Men of Beth-shemesh. (Vs. 19-21)

A. Though it may seem strange that in the midst of this joyous occasion God would strike these men down, they have not upheld his commands when it comes to the ark. (Vs. 19)

a. The problem was not that they opened the ark to look inside, but rather that they did not fulfill the law when it came to covering the ark in public; instead choosing to gaze at it and leave it in full view of all. (cf. Exo. 40:3; Num. 4:5-6)

b. Therefore, the issue that brings condemnation is the gazing upon an object that should have been covered before the people.

B. God brings their rejoicing to sorrow by striking down the men of Beth-shemesh. (Vs. 19)

a. There is a complication in understanding the numbers used in verse 19.

1) The KJV and ASV translate it that God smote 50,000 and 70 men.

2) The ESV and NIV translate it that God smote 70 men.

b. Which is correct?

1) Historically, there is a problem with the 50,000 number because Beth-shemesh is a small city that would not even have had that number of people in the city and outlying areas, much less men alone.

2) There is also something in the original Hebrew that seems to have been mistranslated in some versions.

a) The phrase that the KJV and ASV translate as “50,000” can also mean “50 out of every 1,000.” This seems to be a more accurate translation and one which better fits the context as well.

b) If God killed 50 out of every 1,000 men, and there were 70 total fatalities, that would place the number of men in and around the city at about 1,400 – a much more rational number for this area and city size.

3) Therefore, a more accurate translation would be “he smote of the people 50 out of every 1,000 men: totaling 70 men.” This is also stated historically to have been the case by Josephus as well. (*Antiquities of the Jews*; 6.1.4)

C. The people mourn for their losses and wonder to whom they can send the ark. (Vs. 20)

D. They then send messengers to Kirjath-jearim, telling them that the Philistines have returned the ark to Israel and asking them to come down and take it back with them. (Vs. 21)

CHAPTER 7

The Ark is Brought to Kirjath-Jearim. (Vs. 1-2)

- A. The men of Kirjath-Jearim do as the people of Beth-shemesh requested and come to fetch the ark. (Vs. 1)
- B. It is brought into the house of Abinadab and a man named Eleazar is set up to be the protector of it.
 - a. We do not know anything about either of these two men.
 - b. However, it is important to note that Eleazar is not stated to be a Levite, nor is he stated to have been placed for the purpose of offering sacrifices; he is simply designated as the protector of the ark.
- C. The ark will remain at Kirjath-Jearim for 20 years. (Vs. 2)

Samuel Pleads with Israel to Turn Back to God. (Vs. 3-6)

- A. The Israelites are still being faced with the heavy threat of the Philistines. (Vs. 3)
- B. Samuel tells Israel that if they will repent and return to God he will help them defeat the Philistines. (Vs. 3)
 - a. Many Israelites have incorporated other gods (Ashteroth is specifically named) into their worship and have become polytheistic.

- b. Samuel says the only way Israel will receive the help of God is if they serve him only.
- C. Israel agrees to do as Samuel has said and to put away the images to Baalim and Ashteroth. (Vs. 4)
- D. The children of Israel then come together at Mizpeh to pray for God's forgiveness. (Vs. 5-6)
 - a. They have put away their idols, but that is not enough, they also need to ask for God's forgiveness.
 - b. They come together; gather water to pour out before the Lord, and fast all that day as they plead with God.
 - 1) The pouring out of the water is not found in any commandment of the law
 - 2) It seems to be a symbol of them pouring out their impurities, but also pouring out their distresses before God.
 - c. Israel acknowledges that they have sinned before God and Samuel stands before them as God's judge.

The Philistines Attack the Israelites. (Vs. 7-14)

- A. When the Philistines hear that all Israel has gathered at Mizpeh, they believe it to be an opportune time to attack Israel and destroy them. (Vs. 7)
- B. When Israel hears of the coming Philistine army they are fearful. (Vs. 7)
 - a. The last time Israel faced the Philistines, they were soundly defeated twice (cf. - Ch. 4)
 - b. Therefore, Israel is afraid of having the same results again.
- C. Samuel prepares Israel and they battle the Philistines. (Vs. 8-11)
 - a. Samuel tells the people to continue crying out to the Lord. Instead of preparing for battle, they are placing their trust in God to save them. (Vs. 8)
 - b. While Israel is crying out to the Lord, Samuel offers a burnt offering of a whole lamb to the Lord and he then cries out as well. (Vs. 9)
 - c. As Samuel is offering the burnt offering, the Philistines are approaching for battle. (Vs. 10)

- d. As the Philistines reach the point of starting the battle, God sends a great thundering sound that panics and confuses them and they flee. (Vs. 10)
- e. The men of Israel pursue the fleeing Philistines all the way to Beth-car, striking them down along the way. (Vs. 11)
- D. God receives the glory for the victory. (Vs. 12)
 - a. A stone is erected by Samuel between Mizpeh and Shen and it is called Ebenezer (Heb. – “stone of help”).
 - b. The stone is intended to be a reminder to the children of Israel of this occasion in which they received the help of the Lord to defeat their enemies.
- E. The Philistines are put back in their place. (Vs. 13-14)
 - a. After this battle, the Philistines are subdued and do not come across the border into Israel again for a long time. (Vs. 13)
 - b. The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were returned and the borders between Israel and Philistia were moved all the way back to a line from Gath to Ekron. The Philistines still retained these cities but just beyond them the territory became Israelite. (Vs. 14)
 - c. Israel’s defeat of the Philistines also brought peace between the Israelites and the Amorites, who wanted nothing more to do with fighting Israel either.

An Overview of Samuel’s Judgeship. (Vs. 15-17)

- A. Samuel will be the judge over Israel the rest of his life. Even though the Israelites will receive a king shortly; that will not negate Samuel’s relationship as judge standing between God and his people. (Vs. 15)
- B. Every year Samuel made a circuit from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpeh, and Israel could come to him with problems to be judged at those times in those places. (Vs. 16)
- C. However, Samuel made his home in Ramah. He also built an altar to the Lord in the city and used the city as the base for his judgeship of Israel. (Vs. 17)

CHAPTER 8

Israel Asks for a King. (Vs. 1-5)

- A. After the events of chapter 7 the writer fast forwards to when Samuel is old. (Vs. 1)
- B. Samuel has established his two sons, Joel and Abiah as judges in Beersheba, about 40 miles south of where he remains in Ramah. (Vs. 1-2)
- C. Samuel's sons do not follow in his ways. (Vs. 3)
 - a. Differences between Samuel's situation and Eli's with his sons.
 - 1) Samuel's sons are made judges, not priests; as such they were not perverting the worship of God and the ability of Israel to worship God acceptably.
 - 2) Samuel's sons were greedy and accepting bribes to pervert judgment; however, unlike with Eli's sons, there is no direct statement in the Old Law dealing with the process for removing judges from before the people.
 - 3) Unlike Eli, there is no indication that Samuel knew what was taking place with his sons; nor is there any indication he ignored it.
 - b. Samuel's sons were no better than Eli's in the decisions they made and their relationship with God, but their circumstances were very different.
- D. The Israelite elders decide to use the actions of Samuel's sons as a catalyst for seeking something they have desired for some time – a king. (Vs. 4-5)

- a. They veil the request in the rationale that Samuel's sons are untrustworthy because of their taking of bribes.
- b. In reality, the true reason they want a king is seen in verse 5 when they desire to be "like all the nations."

The Lord Responds to Samuel. (Vs. 6-9)

- A. Samuel is not happy at their request for a king and he goes to God in prayer about the situation. (Vs. 6)
- B. God answers Samuel by explaining what they have done and how Samuel is to respond. (Vs. 7-9)
 - a. God begins by telling Samuel to listen to everything the elders have said to him. (Vs. 7)
 - b. They have not rejected Samuel; they have rejected God and his place in authority over them. (Vs. 7)
 - c. God says they are not doing anything to Samuel now that they have not done to God since the time he brought them out of Egypt. (Vs. 8)
 - d. While Samuel is to listen to them and give them what they desire, it is to be done under protest. He is first to stand before them and warn them what will happen once they have a king. (Vs. 9)

Samuel Admonishes the People. (Vs. 10-22)

- A. Samuel returns to the elders of the people with the Lord's answer. (Vs. 10)
- B. Samuel then foretells what their kings will do to them as a people. (Vs. 11-17)
 - a. He will take their sons and make them his charioteers, captains, and servants. (Vs. 11-12)
 - b. He will take their daughters to be his perfumers (KJV – confectionaries), cooks and bakers. (Vs. 13)
 - c. He will take the best of their fields, vineyards, and olive groves and give them to his servants. (Vs. 14)
 - d. He will take 10% of their harvests for his servants and officials (a.k.a. taxes). (Vs. 15)

- e. He will take their servants and animals and put them to use for his own purposes. (Vs. 16-17)
- C. Samuel concludes by telling them that when all of these things occur they will cry out to God for help and deliverance and he will not listen to them. (Vs. 18)
- a. He is not saying that God will not be able to hear them, but rather he will refuse to acknowledge their complaints.
 - b. It is as the old proverb says: they will have made their bed and then they will have to lay in it.
- D. The people refuse to heed Samuel's warning. (Vs. 19-22)
- a. Their response: No, we want a king over us. (Vs. 19)
 - b. Two reasons they want a king. (Vs. 20)
 - 1) They want to be like the nations around them (everyone else has one).
 - 2) They want someone to go out and fight their battles for them (obviously they have forgotten who fought their last major battle for them – cf. – 7:10)
 - c. Samuel listens to their arguments and goes back to God about them. God tells him to make them a king, so Samuel sends the elders home and sets about to find a king for Israel. (Vs. 21-22)

CHAPTER 9

Saul Seeks his Father's Donkeys. (Vs. 1-10)

- A. We are first introduced to Saul's father, Kish. (Vs. 1)
 - a. Kish is a Benjamite (of the tribe of Benjamin).
 - b. He is also a man of great power (Heb. *chayil* meaning "strength, wealth"). He is rich and powerful among the people of Benjamin.
- B. Our first description of Saul. (Vs. 2)
 - a. Saul is a "choice young man" – the Hebrew phrase meaning "an excellent young man."
 - b. He is also considered to be "goodly" (handsome).
 - c. An additional feature of Saul's was his height, standing head and shoulders above any of the other Israelites. It has been estimated that he was likely in the 6 foot 8 inch range.
- C. Saul's search for his father's donkeys. (Vs. 3-10)
 - a. Kish tells Saul to take one of his servants and go find the lost donkeys. (Vs. 3)
 - b. Saul and his servant went back and forth across the land of Benjamin and did not find the donkeys. (Vs. 4)
 - c. As they come to the land of (in our terms it would be "district" or "county") Zuph, Saul decides to turn back lest his father start looking for him instead of the donkeys. (Vs. 5)

- d. Saul's servant asks him to go into the nearby city where there was a man of God. (Vs. 6)
- 1) Many have argued that this city is likely Ramah, Samuel's home (7:17), but there is no indication that is the case.
 - 2) The statement of the servant is that the man of God is present in that city, not that he lives there.
- e. Saul then asks what they would bring to the man of God. (Vs. 7)
- 1) It was customary when one came to ask something of a prophet of God to bring him a gift in thanks and acknowledgement for his assistance.
 - 2) Saul is unsure what they can give him because they have used all of their bread and they do not have anything else to present.
- f. The servant tells Saul he has a quarter of a shekel of silver that can be used as a gift to the man of God, Saul agrees and they set out to find him. (Vs. 8-10)
- 1) The shekel is a weight applied to metals, not a monetary value per se. However, a quarter shekel is equal to about 2.5 grams in weight – equivalent to a penny in mass. The silver of this time would not have been minted or fashioned but simply a rough chunk of varied weights for value.
 - 2) Saul agrees that the small amount of silver would be sufficient and they go into the city. (Vs. 10)
 - 3) There is a brief explanatory interlude in verse 9 where the writer explains that at this time the common term for prophet was "seer" and this would have been a normal attribution to the prophets of God.

Samuel Meets Saul. (Vs. 11-27)

- A. As Saul and his servant go up the hill to the city they come to some young women drawing water and ask if the seer is in the city. (Vs. 11)
- B. They are told where they can find the prophet. (Vs. 12-13)
- a. He is just ahead, inside the city, preparing to offer a sacrifice for the people to God.

- b. He has just come into the city, and everyone is waiting on the sacrifice to be offered so that, once blessed, they can eat their meals as well as their portions from the sacrifice.
- C. They go up into the city as they are told and Samuel comes out to them. (Vs. 14)
- D. Samuel had already been told to expect the arrival of Saul. (Vs. 15-16)
 - a. God had told him about the coming of a Benjamite.
 - b. Samuel was to take him and anoint him to be captain over Israel (a.k.a. “king”).
 - c. The Philistines are going to rise up against Israel yet again, and God has heard the desires of the people (see chapter 8) and will acquiesce to their desires.
- E. When Samuel sees Saul God tells him that this is the man he had chosen to reign over Israel. (Vs. 17)
- F. When Saul comes before Samuel he asks for directions to the seer’s house. (Vs. 18-20)
 - a. Samuel identifies himself to Saul and tells him to come up to the place of sacrifice and eat with him and all his questions will be answered tomorrow. (Vs. 19)
 - b. Additionally, Samuel tells Saul not to worry about the donkeys: they have already been found. (Vs. 20)
- G. When Samuel suggests that all of Israel desires Saul and his father’s house (as king and leader), Saul scoffs. (Vs. 20-21)
 - a. Saul argues that Benjamin is the smallest of the tribes (an accurate statement).
 - b. He then states that his family is least (Heb. - most insignificant) of all the tribes of Benjamin (though a humble statement, it would not be an accurate one according to verse 1 of the chapter).
- H. Saul eats with Samuel. (Vs. 22-24)
 - a. Samuel sets Saul at the most honorable seat among the 30 people present at the meal. (Vs. 22)
 - b. Samuel had already told the cook to set aside the shoulder of meat (generally reserved for the priest himself) and has it placed before Saul. The honor being shown Saul would have been apparent to all present. (Vs. 23-24)
 - c. Samuel describes it as “that which is left” meaning “that which has been reserved.”
- I. Samuel speaks with Saul. (Vs. 25-27)

- a. After the meal, they go to the top of the house where Samuel is staying and commune (talk, converse). (Vs. 25)
- b. When “the spring of the day” (morning) comes, Samuel prepares to send Saul on his way. (Vs. 26)
- c. However, before Saul and his servant go, Samuel asks that the servant be sent on ahead so that Samuel can show Saul the word of the Lord privately. (Vs. 27)
- d. This will lead to the anointing of Saul as king in chapter 10.

CHAPTER 10

Saul’s Return Home. (Vs. 1-16)

- A. This chapter is a continuation of the events at the end of chapter nine, not a new subject.
- B. Samuel, after sending Saul’s servant ahead of him, pours a vial of oil over Saul’s head, kisses him on the head (as a sign of respect and honor), and tells him God has anointed him as captain over his inheritance (Israel). (Vs. 1)
 - a. Samuel did not state that he had chosen Saul, God had done the choosing.
 - b. Samuel again uses the term “captain” in reference to the newly crowned king. Even though Israel has asked for a king and God will grant it to them, he is being very clear as to who is still in charge.
- C. Samuel tells Saul of three events that will occur on his way home. (Vs. 2-8)
 - a. The two men at Zelzah by Rachel’s tomb. (Vs. 2)
 - 1) They will tell Saul of the finding of the donkeys.
 - 2) They will also tell Saul that his father has become worried about him.
 - b. The three men going to Bethel. (Vs. 3-4)
 - 1) These three men are going to Bethel to worship God. This place had been used for such since the days of Jacob (Gen. 35:14-15)

2) They will have with them three young kids (goats, not children), three loaves of bread, and a bottle of wine (grape juice used in drink offerings).

3) They will give Saul 2 loaves of bread, for all of their provisions had been used before they met Saul. (9:7)

c. The company of prophets. (Vs. 5-7)

1) They will come to a place called “the hill of God.” The location of the place is uncertain, but it is on the border of Israel and the Philistines because there is a Philistine garrison nearby. (Vs. 5)

2) The company of prophets coming down from the high place (place of worship) will be prophesying and have numerous instruments with them.

3) When Saul meets with them, the Spirit of the Lord will come upon him and he will begin to prophecy as well. (Vs. 6-7)

d. After he has returned home and all these things are accomplished, Saul is to go to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel to come and offer sacrifices to the Lord and tell him what he should do. (Vs. 8)

D. All of Samuel’s statements come true. (Vs. 9-13)

a. As Saul heads home, each aspect of Samuel’s prophecy comes true. (Vs. 9)

b. When Saul begins prophesying, those who know him begin to ask one another if this is really Saul. (Vs. 10-12)

1) They begin to ask what has happened to Saul, if he is now a prophet. (Vs. 10)

2) Someone asks if his father was a prophet (Vs. 11), the answer being negative.

3) Therefore, the phrase “Is Saul also among the prophets?” became a figure of speech used as a response when one began doing something that they were not trained for or were perceived as having no business doing. (Vs. 12)

c. When Saul concludes his prophecies, he goes up to the high place of worship. (Vs. 13)

E. Saul discusses his journey with his uncle. (Vs. 14-16)

a. Saul’s uncle asks him where he went. (Vs. 14)

1) Saul tells about the endeavor to retrieve the donkeys.

2) He also tells him the reason for going to Samuel.

- b. Saul's uncle then wants to know what Samuel said. (Vs. 15-16)
 - 1) Saul tells of Samuel's statements that the donkeys had already been found.
 - 2) However, he leaves out the information about his anointing as king of Israel.

Samuel's Declaration of Saul as King before Israel. (Vs. 17-27)

- A. Samuel will once again call the people together at Mizpeh. (Vs. 17)
 - a. The last time this was done it was at a time of national repentance and revival (Chapter 8)
 - b. This time it will be on an occasion of national rejection as a king is determined.
- B. Samuel gives God's edict of rejection. (Vs. 18-19)
 - a. God had brought them up out of Egypt, delivered them and kept them safe, but they have rejected him for a king.
 - b. Now they are to present themselves by tribe so that a king can be selected.
- C. The public process of selecting the king. (Vs. 20-24)
 - a. God has already selected the king, but a formal process has been arranged by which the king will be made known.
 - b. First, the tribe of Benjamin is selected. (Vs. 20)
 - c. Next, the family of Matri is selected. (Vs. 21)
 - d. When Saul's name is called from among the family he is nowhere to be found, having hid himself among the stuff. (Vs. 22)
 - 1) Saul is obviously scared of the duty that is being handed to him.
 - 2) It is also possible that, with the statement of Samuel earlier in the chapter calling him "captain," that Saul did not fully recognize until this moment what God intended for him to do.
 - e. When the people see him and hear that God has chosen him they shout "God save the king." (Vs. 23-24)
- D. Samuel then gives to the people "the manner of the kingdom." (Vs. 25)
 - a. The term "manner" means "ordinance, judgment."

- b. Samuel told them the way this kingdom was going to operate, wrote it in a book and placed it before the Lord (i.e. he placed it among the priests in the place where they came before God).
 - c. Then the people dispersed back to their homes.
- E. When Saul goes home some men go with him, having been touched by God to remain with the king (i.e. the king's bodyguards). Others (the children of worthlessness) hold no confidence in Saul. They despise the choice of this man and refuse to show him the honor that is due him. Saul may be the king, but he has not yet won the hearts of all the people. (Vs. 26-27)

CHAPTER 11

Nahash Demands the Surrender of Jabesh-Gilead. (Vs. 1-3)

- A. Nahash, king of the Ammonites, comes and camps his army against Jabesh-Gilead. (Vs. 1)
 - a. Ammon originally held the region of Gilead before the Israelites came and conquered it, and they still considered it their territory.
 - b. They had tried on at least one other occasion to retake the region, but the judge Jephthah was defended it. (Jud. 11)
 - c. Now Nahash has come to again attempt the regaining of this territory.
- B. Jabesh tries to negotiate with the Ammonite king. (Vs. 1-3)
 - a. Jabesh seeks to surrender the city by treaty with the Ammonites. (Vs. 1)
 - b. Nahash says he will only accept it if he is allowed to pluck out the right eye of every man in the city. He wants to use Jabesh to scorn and shame the rest of Israel by means of the mutilation of their men. (Vs. 2)
 - c. The men of Jabesh ask for seven days to try to get a response from the rest of Israel, if there is none they will submit to Nahash's requirement. (Vs. 3)

Saul Defeats the Ammonites and Rescues Jabesh. (Vs. 4-11)

- A. Word reaches Gibeah (where Saul is) of what has happened at Jabesh, causing the people to weep. (Vs. 4)
- B. When Saul finds out what has transpired at Jabesh, the Spirit of God came upon him and he became very angry. (Vs. 5-6)
- C. He takes a yoke of oxen, cuts them in pieces, and sends them throughout Israel with the message that whoever fails to come after Saul and Samuel will have the same done to them. (Vs. 7)
 - a. God used Saul by inspiration to send this message to Israel.
 - b. The people hear the message and fully consent to Saul's ultimatum.
- D. The children of Israel gather at Bezek. (Vs. 8)
 - a. Bezek is a few miles north of Tirzah and directly across the Jordan River from Jabesh-Gilead.
 - b. There gathered at Bezek 330,000 men (300,000 from the northern tribes, 30,000 from the tribe of Judah).
- E. Saul sends messengers to Jabesh letting them know that by noon tomorrow they will have help. (Vs. 9)
- F. To buy time, the men of Jabesh tell Nahash they will come out on the morrow and he can do with them as he wishes. (Vs. 10)
- G. In the morning Saul divides his army into three companies and attacks Nahash. The fight lasts until the afternoon and when it is over there are not two soldiers of the Ammonites fleeing the field together. (Vs. 11)

Saul is Confirmed as King. (Vs. 12-15)

- A. After the battle the people ask Samuel who among them had been a doubter of Saul. (Vs. 12)
 - a. After seeing Saul lead the people, there is a desire to make sure everyone is behind him.
 - b. These men are even willing to kill his detractors to ensure the cohesion of his kingdom.

B. However, Saul intervenes, stating that the Lord saved the day and there would be none put to death on this day. (Vs. 13)

C. Samuel suggests they go back to Gilead and renew (start fresh) the kingdom there. (Vs. 14-15)

- a. They return to Gilgal, officially and completely making Saul king.
- b. The people offered sacrifices before God and rejoiced at his coronation.

CHAPTER 12

Samuel Asks for Witness Concerning his Judgeship. (Vs. 1-5)

A. This chapter picks up on the heels of Saul's confirmation in Gilgal at the end of chapter 11.

B. Samuel tells them that he has done everything they demanded in their desire for a king. (Vs. 1)

C. Samuel is old and has served them for many years; he wants to know when he did anything against them that would turn them from him. (Vs. 2-5)

- a. He describes himself as old and gray-headed. (Vs. 2)
- b. He is old enough that his sons are grown and among them. (Vs. 2)
- c. He asks anyone to bring witness against him of any means by which he as taken advantage of them or mistreated them. (Vs. 3)
- d. They readily admit that he has not done anything to defraud or oppress them. (Vs. 4)
- e. Samuel then calls upon God to be a witness, before both king and the people, that Samuel had not done anything wrong to bring about these desires for a king from the people. (Vs. 5)

f. Samuel already knows this is the case, but he wants it on the record officially before he gives the warning and condemnation that is to follow in the remainder of the chapter.

Samuel Warns the People About Rebelling Against God. (Vs. 6-25)

A. Samuel then begins to give the people a history lesson about all that God has done for the protection and deliverance of Israel. (Vs. 6-15)

a. It was the Lord that brought forth Moses and Aaron to deliver Israel from Egypt, they did not come forward of their own accord. (Vs. 6-8 - cf. – Exo. 3-4)

b. Israel's rebellion during the time of the judges and God's deliverance through such men as Jerub-baal, Bedan, and Jephthah. (Vs. 9-11)

1) Jerub-baal is the other name for Gideon. (Jud. 6:29-32)

2) Bedan is not mentioned in Judges and therefore leaves two possibilities: either it is another name for one of the judges that is not used elsewhere in Scripture, or that God called more judges than are listed in the book and these were known to the people of Samuel's day but unknown to us today. Either is possible and equally likely from the standpoint of Scripture.

3) Jephthah is the judge who delivered Israel from the Midianites. (Jud. 11)

c. Now, instead of God's deliverance, when Nahash came up against them (ch. 11), they wanted another king instead of God to deliver them. (Vs. 12)

d. Therefore, God has given them a king but they must still remain faithful to God, from the king to the least of the people. (Vs. 13-15)

1) The king is just as answerable to God as any other Israelite. (Vs. 14)

2) If they rebel against God he will respond to them just as he did to their ancestors when they rebelled. (Vs. 15)

B. God provides evidence this message is from him. (Vs. 16-18)

a. It was the time of wheat harvest. (Vs. 17)

1) This would have been May-June on our calendars.

2) During this time there is very little rain in Palestine.

- b. Therefore, at a time of little rain, Samuel calls upon God to show his presence with thunder and rain. (Vs. 17)
 - 1) This will be proof the message is from God.
 - 2) It will also show the foolishness and wickedness by which Israel tried to circumvent God with a king.
- c. When God does as Samuel has asked the people become very afraid. (Vs. 18)
- C. The people ask forgiveness for seeking a king. (Vs. 19-25)
 - a. They ask Samuel to pray for them because they have compounded their desire for a king on top of their other sins before God. (Vs. 19 - cf. - ch. 9)
 - b. Notice: They do not say that they want to release their king and go back to being under God alone, only that they want to be forgiven for their request.
 - c. Samuel tells them God is not going to destroy them, but he still expects them to be faithful in following the laws and commands of God. (Vs. 20-22)
 - 1) They must not go after the empty things of the nations around them (as they had in their desire for a king) for there is no value in them. (Vs. 21)
 - 2) However, the Lord will not forsake them because he had made them a promise to make them his people and he keeps his promises. (Vs. 22)
 - d. Samuel will also be a faithful servant and continue to pray for them, but also to continue to teach them the right way. (Vs. 23)
 - e. They need to remember all that God has done for them, fearing and serving God in truth. If they do not, no king will be able to save them from the wrath of God. (Vs. 24-25)

CHAPTER 13

Saul and Jonathan Attack the Philistines. (Vs. 1-4)

- A. This chapter begins with a rather elusive verse to understand. Verse one portrays the start of Saul's reign.
- a. The KJV states that Saul had reigned one year in Israel and, seemingly, was in the second year of his reign when the events of the chapter occurred.
 - b. The ASV states that Saul was 40 years old when he began to reign and the events of the chapter took place in the second year of his reign.
 - c. The Jewish Publication Society Hebrew-English Tanakh (The Jewish side-by-side version of the Old Testament) notes that the number in the first half of the sentence is lacking in the Hebrew manuscripts, therefore a confident final statement as to what should be inserted into the first numerical blank is conjecture. They simply have a blank in their translation.
 - d. Therefore, it is difficult to fully apply the intent of the statement. There are two possibilities.

1) The first part of verse one is a reference back to the events of chapters 11 and 12, stating that they all took place in the first year of his reign. (the position of the KJV translators)

2) The first part of verse one is a reference to the age of Saul at the time of his inauguration as king and the events of the chapter take place in the second year of that reign. (The position of the ASV and JPST translators)

3) The most likely answer tends toward the latter one. However, to state exactly that he was 40 years old (as the ASV does) is not possible from the text. It is possible to extrapolate that he was about that age because he is still considered a young man (1 Sam. 9:2), yet he has a son in Jonathan who is old enough, by the second year of his reign, to be leading a division of the army (13:2), which required him to be 20 years old according to the Old Law (Num. 1:3; etc.).

B. The men of Israel are dispersed. (Vs. 2)

- a. Saul chooses 3,000 men, 2,000 to be divided with him between Michmash and mount Bethel, the other 1,000 under the command of Jonathan at Gibeah.
- b. The rest of the men of Israel are sent back to their homes. The indication is this is on the heels of the events at Gilgal in chapter 12.

C. Jonathan attacks a Philistine garrison. (Vs. 3-4)

- a. The Philistines have a garrison at Geba (another name for Gibeah) that Jonathan attacks and defeats.
- b. Saul blows the trumpet (spreads the word) throughout all the land that his men had defeated the Philistines; but word also reaches the ears of the Philistines.
- c. When Israel hears what Saul has done and that they have been “had in abomination” with the Philistines, they begin to head once again to Gilgal.

1) The phrase “was had in abomination” is an interesting idiom. It literally in the Hebrew means “to cause a stink.”

2) The JPST translates it as Israel “incurred the wrath of” the Philistines.

The Philistines Invade Israel. (Vs. 5-7)

- A. The Philistines gather to invade Israel with an enormous army. (Vs. 5)
 - a. 30,000 chariots.
 - b. 6,000 horsemen.
 - c. A great multitude of foot-soldiers (described as the sand of the sea shore).
 - d. They come and take up camp at Michmash, in the direct center of the nation of Israel. From there they can reach out into every region of Israelite territory.
- B. When the men of Israel see their situation they scatter and flee. (Vs. 6-7)
 - a. They hide wherever they can (caves, woods, rocks, mountains, or pits). (Vs. 6)
 - b. Some even flee across the Jordan River to the lands of Gad and Gilead, putting as much room between themselves and the Philistines as possible. (Vs. 7)
 - c. Those who remain with Saul are scared and trembling.

Saul Offers Sacrifices Unlawfully. (Vs. 8-14)

- A. However, Saul waited in Gilgal for Samuel to arrive to offer sacrifices to God. (Vs. 8)
 - a. It seems, though not the same occurrence described in 1 Samuel 10:8, that this was the standing arrangement between Saul and Samuel.
 - b. When Saul needed to offer sacrifices he would go to Gilgal and within seven days Samuel would come to offer them for him.
- B. When the seventh day has come, Samuel still has not appeared; and the people (and to some extent Saul as well) are panicked and scattering.. (Vs. 8)
- C. Saul decides to take matters into his own hands. (Vs. 9-10)
 - a. Saul calls for the burnt offering and peace offerings to be brought to him and he offers them himself. (Vs. 9)
 - 1) Saul is from the tribe of Benjamin, not Levi, and therefore is not eligible to offer these sacrifices.
 - 2) Samuel's reaction to these actions are constant proof that times of crisis do not negate God's Laws and expectations pertaining to worship and obedience.
 - b. As soon as the sacrifices are completed, Samuel arrives. (Vs. 10)
 - 1) It is still the seventh day, so Samuel is not late according to their agreement.
 - 2) Saul goes out to greet him as though nothing is wrong.

- D. Samuel informs Saul of how bad his error is. (Vs. 11-14)
 - a. Samuel immediately asks Saul what he has done. (Vs. 11)
 - b. Saul responds by making the excuse that Samuel was late (he was not) and the people were so panicked and scattered he forced himself to offer the sacrifices for Samuel. (Vs. 11-12)
 - c. Samuel tells Saul he has foolishly violated the law of God at a time when God was prepared to fully validate his kingdom before Israel forever. (Vs. 13)
 - d. Instead, because Saul has shown the willingness to cast God's law aside when it is inconvenient, Saul's line will not continue and God will find a king after his own heart. (Vs. 14)

The Philistines' Actions against Israel and Israel's Defenselessness. (Vs. 15-23)

- A. Saul and Samuel go to Gibeah. (Vs. 15-16)
 - a. When Samuel leaves to go to Gibeah the total number of men remaining with Saul at Gilgal was 600. (Vs. 15)
 - b. Saul will then travel with his 600 men to Gibeah, where Jonathan had already defeated the Philistine garrison. (Vs. 16)
- B. The Philistine invasion. (Vs. 17-18)
 - a. Once the Philistines camped at Michmash, they began to send raids out into the land of Israel. These raids were accomplished by three different companies of troops.
 - b. One company took the road to Ophrah (hometown of Gideon – Jud. 6:11) to the land of Shual. This route would take them on an incursion into northern Israel for Ophrah was in the land of the tribe of Manasseh.
 - c. A second company took the road to Beth-horon. This was the western prong, with Beth-horon being one of two towns (Upper Beth-Horon and Lower Beth-horon) on the borders of Dan, Ephraim, and Benjamin.
 - d. The third company headed down toward the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness. This prong went east to the valley better known as the valley of Achor (Josh. 7:26). This would be the eastern prong of the raiding parties.

C. The Israelites Defenselessness. (Vs. 19-23)

a. Israel has no blacksmiths. (Vs. 19-22)

1) The Philistines had removed them all so that the children of Israel would not be able to make swords or spears and would have to come to them to get their farm instruments sharpened. (Vs. 19-21)

2) It seems that this was likely done when the Philistines had dominant control over Israel in the early part of the book.

3) Therefore, when the time came for battle, the only ones with swords or spears were Saul and Jonathan. (Vs. 22)

4) Between the scattering of the people of Israel and the raiding parties sent out by the Philistines, there are few men and fewer weapons available to the Israelites.

b. The main garrison of the Philistines comes out to the passage of Michmash. (Vs. 23)

1) This pass was considered to be the only way for Saul to get to the Philistines from Gibeah.

2) It is an easily defensible area that the Philistines believe will help them retain control of the region.

CHAPTER 14

Jonathan Defeats the Philistine Garrison. (Vs. 1-14)

A. This is the continuation of the events at the end of chapter 13. Saul's "army" of 600 men, who are gathered without weapons, are camped at Gibeah. The Philistines are camped on the other side of a rocky pass at Michmash and have sent out raiding parties to the east, north, and west.

B. Jonathan calls upon his armor-bearer to go with him to scout the Philistine garrison on the other end of the pass. (Vs. 1-3)

a. Jonathan does not tell his father where he is going.

b. While Jonathan heads out on this excursion, Saul is camped under a pomegranate tree on the outskirts of Gibeah at a place called Migron.

c. Saul also has with him Ahiah, a priest. (Vs. 3)

1) Ahiah is the son of Ahitub, who is a relative of Ichabod, the grandson of Eli.

2) The word translated "brother" is from a Hebrew generic term that references any relative or kinsman of an individual. It does not insinuate he was his blood brother, but he was a family member (as he would have to be to be priest).

3) Some think that Ahiah is the same as Ahimelech mentioned in 1 Samuel 21, but it is more likely they are different sons of the same family.

C. Jonathan approaches the garrison. (Vs. 4-7)

a. There are two sharp rocks (cliffs) on either side of the pass, one on the north toward Michmash, the other on the south toward Gibeah. This greatly decreased the ease with which large numbers of men could get through the area between the two camps. (Vs. 4-5)

b. Jonathan tells his armor-bearer that they are going to go check out the garrison at the mouth of the pass and see if the Lord will let them take it. (Vs. 6-7)

1) Jonathan tells the young man that God is not restrained by numbers.

2) The armor-bearer says that he will go with him to do all that is in Jonathan's heart. (Vs. 7)

D. Jonathan's devises a plan of attack. (Vs. 8-14)

a. Jonathan's plan is to go over and present themselves to the garrison. (Vs. 8-10)

1) When they show themselves, if the garrison tells them to wait until they come after them: they will not attack. (Vs. 9)

2) If the garrison says to "come to us," in essence, "come and get us." It will be a sign from God to attack and they will do so. (Vs. 10)

b. When they come out from cover before the Philistines, the Philistines remark that the Hebrew have finally come out of their holes and invite them to "come and get us" as they prepare to, in our terminology, "show the Hebrews a thing or two." (Vs. 11-12)

c. Jonathan tells his armor-bearer to follow him, for the Lord has delivered them into their hands. (Vs. 12)

d. Between the two of them, Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed 20 of the Philistine garrison "within as it were an half acre of land." While the exact measuring of the phrase is uncertain what is known is that it has reference to a small space of land. (Vs. 13-14)

Saul Presses the Advantage over the Philistines. (Vs. 15-23)

- A. When Jonathan defeats the forward garrison, the Philistine camp becomes afraid; because coinciding with Jonathan's actions there is an earthquake (obviously sent by God). (Vs. 15)
- B. Saul's watchmen see as the multitude of the Philistine army begin to melt away, beating down (trampling) one another in their haste to get away. (Vs. 16)
- C. Saul takes count to see who has left the camp that might be causing this and they find that Jonathan is missing. (Vs. 17)
- D. Initially, Saul calls upon Ahiah to bring the Ark of the Covenant up for the battle, but when he sees the tide continuing to turn in their favor so rapidly he rescinds the order and assembles his army (such as it is) for battle. (Vs. 18-20)
- E. As Saul and his men arrive at the battle it is greatly confused. The Philistines are beating each other up because they cannot get out of one another's way; the Israelites that had surrendered to the Philistines and had been coming in and out of the camp turned on them and fought against them; all the Israelite men who had been hiding nearby in the mountains of Ephraim came and joined the battle as well. (Vs. 20-22)
- F. The Lord saved Israel, beginning with the hand of Jonathan, and the battle continued to progress to Beth-aven as the day continued. (Vs. 23)

Saul's Curse and Jonathan's Violation. (Vs. 24-46)

- A. Saul's men are "distressed" as the battle continues throughout the day. (Vs. 24)
- a. The word "distressed" is from a Hebrew term meaning to be hard pressed or oppressed. The term does not refer to their personal emotions, but to the conditions under which they were working.
 - b. The reason for their condition is seen in the curse that Saul speaks against any individual who eats before evening.
 - c. The men in battle are starting to become weary because of hunger and their ability to continue the fight is waning.
- B. Saul's men come upon honey in a wooded area. (Vs. 25-27)

- a. It had dropped to the ground when the men came into the area (likely because of the fighting). (Vs. 26)
 - b. None of the men of Israel are willing to take and eat it because of their fear of Saul's oath. (Vs. 26)
 - c. However, Jonathan has not heard of the oath, having already been out on the battlefield when it was issued. He immediately takes and eats of the honeycomb. (Vs. 27)
 - d. When he eats of it, Jonathan's eyes are "enlightened." This is not a miraculous occurrence, but this statement simply references his response when he ate of it (we would say his eyes "lit up" at the taste of the honey). It renewed his will. (Vs. 27)
- C. Jonathan is confronted with his father's command. (Vs. 28-30)
- a. One of the other men immediately tells Jonathan what his father had said. (Vs. 28)
 - b. Jonathan responds by commenting on the harmful nature of the command of the king. (Vs. 29-30)
 - 1) He describes it as "troubling the land."
 - 2) He then comments on how much better the men would fight if they were able to eat.
 - c. However, there is no indication that he continues to eat once he has been informed of the command.
- D. The people become so hungry they violate the law of God. (Vs. 31-35)
- a. The Israelites drive the routed Philistines back as far as Ai-jalon, about 15 miles to the southwest of Michmash. (Vs. 31)
 - b. However, by the time the Israelites reach this point they are hungry and exhausted. Therefore, when they find the spoils of the Philistines (sheep, oxen, calves, etc.) they take them and immediately begin killing and eating them. (Vs. 32)
 - 1) They do so without draining the blood or preparing them properly.
 - 2) Doing so was a direct violation of the laws of God pertaining to the eating of meats as found in Deuteronomy 12:16, 23-24.
 - c. When Saul is notified of the actions of the men of Israel, he recognizes the problem and calls for a large stone to be brought to him. (Vs. 33-35)

1) The large stone would be used as a place to kill the animals and allow the blood to drain to the ground without harming the meat. (Vs. 34)

2) Saul then builds an altar to the Lord, the first one he has ever built. (Vs. 35)

E. Saul desires to continue to press the attack during the night and continue to gain spoils from the Philistines. (Vs. 36-37)

a. The people are willing to continue the fight. (Vs. 36)

b. The priest (likely Ahiah) says that they should ask God. (Vs. 36)

c. However, when Saul asks for God's counsel, no word is received. (Vs. 37)

F. Saul comes to the conclusion that there has been a violation for which atonement has not been made. (Vs. 38-46)

a. Saul calls the heads of the people together and tells them to reveal who has sinned. Saul says that whoever it is, even if it is Jonathan, he will put him to death. (Vs. 38-39)

b. When nobody answers him, he puts the Israelites on one side and he and Jonathan on the other to see if the problem is with the people or him and Jonathan. (Vs. 40-44)

1) Saul then calls upon God to show where the problem lies, and he and Jonathan are shown to be the culprits. (Vs. 41)

2) Saul then asks which of them is in violation and the response recognizes Jonathan. (Vs. 42)

3) When Saul asks what Jonathan has done and is told about the eating of the honey. (Vs. 43)

a) Notice: Jonathan is not guilty of breaking God's Law, but Saul's.

b) However, since Saul bound this law on the people, Jonathan was guilty of sin (violation of the Law), not against God, but Saul. Nevertheless, that situation had to be resolved before God would give any further information to Saul.

G. Saul condemns Jonathan to death for his violation. (Vs. 44)

a. However, the people speak on Jonathan's behalf and the sentence is rescinded. (Vs. 45)

b. Saul then returns home from chasing the Philistines and they return to their land as well. (Vs. 46)

Saul's Kingdom is Fully Established. (Vs. 47-52)

- A. Saul officially takes as his own the entire nation of Israel. (Vs. 47-48)
 - a. He fights the enemies of Israel, including the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, the kings of Zobah, the Philistines, and the Amalekites.
 - b. Everywhere he fought, he defeated his enemies.
- B. Saul's family (at this time) is listed. (Vs. 49-50)
 - a. His sons are: Jonathan, Ishui, and Mel-Chishua.
 - b. His daughters are: Merab and Michal.
 - c. His wife's name is Ahinoam.
- C. The captain of Saul's army is his cousin Abner. (Vs. 50-51)
- D. For the rest of the days of Saul, he will be at war with the Philistines; because of this, whenever Saul found a strong or valiant man he took him into his service. (Vs. 52)

CHAPTER 15

God Orders Saul to Destroy the Amalekites. (Vs. 1-9)

- A. There is quite a time gap between chapters 14 and 15.
 - a. The events of chapter 13 and 14 take place in the second year of the reign of Saul. (13:1)
 - b. The events of chapter 15 seem to have taken place some 25 years later.
 - 1) This conclusion is based upon the information concerning David that is to come.
 - 2) David will be 30 years old when he begins to reign at the end of Saul's 40 year reign. (2 Sam. 5:4)
 - 3) Therefore, David was not born until the 10th year of Saul's reign (40 years in Saul's reign minus David's age of 30 years).

4) The indication is that the events of chapter 16 follow closely after those of chapter 15. (15:35; 16:1)

5) Therefore, the events of chapters 15 and 16 would have had to have occurred after David was born and old enough to tend the sheep. (16:11)

6) A time of about 25 years between the events of chapters 14 and 15 would have made David about 17 years old at the time of the events and is consistent with what we know about David entering his confrontation with Goliath as will be discussed further in chapter 17.

7) Nevertheless, it is evident that much time has passed between the events of chapters 14 and 15. It is equally evident in Saul's attitude and actions.

B. God's command to Saul. (Vs. 1-3)

a. God reminds Saul that he is the one who had Saul anointed as king; therefore, Saul needs to listen to the Lord's command. (Vs. 1)

b. The Lord has not forgotten the actions of the Amalekites. (Vs. 2)

1) The Amalekites are a branch of descendants from the children of Esau. (Gen. 36:15-16)

2) They had attacked the children of Israel in the wilderness when Israel was coming out of bondage and God stated he would not forget their actions. (Exo. 17:8-16)

3) God is now going to bring Amalek into judgment for their actions, both against Israel in the beginning and their continued oppressions against God and the Israelites from that time forward. (Vs. 3)

c. Saul is to destroy everything that belongs to the Amalekites: people and livestock. (Vs. 3)

1) This brings up one of the most difficult and most asked questions concerning this passage of Scripture: How could God be just and require all of the people, including children, to be killed?

a) We must first understand that God is just, and this is an action of judgment being brought against the Amalekites. They have attacked God's people relentlessly over

the years, they have worshiped idols and false gods with no regard for truth, and they have been warned on multiple occasions of the judgment of the Lord.

b) This judgment is brought against a nation, not just an individual, family, or town. As such, it shows the complete disregard of the entire nation for the ways of God (cf. Gen. 6; 18-19; etc.). There are no righteous or redeeming qualities for this nation.

c) In all judgments against nations, or groups of people in general, children are involved. They suffer consequences from the actions of the parents (even though the sins of the parents are not held to their account). Consider the deaths that would have occurred when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, or even the deaths we know occurred when Israel is brought into subjection by neighboring nations because of disobedience. There are always children involved.

d) Consider also the judgment from God's perspective. If the children remain, they will carry to further generations the very teachings and practices for which God is bringing their parents into judgment because these are the things that they have been taught.

e) Also consider what would have happened with the children had they been left alive. By law the Israelites could not have taken them, because they were to remain separate from the nations and not intermarry or bind themselves to them. Thus there would have been nobody to take care of these children once their parents were killed.

2) While to our sensibilities it seems callous and harsh, God's judgment being brought about by this manner satisfied his justice on the people of Amalek, but also (from the eternal perspective) saved the souls of those who would surely have either died a short time later or grown up to follow in their parents footsteps.

3) God was not mean-spirited, cruel, or hard-hearted with this order. It was what his righteousness and justice demanded and it took into account every aspect of the situation.

C. Saul gathers his army. (Vs. 4-5)

- a. His army includes 200,000 foot soldiers and an additional 10,000 men of Judah, equaling 210,000 total men in his army. (Vs. 4)
 - b. He gathers them in Telaim and brings his army to set an ambush (“lay wait” – KJV) outside of one Amalekite city. (Vs. 5)
- D. Saul warns the Kenites to leave the land of the Amalekites. (Vs. 6)
- a. The Kenites were the tribe of which Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, was a part. (Jud. 4:11)
 - b. Saul recounts the Kenites kindness to the Israelites when they came out of Egypt (cf. Num. 10:29ff) and gives them the opportunity to leave the area before the action against the Amalekites begins, which they readily take.
- E. Saul destroys the Amalekites. (Vs. 7-9)
- a. He strikes them down from Havilah to Shur. These places are southeast of Palestine stretching north to south down the Arabian Peninsula (modern-day Saudi Arabia). Therefore, Saul did not merely cross the Jordan River to fight this people; he travelled a great distance round trip to fulfill these orders.
 - b. However, Saul did not obey all of the orders God had given him. (Vs. 8-9)
 - 1) Saul kept the king, Agag, alive and brought him back – presumably as a sign of his victory. (Vs. 8)
 - 2) Saul also brought back the best of the livestock: including sheep, oxen, and others that were good among their herds. (Vs. 9)
 - 3) Saul had been given direct orders and he had kept most of them, but he decided he knew better than God on some areas.

Samuel Confronts Saul. (Vs. 10-31)

- A. God speaks to Samuel telling him what Saul has done. (Vs. 10-11)
 - a. God says that it “repents him” (literally “makes him sorry”) that he made Saul king because he has refused to follow God’s commands.
 - b. Samuel spends that night in grief calling out to the Lord because of the actions of the leader of the nation of Israel.
- B. Samuel gets up early the next morning to go find Saul. (Vs. 12)

- a. Samuel is told that Saul had gone to Carmel to set up a “place.”
 - 1) The word translated “place” means literally “a hand” in Hebrew.
 - 2) It is used to describe a monument or pillar that is erected as a sign of the power of the erector. It would often be in the shape or figure of a hand symbolizing the hand of power.
 - 3) Therefore, Saul stopped in Carmel (Southeast of Hebron in Judah as one entered Israel from the south) to erect a monument declaring his own power and ability.
 - b. Additionally, Samuel is told that once Saul erected this monument to himself he continued on to Gilgal.
- C. Samuel goes to Gilgal and confronts Saul. (Vs. 13-31)
- a. When Samuel arrives, Saul greets him with joy stating that he has done the will of the Lord. (Vs. 13)
 - b. Samuel asks about the animals he is hearing around him. (Vs. 14-15)
 - 1) The animals that are so easily heard are understood to have been those brought back by Saul from his conquest.
 - 2) Saul tries to place the blame for the return of the animals on the people, saying they wanted to bring them back to sacrifice to God. (Vs. 15)
 - c. Samuel reveals to Saul God’s feelings about the king’s actions. (Vs. 16-23)
 - 1) Samuel reminds Saul who put him in his position. (Vs. 17)
 - 2) He then reminds Saul of the orders God had given him concerning the Amalekites. (Vs. 18)
 - 3) He asks Saul why he refused to obey the word of God and instead took spoils from the Amalekites. (Vs. 19)
 - 4) Saul tries to argue his righteousness with Samuel, telling him that he has done everything God asked. He argues the people are to blame, not him. (Vs. 20-21)
 - 5) Samuel replies that God is more interested in obedience than sacrifice. (Vs. 22)
 - 6) Additionally, because of the rebellion of Saul (he is in command, even if his statement about the people is true), God has rejected him as king. (Vs. 23)
 - d. Saul admits his sin. (Vs. 24-31)

- 1) Saul states that he has sinned, but that his sin was because of his fear of the people. (Vs. 24)
- 2) Saul asks Samuel to pardon his transgression and worship with him. (Vs. 25)
- 3) Samuel refuses to make a public show of unity with Saul because he is guilty of rejecting the word of God and God has rejected him. (Vs. 26)
 - a) Notice: he is not refusing to forgive Saul when he has repented.
 - b) He is refusing to “smooth everything over” before the people when it comes to the perception of Saul’s actions.
- 4) When Samuel turns to leave, Saul reaches out to grab Samuel’s coat and tears the skirt (edge, corner) of it. (Vs. 27)
- 5) In reaction to Saul’s impulsive grab, Samuel tells the king that God will tear the kingdom from him and give it to someone better than him. Additionally, Saul can be assured this will happen because God does not lie or go back on his word. (Vs. 28-29)
- 6) At these words, Saul begs Samuel to stay so that he can worship God. (Vs. 30-31)
 - a) However, it is telling that Saul terms him “the Lord THY God,” not showing recognition of God as his own.
 - b) Samuel will turn at this second behest of Saul and return with him so he can worship God.

Samuel Kills Agag. (Vs. 32-35)

- A. After the worship has been offered, Samuel calls for Agag to be brought to him. (Vs. 32-33)
 - a. Agag comes before him “delicately,” more appropriate in our terminology would be the term “delightfully,” he believes the danger has passed and he is safe with Saul. (Vs. 32)
 - b. Samuel then fulfills the death sentence that God had placed upon Agag and puts him to death. (Vs. 33)
 - 1) Samuel says that he will die after the same manner by which he made women childless. This statement recognizes that Agag had been a brutal king.

2) Samuel cut Agag into pieces before the Lord, indicating that this had been the method Agag had used to kill many others in his life.

3) Remember: This is the execution of God's judgment upon the ruler of the Amalekites. Samuel is not being cruel for the sake of it, but it is the recompense for the life and actions the king had taken in his own life.

B. Samuel returns home to Ramah and Saul goes back to his home in Gibeah. (Vs. 34-35)

a. From this time forward, Samuel never comes before Saul again. (Vs. 35)

b. However, that does not stop Samuel for mourning for the failures of Saul and being filled with sadness at the attitude and actions of the one chosen to be the leader of Israel.

c. God is equally saddened and regretful for the actions of Saul and the fact that God had made him king over Israel.

CHAPTER 16

Samuel goes to Bethlehem in search of a new King. (Vs. 1-5)

A. On the heels of God removing himself from Saul in chapter 15, it is time to anoint the replacement for the king. (Vs. 1-3)

a. God tells Samuel that it is time to stop mourning over Saul. (Vs. 1)

b. Samuel is to go to Bethlehem, to the family of Jesse, because God has already provided a king from among his sons. (Vs. 1)

- c. Samuel asks how he is to accomplish this, for he is certain if Saul hears about it he will have him killed. (Vs. 2)
 - d. God tells him to go to Bethlehem under the auspices of offering sacrifices for the people. (Vs. 2-3)
 - 1) He is to take a heifer with him. (Vs. 2)
 - 2) He is to call Jesse and his family to the sacrifice and anoint the appropriate son. (Vs. 3)
- B. Samuel comes to Bethlehem as the Lord commanded. (Vs. 4-5)
- a. The elders of Bethlehem are described as being terrified at Samuel's arrival and ask if he has come peaceably. (Vs. 4)
 - 1) Obviously, they have heard of the death of Agag and God's promises to Saul.
 - 2) It is likely they are made more uncertain by the fact that Bethlehem is not on Samuel's normal circuit as priest.
 - b. However, Samuel assures them he has come peaceably to offer sacrifices to God. (Vs. 5)
 - 1) He calls upon them to sanctify (from the Hebrew word meaning to "cleanse," or "prepare") themselves before the sacrifice.
 - 2) Samuel personally goes through the sanctification process with Jesse and his sons, ensuring they will be at the sacrifice.

Samuel Examines Jesse's Sons. (Vs. 6-13)

- A. After everyone has completed the sanctification process (a process first introduced in Exodus 19 that lasted as much as 3 days), Jesse presents his family to Samuel. (Vs. 6)
 - a. Though these events are often considered to have happened at the home of Jesse, this does not seem to be the case.
 - b. Samuel is in Bethlehem preparing to offer the sacrifice; therefore, Jesse and his family come to Samuel, not the other way around.
- B. When the oldest son, Eliab (cf. 1 Sam. 17:13), comes before Samuel he is convinced this is the intended replacement for Saul. (Vs. 6-7)

- a. Samuel is impressed with Eliab and says to himself, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him."
- b. However, God tells Samuel not to look on Eliab's appearance or height, because God is not looking for a new king that looks the part, but one who has the right heart for the job.
- C. After Eliab, Jesse sends his next 6 sons before Samuel; but none of them are selected by the Lord. (Vs. 8-10)
- D. After the last of the sons present have come before Samuel, he asks Jesse if he has any more sons. (Vs. 11)
 - a. While in the KJV the word used in "children," the Hebrew word specifically denotes sons.
 - b. Jesse says there is another son, the youngest, but he is out taking care of the sheep.
 - c. Samuel tells Jesse to send for him, for they will not as much as sit down until he arrives.
- E. David arrives and is anointed to be the next king of Israel. (Vs. 12-13)
 - a. Though not the source of the decision, David's appearance is striking. (Vs. 12)
 - 1) He is ruddy: from the Hebrew meaning "red," speaking of his hair. This was unusual for this culture where most people had dark hair.
 - 2) He has a beautiful countenance: from the Hebrew phrase meaning "beautiful eyes."
 - 3) He has good looks.
 - 4) Far from being rough and rugged, David is a good looking young man who stands out among the people in a very different way from Saul.
 - b. The Lord tells Samuel to anoint David as the next king.
 - 1) This is done with his family gathered around him. (Vs. 13)
 - 2) Following his anointing, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon (the Hebrew word is more appropriately "to" or "toward") him and remains with him from that day forward.
 - a) The emphasis of the "Spirit of the Lord" does not imply that David is filled with the Holy Spirit and that God guides his every move, for his imperfect actions reject such an association.

- b) Instead, the idea is that the “spirit” (from the Hebrew meaning “breath” or “mind”) of the Lord comes to David (through the prophets, etc.). The word of the Lord begins to be made known to David on a regular basis because of the position for which he has been chosen and his heart toward God.
- c. Following the anointing of David, Samuel returns to Ramah.

David is brought into Saul’s Presence. (Vs. 14-23)

- A. Just as the spirit of the Lord comes upon David, it is removed from Saul. (Vs. 14)
 - a. God will have nothing more to do with Saul because of his arrogance and disobedience.
 - b. While this idea of an “evil spirit from God” is troubling to some, the answer as to the how and why are rather simple.
 - 1) Since the spirit of God references the words, advice, and help of God: when that spirit (guidance) is removed something takes its place.
 - 2) When God removed his guidance and advice, all that was left to Saul was evil (from the Hebrew term meaning “sad, unpleasant, disagreeable, or displeasing”).
 - 3) This does not insinuate that God, who is good, physically places evil upon Saul; but instead, that when God removed his good from Saul all that was left to him was evil and destructive, as though God had sent it.
 - 4) It can be seen that this spirit is directly related to the mindset of Saul because of the comfort he receives from the music of David. (Vs. 23)
- B. Due to Saul’s dismay and terror (the meaning of “trouble” in the KJV), his servants seek a remedy for his ailing mind. (Vs. 15-18)
 - a. They recognize what has happened to their king. (Vs. 15)
 - b. They seek his permission to find someone who is good at playing a lyre that will come and soothe Saul’s pain. (Vs. 16)
 - c. Saul agrees with their request. (Vs. 17)
 - d. One of the servants mentions having seen a son of Jesse that fits what Saul needs. (Vs. 18)
 - 1) He is good with a lyre.

2) He is a strong and brave young man (not a reference to war against men, but likely referencing David courage and bravery against the lion and bear – 17:34-35).

3) He is a prudent speaker (he is not going to say something undesirable before the king).

4) He is good looking.

5) The Lord is with him.

C. Saul sends for David at his servants' request. (Vs. 19-23)

a. Saul sends messengers to Jesse to fetch David. (Vs. 19)

b. Jesse prepares a donkey saddled with bread, a bottle of wine (from the Hebrew *yayin* which generally references "juice from the vine," it does not require or imply intoxicating beverage), and a kid of the goats for David to take to Saul. (Vs. 20)

c. When David comes before Saul, the king takes an instant liking to him and makes him his armor-bearer. (Vs. 21)

d. The king asks Jesse to allow David to remain with him, and such he does. (Vs. 22-23)

1) David has been found with great favor before Saul.

2) Whenever Saul becomes tormented in his mind, he calls for David and his playing soothes him.

CHAPTER 17

Goliath Challenges the Israelites. (Vs. 1-11)

A. The events of chapter 17 seem to follow very closely on the heels of chapter 16.

B. The Philistines gather their forces against the Israelites. (Vs. 1-3)

a. Just as there are tribes of Israel, there are tribes, or clans, of the Philistines.

- b. Therefore, the bringing together of the armies of the Philistines involves a uniting of the armies of all their tribes together in a single place for a single purpose.
- c. The place of their gathering is just inside the border of Judah at a place called Ephes-dammim. (Vs. 1)
 - 1) Ephes-dammim is located between Shocoh and Azekah.
 - 2) This places it about 16 miles southwest of Jerusalem, near the Philistine border.
- d. Saul gathers the army of Israel together and goes out to meet them by the valley of Elah. (Vs. 2)
- e. As the scenario is set, Israel is arranged for battle on one mountain, the Philistines are ready for battle on another mountain with a valley between them. (Vs. 3)
- C. Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, comes out with a challenge for Israel. (Vs. 4-10)
 - a. The description of Goliath. (Vs. 4-7)
 - 1) He is from Gath, known for being among the 5 main cities of the Philistines. (Vs. 4)
 - 2) He stands 6 cubits and a span (approximately 9 feet, 6 inches) tall. (Vs. 4)
 - 3) He wears a helmet of brass on his head.
 - 4) He also wears a coat of mail (a garment, often going down to the knees, of bronze rings interwoven together to protect from sword and spear) that weighed 5,000 shekels of brass (approximately 100-125 pounds).
 - 5) His armor also included brass greaves to protect his legs.
 - 6) His armament included a small lance/javelin that was carried on his back, and a spear with a head that weighed 600 shekels of iron (approximated by K & D to be about 17 pounds).
 - 7) In addition to all of this armor, he has a man walking in front of him carrying a shield.
 - b. The challenge of Goliath. (Vs. 8-10)
 - 1) He asks why they have taken the time to array themselves for a major battle when all they have to do is send a man out to face him. (Vs. 8)
 - 2) He proposes a fight to the death and the losers will serve the victors. (Vs. 9)

3) Goliath comes out defying (from the Hebrew word meaning “taunt, reproach, upbraid”) Israel. Our terminology would qualify it as trash-talking.

c. When Saul and the Israelites hear the challenge, their spirit is shattered and they are very afraid of the giant. (Vs. 11)

David comes into the Camp of the Israelites. (Vs. 12-37)

A. How David’s family fit into the framework of Saul’s military. (Vs. 12-14)

a. David is the son of Jesse, who is an old man at the time of these events. (Vs. 12)

b. He has 8 sons, of which 3 are in the army of Saul: Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah. (Vs. 13)

c. David is the youngest of the 8 sons. (Vs. 14)

d. While all of these things have previously been affirmed in chapter 16, they help set the stage for what will happen in the remainder of the chapter.

B. David is sent by his father to the army’s camp. (Vs. 15-21)

a. David has returned home from Saul to tend his father’s sheep. (Vs. 15)

1) It is possible (and most likely) that David had been left behind at Saul’s house when the army left to go to battle and simply went home to help tend his father’s sheep; having nothing better to do.

2) It is also possible (though not likely because of the brother’s response upon seeing him) that David went with the army to the battle, but for whatever reason was sent back to assist his father.

3) Most likely, David had not been in the army’s camp until he comes under the authority of his father.

b. Goliath has been presenting himself, morning and evening, for 40 days. (Vs. 16)

c. Jesse wants David to take his brothers an ephah of “parched corn” (more appropriately from the Hebrew “roasted grain”) and 10 loaves of bread, as well as 10 cheeses to their captain. (Vs. 17-18)

d. Additionally, David is to find out how they are doing and “take their pledge.” (Vs. 18)

1) The taking of a pledge was a common action among soldiers of the day wherein they would send something home (a lock of hair, etc.) as proof that they are okay.

2) Therefore, David is to bring back proof that his brothers have not come to harm in battle.

e. David gets up early in the morning and travels to the valley of Elah and makes it to the front line (the “trench” is a rampart most commentators say would have been made from carts or wagons for protection) as the men are coming up to the line with a war cry. (Vs. 19-21)

C. David observes the challenge of Goliath. (Vs. 22-30)

a. David leaves his carriage (the things he had brought with him) with the keeper and runs into the lines of the army to greet his brothers. (Vs. 22)

b. While he is there, Goliath comes out and offers his challenge. (Vs. 23)

c. The men flee in fear from Goliath, and then tell David why. (Vs. 24-25)

1) They tell what Goliath has been doing to defy Israel.

2) They also tell the incentives Saul has tried in motivating someone to volunteer to fight Goliath (riches, the hand of his daughter in marriage, making the father’s house tax-free in Israel).

d. David asks if they are certain these things will be done, and why Goliath has been allowed to defy the armies of God. (Vs. 26-27)

1) They assure him the promises of Saul stand.

2) However, they do not even attempt to answer the second part of the question.

e. At this point in the conversation David’s older brother, Eliab, begins to question the young man. (Vs. 28)

1) He asks why he is here and with whom he left the sheep.

2) He also argues his belief that the only reason David is really here is to see the battle.

f. David responds by asking what he has done wrong. (Vs. 29)

1) The KJV renders the second statement of David in this verse as another question – “Is there not a cause?”

2) However, from the Hebrew others have rendered it a bit differently.

- a) The Jewish Publication Society in their Hebrew-English version renders it an exclamation: “I was only asking!”
- b) The ESV renders it as a question, but more clearly: “Was it not but a word?”
- 3) Both of these renderings are better from the Hebrew than the KJV. Whether the statement is a question or an exclamation is unclear, what is clear is that David had only responded with a couple of words (Vs. 26), nothing worthy of provoking such a harsh response from his brother.
- g. David then goes to other soldiers to try to get more information, but keeps getting the same answers. (Vs. 30)
- D. Saul sends for David. (Vs. 31-37)
 - a. When word gets back to Saul of the things David has been asking, he calls for him. (Vs. 31)
 - b. David tells the king that he will go and fight the Philistine. (Vs. 32)
 - c. Saul tries to convince David of the futility of such an action. (Vs. 33)
 - 1) David cannot beat the giant.
 - 2) David is just a boy.
 - 3) Goliath has been a warrior since he was a boy.
 - d. David speaks of his own conquests over the lion and the bear. (Vs. 34-37)
 - 1) As he killed the lion and bear, so he will kill the Philistine.
 - 2) However, David does not believe he will be without help. He says the Lord will deliver him. (Vs. 37)
 - e. Saul responds by telling him to go and the Lord be with him. He has either been convinced by the young man’s statements, or after 40 days of this challenge has realized there will not be another to step forward and volunteer. (Vs. 37)

David versus Goliath. (Vs. 38-58)

- A. Saul seeks to arm David with his armor. (Vs. 38-40)
 - a. He puts his helmet and coat of mail on David, to which David adds his own sword.
 - b. However, David refuses to go to battle wearing the armor. (Vs. 39)

1) Many have taken this to mean that it did not fit or was too big for David, but that reason is never given.

2) Instead, David says he has not tested it, therefore it is unfamiliar to him.

3) David is not going to go into battle with something he has never used and with which he is uncomfortable.

c. Instead, David takes his staff and his sling, goes to the brook and chooses 5 smooth stones to place in his bag. (Vs. 40)

B. David answers Goliath's challenge. (Vs. 41-54)

a. As David goes out, the Philistine also comes out to meet him with his shield-bearer in front of him. (Vs. 41)

b. When Goliath sees David, he looks upon him with contempt. (Vs. 42-44)

1) He sees nothing dangerous in the red-haired, fair featured youth. (Vs. 42)

2) He asks derisively if he is nothing more than a dog, to come out against him with a staff. (Vs. 43)

3) He curses David by means of his gods. (Vs. 43)

4) He threatens David by telling him he will leave his flesh for the birds and beasts. (Vs. 44)

c. David responds to the Philistine's threats. (Vs. 45-47)

1) He is not intimidated by Goliath.

2) He states that, while Goliath comes with his weapons, he comes with the name of the Lord. (Vs. 45)

3) He is confident the Lord will deliver Goliath into his hand. (Vs. 46)

4) It will be Goliath's carcass, not David's, left for the animals. (Vs. 46)

5) All the earth will know that there is a God and he delivered Israel. (Vs. 46-47)

d. At David's words, Goliath comes forward to fight David. (Vs. 48-51)

1) David does not hold his distance, but instead runs toward the giant; taking a stone as he goes, putting it in his sling. (Vs. 48-49)

2) The stone hits Goliath in the forehead, sinking into his flesh. (Vs. 49)

3) Though David has killed the giant, there must be proof that Goliath has truly been killed (remember, this is a fight to the death – Vs. 9); so David takes Goliath's own sword and cuts off his head. (Vs. 50-51)

4) When the Philistines see their champion dead they flee the battlefield, being followed quickly by the Israelites. (Vs. 51-52)

a) They were pursued all the way back to Ekron in the land of the Philistines. (Vs. 52)

b) The wounded of the Philistines were left along the route back to their home. (Vs. 52)

5) After the Israelites chase the Philistines back across the border, they return to loot the Philistine camp. (Vs. 53)

6) David takes the head of Goliath back to Jerusalem, and the armor of the giant to his own home. (Vs. 54)

C. Saul enquires as to the family of the victor. (Vs. 55-58)

a. While it may appear that Saul does not know who David is, careful consideration of this section shows that such is not the question.

b. As David fights Goliath, Saul asks if his commander, Abner, knows of David's family. (Vs. 55-56)

1) Abner does not know. (Vs. 55)

2) Saul tells Abner to find out the answer. (Vs. 56)

3) It must be remembered that the only interaction Saul has had with David's father is through messenger (16:19, 22); therefore, it is likely that Saul either does not remember, or truly never knew, the family to which David belonged.

c. After the battle, David is brought before Saul while still holding Goliath's head in his hand. (Vs. 57-58)

1) Saul asks David who his father is. (Vs. 58)

2) David responds by stating that he is the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite.

CHAPTER 18

Saul becomes Distrustful of David. (Vs. 1-9)

- A. The bond between David and Jonathan. (Vs. 1-4)
 - a. After David's display of courage and bravery, Jonathan loves David and their souls are knit (bound, tied) together. (Vs. 1)
 - 1) This is not in any way a sexual or perverse relationship.
 - 2) It is described as a close friendship, a relationship as though they were brothers, between men who are very similar in conviction and purpose.
 - b. The age difference between David and Jonathan.
 - 1) We know that Saul reigned for 40 years. (Acts 13:21)
 - 2) Jonathan will be a leader of troops, almost from the beginning of Saul's reign, making him at least 20 years old at the time. (1 Sam. 13:1-2)
 - 3) David will begin to reign at the age of 30, which means he was not born until 10 years into Saul's reign. (2 Sam. 5:4)
 - 4) All of these things put together mean that Jonathan was at least 30 years older than David. These men were not the same age.
 - c. After the battle with the Philistines, Saul refuses to allow David to go home again, he will remain with Saul. (Vs. 2)
 - d. Jonathan and David seal their friendship with a covenant and Jonathan will give David his garments and armor as a sign of the agreement. This would have been a style of clothing and weapons to which David would not have had access otherwise. (Vs. 3-4)
- B. The response of the people to David and the distrust it breeds in Saul. (Vs. 5-9)
 - a. David was placed over the men of war by Saul. (Vs. 5)
 - 1) He will go wherever Saul sends him.
 - 2) He behaves himself well and is accepted by all of the people.
 - b. The women come out to meet Saul and David as they return home. (Vs. 6-7)
 - 1) They come out singing and dancing, rejoicing and celebrating the victories of Israel.
 - 2) The song they sing is: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten-thousands."

c. Saul is angry because of the pedestal upon which they have placed David, and assumes in his mind that David must desire Saul's throne. Therefore, Saul watches him closely. (Vs. 8-9)

Saul seeks to Kill David. (Vs. 10-16)

A. The day after they return from hearing these songs of honor to David, the thoughts of sadness and depression came upon Saul. (Vs. 10-11)

a. David plays before Saul, as he had at other times, but this time Saul's thoughts and despairs are about David.

b. Saul has a javelin (spear) in his hand as David is playing, and decides to end his troubling thoughts then and there. He throws the spear at David, attempting to pin him to the wall.

c. However, David escapes the attempts of Saul twice.

B. Saul becomes afraid of David because he knows the Lord is with him. (Vs. 12)

C. Saul's solution is to send David out on patrols to keep him away from the king. (Vs. 13-16)

a. Saul makes David captain over 1,000 men. (Vs. 13)

b. David continues to behave uprightly and give no reason for evil to be said about him. (Vs. 14)

c. When Saul sees David's actions, he becomes even more afraid of David. (Vs. 15)

d. However, David, by his actions, has gained the favor and support of the people of Israel and Judah as he is out among them. (Vs. 16)

Saul Plots against David through his Daughters. (Vs. 17-30)

A. Saul offers to give his oldest daughter, Merab, to David in exchange for David fighting valiantly for Saul in the Lord's battles. (Vs. 17-19)

a. Saul's desire is not happiness for David, or his daughter, but that in fighting battles for Saul the Philistines will kill David for Saul. (Vs. 17)

b. David does not consider himself worthy, by person or family, to be the king's son-in-law. (Vs. 18)

- c. However, when the agreed time comes for Saul to give Merab to David, Saul suddenly gives her to another man instead. (Vs. 19)
- B. Saul has another daughter, Michal, who has fallen in love with David. When the king is told this, he seeks to use her for the same purposes earlier stated. (Vs. 20-21)
 - a. Saul hopes she will be the bait in a trap for David. (Vs. 21)
 - b. He also hopes that the Philistines will do his dirty work for him. (Vs. 21)
- C. Saul contrives a plan against David. (Vs. 22-27)
 - a. Saul sends his servants to convince David secretly that he needs to be the son-in-law of the king. (Vs. 22)
 - b. David responds by asking how they could take such a thing so lightly. (Vs. 23)
 - c. When they tell the king David's response, the king tells them to assure David that the "only" thing the king wants as dowry is 100 foreskins of the Philistines. (Vs. 24-25)
 - 1) Saul does not believe David will be able to kill 100 Philistines to fulfill the agreement.
 - 2) He is convinced the Philistines will kill David before the errand is completed.
 - d. David is pleased by the king's request and takes his men to fight the Philistines. (Vs. 26-27)
 - 1) Instead of 100 foreskins, David brings back 200.
 - 2) David's men return to tell the king the whole story about how this was accomplished. (Vs. 27)
 - e. The king has no choice but to give Michal as David's wife. His plan has failed once again.
- D. Saul's fear of David continues to grow. (Vs. 28-30)
 - a. Saul knows that the Lord is with David, and that Michal loves her new husband. This is not the arrangement for which he was hoping. (Vs. 28)
 - b. Saul's fear of David grows continuously, making him look at David more and more as an enemy with each passing day. (Vs. 29)

c. When the Philistines came out to battle against the Israelites, David always dealt with the situation more wisely than any of the other servants of Saul. So much so that his name was highly honored among the people. (Vs. 30)

CHAPTER 19

Saul tries to turn Jonathan against David. (Vs. 1-7)

- A. Saul tells Jonathan and his servants that they need to kill David. (Vs. 1)
 - a. David is living in Saul's house as his son-in-law and commander in the army.
 - b. Now, Saul is looking for anyone who will remove the one he sees as his greatest enemy.
- B. Jonathan tells David what his father has said and what he is going to try to do about it. (Vs. 2-3)
 - a. He advises David to hide himself until the morning. (Vs. 2)
 - b. He is going to try to talk to his father and get more information. (Vs. 3)
- C. Jonathan speaks on David's behalf before the king. (Vs. 4-6)
 - a. He reminds Saul that David has done nothing but been faithful and loyal. (Vs. 4)
 - b. He asks how Saul can repay the man who slew the Philistine and brought victory for all Israel by shedding his blood innocently. (Vs. 5)
 - c. Saul listens to the words of his son and agrees not to kill David. (Vs. 6)
- D. Jonathan calls David and tells him it is safe to go back into the presence of the king. (Vs. 7)

Saul again Attempts to Kill David. (Vs. 8-17)

- A. A period of time later, there was war once again between the Philistines and the Israelites. (Vs. 8)
 - a. David once again soundly defeats the Philistines.
 - b. He drives them fleeing back home.
- B. Once again, the mental sadness and anguish that God has left with Saul comes upon him after these victories. (Vs. 9-10)

- a. David is still before the king playing the lyre as he has in times past. (Vs. 9)
 - b. Saul once again tries to pin David to the wall with his javelin, but David escapes unharmed and flees from the presence of the king. (Vs. 10)
- C. Saul sends men to David's house to wait for him to leave his house and kill him. (Vs. 11-16)
- a. David has already entered his house, they are waiting outside for him to leave in the morning. (Vs. 11)
 - b. David's wife, Michal, tells him that if he does not leave that night, he will be dead on the morrow. (Vs. 11)
 - c. Michal helps David escape out a window, then turns her attention to setting up a dummy in the bed to represent David. (Vs. 12-13)
 - 1) She takes an image (from the Hebrew *teraphim*, meaning "image, idol, household god"), though of what type we do not know other than it resembled a human figure, and places it in the bed.
 - 2) She places a pillow of goat's hair under its head, and a cloth over it so that it cannot really be seen.
 - d. The next day, Saul's messengers come for David, but she tells them he is sick. (Vs. 14-16)
 - 1) Saul's response is to bring "David" on his bed and he will kill him personally. (Vs. 15)
 - 2) Saul believes he will take advantage of David's weakness as a means of being permanently rid of him.
 - 3) However, when the messengers go in to the bed, they find only Michal's creation. (Vs. 16)
- D. Saul interrogates his daughter on her deception. (Vs. 17)
- a. He asks why she deceived him, expecting her loyalties to be to him over David.
 - b. She again lies to her father, telling him that David threatened to kill her if she did not let him go.
 - c. Notice: God is not condoning what is done by Michal, nor the manner by which it is accomplished, this is simply a true account of that which occurred on this occasion.

David Flees to Samuel. (Vs. 18-24)

A. When David escapes Saul's grasp, he goes to Samuel, who is still living in Ramah. (Vs. 18)

a. David tells Samuel everything that has happened between him and Saul.

b. Samuel takes David to Naioth.

1) Naioth is not so much a city as a neighborhood.

2) The name itself means "habitations" or "residences," it seems to refer to a group of houses around Ramah where prophets of God had assembled to live near Samuel.

B. When Saul hears that David is at Naioth, he sends messengers to recover David. (Vs. 19-20)

a. When these messengers come to Naioth, they see the group of prophets, with Samuel at their lead, prophesying.

b. Immediately, the messengers begin to prophesy as well. This is much the same type of incident as is seen in chapter 10 with Saul. (1 Sam. 10:11)

C. When Saul hears what has happened he sends more messengers on 2 other occasions, with the same result. (Vs. 21)

D. Finally, Saul will go to Naioth himself. (Vs. 22-24)

a. He goes to Ramah and asks where Samuel and David are to be found. (Vs. 22)

b. As he travels the short distance to Naioth, he begins to prophesy just like the others, but with even more force. (Vs. 23-24)

1) He strips off his clothes and lays down naked all day and night.

2) The people again ask if Saul is among the prophets.

c. God is showing Saul that if he does not want an individual taken, he will not be taken. David is under God's protection through Samuel and Saul will not be allowed to touch him while he is there.

CHAPTER 20

David Asks Jonathan to Find out Saul's Intentions. (Vs. 1-23)

- A. David flees Naioth once Saul has visited and finds Jonathan. (Vs. 1-4)
 - a. He asks Jonathan what he has done wrong to cause Saul to want to kill him. (Vs. 1)
 - b. Jonathan tries to reassure David that nothing will happen to him because Saul would not do anything without telling Jonathan. (Vs. 2)
 - c. David responds by telling Jonathan that their friendship is well known and Saul will try to keep his intentions from Jonathan. (Vs. 3)
 - 1) David does not believe Saul will continue to let Jonathan know his plans pertaining to David.
 - 2) David is also convinced that there is only a step between him and death at the moment. One wrong move and Saul will kill him.
 - d. Jonathan says he will do whatever David desires. (Vs. 4)
- B. David and Jonathan devise a plan to find out Saul's intentions. (Vs. 5-9)
 - a. David reminds him that the next day is the new moon and he will be expected at the king's table. (Vs. 5)
 - 1) The new moon, the start of the month, was a time of sacrifice and feasting. (Num. 10:10; 28:11-14)
 - 2) David, as an extended member of the family of Saul, would be expected to be with the rest of the family for the sacrifices and meal afterward.
 - b. David will remain gone for 3 days, if Saul asks about him Jonathan is to tell the king that David had to return to Bethlehem for a yearly sacrifice with his family. (Vs. 5-6)

- c. If Saul is understanding, recognizing the given purpose for David's absence, then all is well; but if he becomes angry, they can know that Saul has evil intent for David. (Vs. 7)
 - d. All of that being determined, David tells Jonathan that if he discovers David has done something worthy of death, Jonathan should kill him personally, not bring him back to Saul. (Vs. 8)
 - e. Jonathan tells David that such will not be necessary, for if David had done anything wrong he would know about it and would have told the young man. (Vs. 9)
- C. David asks how Jonathan will tell him the news of Saul's response. (Vs. 10-23)
- a. Jonathan invites David out into a nearby field. (Vs. 11)
 - b. Jonathan makes an oath. (Vs. 12-17)
 - 1) He will tell David the truth about the situation, whatever it may be, or else the punishment will be upon Jonathan. (Vs. 12-13)
 - 2) In return David must promise to show kindness, not just to Jonathan, but to his household as well. (Vs. 14-15)
 - 3) Jonathan and David seal the promise with an oath. (Vs. 16-17)
 - 4) Jonathan's statements would be accomplished by the Lord at the expense of the enemies of David. In other words, the fulfillment of this covenant would be accomplished through the destruction of David's enemies. (Vs. 16)
 - c. Jonathan explains how he will tell David the news of Saul. (Vs. 18-23)
 - 1) He confirms that David will be missed at the feast because his seat will be empty. (Vs. 18)
 - 2) After David has been gone for 3 days, he is to return to the place where he hid earlier by the stone named Ezel. (Vs. 19 - cf. 19:2-3)
 - 3) Jonathan will go out to the field with a boy and shoot three arrows, as though shooting at a target. (Vs. 20-22)
 - a) If he tells the boy the arrows are closer to Jonathan, it is safe and David can retrieve the arrows and come home. (Vs. 21)
 - b) If he tells the boy the arrows are farther out, David needs to leave. (Vs. 22)

4) Jonathan again reminds David of the promises they have made to one another. (Vs. 23)

Saul tries to Kill Jonathan. (Vs. 24-34)

- A. David goes and hides while Jonathan returns for the feast. (Vs. 24)
- B. As the king sits down to eat, Jonathan and Abner (Saul's captain of the host – 17:55) are present, but David is absent. (Vs. 25)
- C. Saul says nothing about the absence, thinking that he must have been unclean (according to some ordinance of the law) that day. (Vs. 26)
- D. When David does not appear the second day, Saul enquires as to his whereabouts. (Vs. 27-29)
 - a. He asks Jonathan why David has not come to eat either day. (Vs. 27)
 - b. Jonathan responds as was previously agreed, telling Saul that David needed to return to Bethlehem. (Vs. 28-29)
- E. Saul turns his anger on Jonathan. (Vs. 30-33)
 - a. He calls him the son of a "perverse rebellious woman." This is not intended to be an insult upon the mother, but upon Jonathan and the "shame" that he brings to his birth. (Vs. 30)
 - b. Saul tells his son that as long as David lives, the kingdom of Jonathan will not be established. (Vs. 31)
 - c. Saul calls for Jonathan to bring David to him so that he can be executed. (Vs. 31)
 - d. Jonathan responds by asking what David has done to deserve such an indictment. (Vs. 32)
 - e. In response, Saul throws his spear at Jonathan in an attempt to strike him. (Vs. 33)
- F. Jonathan, knowing now that Saul will stop at nothing to kill David, leaves in anger and will not return to the meal. (Vs. 33-34)

David goes into Hiding. (Vs. 35-42)

- A. The next morning, Jonathan takes a boy out into the field with him at the appropriate time. (Vs. 35)
- B. He tells the boy to run out into the field and find the arrows he shoots. (Vs. 36-39)
 - a. He shoots the arrows past the boy, telling him to go farther. (Vs. 36-37)
 - b. He follows that with the cry for David to hurry and leave as fast as he can. (Vs. 38)
 - c. The boy gathers the arrows and returns, knowing nothing about what has occurred between David and Jonathan. (Vs. 39)
- C. Jonathan gives his bow and arrows to the boy and sends him back into the city. (Vs. 40)
- D. When the boy is gone, David comes out of hiding to say goodbye to Jonathan. (Vs. 41-42)
 - a. David bows to the ground 3 times in honor of his position as prince. (Vs. 41)
 - b. They embrace and weep together. (Vs. 41)
 - c. Jonathan tells David to go in peace and again reminds him of their oaths. (Vs. 42)
 - d. David flees and Jonathan returns to the city. (Vs. 42)

CHAPTER 21

David gets Bread from Ahimelech. (Vs. 1-9)

A. When David leaves Jonathan he goes to Nob, just a short distance south of the areas of Ramah and Gibeon. (Vs. 1)

B. While in Nob he speaks to Ahimelech the priest, for Nob is among the Levitical cities. (Vs. 1-2)

a. Ahimelech is afraid, having seen the king's son-in-law approaching by himself and asks him why he is alone. (Vs. 1)

b. David lies to Ahimelech, telling him that he is on a secret errand from the king and the rest of his men (his "servants" – KJV) are waiting for him elsewhere. (Vs. 2)

1) God is not condoning David's lie on this occasion, simply recording it as it happened.

2) It is understandable, given the circumstances, that David does not know who he can trust and who will turn him in to Saul at the first opportunity.

3) However, his statement about having others waiting for him is true as verified by Jesus. (Luke 6:3-4)

C. David asks for bread from Ahimelech. (Vs. 3-7)

a. David asks for 5 loaves of bread, or whatever Ahimelech might have available to give him. (Vs. 3)

b. Ahimelech tells him that there is no "common bread" (bread made for ordinary purposes) at hand. All he has is "hallowed bread" (bread which has been holy, from the table of showbread in the tabernacle). (Vs. 4)

1) He would be willing to give some of this bread to David as long as his young men had not been sexually active in the last 3 days.

- 2) This request stems from the 3 days that was recognized as being necessary for sanctification before interacting with that which was holy. (cf. - Exo. 19:14-15)
- c. David assures the priest that there have been no women around for the last three days (which was true since David has been in hiding – 20:5). (Vs. 5)
- d. David states that the bread available is a form of common now since it has been removed from the table of showbread. (Vs. 5-6)
 - 1) The bread would sit on the table for a week and then be replaced with new bread on the Sabbath. (Lev. 24:5-8)
 - 2) We do not have an exact timetable of when this occurs, but we do know it is shortly after the changing of the bread. (Vs. 5)
- e. Did David and Ahimelech sin with this exchange?
 - 1) Most will argue in the affirmative, but I am not convinced that is the case. Consider a few reasons why.
 - 2) What was the shewbread?
 - a) The shewbread included 12 loaves of bread estimated to have weighed 7-8 pounds each. (Lev. 24:5-9)
 - b) That means there was a minimum of 84 pounds of bread on the table of shewbread at any given time.
 - 3) The Old Testament laws for shewbread.
 - a) It was to be replaced each Sabbath. (Lev. 24:8)
 - b) It was to be eaten in the holy place before the Lord. (Lev. 24:9)
 - c) At the time the law was given, the priesthood consisted of Aaron and his sons.
 - 4) At the time David comes to Nob there are about 85 priests in the city (1 Sam. 22:18). That means there was about 1 pound of bread for each priest to eat. Which leads us to another question: what about leftovers?
 - a) There is no law in the Old Testament dealing with the leftovers of the shewbread after it has been eaten by the priests in the tabernacle.
 - b) David received the leftovers after the shewbread had been replaced and eaten.

- c) David's argument to Ahimelech is that at this point the bread is essentially common again anyway. (Vs. 5)
 - d) David and Ahimelech both recognize that there is no law dictating what is to be done with the bread after its use is fulfilled in the tabernacle.
 - e) There is no condemnation for David's actions in the Old or New Testaments. In fact, Jesus insinuates that David was guiltless in what he did. (Mat. 12:7)
- 5) Additionally, notice how Jesus uses this point in Luke 6:1-11.
- a) The term "lawful" as it is used in this context does not mean "legal" in the sense we would use it, but rather meant "does it exist in the law," or "naming a specific law."
 - b) Jesus recounts David's actions, admits that they were "not lawful" (i.e. you could not find the text in the Old Law which said the non-priest could have the showbread because there was no law of any kind dealing with what could or could not be done with it after it was eaten before the Lord). (Vs. 4)
 - c) Jesus then utilizes the very same question in verse 9 when he asks where in the Law it explicitly states you can do good or evil, heal or destroy.
 - i) The answer is that there is none to be found.
 - ii) There was no law that said you could watch over a loved one or help a friend in need.
 - iii) This is because the Sabbath laws were about work for one's own profit and personal benefit, not edicts about every aspect of life to be carried out on that day.
 - d) Jesus then uses the lack of any law pertaining to the action to heal the man with the withered hand and prove that where there is no law (positive or negative) there is freedom of choice.
- f. David and Ahimelech did not sin in their actions and Jesus proved it, though many men today, like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, do not see it.
- g. However, there is a witness to this event: Doeg, the servant and chief-herdsman of Saul. (Vs. 7)

1) While there is nothing more about Doeg said in this chapter, his insertion here is for a specific reason.

a) It is evident that David saw and recognized Doeg. (cf. 22:23)

b) This caused David to fear what would happen and precipitated his next two actions (asking for a weapon and fleeing to Gath).

2) Neither of the following actions were planned, but were the fearful instincts of a man unsure of what would come next.

D. David asks for a weapon. (Vs. 8-9)

a. He asks for anything that might be present, because he has had to flee with only the clothes on his back. (Vs. 8)

b. The priest tells him the only weapon present is the sword of Goliath and he can have it if he desires. (Vs. 9)

c. David takes the sword, stating that there is none like it.

David flees to the Philistines. (Vs. 10-15)

A. When David flees Nob, he goes into the land of the Philistines; coming to Achish, king of Gath. (Vs. 10)

a. There is no indication this was the original intent of David when he went to Nob.

b. Instead, it seems this was a panicked move by David when he saw Doeg.

B. When he arrives the servants of Achish recognize him and even know the song that the women of Israel sang about him. (Vs. 11)

C. When David realizes he has been recognized, he acts as though he has gone crazy. (Vs. 12-13)

a. He starts scribbling on the doors of the gate. (Vs. 13)

b. He also begins to let his drool run down his chin into his beard, something no sane man would do because it was considered such a great insult to the others present. (Vs. 13)

D. Achish deems him insane and asks his servants why they have even bothered to bring David before him. (Vs. 14-15)

a. He seeks no entertainment from, nor the presence of, the insane.

b. Therefore, David is taken out of the presence of Achish and released.

CHAPTER 22

David takes his Parents to Safety. (Vs. 1-5)

A. David leaves Gath and heads to the cave Adullam. (Vs. 1)

a. While the exact location of this cave is unknown, it is without doubt that it is located in the lowlands of Judah, at the foot of the mountains, near the Philistine border.

b. There are many cave systems (some quite deep and cavernous) in the region that would have been sufficient to hold a large number of people.

c. When his family hears where he is they come to him.

B. David also becomes the captain for all the malcontents in the region. (Vs. 2)

a. David, now that he has become an outlaw, has become very much a “Robin Hood”-style character. He is living out in caves with his 400 men.

b. He has not sought these men, nor has he been actively recruiting a resistance; they have come to find him.

C. Following these events, David seeks to get his parents to safety until things are more certain. (Vs. 3-4)

a. David comes to “Mizpeh” of Moab.

1) The name *Mizpeh* is a Hebrew word meaning “watchtower.” Some consider this to be a specific city, others argue that it is simply a watchtower fortress near the border of Israel and Moab.

2) In all likelihood it was a combination of the two as the text seems to refer to it as a proper name and a fortress (Vs. 4), it would seem that the name of the fortress was “Mizpeh” (the watchtower).

b. David seeks asylum for his parents.

1) This location is a logical one for David.

a) His great-grandmother was a Moabitess (Ruth).

b) He is not considered to be the enemy of the Moabites (as he was with the Philistines), Saul is.

2) The king of Moab agrees and David's parents remain there with him while he is there.

D. However, God sends a prophet named Gad to tell David to return to Judah. (Vs. 5)

a. God does not want David remaining in a foreign land.

b. So David, by all indications, leaves his parents behind and returns to the forest of Hareth in Judah.

Doeg Reports David's Appearance at Nob. (Vs. 6-10)

A. Saul bemoans how nobody is faithful to him. (Vs. 6-8)

a. Saul's paranoia is continuing to grow. While staying in Gibeah he finds out about David and his men. (Vs. 6)

b. He asks if David (again referred to as "the son of Jesse") is going to reward every man with riches and rank. (Vs. 7)

c. He accuses them all of conspiring with David and Jonathan against him. (Vs. 8)

1) It is the typical "nobody loves me" rant.

2) He even accuses Jonathan of being the one behind raising David up "against him," even though Jonathan had long tried to defend his father.

B. In response, Doeg tells Saul what he saw at Nob. (Vs. 9-10)

a. He tells of his meeting with Ahimelech. (Vs. 9)

b. He also tells of the provisions and weapon that David received while there. (Vs. 10)

Saul Calls all of the Priests of Nob before Him. (Vs. 11-23)

A. Saul does not just call Ahimelech, but all of the priests of Nob. (Vs. 11)

B. Saul accuses them of being conspirators against the king, in essence charging them with treason. (Vs. 12-13)

C. Ahimelech responds that, as far as he knew, David was a faithful servant (and son-in-law) to the king. (Vs. 14)

- D. Ahimelech also argues that he did not enquire of God on David's behalf, which is true, or try to assist him in dethroning Saul. (Vs. 15)
- E. Instead of listening to the truth of Ahimelech's statement, Saul immediately sentences him and all of his family to death. (Vs. 16)
- F. Saul commands his guards to kill the priests for their perceived treason, but the guards refuse to raise their swords against the priests of the Lord. (Vs. 17)
- G. When the guards refuse, Saul turns to Doeg to do the dirty work. (Vs. 18-19)
- a. He kills 85 priests of the Lord from Nob.
 - b. He then goes into the city and slaughters every man, woman, child, and animal in the name of Saul.
- H. One of Ahimelech's sons, Abiathar, escapes and finds David to tell him what has happened. (Vs. 20-23)
- a. David states that he knew Doeg would tell the king when he saw him in Nob. (Vs. 23)
 - b. He blames himself for the deaths of those in Nob, though he certainly never thought Saul would react this way. (Vs. 23)
 - c. He tells Abiathar to stay with him and he will be kept safe. (Vs. 24)

CHAPTER 23

David saves Keilah from the Philistines. (Vs. 1-6)

- A. David is told that the Philistines are raiding the city of Keilah. (Vs. 1)
 - a. Keilah is a stronghold city (Vs. 7), located to the northwest of Hebron and the southwest of Bethlehem, close to the Philistine border.
 - b. The Philistines are raiding the threshing-floors at Keilah for food and supplies.
- B. David asks the Lord if he should go to the aid of the city. (Vs. 2-4)
 - a. The Lord tells him to go and save Keilah. (Vs. 2)
 - b. However, his men are not excited to take on this challenge. (Vs. 3)
 - 1) They are already on the run from Saul (“we be afraid”).
 - 2) They are concerned that, if they cannot stand up to Saul, how will they be able to fight the Philistines.
 - c. David goes back to the Lord to ask a second time, and the Lord tells him to go and he will deliver Keilah into David’s hand. (Vs. 4)
- C. David and his men fight the Philistines at Keilah and defeat them. (Vs. 5)
- D. When David and his men go down to Keilah, they are accompanied by Abiathar. (Vs. 6)
 - a. Abiathar is already with David and his men when they go to Keilah. (22:20)
 - b. So, the import of the statement is that he came with David to Keilah, and he brought an ephod (priestly garment), which had been brought with him as he escaped from Saul’s men.
 - c. The ephod would have contained the Urim and Thummim (Exo. 28:30), which would allow David to inquire of God, as he did in verses 2 and 4, and would do again in verses 9-12.

David Escapes Saul’s Pursuit Again. (Vs. 7-15)

- A. Saul is told that David is at Keilah and rejoices. (Vs. 7-8)
 - a. He claims that God has delivered David into his hand. (Vs. 7)
 - 1) The idea of the word “delivered” as used here means “to reject, resign, disregard” (Strong).
 - 2) Saul believes that God has rejected David for some reason and that David is now trapped by a city with gates and bars so that he cannot escape.
 - b. He calls the people (Israelites) together to besiege Keilah and capture David. (Vs. 8)
- B. David knows that Saul is planning mischief, so he calls Abiathar to allow him to inquire of God about the situation. (Vs. 9-12)
 - a. He begins by asking if Saul will come down to Keilah as he has heard, and God responds affirmatively.
 - b. He also asks if the people of Keilah will turn him over to Saul when he arrives and is told that they will.
- C. Knowing this, David and his men (who now number about 600) leave Keilah and went wherever they could go. (Vs. 13-15)
 - a. When Saul learns that David is no longer at Keilah, he ceases his plan to go there. (Vs. 13)
 - b. David goes back into the wilderness and stays in a mountain in Ziph. (Vs. 14)
 - c. Saul continues to seek David, but God continues to protect him. (Vs. 14)

Jonathan Visits David. (Vs. 16-18)

- A. As impossible as it has been for Saul to find David, Jonathan has no trouble. (Vs. 16)
- B. Jonathan strengthens David, not with weapons or provisions, but with the things of God.
- C. Jonathan tells him not to fear, David will be the next king of Israel and Jonathan will stand with him. (Vs. 17)
- D. Jonathan also tells David that Saul knows this as well.
- E. After making a covenant with the Lord, Jonathan returns home and David stays in the forest. (Vs. 18)

The Ziphites Report David to Saul. (Vs. 19-29)

- A. The inhabitants of the region of Ziph come to Saul to inform him of David's location. (Vs. 19)
- B. They tell Saul that if he will come down to the region, their assistance will be to help direct him to David's exact location. (Vs. 20)
- C. Saul gladly and gratefully accepts their offer of information. (Vs. 21-23)
 - a. He tells them to go back to Ziph, find David's exact location, and return to him with the information.
 - b. He knows that David is moving as secretly as he can through the region (Vs. 22), so Saul does not want to go there until he knows for certain where David is.
- D. The Ziphites do as Saul has asked. (Vs. 24)
- E. Saul pursues David in southern Judah. (Vs. 25-26)
 - a. David is in the wilderness of Maon, on the south end of the wilderness ("Jeshimon," in Hebrew, means "wilderness, desert"). (Vs. 24)
 - b. The Ziphites tell Saul where he is and Saul sends his men into the wilderness after David. (Vs. 25)
 - c. When David flees to "a rock," supposed by most to be the mountain "Maon" (also known as "Tell Main") in the midst of the wilderness, Saul seeks to trap David. (Vs. 26)
 - 1) He and his army go up one side of the mountain while David is trying to escape on the other side.
 - 2) Saul's army is slowly encircling David and his men, leaving them with steadily decreasing options by which they can escape.
- F. Psalm 54 is written by David during the time of his betrayal by the Ziphites.
- G. Just as Saul is getting in position to capture David a messenger comes to him bringing news that the Philistines have invaded the land. (Vs. 27-28)
 - a. Saul has to leave his pursuit of David to take care of the Philistine invasion. (Vs. 28)
 - b. Without a doubt this was far more than coincidental timing. God has once again made a way for David to escape.

H. When Saul leaves David flees to Engedi, a town surrounded by cliffs and caverns on the western edge of the Dead Sea in a largely uninhabited area. (Vs. 29)

CHAPTER 24

David has the Chance to Kill Saul. (Vs. 1-8)

A. After Saul returns from taking care of the Philistine threat brought to his attention at the end of chapter 23, he is informed that David is in the wilderness of Engedi. (Vs. 1-2)

- a. The wilderness of Engedi is just west of the Dead Sea and east of the wilderness of Ziph.
- b. Upon hearing of David's location, Saul selects 3,000 men and goes to seek David.
- c. The "rocks of the wild goats" is more likely a description of the terrain than a statement of an actual location.

B. As they are searching for David, Saul stops at a cave to "cover his feet" (a.k.a. "use the bathroom"). (Vs. 3-7)

- a. Unbeknownst to Saul, David and his men are hiding in the same cave Saul has chosen as his commode. (Vs. 3)
- b. David's men try to convince him to kill Saul now while he has the chance. (Vs. 4)
 - 1) They state that God has delivered Saul into David's hand.
 - 2) The import of the statement is that David can end this now.
- c. Instead, David cuts off the skirt of Saul's garment that had been discarded for the moment. (Vs. 4-6)
 - 1) David immediately feels guilty for what he has done. (Vs. 5)
 - 2) He states that he has no right to mistreat the Lord's anointed because the Lord put him in that position. (Vs. 6)
- d. David stays his servants with these words and compels them not to do anything against Saul. (Vs. 7)

C. After Saul leaves, David exits the cave calling after him. (Vs. 8)

- a. David calls Saul, “My lord and king,” showing no signs of rebellion.
- b. When Saul turns, David also falls on his face to the earth in deference to the king’s authority.
- c. David is ensuring there are no misunderstandings as it pertains to his recognition of Saul and his authority.

David Confronts Saul about his Opportunity. (Vs. 9-22)

- A. David begins his confrontation with his king by asking him why he listens to other men when they say that David seeks to hurt Saul. (Vs. 9-15)
 - a. He tells how he had the opportunity to kill Saul in the cave, and some even asked him to do so. (Vs. 10)
 - b. He shows Saul the piece of his robe that he had removed while the king was in the cave. (Vs. 11)
 - c. He states that he has not sinned against Saul in any way and calls upon the Lord as his judge. (Vs. 11-12)
 - d. He quotes a proverb of the ancients: “Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked,” but states that he will not raise his hand against the king. (Vs. 13)
 - e. He compares himself to a dead dog or a flea; showing that the king is wasting his time on someone so lowly as to be of no importance. (Vs. 14)
 - f. He closes by, again, calling on God to be the judge and deliverer between him and Saul. (Vs. 15)
- B. When David has finished, Saul responds. (Vs. 16-21)
 - a. He asks if it is really David, then begins to weep. (Vs. 16)
 - b. He acknowledges that David is more righteous than he because of the evil that has been in his heart. (Vs. 17)
 - c. He states that David has shown his heart by his actions in letting Saul live, for most men would not do so. (Vs. 18-19)
 - d. He calls upon the Lord to reward David for his actions. (Vs. 19)
 - e. He admits his knowledge that David will be the next king and seeks his promise that David will not seek to eliminate his family when he takes the throne. (Vs. 20-21)

- C. David gives his promise to Saul in response to the king's wishes. When their conversation in concluded, Saul returns home. However, David remains in the wilderness. (Vs. 22)
- D. David wrote Psalm 57 at the time of the events of this chapter.

CHAPTER 25

David sends Men to Speak to Nabal. (Vs. 1-13)

- A. The chapter begins with the death of Samuel. (Vs. 1)
 - a. Samuel was a beloved prophet of the people, he is mourned by the entire nation when he dies.
 - b. He is buried in Ramah, which was his home.
- B. We are told that David went to the wilderness of Paran (the location of which is disputed, some say it should read as the "wilderness of Maon," not Paran, which makes more sense in the context of the chapter).
- C. In Maon (A place David had previously been when hiding from Saul – 23:24), there is a rich herdsman named Nabal. (Vs. 2-3)
 - a. He has 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. (Vs. 2)
 - b. He is shearing his sheep at Carmel, just north of Maon. (Vs. 2)
 - c. His wife's name is Abigail. (Vs. 3)
 - 1) She is a stark contrast to her husband.
 - 2) She is intelligent and beautiful.
 - 3) He is cruel and an evildoer.
- D. David hears that Nabal is in the process of shearing his sheep and sends 10 young men to ask Nabal for assistance. (Vs. 4-9)
 - a. They are to remind Nabal that David's men had protected and watched out for Nabal's shepherds and ensured that no harm came to them. (Vs. 7)
 - b. Therefore, David asks for any help that can be given from the bounty of Nabal's yield in return for David's assistance. (Vs. 8)

- c. David's men deliver their message and await Nabal's reply. (Vs. 9)
- E. In response, Nabal states that there is no proof they are from David. (Vs. 10-11)
 - a. He asks which of them is David, and then argues that there are many slaves who run away from their masters these days; insinuating that these men are not who they claim to be. (Vs. 10)
 - b. He goes on to say that he will not give anything to these men, since David is not among them, and he has no way of knowing if they are really with David or not. (Vs. 11)
 - c. The indication is that he knows that these are David's men (thus the reference to slaves and masters) but he is using the fact that David is not among them as a means of refusing to assist them.
- F. David's men return and tell him what was said. (Vs. 12-13)
 - a. David is angered by Nabal's actions toward his men.
 - b. He directs his men to get their swords and takes 400 men with him to confront Nabal. (Vs. 13)

Abigail tries to save her Husband. (Vs. 14-35)

- A. One of Nabal's young men tells Abigail what has happened. (Vs. 14-17)
 - a. He tells her that Nabal mistreated the messengers of David. (Vs. 14)
 - b. He tells her of all the ways David's men had helped them and kept them safe. (Vs. 15-16)
 - c. He then asks Abigail to do something because of what he knows is about to happen in response from David. (Vs. 17)
- B. Abigail goes to intercept David. (Vs. 18-31)
 - a. She prepares a large number of provisions to take with her for David's men. (Vs. 18)
 - 1) 200 loaves of bread.
 - 2) 2 bottles of wine.
 - 3) 5 sheep that were already dressed and prepared to eat.
 - 4) 5 measures (about 8 gallons) of parched corn (roasted grains).
 - 5) 100 clusters of raisins (dried grape cakes).

6) 200 fig cakes.

7) She saddles all of these provisions on asses and leaves to meet David.

b. She tells her servants to go ahead of her, but does not let her husband know what she is doing. (Vs. 19)

c. As she is coming down a hidden portion of the hill (likely the other side from where they lived) she sees David coming and stops him. (Vs. 20)

d. David has been seething at Nabal's treatment and is intending to kill Nabal and all his men for his dishonest actions. (Vs. 21-22)

e. When Abigail sees David she quickly gets off the ass she is riding and bows before him. (Vs. 23)

f. She begs David to hear her. (Vs. 24-31)

1) She asks David to pay no attention to Nabal. (Vs. 25)

a) She says that he is what his name says.

b) His name (Nabal) means "fool" or "boor."

2) She tells David she did not see his men when they came the first time. (Vs. 25)

3) She implies that, through her meeting him before he arrives at Nabal's house, he has stopped him from avenging himself (an accurate assessment). (Vs. 26)

4) She asks David to accept the offerings she has brought and forgive the trespass stating that, if he does, God will bless him. (Vs. 27-28)

5) She says that God will take care of him (as he always has) and that when all the Lord has told him comes to pass he will be able to accept these things with a clear conscience, having allowed the Lord to take care of his enemies. (Vs. 29-31)

C. David responds to Abigail's pleas. (Vs. 32-35)

a. He gives thanks to God for sending Abigail to stop him from doing something wrong. (Vs. 32-33)

b. He states that, without her intervention, he had every intent of killing every male with Nabal. (Vs. 34)

c. However, David accepts her offerings and tells her to go in peace. (Vs. 35)

Nabal's Death and Abigail's Remarriage. (Vs. 36-44)

- A. When Abigail returns, Nabal is feasting in his house like a king. (Vs. 36)
 - a. He is very drunk at the time Abigail returns.
 - b. She does not tell him anything that has happened at the time, for he would not have remembered it anyway.
- B. The next day, Abigail tells him what happened. (Vs. 37-38)
 - a. When Abigail tells him what had almost befallen him, his "heart died within him" and he became like a stone.
 - 1) Some have said that it was a physical malady that overtook him (such as a stroke) that caused him paralysis.
 - 2) Others suspect that he was horrified by what had almost happened and went into some form of shock.
 - b. Regardless of what overtook Nabal, 10 days later the Lord struck him dead because of his actions.
- C. David thanks God when he hears of what has happened to Nabal. (Vs. 39)
 - a. He thanks him for bringing justice to the situation.
 - b. He also thanks him for stopping David from doing wrong in his anger.
- D. David asks Abigail to marry him and she accepts, bringing five maids with her. (Vs. 39-42)
- E. The chapter concludes by discussing David's wives to this point. (Vs. 43-44)
 - a. In addition to Abigail, David also takes Ahinoam of Jezreel as a wife.
 - b. Meanwhile Michal, who was also David's wife, has been given by Saul to another man. (Vs. 44)
 - c. Remember: under the Old Testament laws, there were no laws regarding how many wives a man could have, so David's taking of multiple wives was not sinful (a violation of the Law), even though it was not as the Lord desired or originally designed marriage to be.

CHAPTER 26

Saul again comes out to get David. (Vs. 1-4)

- A. The Ziphites (who went to Saul about David in chapter 23) again come to Saul to tattle on David's whereabouts. (Vs. 1)
- B. Saul again gathers 3,000 men and goes to find David (indicating yet another attempt to harm him). (Vs. 2)
- C. When Saul arrives at the hill Hachilah, David sends out spies and finds out that Saul has once again come after him. (Vs. 3-4)

David takes Saul's Spear and Water. (Vs. 5-12)

- A. David comes to see Saul's camp. (Vs. 5)
 - a. Saul is sleeping in the center of the encampment and Abner, the captain of the soldiers, is beside him.
 - b. "In the trench" – from the Hebrew meaning within the barricades they had made.
- B. David asks Ahimelech and Abishai who will go with him into the camp, and Abishai responds affirmatively. (Vs. 6)
- C. David and Abishai sneak into Saul's sleeping camp in the middle of the night. (Vs. 7-12)
 - a. Saul is asleep, as are all of the men around him. (Vs. 7)
 - b. Abishai asks David to let him kill Saul, that he can finish this with one blow. (Vs. 8)
 - c. David refuses to allow Abishai to take his life. (Vs. 9)
 - d. David tells Abishai that either the Lord will kill him, he will die of his own accord, or die in battle; but David will not be responsible for the death of the Lord's anointed. (Vs. 10-11)
 - e. Instead, David takes Saul's spear and jug of water and leaves the camp. (Vs. 11-12)

f. God protected David in his endeavor by causing a deep sleep to come upon Saul's sleeping soldiers, keeping them from being awakened by David and Abishai. (Vs. 12)

David confronts Saul from the Hilltop. (Vs. 13-25)

A. After David takes the items from Saul, he goes to a hilltop away from the encampment and begins to cry out to the sleeping king and his men. (Vs. 13-16)

a. He first calls out Abner, the captain of the host, but Abner is not sure who is speaking to him. (Vs. 14)

b. David taunts Abner for not keeping the king secure as he should have been able to do. (Vs. 15)

c. David tells him that he is worthy of death for his failure to protect the king and points out the missing spear and jug of water. (Vs. 16)

B. Saul knows the voice of David, and seeks verification that he is correct in his conclusion. (Vs. 17)

C. David turns his attention to Saul and speaks to him. (Vs. 18-20)

a. He asks why Saul is once again pursuing him. (Vs. 18)

b. David says that if Saul has been sent by God, let offerings be made to appease him; but if he has been sent out by men (as he had) that the men should be cursed for running David out of the land of Israel's inheritance and into the hands of those who follow other gods. (Vs. 19)

c. He asks that his blood not be shed before the Lord, for he is nothing more than a flea before the king. (Vs. 20)

D. Saul announces to David that he has sinned for coming after David without provocation and promises not to pursue him anymore. (Vs. 21)

E. David calls upon Saul to send one of his young men to retrieve the spear, adding the reminder of what could have happened to Saul if that had been what the Lord and David had desired. Yet David refused again to slay the Lord's anointed. (Vs. 22-24)

F. Saul's final reply is that David will do great things and ultimately prevail: both statements being absolutely true.

G. This serves as the final recorded instance of Saul actively pursuing David in his desire to kill him. However, it has now been approximately 7 years since David first fled from Saul's hand in chapter 19.

CHAPTER 27

David Flees to Gath. (Vs. 1-4)

A. Even though Saul has promised not to go after David any longer, David is not confident in the truth of the king's statement. (Vs. 1)

a. He is convinced that, eventually, Saul is once again going to seek his life.

b. Therefore, he decides his best course of action is to leave the land of the Israelites for the land of the Philistines so that Saul will not be tempted to hunt him down.

B. David takes his 600 men and all of their families to Achish, the king of Gath. (Vs. 2-3)

C. Saul hears that David has fled to Gath, but he makes no effort to find or pursue him. (Vs. 4)

David receives Ziklag and begins raiding the Caananites. (Vs. 5-12)

A. David seeks a city for him and his men. (Vs. 5)

a. He has found favor in the eyes of Achish, and seeks a place "in some town in the country" where he can settle with his men.

b. While David presents the reason of not wanting to cause any problems being in the royal city, the real reason is that David wants the freedom to pursue the endeavors mentioned in the next few verses without raising suspicion with Achish.

B. Achish gives him Ziklag. (Vs. 6-7)

a. Ziklag is a city in southwestern Judah on the border with Philistia. While it was given to the people of Israel and mentioned in the dispersal of the land (Josh. 19:5), it seems it was never fully controlled and inhabited by Israel, but had fallen back under Philistine control.

- b. However, once David has the city, he retains control of it as king and it stays in Israelite possession from that time forward. (Vs. 6)
 - c. David is going to move his men to Ziklag, and there he will stay for the next 16 months. (Vs. 7)
- C. David begins raiding the southern regions. (Vs. 8-12)
- a. He conducts raids with his men against 3 different groups: the Geshurites, the Gezrites, and the Amalekites. (Vs. 8)
 - 1) The Geshurites were a group of non-Israelites that lived on the southern border of the Philistines, they had not been driven out when Israel took the land. (cf. Josh. 13:2)
 - 2) The Gezrites are unknown to us except for their discussion here and their seeming existence to the south of Palestine.
 - 3) The Amalekites are the remnants of the people that Saul did not destroy in 1 Samuel 15, they have re-formed and are still residing south of Palestine.
 - 4) All three of these groups were south of Israel between Shur and Egypt.
 - b. As David raids across the land, he kills both men and women so that nobody can report back to Achish about his activities. (Vs. 9-11)
 - 1) While he kills the men and women, he takes the spoils of their flocks, herds, and possessions and returns to Achish. (Vs. 9)
 - 2) When Achish asks where he has been raiding (obviously having seen the goods), David tells him he has been raiding the lands in southern Judah and her allies (the Kenites). With this disinformation, he has Achish believing that he has been attacking his own people and their allies. (Vs. 10)
 - c. Achish believes David's tale. (Vs. 12)
 - 1) He believes that David has turned on his own people and that they in return will despise him.
 - 2) Because of this, he is also convinced that David will serve him from this moment forward because he has nowhere else to go.
 - 3) To the mind of Achish, the hero of Israel, the slayer of Goliath, is now his most valuable asset.

CHAPTER 28

The Philistines Prepare for Battle against Israel. (Vs. 1-2)

- A. As the Philistines prepare for battle, King Achish tells David that he and his men will be accompanying the Philistine army. (Vs. 1)
- B. David assures Achish that he will see what David and his men can do. (Vs. 2)
- C. Achish replies by telling David he is going to keep his men as the king's personal bodyguards. (Vs. 2)

Saul goes to meet the Philistine Threat. (Vs. 3-6)

- A. Verse 3 begins with a reminder that Samuel has been dead and buried for some time now. (cf. 25:1)
- B. Verse 3 concludes with the acknowledgement that Saul had removed all those who "had familiar spirits" (spoke to the dead) and were "wizards" (literally interpreted as "a conjuror of ghosts"). Attempts at such things were expressly forbidden by the Law. (Lev. 19:31)
- C. However, when the Philistines set their camp in Shunem (in north-central Palestine, just south of Mt. Tabor), Saul panics. (vs. 4-5)
 - a. He sees the great numbers of the army of the Philistines.
 - b. He has gathered his army at Gilboa, just south of Shunem, but has no confidence in his ability to defeat his enemy.
- D. Saul tries enquiring of the Lord, but the Lord will not answer him. (Vs. 6)
 - a. He does not answer in dreams.

- b. He does not answer by priest (the use of the Urim).
- c. He does not answer by prophet.

Saul Visits the Woman at Endor. (Vs. 7-25)

- A. In his desperation Saul decides to try another method, asking his servants to find a woman who speaks to the dead so that he can talk to her. (Vs. 7)
- B. The servants find a woman at Endor that fits the description. (Vs. 7)
- C. Saul dons a disguise and, taking 2 men with him, goes at night to see her. The need for such has 2 answers. (Vs. 8)
 - a. He does not want her to recognize him as the King of Israel since he had tried to expel such people from the kingdom.
 - b. Endor's location is north of Shunem, which means he will have to go past the Philistine camp to get to this woman's location.
- D. Saul's request of the woman is for her to call to whomever he asks. (Vs. 8-20)
 - a. The woman had obviously ceased her activities in this regard because she accuses Saul of trying to lay a trap for her to get her killed. (Vs. 9)
 - b. Saul assures her there will be no punishment for her actions. (Vs. 10)
 - c. She asks who she is to bring up to him and he tells her he wants to speak to Samuel. (Vs. 11)
 - d. When Samuel arrives she cries out and knows it is Saul. (Vs. 12-14)
 - 1) Recognizing that these things were just as fake then as they are today, she is shocked when Samuel actually arrives at her "summoning." (Vs. 12)
 - 2) Saul seeks to re-assure her and asks what she saw. (Vs. 13)
 - 3) She says she saw "gods" coming up out of the earth. (Vs. 13)
 - a) The term here, *elohim*, can be a reference to God, but is not being used in such a way in this instance.
 - b) Here it simply means "a divine being," one who is not of this earth.
 - 4) When Saul asks her to describe the being, and when she does he is convinced it is Samuel and bows his face to the ground. (Vs. 14)

- e. Samuel asks Saul why he has disturbed him. (Vs. 15-19)
 - 1) Saul explains his dilemma of having the Philistines camped against him and receiving no answer from God. (Vs. 15)
 - 2) Samuel asks why Saul has come to him since God wants nothing to do with him. (Vs. 16)
 - 3) Samuel continues by telling Saul that the kingdom is going to be torn out of his hands and given to David because Saul refused to obey the Lord's commands. (Vs. 17-18)
 - 4) Additionally, God is going to deliver the Israelites into the hands of the Philistines and by tomorrow Saul and his sons will be with Samuel (dead). (Vs. 19)
- f. Saul falls to the ground in fear at Samuel's words being weak because he had not eaten all day. (Vs. 20)
- E. The woman takes care of King Saul. (Vs. 21-25)
 - a. When she sees his distress, she asks him to listen to her and allow her to feed him before he leaves. (Vs. 21-22)
 - b. While he initially refuses, his servants and the woman convince him of the necessity of eating before he returns to the camp. (Vs. 23)
 - c. The woman kills a fat calf, makes unleavened bread, and brings it to Saul and his servants to eat. (Vs. 24-25)
 - d. After eating, Saul returns to Gilboa. (Vs. 25)

CHAPTER 29

The other Lords of the Philistines Reject David. (Vs. 1-5)

- A. The Philistines' mustering area was at Aphek. (Vs. 1)
 - a. Aphek is at the northern edge of Philistine territory and leads into the northern sections of Palestine, an area into which the Philistines did not often venture.
 - b. This event would have occurred before the Philistines actually pitched their camp at Shunem. (cf. 28:4)
- B. As the armies of the philistines are passing in their groups of hundreds and thousands attention is drawn to David and his men. (Vs. 2-5)
 - a. David and his men are not marching with the rest of the army, they are at the back with Achish. (Vs. 2)
 - b. The other princes (lords) of the Philistines begin to question Achish about his rearguard. (Vs. 3)
 - 1) They want to know what those Hebrews are doing among the Philistines, seeing they are about to invade Hebrew lands.
 - 2) Achish explains who David is, that he has been with him over a year, and that he has complete confidence in David.
 - c. The other lords of the Philistines respond angrily to Achish, commanding him to return to wherever Achish had him stationed because they do not trust him to fight on their side in the upcoming battle. (Vs. 4)

d. They remind Achish of the song that was sung years ago about David. (Vs. 5; cf. 18:7)

Achish sends David back to Ziklag. (Vs. 6-11)

A. While Achish does not like the response of the other lords, he has no choice but to send David back. (Vs. 6-7)

a. He tells David of his unwavering confidence in him. (Vs. 6)

b. However, he also explains to David that he cannot afford to displease the other lords. (Vs. 7)

B. David protests by asking what he has done to have brought about such a response. (Vs. 8)

C. Achish tells David that it is nothing he has done, but that the other lords refuse to let him remain with the army. (Vs. 9-10)

a. While Achish has been taken in by David's ploy, the rest of the lords of the Philistines are not so easily swayed.

b. Achish tells David to leave first thing in the morning and to take his men with him back to Ziklag. (Vs. 10)

D. David does as he is commanded, and the Philistines proceed on their invasion of northern Palestine. (Vs. 11)

CHAPTER 30

Ziklag is Raided and the People Taken Captive. (Vs. 1-6)

- A. When David and his men return home from the Philistine camp they find Ziklag burned to the ground. (Vs. 1-2)
 - a. It took David 3 days to get back to Ziklag from Aphek. (Vs. 1)
 - b. The Amalekites had raided Ziklag, and other areas in the vicinity. (Vs. 1, 14)
 - c. They took the women and children as captives, not killing a single one of them. (Vs. 2)
- B. When David's men return to find the city burned down and their women and children taken captive, they weep until they have no more strength left. (Vs. 3-4)
- C. Even though both of David's wives are also taken, David has to deal with the additional distress of the emotions of his men and the depth of their grief as well. (Vs. 5-6)
 - a. Some of David's men have mentioned taking out their frustrations on David because he is their leader. (Vs. 6)
 - b. However, David takes comfort in the Lord. (Vs. 6)
- D. David was also joined at his arrival in Ziklag by men from Manasseh who will help with the endeavors to follow. (cf. 1 Chr. 12:19-22)

David Pursues the Amalekites. (Vs. 7-15)

- A. David calls on Abiathar to bring the priest's ephod so he can enquire of God. (Vs. 7)

B. David asks the Lord if he should pursue those that did this and the Lord tells him to do so and that he will recover all that was taken. (Vs. 8)

C. David takes his 600 men (as well as those from Manasseh that have come to him) and travels hard to overtake the Amalekites. (Vs. 9-10)

a. They travel hard and fast to the brook Besor (about 10-12 miles south of Ziklag) where 200 of David's men have to stop because of exhaustion. (Vs. 9)

b. The rest of the men remain with David and continue the pursuit. (Vs. 10)

D. As David's men continue their pursuit, they come upon an Egyptian by himself in a field. (Vs. 11-15)

a. He is sick and exhausted, having had nothing to eat or drink for 3 days and nights. (Vs. 12)

b. David's men feed him food and water and help to revive him. (Vs. 11-12)

c. David interrogates the Egyptian once his strength has returned. (Vs. 13-15)

1) The young man was the servant of one of the Amalekites who had been left behind 3 days earlier when he fell sick. (Vs. 13)

2) He tells David of the Amalekite incursion into southern Palestine: striking the southern end of the Cherethites (a branch of the Philistines), the southern section of Judah (including the southern area of Caleb's descendants), and Ziklag. (Vs. 14)

3) David asks if he will take them to the Amalekite camp and he agrees with 2 stipulations: (Vs. 15)

a) David does not kill him.

b) David does not turn him back over to his former master.

David Defeats the Amalekites and Divides the Spoils. (Vs. 16-31)

A. With the help of the Egyptian, David and his men find the Amalekites. (Vs. 16)

a. The Amalekites are filled with merriment at their success.

b. Their large forces are spread all around, eating and drinking to their successes.

B. David attacks mercilessly for 24 hours and only 400 servants on camels escaped. (Vs. 17)

- C. David and his men recovered everything, including wives and children, which the Amalekites had taken from them. (Vs. 18-19)
- D. Additionally, David took all of the Amalekites flocks and herds and returned with them as spoil of his own. (Vs. 20)
- E. A dispute arises as to the dividing of the spoils. (Vs. 21-25)
- a. When David and his men return to the brook Besor to collect the 200 men that had to stay behind, some of the men begin to argue that those at Besor did not deserve anything given to them other than their families because they did not fight in the battle. (Vs. 21-22)
 - b. David tells these men that they will not be allowed to hoard the blessings from the Lord against those that were unable to go. Rather, that the ones who “stayed by the stuff” will receive the same portion as those that fought in the battle. (Vs. 23-24)
 - c. Additionally, David made it an ordinance that spoils would be divided in that way throughout the kingdom from that day forward. (Vs. 25)
- F. David shares the spoils with his friends throughout the region. (Vs. 26-31)
- a. When David returns to Ziklag, he sends portions of the spoils to various areas that had either been previously raided by the Amalekites or were friends of his.
 - b. More than 13 cities and regions received gifts from David out of the plunder of the Amalekites.

CHAPTER 31

The Death of Saul. (Vs. 1-6)

- A. After dealing with the events of David and Ziklag, the writer returns to the original storyline of chapters 27 and 28.
- B. The battle between the Philistines and Israelites commences at Mt. Gilboa. (Vs. 1-2)
 - a. The battle does not go well for Israel, they flee before the greater numbers of the Philistines. (Vs. 1)
 - b. Many Israelites are killed, including Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchishua, the sons of Saul. (Vs. 2)
- C. Saul is also hit by archers and gravely wounded. (Vs. 3-6)
 - a. He begs his armor-bearer to kill him so that the Philistines would not be allowed to do it. When the armor-bearer refuses out of fear (he is responsible for the life of the king), Saul takes his own life. (Vs. 4)
 - b. The armor-bearer then follows suit, dying with his king. (Vs. 5)
 - c. Saul, his 3 sons, his armor-bearer, and all those of his household at the battle (stated in the KJV as “all his men”) died that day. (Vs. 6)

The Men of Jabesh-Gilead Retrieve the Body of Saul. (Vs. 7-13)

- A. The fleeing of the army of Israel causes a panic among the cities of the region causing the inhabitants to flee as well. This left the cities open for Philistine occupation. (Vs. 7)
- B. On the day after the battle, as the Philistines are looting the dead, they find the bodies of Saul and his 3 sons on the battlefield. (Vs. 8-10)
- a. They cut off Saul's head (and, by indication, the heads of the sons as well), strip off their armor and send them throughout the land of the Philistines as proof of their victory. (Vs. 8)
 - b. They put the armor in the temples of Ashtaroath. (Vs. 10)
 - c. They fasten the bodies on display in Beth-Shan (in the Jordan River valley). (Vs. 10)
 - d. They display the heads in the temple of Dagon (in Ashdod according to 5:1-2). (1 Chr. 10:10)
- C. When the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead find out what the Philistines have done to Saul and his sons they go by night, take down the bodies from the wall of Beth-Shan, return them to Jabesh and burn them. (Vs. 11-12)
- a. Remember: Saul had delivered Jabesh-Gilead from the Ammonites in his early days as king (11:1-11); there was obviously a great affection for Saul that had remained with the inhabitants of this city through the years.
 - b. They took the corpses so that they could no longer be desecrated by the Philistines.
 - c. While the burning of bodies was not the normal Hebrew custom, it was likely intended to keep any further actions from being taken upon the bodies of these men.
- D. The men of Jabesh took the bones that remained and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, then they fasted seven days in mourning. (Vs. 13)