
שמואל א • 1ST SAMUEL

INTRODUCTION

In the Hebrew Bible, the two *Books of Samuel* constitute one single work; the division into two books originates in the Greek translation of the *Septuagint*, which moreover, grouped Samuel and Kings under one title, “The Four Books of Kingdoms” (called, in the *Vulgate*, “The Four Books of Kings”).

The text is one of the worst preserved of the Old Testament. The *Septuagint* gives a text that is frequently different from the *Masoretic Text*, derived from a prototype, significant fragments of which have been recovered from the caves of Qumran (1QSam, 4QSam^a, 4QSam^b & 4QSam^c). There evidently existed several Hebrew versions of the *Books of Samuel*.

The text of Chs 17–18, which includes the David and Goliath story, differs considerably in the *LXX* as compared to the *MT*, supporting the idea that this story circulated in ancient times in more than one form. The *LXX* version is much shorter than the *MT* (unlike other chapters, where the *LXX* is generally significantly longer), lacking almost half of the material. Many scholars think that the shorter text of the *LXX* is preferable to the *MT*, which in their view has been expanded by incorporation of later material; others conclude that the shorter Greek text (or the Hebrew text that underlies it) reflects an attempt to harmonise certain alleged inconsistencies that appear in the longer version of the story. Given the translation characteristics of the *LXX* elsewhere in this section, it does not seem likely that these differences are due to deliberate omission of these verses on the part of the translator; it seems more likely that the Greek translator has faithfully rendered a Hebrew text that itself was much shorter than the *MT*.

Overall, it seems preferable to stay with the *MT*, at least for the most part; however, major textual differences between the *LXX* and the *MT* are mentioned, throughout, in the footnotes.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

The book is traditionally attributed to the prophets, Samuel, Gad, and Nathan, who may well have written the core of the text we now have. It is possible that other literary units, besides the lengthy history of 2S 9–20, were formed some time in the first two centuries of the monarchy, namely, the earliest Samuel cycle and the two histories of Saul and David (1S 17 through 2S 1). It is further possible that these units had already been combined by about 700 BCE, though the books did not reach definitive form until they were gathered into the great Deuteronomic historical work a little before, or during, the Exile. Even so, the influence of the so-called ‘Deuteronomic Editor’ is less obvious here than in Judges and Kings; it is most noticeable in the earlier chapters (especially 1S 7 & 12) and may possibly be traced in a re-handling of Nathan’s prophecy, 2S 7; but the narrative of 2S 9–20 has remained almost untouched.

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^א וַיְהִי אִישׁ אֶחָד מִן־הַרְמָתִים צוֹפִים מֵהָר אֶפְרַיִם וּשְׁמוֹ אֶלְקָנָה בֶן־יֵרֹחַם בֶּן־אֱלִיהוּא בֶן־תָּחוּ בֶן־צוּף אֶפְרַתִּי: ^ב וְלוֹ שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים שֵׁם אַחַת חַנָּה וְשֵׁם הַשְּׁנִית פִּנְנָה וַיְהִי לַפִּנְנָה יָלָדִים וּלְחַנָּה אֵין יָלָדִים: ^ג וְעַלָּה הָאִישׁ הָהוּא מַעִירוֹ מִיָּמִים | יְמִימָה לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת וּלְזָבַח לַיהוָה צְבָאוֹת בְּשִׁלֹּה וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי בְנֵי־עָלִי חֲפָנִי וּפְנִיחַס כֹּהֲנִים לַיהוָה: ^ד וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיִּזְבַּח אֶלְקָנָה וְנָתַן לַפִּנְנָה אֲשֶׁתּוֹ וּלְכָל־בְּנֵיהָ וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ מִנּוֹת: ^ה וּלְחַנָּה יָתָן מִנָּה אַחַת אֶפְסִים כִּי אֶת־חַנָּה אָהָב וַיְהוֶה סָגֵר רַחֲמָהּ: ^ו וְכַעֲסָתָהּ

¹ There was a man of Ramathaim-Zophim, from the highlands of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ² He had two wives, one called Hannah, the other Peninnah; Peninnah had children but Hannah had none. ³ Every year this man used to go up from his town to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh Sabaoth in Shiloh. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there as priests of Yahweh. ⁴ On the day Elkanah offered sacrifices, he would give portions to Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; ⁵ but to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her more, since Yahweh had made her barren. ⁶ Her rival would

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- ¹ The opening here follows the MT – the LXX reads ‘a man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite’ (Ἀνθρώπος ᾧν ἐξ Ἀρμαθαίμ Σιφά), which is followed by a number of recent English translations (including the NJB & NRSV); it is possible the MT reading, צוֹפִים, arose from dittography of the מ at the beginning of the following word. Comparison with v. 19 shows that Ramah was probably the familiar name of the place.
- ² Bigamy was not common in Old Testament times but was allowed (Dt 21:15–17).
- ³ The interpretation of ‘Yahweh Sabaoth’ as ‘Yahweh of hosts/armies’ (be these the armies of Israel, or the armies of heaven, stars, angels, and cosmic forces at large) is not certain. The title appears here for the first time and is connected with the cult at Shiloh; the expression, “Yahweh Sabaoth, whose throne is on the winged creatures,” occurs for the first time in 4:4, in connexion with the moving of the Ark from Shiloh. The title remained associated with the ritual of the Ark and passed into usage in Jerusalem, once the Ark was installed there (2S 6:2, 18, 7:8, 27).
- ⁴ The NJB opens this verse, here following the NRSV, with, “One day Elkanah offered sacrifice. He used to give...”
- ⁵ The exact sense of the word אֶפְסִים (‘two faces’) is not certain; it is most likely used with the preceding expression (‘one portion of two faces’) to mean a double portion. Although evidence for this use of the word derives primarily from Aramaic rather than from Hebrew usage, it fits the context here better than other suggestions do. Other possibilities for the meaning of the word include ‘heavily’ (cf. Vg, *tristis*) and ‘worthy’ or ‘choice’ (cf. KJV and Tg). Some follow the LXX here, emending to אָפֶס and translating it as ‘but’ or ‘however’, which seems unnecessary: the translators of the LXX may have struggled to make sense of the word rather than following a different Hebrew text.
- ⁶ Note the unusual/unexpected dagesh on the *resh* in הָרַעְמָהּ.

אָרְתָהּ גַם־כַּעַס בַּעֲבוּר הָרַעְמָה כִּי־סָגַר יְהוָה בַּעַד
 רַחֲמָה: ז' וְכֵן יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה מִדֵּי עֲלֹתָהּ בְּבֵית
 יְהוָה כִּן תִּכְעַסְנָה וְתִבְכֶּה וְלֹא תֹאכַל: ח' וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ
 אֱלִקָנָה אִישָׁהּ חֲנָה לָמָּה תִּבְכִּי וְלָמָּה לֹא תֹאכְלִי
 וְלָמָּה יָרַע לְבַבְךָ הַלּוֹא אֲנֹכִי טוֹב לָךְ מֵעֲשֵׂרָה
 בָּנִים: ט' וַתִּקֶּם חֲנָה אַחֲרֵי אֲכָלָהּ בִּשְׁלָה וְאַחֲרֵי
 שָׁתָה וְעָלִי הַכֹּהֵן יָשָׁב עַל־הַכִּסֵּא עַל־מְזוֹזַת הַיֵּכָל
 יְהוָה: י' וְהָיָא מֵרַת נֶפֶשׁ וַתִּתְפַּלֵּל עַל־יְהוָה וּבָכָה
 תִּבְכֶּה: יא' וַתִּדְרֹךְ נֶדֶר וַתֹּאמֶר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־
 רָאָה תִּרְאֶה | בָּעֵינִי אֲמַתְךָ וּזְכַרְתָּנִי וְלֹא־תִשְׁכַּח
 אֶת־אֲמַתְךָ וְנִתְּתָהּ לְאֲמַתְךָ זָרַע אֲנָשִׁים וְנִתְּתִיו
 לַיהוָה כְּלִימֵי חַיִּיו וּמִזְרָה לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ:
 יב' וְהָיָה כִּי הִרְבֵּתָהּ לְהִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְעָלִי שָׁמַר
 אֶת־פִּיהָ: יג' וְחֲנָה הָיָא מְדַבֶּרֶת עַל־לִפָּהּ רַק
 שִׁפְתֶיהָ נִעוֹת וְקוֹלָהּ לֹא יִשְׁמָע וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ עָלֶי

taunt her to annoy her, because Yahweh had made her barren.⁷ So, year
 after year, when she went up to the temple of Yahweh, she would taunt
 her. On that day, Hannah wept and would not eat anything.⁸ Then
 Elkanah her husband said to her, “Hannah, why are you crying and why
 are you not eating? Why is your heart so sad? Am I not more to you than
 ten sons?”⁹ After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose,
 while Eli, the priest, was sitting on his seat by the doorpost of the
 Temple of Yahweh.¹⁰ She was deeply distressed and prayed to Yahweh,
 and wept bitterly¹¹ and made a vow, saying, “Yahweh Sabaoth! If you
 will take notice of the distress of your servant and bear me in mind and
 not forget your servant and give her a man-child, then I will give him to
 Yahweh all the days of his life; a razor shall never touch his head.”

¹² As she continued praying before Yahweh, Eli was watching her
 mouth;¹³ she was speaking silently; her lips were moving but her voice
 was inaudible; therefore, Eli thought she was drunk.¹⁴ And Eli said to

⁷ In the desert, the shrine of the Ark was a tent; but, at Shiloh, it was a stone building (see v. 9, 3:2, 3:15).

⁸ Like the number seven, the number ten is sometimes used in the OT as an ideal number (see, for example, Dn 1:20, Zc 8:23).

⁹ The NRSV & NJB, following the LXX (καὶ κατέστη ἐνώπιον κυρίου) add ‘and took her stand before Yahweh’ after ‘rose’; here, we follow the MT.

¹⁰ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “In the bitterness of her soul she prayed to Yahweh with many tears.”

¹¹ The NRSV, following the LXX (καὶ δώσω αὐτὸν ἐνώπιόν σου δοτὸν ἕως ἡμέρας θανάτου αὐτοῦ, καὶ οἶνον καὶ μέθυ οὐ πίνεται, καὶ σίδηρος οὐκ ἀναβήσεται ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ αὐτοῦ) & 4QSam^a, ends this verse with, “then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head;” here, we follow the MT.

¹² The NJB opens this verse, here following the NRSV, with, “While she prayed before Yahweh, which she did for some time.”

¹³ People usually prayed aloud and feast days were sometimes an occasion for heavy drinking (Is 22:13, Amos 2:8); hence Eli’s contempt.

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘how much longer’ in place of ‘how often’, here following NETB.

לְשִׁכְרָה: י' וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁתַּכְּרִין
הַסִּירִי אֶת־יַיִנְךָ מֵעַלֶיךָ: ט' וַתֵּעַן חַנָּה וַתֹּאמֶר לֹא
אֲדֹנִי אֵשָׁה קִשְׁת־רוּחַ אֲנֹכִי וַיֵּין וּשְׂכָר לֹא שָׁתִיתִי
וַאֲשַׁפֵּךְ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: ט"ו אֶל־תִּתֵּן אֶת־
אִמָּתְךָ לִפְנֵי בַת־בְּלִיעַל כִּי־מְרֹב שִׁיחִי וְכַעֲסִי
דִּבַּרְתִּי עַד־הֵנָּה: ז' וַיַּעַן עָלַי וַיֹּאמֶר לְכִי לְשָׁלוֹם
וְאַל־הִי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתֵּן אֶת־שְׁלָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר שָׁאַלְתָּ מֵעַמּוֹ:
י" וַתֹּאמֶר תִּמְצָא שְׂפָחַתְךָ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְתִלְךְ הָאִשָּׁה
לְדֶרֶכָּהּ וַתֹּאכֹל וּפְגִיָּה לֹא־הָיָה לָהּ עוֹד: י"ט וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ
בִּבְקָר וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בֵּיתָם
הַרְמָתָה וַיֵּדַע אֶלְקָנָה אֶת־חַנָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּזְכְּרָהּ
יְהוָה: כ' וַיְהִי לְתַקְפוֹת הַיָּמִים וַתֵּהָר חַנָּה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן
וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שְׁמוּאֵל כִּי מִיְהוָה שְׁאַלְתִּיו:
כ"א וַיַּעַל הָאִישׁ אֶלְקָנָה וְכָל־בֵּיתוֹ לִזְבֹּחַ לַיהוָה אֶת־
זֶבַח הַיָּמִים וְאֶת־נִדְרוֹ: כ"ב וְחַנָּה לֹא עָלְתָה כִּי־

her, “How often are you going to get drunk? Put away your wine.”
15 “No, my lord,” Hannah replied, “I am a woman in great trouble; I
have taken neither wine nor strong drink – I was pouring out my soul
before Yahweh. 16 Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; all this
time, I have been speaking from the anxiety and grief.” 17 Then Eli
answered her, saying, “Go in peace and may the God of Israel grant
what you have asked of him.” 18 She said, “May your maidservant find
favour in your sight;” and, with that, the woman went away; she
returned to the hall, ate, and was dejected no longer. 19 They rose early
in the morning and worshipped before Yahweh, then returned to their
home in Ramah. Elkanah laid with Hannah his wife and Yahweh was
mindful of her. 20 She conceived and gave birth to a son, and called him
Samuel; for, she said, “I have asked Yahweh for him.” 21 The man
Elkanah went up again with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice
to Yahweh and to pay his vow. 22 Hannah, however, did not go up,

15 The literal translation of ‘in great trouble’ is ‘difficult of spirit’; the LXX has ‘for whom the day is difficult’ (ἡ σκληρὰ ἡμέρα), apparently mistaking the word for ‘spirit’ (רוּחַ) to be the word for ‘day’ (יוֹם).

16 The literal translation for ‘wicked woman’ is ‘daughter of worthlessness’.

17 In place of ‘what you have asked of him’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘the petition you have made to him’.

18 After ‘ate’, the NRSV, following the LXX (μετὰ τοῦ ἀνδρός αὐτῆς καὶ ἔπιεν) adds ‘and drank with her husband’; here, we follow the MT & NJB.

19 The literal translation of ‘laid with’ is ‘knew’.

20 A derivation from the root שָׁאַל (‘to ask’) would give ‘Saul’; Biblical etymology is often, as here, content with a certain similarity of sound. The actual derivation of ‘Samuel’ (שְׁמוּאֵל) is from ‘Shem-El’ (‘the name of God’ or ‘God’s name is El’); a footnote in the WEBBE suggests that the name sounds like the Hebrew for ‘heard by God’. At the end of this verse (and leading into v. 12), the NJB adds ‘when a year had gone by’.

21 The NJB has ‘husband’ in place of ‘man’, here following the NRSV.

22 At the end of this verse, the NRSV, following 4QSam^a, adds ‘I will offer him as a nazirite for all time’; here, we follow the MT & NJB.

אָמְרָה לְאִשָּׁה עַד יִגְמַל הַנֶּעֱר וְהִבָּאתִיו וְנִרְאָה
 אֶת־פָּנָי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם עַד־עוֹלָם: כב וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ
 אֶלְקָנָה אִשָּׁה עָשִׂי הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ שְׁבִי עַד־גְּמֻלָּךְ
 אֹתוֹ אֲךָ יִקָּם יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרֹךְ וְתֵשֶׁב הָאִשָּׁה וְתִינָק
 אֶת־בְּנָה עַד־גְּמֻלָּהּ אֹתוֹ: כד וְתַעֲלֶהּ עִמָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר
 גִּמְלָתוֹ בַּפָּרִים שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאַיִפָּה אַחַת קֶמַח וְגִבְלֵי יִין
 וְתִבְאֶהּ בֵּית־יְהוָה שְׁלוֹ וְהַנֶּעֱר נָעַר: כה וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ
 אֶת־הַפֶּה וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶת־הַנֶּעֱר אֶל־עֲלִי: כו וְתֹאמַר בִּי
 אֲדֹנָי חַי נִפְשֶׁךָ אֲדֹנָי אֲנִי הָאִשָּׁה הַנֹּצֶבֶת עִמָּכָה
 בָּזָה לְהַתְּפַלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה: כז אֶל־הַנֶּעֱר הַזֶּה
 הִתְּפַלַּלְתִּי וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה לִי אֶת־שְׂאֵלָתִי אֲשֶׁר שְׂאֵלְתִּי
 מֵעַמּוֹ: כח וְגַם אֲנֹכִי הִשְׁאֵלְתִּהוּ לִיהוָה כָּל־הַיָּמִים
 אֲשֶׁר הָיָה הוּא שְׂאוֹל לִיהוָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה שָׁם
 לִיהוָה: {ס}

saying to her husband, "Not before the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and present him before Yahweh and he shall stay there forever." ²³ Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what you think fit; wait until you have weaned him. May Yahweh establish his word." So, the woman remained and nursed her child until his weaning. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him up with her together with three bulls, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the Temple of Yahweh at Shiloh; and the child was with them. ²⁵ They slaughtered the bull and brought the child to Eli. ²⁶ She said, "If you please, my lord. As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to Yahweh. ²⁷ For this child I prayed and Yahweh has granted me what I asked of him. ²⁸ Now I make him over to Yahweh for the whole of his life. He is made over to Yahweh." Then they worshipped Yahweh there.

²³ The NJB, following 4QSam^a, ends with 'may Yahweh bring about what you have said'.

²⁴ In place of 'three bulls', here following the MT, the NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (μόσχω τριετίζοντι) have 'a three-year old bull' (cf. v. 25).

²⁵ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "...the child's mother came to Eli."

²⁶ In place of 'beside you', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'in your presence'.

²⁷ The NRSV ends this verse, here following the NJB, with, "...the petition I made to him."

²⁸ For the last sentence, the NJB (following the LXX - ἃς ζῆν αὐτός, ἔρῃσιν τῷ κυρίῳ) has "There she left him, for Yahweh."

שמואל א פרק ב

1 SAMUEL 2

א	וַתִּתְפַּלֵּל חַנָּה וַתֹּאמֶר עֲלָץ לִבִּי בַיהוָה רָמָה קִרְנִי בַיהוָה רָחַב פִּי עַל־אֹיְבֵי כִּי שִׂמַּחְתִּי בִישׁוּעָתְךָ: ב	1 And Hannah prayed, saying: My heart exults in Yahweh, my strength lifted up in Yahweh; my mouth derides my foes, for I rejoice in your deliverance.
ג	אֵין־קָדוֹשׁ כִּיהוָה כִּי אֵין בַּלְתָּךְ וְאֵין צוּר כְּאֱלֹהֵינוּ: ג	2 There is no Holy One like Yahweh, (indeed there is none but you) no Rock like our God.
ד	אֶל־תִּרְבּוּ תִּדְבְּרוּ גְבוּהָה יֵצֵא עֲתָק מִפִּיכֶם כִּי אֵל דַּעוֹת יְהוָה וְלֹא וְלֹא נִתְכַּנּוּ עֲלִלוֹת: ד	3 Do not keep talking so proudly, let no arrogance come from your mouth. For Yahweh is an all-knowing God and by him actions are weighed.
ה	קִשְׁתֵּי גִבּוֹרִים חֲתִים וְנַכְשָׁלִים אֲזֹרוּ חֵיל: ה	4 The bows of the mighty are broken but the feeble are girded with strength.
	שְׂבָעִים בִּלְחֶם נִשְׁכָּרוּ וְרַעֲבִים חֲדָלוּ	5 The fully fed are hiring themselves out for bread but the hungry need labour no more;

1 SAMUEL 2

- ¹ In the 3rd line, the NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (ἐν θεῷ μου), have 'in my God' in place of 'in Yahweh', here following the MT & NETB. The NRSV, following 4QSam^a, has 'my victory' in place of 'your deliverance', here following the MT & NJB.
- ² For the last line, the LXX has 'there is no holy one like you' (οὐκ ἔστιν ἅγιος πλὴν σοῦ). The term translated 'rock' refers to a rocky cliff where one can seek refuge from enemies; here, the metaphor depicts God as a protector of his people.
- ³ The Ketiv opens the last line with 'and not' (וְלֹא) in place of 'and by him', here following the Qere (וְלֹא).
- ⁴ The NJB has 'bow' in place of 'bows', here following the NRSV.
- ⁵ For the 2nd line, the NRSV has 'but those who were hungry are fat with spoil'; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

עֲד־עֲקָרָה יִלְדָּה שִׁבְעָה
 וְרַבַּת בָּנִים אִמְלֵלָה:
 יְהוָה מִמִּית וּמַחְיֶה
 מוֹרִיד שְׁאוֹל וַיַּעַל:
 יְהוָה מוֹרִישׁ וּמַעֲשִׂיר
 מִשְׁפִּיל אֶף־מְרוֹמָם:
 מִקִּים מַעְפָּר דָּל
 מֵאֲשַׁפַּת יָרִים אֲבִיוֹן
 לְהוֹשִׁיב עִם־נְדִיבִים
 וְכִסֵּא כְבוֹד יַנְחִלֵם
 כִּי לַיהוָה מִצְקֵי אֶרֶץ
 וַיִּשֶׁת עֲלֵיהֶם תִּבְלָה:
 רִגְלֵי חֲסִידוֹ יִשְׁמֹר
 וְרָשָׁעִים בַּחֲשֵׁךְ יִדְמוּ
 כִּי־לֹא בִכַח יִגְבֹּר־אִישׁ:
 יְהוָה יַחַתּוּ מְרִיבֹו
 עֲלֹו בַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְעֹם

the barren woman bears sevenfold
 but the mother of many is left desolate.
 6 Yahweh gives death and life,
 brings down to Sheol, and draws up;
 7 Yahweh makes poor and makes rich;
 he humbles and he also exalts.
 8 He raises the poor from the dust;
 he lifts the needy from the dunghill
 to give them a place with princes,
 and to assign them a seat of honour.
 For, to Yahweh belong the pillars of the earth;
 on these, he has poised the world.
 9 He safeguards the steps of his faithful
 but the wicked vanish in darkness
 (for human strength can win no victory).
 10 The enemies of Yahweh are shattered,
 the Most High thunders in the heavens.

-
- 6 'Life' may refer to birth rather than to resurrection from the dead; likewise, the next line may refer to deep trouble or desperate injuries and recovery from them. 'Sheol' (שְׁאוֹל) was the place of the dead under the earth, like Hades among the Greeks (Is 14:9-21); but the term is sometimes used of conditions near death (Ps 86:13, 88:3-7).
 7 The NJB omits the 2nd occurrence of 'makes' in the 1st line.
 8 After the 4th line, the LXX inserts, "He grants the vow of the one who vows, and blesses the years of the just."
 9 The idea that the good would prosper and the wicked suffer ill fortune in this world was widespread in the post-Exilic period (see Pr 3:9-10, 5:22-23); the books of Job and Ecclesiastes are protests against this view of life.
 10 'The Most High' is a conjectural translation ('Elyon'); the MT has 'against him he thunders'. For God as the final judge of all, see Ps 98:9.

יְהוָה יִדִּין אֶפְסֵי־אָרֶץ
וַיִּתֶּן־עֹז לְמַלְכּוֹ וַיְרַם קֶרֶן מְשִׁיחוֹ:

{פ}

Yahweh judges the ends of the earth;
he endows his king with power and strengthens his Anointed.

י^א וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶלְקָנָה הַרְמָתָה עַל־בֵּיתוֹ וְהַנְעֹר הִיא
מְשֶׁרֶת אֶת־יְהוָה אֶת־פָּנָיו עָלֶיּהָ הִכְהֵן: י^ב וּבְנֵי עָלֶי
בְּנֵי בְלִיעַל לֹא יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה: י^ג וּמִשְׁפַּט הַכֹּהֲנִים
אֶת־הָעָם כָּל־אִישׁ זִבְחַת זִבַּח וּבָא גַּעַר הִכְהֵן כְּבִשְׁל
הַבָּשָׂר וְהַמִּזְלֵג שְׁלֹשׁ הַשָּׁנִים בִּידּוֹ: י^ד וְהִכָּה בַכִּיֹּר
אוֹ בִדּוֹד אוֹ בַקְלָחַת אוֹ בַפְּרוֹר כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה
הַמִּזְלֵג יִקַּח הִכְהֵן בּוֹ כֹּכָה יַעֲשׂוּ לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַבָּאִים שָׁם בְּשִׁלָּה: י^ט גַּם בְּטָרִם יִקְטְרוּן אֶת־
הַחֵלֶב וּבָא גַּעַר הִכְהֵן וְאָמַר לְאִישׁ הַזִּבְחַת תִּנְה
בָּשָׂר לְעֹלֹת לִכְהֵן וְלֹא־יִקַּח מִמֶּךָ בָּשָׂר מִבְּשָׁל כִּי
אִם־חַי: י^ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָאִישׁ קֵטֶר יִקְטְרוּן כִּיֹּם
הַחֵלֶב וְקַח־לָךְ כָּאֲשֶׁר תִּאֻוָּה נִפְשֶׁךָ וְאָמַר | לֹא לוֹ
כִּי עָתָה תִּתֶּן וְאִם־לֹא לִקְחָתִי בַחֲזָקָה: י^ז וְתִהְיֶה
חֲטָאת הַנְּעָרִים גְּדוֹלָה מְאֹד אֶת־פָּנָיו יְהוָה כִּי נֶאֱצַו

¹¹ Then Elkanah left for Ramah but the boy stayed to minister to Yahweh in the presence of Eli the priest. ¹² Now the sons of Eli were scoundrels; they cared nothing for Yahweh ¹³ or the duties of the priests to the people. When a man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was cooking; ¹⁴ he would thrust this into cauldron or pan, or dish or pot, and the priest claimed for his own whatever the fork brought up. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. ¹⁵ The priest's servant would even come up before the fat had been burnt and say to the man who was making the sacrifice, "Give the priest meat for him to roast. He will not take boiled meat from you, but raw." ¹⁶ Then if the man replied, "Let them first burn the fat and then take whatever you wish," he would say, "No! You must give it now or I will take it by force." ¹⁷ This sin of the young men was very great in the sight of Yahweh, because they

¹¹ In place of 'Elkanah left', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'she left'; the LXX has 'they left' (ἀπῆλθον).

¹² The literal translation of 'scoundrels' is 'sons of worthlessness'.

¹³ Eli's sons ignore the regulations governing the priest's share (see Lv 7:28ff, Nb 18:8ff, Dt 18:3-4).

¹⁴ For the last sentence, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "They behaved thus with all the Israelites who came there to Shiloh."

¹⁵ The literal translation of 'raw' is 'living'.

¹⁶ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁷ The LXX & 4QSam^a lack 'they' (literally, 'the men').

הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת מִנְחַת יְהוָה: יי' וּשְׂמוֹאֵל מִשְׁרַת אֶת־
פָּנֵי יְהוָה נָעַר חֲגוּר אֶפֹּד בֶּד: יט וּמַעֲיִל קֹטֵן
תַּעֲשֶׂה־לּוֹ אִמּוֹ וְהַעֲלֹתָהּ לוֹ מִיָּמִים | יְמִימָה
בְּעֹלוֹתָהּ אֶת־אִשָּׁהּ לִזְבַּח אֶת־זִבְחַת הַיָּמִים:
כ וּבֶרֶךְ עָלֶי אֶת־אֱלֹקֶינָהּ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאָמַר יֵשׁ
יְהוָה לָךְ זֶרַע מִן־הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת תַּחַת הַשְּׁאֵלָה
אֲשֶׁר שָׁאֵל לִיהוָה וְהָלְכוּ לְמִקְוָמוֹ: כא כִּי־פָקַד יְהוָה
אֶת־חַנָּה וַתֵּהָר וַתֵּלֶד שְׁלֹשָׁה־בָנִים וּשְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת
וַיִּגְדֵּל הַנָּעַר שְׂמוֹאֵל עִם־יְהוָה: {ס}

כב וְעַלִּי זָקֵן מְאֹד וְשָׁמַע אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשׂוּן בָּנָיו
לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁכָּבוּן אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים
הַצְּבָאוֹת פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: כג וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לָמָּה
תַּעֲשׂוּן כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי שָׁמַע אֶת־
דְּבָרֵיכֶם רָעִים מֵאֵת כָּל־הָעָם אֵלֶּה: כד אֵל בְּנֵי כִי
לֹא־טוֹבָה הַשְּׁמָעָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי שָׁמַע מֵעַבְרִים

treated the offering made to Yahweh with contempt. ¹⁸ Samuel was in the service of Yahweh; a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ His mother used to make him a little tunic which she brought him each year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, “May Yahweh give you children by this woman for the gift she has made to Yahweh;” and then they would go home. ²¹ Yahweh visited Hannah; she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of Yahweh.

²² Though now very old, Eli came to hear of everything that his sons were doing to all the people of Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ²³ He said to them, “Why do you do these wicked things, behaving as all these people say you are? ²⁴ No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear the people of Yahweh spreading abroad. ²⁵ If man sins against man, God will be the

¹⁸ The ‘ephod’ (אֶפֹּד) was a priestly vestment (see 22:18, 2S 6:14); it is to be distinguished from the instrument of divination, also called ‘ephod’ (see #28). On the High Priest’s ephod, see #Ex 28:6.

¹⁹ The literal translation of ‘each year’ is ‘regular intervals’.

²⁰ ‘The gift she has made to’ follows the LXX (ἀντὶ τοῦ χάρους, οὗ ἑχρησας); the MT has ‘for the petition she asked of’.

²¹ At the beginning of this verse, the MT has ‘when’ and the LXX has ‘and’.

²² The NJB, following the LXX, lacks ‘and how they lay with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting’ (a footnote therein explains it as a gloss suggested by Ex 38:8.) There does seem to be an error here, as the Sanctuary at Shiloh was a building, not a tent.

²³ For ‘these people’, the LXX has ‘people of the LORD’ (λαοῦ κυρίου), perhaps through the influence of the final phrase of v. 24.

²⁴ The NJB reads only: “No my sons! The reports I hear are not good...”

²⁵ As elsewhere in the Bible (Ex 4:21, Jos 11:20, Is 6:9–10, etc.), the ‘hardening’ of the sinner is attributed to Yahweh as its ultimate cause.

עַם־יְהוָה: כִּי אִם־יַחְטָא אִישׁ לְאִישׁ וּפָלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים
וְאִם לַיהוָה יַחְטָא־אִישׁ מִי יִתְפַּלֵּל־לוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ
לְקוֹל אֲבִיהֶם כִּי־חָפֵץ יְהוָה לַהֲמִיתָם: כִּי וְהַנֶּעַר
שְׁמוּאֵל הָלַךְ וַגְּדַל וְטוֹב גַּם עַם־יְהוָה וְגַם עַם־
אָנָשִׁים: {פ}

כִּי וַיָּבֹא אִישׁ־אֱלֹהִים אֶל־עֲלִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו כֹּה אָמַר
יְהוָה הִנְגִּלָה נְגִלְתִּי אֶל־בֵּית אָבִיךָ בְּהִיוֹתָם
בְּמִצְרַיִם לְבֵית פַּרְעֹה: כִּי וּבָחַר אֲתוֹ מִכָּל־שְׁבִטֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לִי לַכֹּהֵן לַעֲלֹת עַל־מִזְבְּחִי לַהֲקָטִיר
קִטְרֶת לְשֹׂאת אִפֹּד לִפְנֵי וְאֶתְנָה לְבֵית אָבִיךָ אֶת־
כָּל־אֲשֵׁי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כִּי לָמָּה תִּבְעֲטוּ בְּזִבְחִי
וּבִמְנַחְתִּי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי מַעֲוֹן וְתִכְבֹּד אֶת־בְּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי
לְהַבְרִיאֲכֶם מֵרֵאשִׁית כָּל־מְנַחַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּי:
לִכֹּן נֹאֵם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲמֹר אֲמַרְתִּי בֵּיתְךָ
וּבֵית אָבִיךָ יִתְהַלְכוּ לִפְנֵי עַד־עוֹלָם וְעַתָּה נֹאֵם־
יְהוָה חָלִילָה לִּי כִּי־מְכַבְּדִי אֲכַבֵּד וּבֹזֵי יִקְלוּ:

arbiter, but if he sins against Yahweh, who will intercede for him?" However, they did not listen to their father's words, for Yahweh was determined to bring them to their deaths. ²⁶ Meanwhile the boy Samuel went on growing in stature and in favour both with Yahweh and with men.

²⁷ A man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Yahweh says this, "Did I reveal myself to your father's House when they were in Egypt, in the house of Pharaoh? ²⁸ I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to carry the ephod; and, to your father's house, I gave all the burnt offerings of the sons of Israel. ²⁹ Why do you scorn the sacrifice and the offering I have ordered, honouring your sons more than me, fattening yourselves on the best part of all the offerings of my people Israel?" ³⁰ So, Yahweh the God of Israel says: "I said that your House and your father's House would walk before me forever." But now Yahweh says, "Far be it from me, for those who honour me I will honour, and those who despise me will be objects

²⁶ In place of 'growing in stature', here following the NJB, NETB has 'growing up'.

²⁷ The NRSV, following the LXX (Ἀποκαλύφθεις ἀπεκαλύφθην, literally, 'in revealing I revealed') has 'I revealed' in place of 'did I reveal', here following the MT. The NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (δούλων), insert 'slaves' before 'in the house of Pharaoh'; here, we follow the MT.

²⁸ The 'ephod' mentioned here was not a vestment worn, like that of v. 18, but something that is 'carried' or 'fetched' (14:3, 23:6, 30:7) and holds the sacred lots by which Yahweh is consulted (14:18ff, 23:9ff, 30:7–8, see #14:4). It first appears in the period of the Judges (Jg 17:5, 18:14ff) but it is not mentioned in post-Davidic narratives (apart from one allusion on Ho 3:4). Gideon's ephod (Jg 8:26ff) is censured as idolatrous.

²⁹ The literal translation of 'scorn' (here following NETB) is 'kick'; the NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (ἐπέβλεψας ἐπὶ ... ἀναιδεῖ ὀφθαλμῶν), replace the verb with 'look with greedy eye(s) on'.

³⁰ The text and meaning of this verse, and v. 32, are uncertain.

לֹא הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים וְגִדַּעְתִּי אֶת־זֶרְעֶךָ וְאֶת־זֶרַע
בֵּית אָבִיךָ מִהָיוֹת זָקֵן בְּבֵיתְךָ: ^לוְהִבְטַת צֶר מְעֹון
בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר־יִיטִיב אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה זָקֵן
בְּבֵיתְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: ^{לז}וְאִישׁ לֹא־אֲכָרִית לְךָ מֵעַם
מִזִּבְחִי לְכָלֹת אֶת־עֵינֶיךָ וְלֹאֲדִיב אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ וְכָל־
מִרְבֵּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים: ^{לח}וְזֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת
אֲשֶׁר יָבֹא אֶל־שְׁנֵי בָנֶיךָ אֶל־חֲפָנִי וּפִינְחָס בְּיוֹם
אֶחָד יָמוּתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם: ^{לה}וְהִקִּימְתִּי לִי כֹהֵן נֶאֱמָן
כְּאֲשֶׁר בְּלִבִּי וּבְנַפְשִׁי יַעֲשֶׂה וּבְגִיתִי לוֹ בֵּית נֶאֱמָן
וְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי־מִשְׁיְחִי כָל־הַיָּמִים: ^{לו}וְהָיָה כָל־
הַנוֹתָר בְּבֵיתְךָ יָבֹא לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לּוֹ לְאַגֹּרֶת כֶּסֶף
וְכִכְר־לֶחֶם וְאָמַר סָפְחָנִי נָא אֶל־אַחַת הַכֹּהֲנֹת
לֶאֱכֹל פֶּת־לֶחֶם: {פ}

of contempt. ³¹ Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's House, until there is not one old man left in your House. ³² You will see trouble in my dwelling place! Israel will experience blessings, but there shall be not one old man left in your House forever. ³³ One of you I will keep at my altar for your eyes to weep and your soul to grieve, but the bulk of your House shall die young. ³⁴ The fate of your two sons Hophni and Phinehas shall be a sign for you: both shall die on the same day. ³⁵ I will raise up a faithful priest for myself; he shall do what is in my heart and soul. I will build him a secure House and he will walk in the presence of my anointed forever. ³⁶ All that survive of your House will come and beg him for a silver piece or a loaf of bread and say: Please give me some priestly task, so that I can have a scrap of bread to eat."

³¹ The literal translation of 'strength' is 'arm', which symbolises strength and activity.

³² For the 1st part of this verse, the NRSV ("Then in distress you will look with greedy eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed upon Israel,") and NJB ("Then, like an envious enemy, you will look on all the good that I shall do to Israel,") follow the LXX; here, we follow the MT & NETB.

³³ The end of this verse is difficult: the MT literally says 'they will die (as) men'; apparently, the meaning is that they will be cut off in the prime of their life without reaching old age. The LXX (ῥομφαία) and 4QSam^a, however, have the additional word 'sword' (giving 'they will die by the sword'); this is an easier reading (cf. NJB, NRSV, NAB, NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT) but that fact is not in favour of its originality.

³⁴ Literally translated, this verse opens, "and this to you the sign which will come to both of your sons."

³⁵ The 'faithful priest' is Zadok (2S 8:17, 15:24, 1K 1:8, 2:35).

³⁶ After 'beg him', the NJB adds 'on their knees'; the MT reads 'bow before him'.

1 SAMUEL 3

שמואל א פרק ג

- א וְהִנֵּעַר שְׁמוּאֵל מִשְׁרַת אֶת־יְהוָה לִפְנֵי עֲלֵי וּדְבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה יָקָר בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם אֵין חֲזוֹן נִפְרָץ: {ס}
- ב וַיְהִי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְעַלֵי שָׁכַב בַּמְּקוֹמוֹ וְעֵינָיו הִחְלוּ כְהוֹת לֹא יוּכַל לִרְאוֹת: ג וְגַר אֱלֹהִים טָרַם יִכְבֶּה וְשְׁמוּאֵל שָׁכַב בְּהִיכַל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם אָרוֹן אֱלֹהִים: {פ}
- ד וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי: ה וַיֵּרָץ אֶל־עֲלֵי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי כִי־קָרָאתָ לִי וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־קָרָאתִי שׁוּב שָׁכַב וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁכַּב: {ס}
- ו וַיִּסֹּף יְהוָה קְרָא עוֹד שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֵּקָם שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־עֲלֵי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי כִי קָרָאתָ לִי וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־קָרָאתִי בְנִי שׁוּב שָׁכַב: ז וְשְׁמוּאֵל טָרַם יָדַע אֶת־יְהוָה וְטָרַם יַגִּילָה אֵלָיו דְּבַר־יְהוָה: ח וַיִּסֹּף יְהוָה קְרָא־שְׁמוּאֵל בִּשְׁלִישִׁת וַיֵּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־עֲלֵי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי כִי קָרָאתָ לִי וַיִּבֶן עֲלֵי כִי יְהוָה קָרָא לַנֶּעַר:
- 1 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to Yahweh under Eli; it was rare for Yahweh to speak in those days; visions were uncommon.
- 2 At that time, Eli was lying down in his room; his eyes were beginning to grow dim and he could no longer see. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out and Samuel was lying down in the Temple of Yahweh where the Ark of God was.
- 4 Then Yahweh called, "Samuel! Samuel!" He said, "Here I am." 5 Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am! For, you called me." He said, "I did not call. Go back and lie down." So, he went and lay down.
- 6 Again, Yahweh called, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He said, "I did not call you, my son; go back and lie down." 7 Now Samuel did not yet know Yahweh and the word of Yahweh had not yet been revealed to him.
- 8 Then Yahweh called Samuel a third time. He got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli then understood that it was

1 SAMUEL 3

- 1 The NJB has 'in the presence of' in place of 'under', here following the NRSV; literally translated, the MT reads 'before'.
- 2 We here rearrange the order of phrases, following the NJB; the MT has 'his eyes ... no longer see' immediately after 'Eli'.
- 3 The 'lamp of God' burned all night (Ex 27:21); hence, the time was just before dawn.
- 4 The NJB makes this verse a continuation of v. 3, substituting 'when' for 'then'; here, we follow the NRSV (and the paragraph break of the MT).
- 5 The NJB & NETB have 'Eli said' in place of 'he said', here following the MT & NRSV.
- 6 NETB has 'Eli said' in place of 'he said', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.
- 7 This verse highlights the 'novice' nature of Samuel and the nature of his prophetic calling.
- 8 The NJB lacks 'Samuel', here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

ט וַיֹּאמֶר עָלַי לְשִׁמוּאֵל לֵךְ | שֹׁכֵב וְהָיָה אִם־יִקְרָא
אֵלָיְךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ דְבַר יְהוָה כִּי שָׁמַעַ עַבְדְּךָ וַיֵּלֶךְ
שִׁמוּאֵל וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹמוֹ: י וַיָּבֹא יְהוָה וַיִּתְּצֵב
וַיִּקְרָא כַּפֶּעַם־בַּפֶּעַם שִׁמוּאֵל | שִׁמוּאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר
שִׁמוּאֵל דְּבַר כִּי שָׁמַעַ עַבְדְּךָ: {פ}

יא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־שִׁמוּאֵל הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי עֹשֶׂה דְבַר
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר כָּל־שָׁמְעוֹ תִּצְלִינָה שְׁתֵּי אָזְנוֹ:
יב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אָקִים אֶל־עָלַי אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי
אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ הַחֹל וְכָלָה: יג וְהִגַּדְתִּי לוֹ כִּי־שָׁפַט אָנֹכִי
אֶת־בֵּיתוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם בַּעֲוֹן אֲשֶׁר־יָדַע כִּי־מִקְלָלִים
לָהֶם בָּנָיו וְלֹא כָהָה בָּם: יד וְלָכֵן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְבֵית עָלַי
אִם־יִתְּכַפֵּר עֹן בֵּית־עָלַי בְּזֹבַח וּבִמְנַחָה עַד־עוֹלָם:
טו וַיִּשְׁכַּב שִׁמוּאֵל עַד־הַבֹּקֶר וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־דִּלְתוֹת
בֵּית־יְהוָה וּשְׁמוּאֵל יָרָא מֵהִגִּיד אֶת־הַמְּרָאָה אֶל־
עָלַי: טז וַיִּקְרָא עָלַי אֶת־שִׁמוּאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר שִׁמוּאֵל בְּנִי

Yahweh who was calling the boy ⁹ and he said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and, if he calls say, “Speak, Yahweh, your servant is listening.”” So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ Yahweh then came and stood by, calling as he had done before, “Samuel! Samuel!” Samuel answered, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

¹¹ Then Yahweh said to Samuel, “See, I am about to do such a thing in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it ring. ¹² On that day, I will carry out against Eli everything I have spoken of concerning his House, from beginning to end. ¹³ For, I have told him that I about to punish his House forever because he has known that his sons have been blaspheming God, yet he has not corrected them. ¹⁴ Therefore – I have sworn it to the House of Eli – the guilt of the House of Eli shall never be forgiven, by neither sacrifice nor offering.” ¹⁵ Then Samuel lay still until the morning, when he opened the doors of Yahweh’s Temple. But Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶ However, Eli called Samuel

⁹ In place of ‘he calls’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘someone calls’.

¹⁰ In Samuel’s reply, the NJB adds ‘Yahweh’ after ‘speak’ (cf. Eli’s instructions in v. 9).

¹¹ Vv. 11–14 are connected with 2:27–36. God chastens as well as offering salvation.

¹² This verse was probably added after 2:27–36 had been inserted.

¹³ The NJB opens with ‘You are to tell him’ in place of ‘For, I have told him’; וְהִגַּדְתִּי לוֹ is a Hiphil perfect 1PS and the conjunction should be understood as ו consecutive (‘I will say to him’). However, the future reference makes more sense if Samuel is the subject, which would require dropping the final ו and reading the 2MS (וְהִגַּדְתָּ). This reading has been adopted in a number of translations; the alternative (as followed here) is to understand the MT to mean ‘I said to him’; but, for, this we would expect the preterite with ו consecutive.

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘I swear’ in place of ‘I have sworn’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁵ The NJB opens with ‘He was’ in place of ‘But Samuel was’, here following the MT & NRSV.

¹⁶ The NJB has ‘called him’ in place of ‘called Samuel’, here following the MT & NRSV.

וַיֹּאמֶר הַנְּנִי: "וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלַיךָ
 אֶל־נָא תַכְחַד מִמֶּנִּי כֹה יַעֲשֶׂה־לְךָ אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה
 יוֹסִיף אֶסְתַּכְחַד מִמֶּנִּי דְבָר מִכָּל־הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר־
 דִּבֶּר אֵלַיךָ: "וַיַּגִּד־לוֹ שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים
 וְלֹא כָחַד מִמֶּנּוּ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הוּא הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינָיו
 יַעֲשֶׂה: {פ}

י" וַיַּגְדֵּל שְׁמוּאֵל וַיהוָה הָיָה עִמּוֹ וְלֹא־הָפִיל מִכָּל־
 דְּבָרָיו אֶרְצָה: כ' וַיֵּדַע כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִדָּן וְעַד־בְּאֵר
 שָׁבַע כִּי נָאֵמַן שְׁמוּאֵל לְנָבִיא לַיהוָה: {ס}
 כ" וַיֹּסֶף יְהוָה לְהִרְאֶה בְּשִׁלָּה בִּי־גִלְגָּל יְהוָה אֶל־
 שְׁמוּאֵל בְּשִׁלּוֹ בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה: {פ}

and said, "Samuel, my son." "Here I am," he answered. ¹⁷ Eli asked, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do this to you, and more, if you keep back anything of all that he said to you." ¹⁸ Therefore, Samuel then told him everything, keeping nothing back from him. Eli said, "He is Yahweh; let him do what seems good in his eyes."

¹⁹ Samuel grew up and Yahweh was with him and let no word of his fall to the ground. ²⁰ All Israel from Dan to Beersheba came to know that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of Yahweh.

²¹ Yahweh continued to appear in Shiloh, for he revealed himself to Samuel in the word of Yahweh.

¹⁷ The verbal forms in Eli's pronouncement are imperfects, not jussives, but the statement has the force of a curse or warning.

¹⁸ The MT has 'he said' in place of 'Eli said', here following the NJB, NRSV & NETB.

¹⁹ The phrase 'let no word fall to the ground' probably means that no prophecy of his was unfulfilled.

²⁰ The phrase 'from Dan to Beersheba' is a common phrase used to mean 'from one end to the other'.

²¹ After 'Samuel', the LXX has a lengthy addition:

καὶ ἐπιστεύθη Σαμουηλ προφήτης γενέσθαι τῷ κυρίῳ εἰς πάντα Ἰσραὴλ ἀπ' ἁκρων τῆς γῆς καὶ ἕως ἁκρων. καὶ Ἡλὶ πρεσβύτης σφόδρα, καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ πορευόμενοι ἐπορεύοντο καὶ πονηρὰ ἡ ὁδὸς αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον κυρίου. and Samuel was acknowledged to be a prophet of the Lord in all Israel, from one end to the other. And Eli was very old; and, as for his sons, their way kept getting worse and worse before the Lord.

The Hebraic nature of the Greek syntax used here suggests that the LXX translator was accurately rendering a Hebrew variant and not simply expanding the text on his own initiative; unfortunately, only the 1st few words of this verse can be read from 4QSam^a.

שמואל א פרק ד

^א וַיְהִי דְבַר־שְׁמוּאֵל לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקִרְיַת פְּלִשְׁתִּים לְמִלְחָמָה וַיַּחֲנוּ עַל־הָאֲבֵן הָעֶזְרוֹ וּפְלִשְׁתִּים חָנוּ בְּאַפֶּק: ^ב וַיַּעֲרְכוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים לְקִרְיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתִּטֵּשׁ הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיִּנָּגֶף יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיָּכּוּ בַּמַּעֲרָכָה בַּשָּׂדֶה כְּאַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים אִישׁ: ^ג וַיָּבֹא הָעָם אֶל־הַמִּחְנֶה וַיֹּאמְרוּ זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמָּה נִגְפָנוּ יְהוָה הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים נִקְחָה אֵלֵינוּ מִשְׁלָה אֶת־אָרוֹן בְּרִית יְהוָה וַיָּבֹא בְּקִרְבָּנוּ וַיִּשְׁעֲנוּ מִכָּף אִיבֵינוּ: ^ד וַיִּשְׁלַח הָעָם שְׁלָה וַיִּשְׁאוּ מִשָּׁם אֶת אָרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִּים וְשָׁם שָׁנָי בְּגִי־עֲלִי עִם־אָרוֹן בְּרִית הָאֱלֹהִים חֲפָנִי וּפִינֶחָס: ^ה וַיְהִי כִּבּוֹא אָרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה אֶל־הַמִּחְנֶה וַיִּרְעוּ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה וַתֵּהֶם הָאָרֶץ: ^ו וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־קוֹל הַתְּרוּעָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ מָה קוֹל הַתְּרוּעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת בַּמִּחְנֶה הָעִבְרִים וַיִּדְּעוּ כִּי אָרוֹן יְהוָה בָּא אֶל־הַמִּחְנֶה: ^ז וַיֵּרְאוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים

1 SAMUEL 4

¹ The word of Samuel came to all Israel. Then the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines, encamping near Ebenezer while the Philistines were encamped at Aphek. ² The Philistines drew up their battle line against Israel, battle was joined, and the Philistines defeated Israel; they killed about four thousand of their army on the field of battle. ³ The troops returned to the camp and the elders of Israel said, "Why has Yahweh allowed us to be defeated today by the Philistines? Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh from Shiloh so that it may come among us and rescue us from the power of our enemies." ⁴ So, the troops sent to Shiloh and brought away the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh Sabaoth, who is enthroned on the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, came with the Ark of the Covenant. ⁵ When the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh arrived in the camp, all Israel gave a great shout so the earth resounded. ⁶ When the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What can this great shouting in the Hebrew camp mean?" When they realised that the Ark of Yahweh had

1 SAMUEL 4

- ¹ After 'Israel', the NJB adds the following sentence (see #3:21): "By then, Eli was very old and his sons persisted in their wicked behaviour towards Yahweh;" here, we follow the MT & NRSV. 'Aphek' (אַפֶּק) was a little to the north of Philistine territory.
- ² The NJB has 'the fighting was fierce' in place of 'battle was joined', here following the NRSV; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.
- ³ The NJB reads 'Ark of God' in place of 'Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh' (as similarly in vv. 4 and 5).
- ⁴ See #1:3. At Shiloh, as in the Temple at Jerusalem (1K 8:6), the 'cherubim' and the Ark formed the 'throne' for the invisible presence of Yahweh.
- ⁵ This sacred war cry is part of the Ark ritual (see #Nb 10:5).
- ⁶ The word, 'Hebrew', in the early parts of the Bible is nearly always used by non-Israelites as a term of contempt (cf. Gn 39:14, 43:32).

כִּי אָמְרוּ בָּא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֹי לָנוּ
כִּי לֹא הִיְתָה כְּזֹאת אֶתְמוּל שְׁלֹשׁ: ^ח אֹי לָנוּ מִי
יִצִּילֵנוּ מִיַּד הָאֱלֹהִים הָאֲדִירִים הָאֵלֶּה אֵלֶּה הֵם
הָאֱלֹהִים הַמְּכִים אֶת־מִצְרַיִם בְּכָל־מִכָּה בַּמִּדְבָּר:
^ט הַתְּחַזְקוּ וְהִיוּ לְאֲנָשִׁים פְּלִשְׁתִּים פֶּן תַּעֲבֹדוּ
לְעִבְרִים כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲבָדוּ לָכֶם וְהִיִּיתֶם לְאֲנָשִׁים
וְנִלְחַמְתֶּם: ^י וַיִּלַּחֲמוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּגְגֵּף יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּנָּסוּ
אִישׁ לְאֹהֲלָיו וַתְּהִי הַמִּכָּה גְדוֹלָה מְאֹד וַיִּפֹּל
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלֹשִׁים אָלֶף רַגְלִי: ^{יא} וְאַרְזֹן אֱלֹהִים
נִלְקַח וּשְׁנֵי בְנֵי־עֲלִי מָתוּ חֲפָנִי וּפִינֶחָס:

^{יב} וַיֵּרָץ אִישׁ־בְּנִימָן מִהַמַּעֲרָכָה וַיָּבֹא שָׁלֵה בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא וּמָדִיו קָרְעִים וְאַדְמָה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ: ^{יג} וַיָּבֹא
וְהָנָה עָלָיו יֹשֵׁב עַל־הַכֶּסֶּא יָד יָד דֶּרֶךְ מִצְפָּה כִּי־
הָיָה לָבוֹ חָרָד עַל אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וְהָאִישׁ בָּא לְהַגִּיד
בְּעִיר וַתִּזְעַק כָּל־הָעִיר: ^{יד} וַיִּשְׁמַע עָלֶי אֶת־קוֹל

come into the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid; and they said, “Gods have come to the camp.” “Alas!” they cried, “This has never happened before. ⁸ Alas! Who will save us from the power of these mighty gods? These gods struck down Egypt with every kind of plague! ⁹ Take courage and be men, O Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you. Be men and fight.” ¹⁰ Therefore, the Philistines joined battle and Israel was defeated, each man fleeing to his tent. The slaughter was great indeed, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. ¹¹ The Ark of God was captured too, and the two sons of Eli died, Hophni and Phinehas.

¹² A Benjaminite ran from the battle line, reaching Shiloh that same day, with his clothes torn and with dust on his head. ¹³ When he arrived in Shiloh, Eli was sitting in his chair watching by the side of the road, for his heart was trembling about the Ark of God. This man, then, came to the town bringing the news, whereupon cries filled the town. ¹⁴ When

⁷ Even though the verb translated ‘have come’ is singular, the following subject should be taken as plural (‘gods’), as v. 8 indicates; some emend the verb to a plural form.

⁸ The NJB has ‘God’ in place of ‘gods’ (twice in this verse), here following the NRSV.

⁹ In place of ‘become slaves to’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘end up serving’.

¹⁰ Most ancient documents, biblical and non-biblical, are less exact with regard to numbers than are modern writings.

¹¹ Thus, the ‘sign’ of 2:34 is given.

¹² An alternative reading for ‘that same day’ is ‘on that day’.

¹³ In place of ‘hand’ (יָד), translated here as ‘side’), here following the Qere, the Ketiv has ‘you’ (אַתָּה); the ‘error’ is almost certainly due to orthographic confusion between a dalet and a final kaf.

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘uproar’ in place of ‘sound of the outcry’, here following the NRSV.

הַצֶּעֶקָה וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה קוֹל הַהֶמּוֹן הַזֶּה וְהָאִישׁ מִהָרֹּץ וַיָּבֹא וַיִּגְדֹּל לְעָלָיו: ^{טו} וְעָלָיו בֶּן־תְּשַׁעִּים וּשְׁמֹנֶה שָׁנָה וַעֲיִנָּיו קָמָה וְלֹא יָכוֹל לִרְאוֹת: ^{טז} וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ אֶל־עָלָיו אֲנֹכִי הֵבֵא מִן־הַמַּעֲרָכָה וְאֲנִי מִן־הַמַּעֲרָכָה נִסִּיתִי הַיּוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה־הָיָה הַדָּבָר בְּנִי: ^{יז} וַיַּעַן הַמַּבְשֵׁר וַיֹּאמֶר נָס יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים וְגַם מִגִּפְּהַ גְּדוֹלָה הָיְתָה בָּעַם וְגַם־שְׁנֵי בְנֵיךָ מָתוּ חֲפָנִי וּפִינֶחָס וְאַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים נִלְקָחָה: {פ}

^{יח} וַיְהִי כִּהְזָכִירוֹ | אֶת־אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּפֹּל מֵעַל־הַכִּסֵּא אַחֲרָנִית בְּעַד | יַד הַשַּׁעַר וַתִּשָּׁבֶר מִפְּרָקָתוֹ וַיָּמָת כִּי־זָקֵן הָאִישׁ וְכָבֵד וְהוּא שָׁפֹט אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה: ^{יט} וְכָלָתוֹ אִשְׁת־פִּינֶחָס הָרָה לֵלֶת וַתִּשְׁמַע אֶת־הַשְּׁמוּעָה אֶל־הַלֵּקֶחַ אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּמָּת חֲמִיָּה וְאִשָּׁה וַתִּכְרַע וַתֵּלֶד כִּי־נִהַפְּכוּ עָלֶיהָ צָרִיהָ: ^כ וְכָעַת מוֹתָהּ וַתְּדַבֵּרנָה הַנֹּצְבוֹת עָלֶיהָ אֶל־תִּירָאִי כִּי בֶן יִלְדָּתָהּ וְלֹא עָנְתָהּ וְלֹא־שָׁתָה לְבָבָהּ: ^{כא} וַתִּקְרָא לַנֶּעַר אִיכָבֹּד לֵאמֹר גָּלָה כְּבוֹד

Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he asked, "What does this great uproar mean?" Then the man came quickly and told Eli. ¹⁵ Now, Eli was ninety-eight years old; his gaze was fixed, so that he could not see. ¹⁶ The man said to Eli, "I have come from the battle. I escaped from the battle-line today." "My son," said Eli, "what has happened?" ¹⁷ The messenger replied, "Israel has fled before the Philistines; the army has been utterly routed. What is worse, your two sons are dead and the Ark of God has been captured."

¹⁸ When he mentioned the Ark of God, Eli fell backward off his seat by the gate; his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years. ¹⁹ Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near her time. When she heard that the Ark of God had been captured, and that her father-in-law and husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth, for her labour pains were too much for her. ²⁰ As she was dying, the women standing round her said, "Do not be afraid; you have given birth to a son." But she did not answer and took no notice. ²¹ She named the boy Ichabod, saying, "The glory

¹⁵ The phrase 'his gaze was fixed' means that his eyes were set in one direction and did not work.

¹⁶ The NJB, following the LXX (παρεμβολῆς), has 'camp' in place of 'battle'.

¹⁷ NETB has 'from' in place of 'before', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

¹⁸ Eli was not, strictly speaking, one of the Judges of Israel (see footnote to Jg 3:7); 'forty years' is a round number used to represent a generation.

¹⁹ In place of 'were too much for her', here following NETB, the NJB has 'came on' and the NRSV has 'overwhelmed her'.

²⁰ The NJB opens with, "When she was at the point of death..." and the NRSV has, "As she was about to die..." here, we follow NETB.

²¹ 'Ichabod' (אִיכָבֹּד) means, 'Where is the glory?', referring to the glory of Yahweh enthroned on the Ark.

מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הַלֶּקֶחַ אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֶל־חַמְיָהּ
וְאִישָׁהּ: כִּי וַתֹּאמֶר גָּלָה כְבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל כִּי נִלְקַח
אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים: {פ} has gone from Israel,” thinking of her father-in-law and husband, and
the capture of the Ark of God. ²² She said, “The glory has gone from
Israel, for the Ark of God has been captured.”

²² The prophecy given to Samuel (3:11–15) has now been fulfilled.

1 SAMUEL 5

שמואל א פרק ה

^א וּפְלִשְׁתִּים לָקְחוּ אֶת אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיְבִיאוּהוּ
מֵעִבְרָתוֹ אֶשְׁדּוֹד׃ ^ב וַיִּקְחוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־אֲרוֹן
הָאֱלֹהִים וַיָּבֵאוּ אֹתוֹ בֵּית דָּגּוֹן וַיִּצְיֵגוּ אֹתוֹ אֶצֶל
דָּגּוֹן׃ ^ג וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ אֲשֶׁדּוּדִים מִמַּחֲרַת וַהֲנֶה דָּגּוֹן נֹפֵל
לִפְנֵי אֶרֶצָה לִפְנֵי אֲרוֹן יְהוָה וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־דָּגּוֹן וַיִּשְׁבּוּ
אֹתוֹ לְמִקְוָמוֹ׃ ^ד וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ בִבְקָר מַמְחֲרַת וַהֲנֶה דָּגּוֹן
נֹפֵל לִפְנֵי אֶרֶצָה לִפְנֵי אֲרוֹן יְהוָה וְרֹאשׁ דָּגּוֹן
וּשְׁתֵּי כַפּוֹת יָדָיו כָּרְתוֹת אֶל־הַמַּפְתָּן רַק דָּגּוֹן
נִשְׁאַר עָלָיו׃ ^ה עַל־כֵּן לֹא־יֵדְרֹכּוּ כְּהֵנִי דָּגּוֹן וְכָל־
הַבָּאִים בֵּית־דָּגּוֹן עַל־מַפְתָּן דָּגּוֹן בְּאֲשֶׁדּוּד עַד
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃ {פ}

^ו וַתִּכְבֵּד יְד־יְהוָה אֶל־הָאֲשֶׁדּוּדִים וַיִּשְׁמֶם וַיָּךְ אֹתָם
בַּעֲפָלִים בְּטַחֲלִים אֶת־אֲשֶׁדּוּד וְאֶת־גְּבוּלָיָה׃
^ז וַיֵּרְאוּ אַנְשֵׁי־אֲשֶׁדּוּד כִּי־כֵן וַאֲמָרוּ לֹא־יֵשֵׁב אֲרוֹן

¹ When the Philistines captured the Ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² Taking the Ark of God, the Philistines put it in the temple of Dagon, setting it down beside Dagon. ³ When the people of Ashdod got up the following morning, there lay Dagon face down on the ground before the Ark of Yahweh. They picked Dagon up and put him back in his place. ⁴ But early next morning there lay Dagon face down again on the ground before the Ark of Yahweh, and Dagon's head and two hands were lying severed on the threshold; only the trunk of Dagon was left in its place. ⁵ This is why the priests of Dagon and indeed all who enter Dagon's temple do not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to the present day.

⁶ The hand of Yahweh was heavy on the people of Ashdod and he terrified and struck them with tumours, in Ashdod and its territory.

⁷ When the men of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, "The Ark

1 SAMUEL 5

¹ 'Ashdod' was one of the five Philistine towns, as also 'Gath' (v. 8), 'Ekron' (v. 10), Ashkelon and Gaza – see 6:17 and #Jos 13:2.

² This was the custom, for 'trophy' captured from a defeated god.

³ After 'morning', the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ εἰσῆλθον εἰς οἶκον Δαγών), adds, 'and went to the temple of Dagon'; here, we follow the MT.

⁴ The MT lacks, 'the trunk of', here following the LXX (ἡ ῥάχισ), Tg & Peshitta.

⁵ It was, in fact, an ancient and widespread custom to avoid stepping on the doorstep, considered the abode of spirits (compare the modern custom of carrying a bride over the threshold).

⁶ At the end of this verse, the LXX (καὶ μέσον τῆς χώρας αὐτῆς ἀνεφύησαν μύες, καὶ ἐγένετο σύγχυσις θανάτου μεγάλη ἐν τῇ πόλει) and Vg (et nati sunt mures et facta est confusio mortis magnæ in civitate) add, "And mice multiplied in their land, and the terror of death was throughout the entire city." The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁷ An alternative reading for 'heavy' is 'severe'.

אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּנוּ כִּי־קִשְׁתָּהּ יָדוֹ עָלֵינוּ וְעַל דָּגוֹן
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ^ח וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיֹּאסְפוּ אֶת־כָּל־סִרְיֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים
 אֵלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מַה־נַּעֲשֶׂה לְאַרֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ גַת יֹסֵב אַרֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּסְבוּ אֶת־
 אַרֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: {ס}

^ט וַיְהִי אַחֲרָיו הִסְבוּ אֹתוֹ וְתָהִי יַד־יְהוָה בְּעִיר
 מְהוּמָה גְדוֹלָה מְאֹד וַיָּד אֶת־אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר מִקְטָן
 וְעַד־גָּדוֹל וַיִּשְׁתְּרוּ לָהֶם עֲפָלִים טַחְרִים: ^י וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ
 אֶת־אַרֹן הָאֱלֹהִים עֶקְרוֹן וַיְהִי כְּבֹוא אַרֹן
 הָאֱלֹהִים עֶקְרוֹן וַיִּזְעְקוּ הָעֶקְרוֹנִים לֵאמֹר הִסְבוּ אֵלַי
 אֶת־אַרֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַמִּיתֵנִי וְאֶת־עַמִּי:
^{יא} וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיֹּאסְפוּ אֶת־כָּל־סִרְיֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 שִׁלְחוּ אֶת־אַרֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּשֶׁב לְמִקְוָמוֹ וְלֹא־
 יָמִית אֹתִי וְאֶת־עַמִּי כִּי־הִיְתָה מְהוּמַת־מָוֶת בְּכָל־
 הָעִיר כְּבֹדָה מְאֹד יָד הָאֱלֹהִים שָׁם: ^{יב} וְהָאֲנָשִׁים
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מָתוּ הָכּוּ בַּעֲפָלִים בְּטַחְרִים וַתַּעַל שׁוֹעַת
 הָעִיר הַשָּׁמַיִם: {ס}

of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for his hand is heavy on us and on Dagon our god.” ⁸ So, they summoned all the Philistine chiefs to them, and said, “What shall we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?” They replied, “The Ark of the God of Israel must go to Gath.” So, they moved the Ark of the God of Israel.

⁹ And it was so that, after they had taken it there, the hand of Yahweh lay heavy on that town and a great panic broke out; the people of the town, from youngest to oldest, were struck with tumours that he brought on them. ¹⁰ Then they sent the Ark of God to Ekron, but when it came to Ekron the people of Ekron shouted, “They have brought us the Ark of the God of Israel to bring death to us and our people.” ¹¹ They summoned all the Philistine chiefs and said, “Send the Ark of the God of Israel away; let it go back to where it belongs and not bring death to us and our people.” For, there was a deathly panic throughout the whole town; the hand of God was very heavy there. ¹² The people who did not die were stricken with tumours and the wailing of the town went up to heaven.

⁸ At the end of this verse, the NJB & NRSV add ‘to Gath’ and, in place of ‘they replied’, the NRSV has ‘the inhabitants of Gath replied’.

⁹ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁰ In place of ‘us’ and ‘our’, the MT has ‘me’ and ‘my’, respectively.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘summoned’ is ‘sent for and gathered’.

¹² The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation. (Some suggest that a *dagesh* in the *ayin* indicates the *Qere* reading.)

שמואל א פרק ו

א וַיְהִי אַרְוֹן־יְהוָה בְּשָׂדֶה פְּלִשְׁתִּים שְׁבַע חֳדָשִׁים:
ב וַיִּקְרְאוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים לַכַּהֲנִים וְלַקְסָמִים לֵאמֹר מָה־
נַעֲשֶׂה לְאַרְוֹן יְהוָה הַזֶּה הַדֹּעֵנוּ בָּמָה נִשְׁלַחְנוּ
לְמָקוֹמוֹ: {ס}

ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲס־מִשְׁלָחִים אֶת־אַרְוֹן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֶל־תִּשְׁלָחוּ אֹתוֹ רִיקָם כִּי־הֵשֵׁב תִּשְׁיָבוּ לוֹ אֲשֶׁם
אֲז תִּרְפָּאוּ וְנוֹדַע לָכֶם לָמָּה לֹא־תִסּוּר יָדוֹ מִכֶּם:
ד וַיֹּאמְרוּ מָה הָאֲשֶׁם אֲשֶׁר נָשִׁיב לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִסְפֵּר
סִרְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים חֲמִשָּׁה עֲפִלֵי טַחְרֵי זָהָב וַחֲמִשָּׁה
עֲכָבְרֵי זָהָב כִּי־מִגָּפָה אַחַת לְכֻלָּם וּלְסִרְנֵיכֶם:
ה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם צִלְמֵי עֲפִלֵיכֶם טַחְרֵיכֶם וְצִלְמֵי
עֲכָבְרֵיכֶם הַמְשַׁחִיתִם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְנָתַתֶּם לְאֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבוֹד אוֹלֵי יִקַּל אֶת־יָדוֹ מֵעֲלֵיכֶם וּמֵעַל
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּמֵעַל אֲרָצְכֶם: ו' וְלָמָּה תִכְבְּדוּ אֶת־
לְבַבְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר כְּבָדוּ מִצְרַיִם וּפִרְעָה אֶת־לִבָּם
הֲלוֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְעַלֵּל בָּהֶם וַיִּשְׁלַחוּם וַיֵּלְכוּ:

1 SAMUEL 6

¹ The Ark of Yahweh was in Philistine territory for seven months. ² Then the Philistines called for their priests and diviners and asked, "What shall we do with the Ark of Yahweh? Tell us how to send it back where it belongs."

³ They replied, "If you do send the Ark of the God of Israel away, you must not send it away empty; you must pay him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and will be ransomed; will not then his hand turn away from you?" ⁴ They then asked, "What is the guilt offering that we shall return to him?" They answered, "In proportion to the number of Philistine chiefs, five golden tumours and five models of your rats, for the plague was the same for you all as for your chiefs. ⁵ Therefore, you must make models of your tumours and models of the rats that ravage your country, and you must pay honour to the God of Israel. Then perhaps he will lighten his hand on you and your gods and your country. ⁶ Why harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After he had brought evil on them, did they not

1 SAMUEL 6

¹ At the end of this verse, the LXX adds 'and their land swarmed with mice' (καὶ ἐξέξσεσεν ἡ γῆ αὐτῶν μύαες).

² For 'diviners', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'omen readers'.

³ For the last sentence, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Then you will be healed and you will know why his hand would not turn away from you." The Philistines wish to make a guilt offering, to appease the God of Israel, who (so they thought) was angry.

⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁵ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁶ For the opening question, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has, "Why should you be stubborn, as Egypt and Pharaoh were?"

וַיַּעֲתָה קָחוּ וַעֲשׂוּ עֲגָלָה חֲדָשָׁה אֶחָת וּשְׁתֵּי פָרוֹת
עֲלֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עָלָה עֲלֵיהֶם עַל וְאַסְרֹתֶם אֶת-
הַפָּרוֹת בַּעֲגָלָה וְהַשִּׁיבְתֶּם בְּנֵיהֶם מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם
הַבֵּיתָה: ^ח וּלְקַחְתֶּם אֶת-אָרוֹן יְהוָה וְנָתַתֶּם אֹתוֹ
אֶל-הָעֲגָלָה וְאֵת כָּלִי הַזֶּהב אֲשֶׁר הֵשַׁבְתֶּם לוֹ
אֲשֶׁם תִּשְׁיִמוּ בָאָרְצוֹ מִצִּדּוֹ וּשְׁלַחְתֶּם אֹתוֹ וְהָלַךְ:
^ט וּרְאִיתֶם אֶם-דֶּרֶךְ גְּבוּלוֹ יַעֲלֶה בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ הוּא
עֹשֶׂה לָנוּ אֶת-הָרָעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת וְאִם-לֹא
וַיֵּדְעֵנוּ כִּי לֹא יָדוּ נִגְעָה בָנוּ מִקְרָה הוּא הִיא לָנוּ:
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כֵּן וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁתֵּי פָרוֹת עֲלֹת
וַיֹּאסְרוּם בַּעֲגָלָה וְאֶת-בְּנֵיהֶם כָּלוּ בַּבַּיִת: ^{יא} וַיִּשְׁמוּ
אֶת-אָרוֹן יְהוָה אֶל-הָעֲגָלָה וְאֵת הָאָרְצוֹ וְאֵת
עֲכָבְרֵי הַזֶּהב וְאֵת צִלְמֵי טַחְרֵיהֶם: ^{יב} וַיִּשְׁרְנָה
הַפָּרוֹת בַּדֶּרֶךְ עַל-דֶּרֶךְ בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ בְּמַסְלָה אֶחָת
הָלְכוּ הָלַךְ וּגְעוּ וְלֹא-סָרוּ יָמִין וּשְׂמָאוֹל וְסָרְגִי
פְּלִשְׁתִּים הַלְכִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם עַד-גְּבוּל בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ:

let the people go, and they departed? ⁷ Now, then, take and fit our new cart, and two milch cows that have never borne the yoke. Then harness the cows to the cart and take their calves back to the byre, away from them. ⁸ Then take the Ark of Yahweh, place it on the cart, and put the golden objects, which you are paying him as guilt-offering, in a box by its side; then, let it go its own way. ⁹ Watch it! If it goes up the road by way of its own territory, to Beth-Shemesh, then it was he who did us this great harm; but, if not, then we shall know it was not his hand that struck us, but that this happened to us by chance.” ¹⁰ And the people did this. They took two milch cows and they harnessed them to the cart; and they shut up their calves in the byre. ¹¹ Then, they placed the Ark of Yahweh on the cart, with the box and the golden rats and the models of their tumours. ¹² The cows took the straight road to Beth-Shemesh, keeping to the one road, lowing as they went and turning neither to right nor to the left. And the Philistine chiefs followed them as far as the boundaries of Beth-Shemesh. ¹³ And the people of Beth-Shemesh were

⁷ Though separated from their calves, the cows go forward (v. 12) – striking evidence that God is leading them (v. 9); compare 1K 18, where Elijah deliberately makes the miracle more difficult.

⁸ The idea here is that God will guide the cows drawing the Ark.

⁹ Throughout this narrative, the pronouns could refer either to God or to the Ark (masculine in Hebrew); but the meaning is the same, since no distinction is made between God and the Ark, which is the sign of his presence.

¹⁰ Literally translated, the 1st sentence reads, “The men did so.”

¹¹ Throughout this section, NETB has ‘sores’ in place of ‘tumours’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

¹² Clearly, then, God is ‘bringing his Ark home’.

¹³ The NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (ἀπάντησιν), have ‘meet’ in place of ‘watch’, here following the MT & NETB.

י¹⁴ וּבֵית שֶׁמֶשׁ קָצְרִים קָצִיר־חֲטִים בַּעֲמֶק וַיֵּשְׂאוּ
אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת־הָאֲרוֹן וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ לִרְאוֹת:
י¹⁵ וְהַעֲגָלָה בָּאָה אֶל־שֵׁדָה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֵּית־הַשְּׁמֶשִׁי
וַתַּעֲמֵד שָׁם וְשָׁם אַבֵּן גְּדוֹלָה וַיִּבְקְעוּ אֶת־עֲצֵי
הַעֲגָלָה וְאֶת־הַפְּרוֹת הָעֵלּוּ עָלֶיהָ לַיהוָה: {ס}

טו¹⁶ וְהַלּוּיִם הוֹרִידוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן יְהוָה וְאֶת־הָאֲרָגָז
אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ כְּלִי־זָהָב וַיִּשְׂמוּ אֶל־הָאֲבֵן
הַגְּדוֹלָה וְאֲנָשֵׁי בֵית־שֶׁמֶשׁ הָעֵלּוּ עָלוֹת וַיִּזְבְּחוּ
זִבְחִים בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לַיהוָה: טז¹⁷ וַחֲמִשָּׁה סַרְגֵּי־
פְּלִשְׁתִּים רָאוּ וַיָּשָׁבוּ עֶקְרוֹן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא: {ס}

י¹⁸ וְאֵלֶּה טַחְרֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר הָשִׁיבוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים {ר}
אֲשֶׁם לַיהוָה {ס} לְאַשְׁדּוֹד אֶחָד {ס} לְעֵזָה {ר}
אֶחָד {ס} לְאַשְׁקֶלֶן אֶחָד {ס} לְגַת {ר}
אֶחָד {ס} לְעֶקְרוֹן אֶחָד: {ס} י" וְעַכְבָּרֵי {ר}
הַזָּהָב מִסֶּפֶר כָּל־עָרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים לַחֲמִשַּׁת הַסַּרְנִים
מֵעִיר מִבְּצָר וְעַד כְּפָר הַפְּרָזִי וְעַד אֲבֵל הַגְּדוֹלָה
אֲשֶׁר הִנִּיחוּ עָלֶיהָ אֶת אֲרוֹן יְהוָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
בְּשֵׁדָה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֵּית הַשְּׁמֶשִׁי: יט¹⁹ וַיֵּךְ בְּאֲנָשֵׁי בֵית־

reaping the wheat harvest in the plain when, raising up their eyes, they saw the Ark and went joyfully to watch it. ¹⁴ When the Ark came to the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh it stopped. There was a large stone there and they cut up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a high-offering to Yahweh.

¹⁵ And, when the Levites had taken down the Ark of Yahweh and the box containing the golden objects beside it, they placed all this upon the large stone. The men of Beth-Shemesh offered high-offerings that day and offered sacrifices to Yahweh. ¹⁶ When the five Philistine chiefs had seen this, they went back to Ekron the same day.

¹⁷ These were the golden tumours paid by the Philistines as guilt offering to Yahweh: for Ashdod, one; for Gaza, one; for Ashkelon, one; for Gath, one; for Ekron, one; ¹⁸ and the golden rats

corresponded in number to all the Philistine towns of the five chiefs, from fortified cities to open villages. The large stone on which they placed the Ark of Yahweh is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh. ¹⁹ The sons of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the people

¹⁴ Any 'large stone' could serve as an altar (14:33).

¹⁵ A scrupulous editor, shocked that profane hands should touch the Ark, has added the first sentence of this verse, which interrupts the narrative.

¹⁶ The NRSV has 'lords of the Philistines' in place of 'Philistine chiefs', here following the NJB.

¹⁷ An attempt has been made here to preserve the 'list' structure of the MT but it is not that simple in contemporary English.

¹⁸ "The large stone ... is a witness," is a correction, following the Tg; the MT has, "as far as the large meadow."

¹⁹ The number 50,070 is surprisingly large, although it finds almost unanimous textual support in the MT and in the ancient versions; only a few

שָׁמַשׁ כִּי רָאוּ בְּאֶרְוֹן יְהוָה וַיִּךְ בָּעַם שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ
חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ וַיִּתְּאֲבְלוּ הָעָם כִּי־הָבָה יְהוָה
בָּעַם מִכָּה גְדוֹלָה: ^כ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שָׁמַשׁ מִי
יֻכַּל לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים הַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה וְאֶל־
מִי יַעֲלֶה מֵעַלֵּינוּ: ^{כא} וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ מַלְאָכִים אֶל־יוֹשְׁבֵי
קִרְיַת־יַעְרִים לֵאמֹר הִשְׁבוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־אֲרוֹן
יְהוָה רְדּוּ הָעָלּוּ אֹתוֹ אֵלֵיכֶם:

of Beth-Shemesh when they saw the Ark of Yahweh, and he struck down fifty thousand and seventy of them. The people mourned because Yahweh had struck them so fiercely. ²⁰ The men of Beth-Shemesh then said, “Who can stand before Yahweh this holy God; to whom shall we let it go, away from us?” ²¹ So, they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-Jearim saying, “The Philistines have sent back the Ark of Yahweh; come down and take it up to your town.”

medieval MSS lack ‘50,000’, reading simply ‘70’ instead. However, there does not seem to be sufficient external evidence to warrant reading 70 rather than 50,070, although that is done by a number of recent translations (e.g. *NJB*, *NRSV*, *NAB*, *NIV* & *NLT*); the present translation, following *NETB*, (reluctantly) follows the *MT* and the ancient versions here.

²⁰ The pronoun ‘it’ is assumed to refer to the Ark; others, however, have ‘him’, assuming the referent is God himself.

²¹ ‘Kiriath-Jearim’ was a Gibeonite town (Jos 9:17), where the Ark would be on neutral ground, between Philistines and Israelites.

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שמואל א פרק ז

- א וַיָּבֹאוּ אֲנָשִׁי קִרְיַת יְעָרִים וַיֵּלֶּךְ אֶת־אֲרוֹן יְהוָה וַיָּבֹאוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־בֵּית אֲבִינָדָב בְּגִבְעָה וְאֶת־אֱלֶעָזָר בְּנוֹ קִדְּשׁוּ לְשֹׁמֵר אֶת־אֲרוֹן יְהוָה: {פ}
- ב וַיְהִי מִיּוֹם שֶׁבַת הָאָרוֹן בְּקִרְיַת יְעָרִים וַיִּרְבוּ הַיָּמִים וַיְהִיו עֹשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וַיִּנָּהוּ כָּל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה: {ס}
- ג וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־כָּל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אִם־בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם אַתֶּם שׁוֹבִים אֶל־יְהוָה הֲסִירוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֶּכֶר מִתּוֹכְכֶם וְהַעֲשִׂיתֶם וְהָלִינוּ לְבַבְכֶם אֶל־יְהוָה וְעַבְדָּהוּ לְבָדּוֹ וַיִּצַּל אֶתְכֶם מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים: ד וַיִּסְּרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַבַּעַלִּים וְאֶת־הָעֲשִׂיתֹת וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה לְבָדּוֹ: {פ}
- ה וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל קִבְּצוּ אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמִּצְפָּתָה וְאֶתְּפֹלֶל בַּעֲדְכֶם אֶל־יְהוָה: ו וַיִּקְבְּצוּ הַמִּצְפָּתָה
- 1 The men of Kiriath-Jearim came and, taking up the Ark of Yahweh, brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the Ark of Yahweh.
- 2 From the day, that the Ark was lodged in Kiriath-Jearim, a long time passed – some twenty years – and the whole House of Israel longed for Yahweh.
- 3 Then Samuel spoke to the whole House of Israel, saying “If you are returning to Yahweh with all your heart, put aside the foreign gods you now have, and the Astartes too, and set your heart on Yahweh and serve him alone; and he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.”
- 4 Therefore, the Israelites put aside the Baals and Astartes and served Yahweh alone.
- 5 Then Samuel said, “Muster all Israel at Mizpah and I will plead with Yahweh on your behalf.” 6 Therefore, they mustered at Mizpah and

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- 1 ‘Eleazar’ was not, however, a Levite (see Jg 17:4ff).
- 2 The NRSV uses ‘lamented after’ in place of ‘longed for’ (here following the NJB); the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain, though the expression seems to mean, in the light of what follows, ‘implored Yahweh for help’.
- 3 Vv. 3–4 were likely inserted by an editor who felt the worship of false gods was always the chief sin of the people (Jg 2:11–15, 3:7, 10:6, 13:1).
- 4 The ‘Baals and the Astartes’ (plural of Astarte, goddess of fertility) were the principal deities of the Canaanites, often said to have been worshipped by the Israelites when they departed from what the editor considered the true faith.
- 5 ‘Mizpah’ was a sanctuary where ancient Israel held its general assemblies (vv. 6, 10:17–24, Jg 20:1–3; 21:1,5,8) not to be confused with the ‘Mizpah’ of 1K 15:22 & Jr 40:13, identified as Tell El-Nasbah, where there was no significant Israelite settlement until after Solomon’s time.
- 6 Libations of water were unusual (wine was used generally) but, to people with a desert background, water would be precious.

וַיִּשְׁאֲבוּ־מַיִם וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּצְוּמוּ בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא וַיֹּאמְרוּ שֶׁם חָטֵאנוּ לַיהוָה וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שְׁמוּאֵל
אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּמִּצְפָּה: ^ז וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי־
הִתְקַבְּצוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמִּצְפָּה וַיַּעֲלוּ סַרְנֵי־
פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּרְאוּ
מִפְּנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים: ^ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל
אֶל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ מִזַּעַק אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁעֲנוּ
מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים: ^ט וַיִּקַּח שְׁמוּאֵל טֹלָה חֶלֶב אֶחָד
וַיַּעֲלֶה וַיַּעֲלֶה עֹלָה כָּלִיל לַיהוָה וַיִּזְעַק שְׁמוּאֵל
אֶל־יְהוָה בְּעַד יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲנֶהוּ יְהוָה: ^י וַיְהִי שְׁמוּאֵל
מַעֲלֵה הָעֹלָה וּפְלִשְׁתִּים נִגְּשׁוּ לַמִּלְחָמָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּרְעֹם יְהוָה בְּקוֹל־גָּדוֹל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא עַל־פְּלִשְׁתִּים
וַיַּהֲרֹם וַיִּנָּגְפוּ לִפְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יא} וַיֵּצְאוּ אַנְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִן־הַמִּצְפָּה וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶת־פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיָּכּוּם עַד־
מִתַּחַת לְבֵית כָּר: ^{יב} וַיִּקַּח שְׁמוּאֵל אֶבֶן אֶחָת וַיִּשֶׂם
בֵּין־הַמִּצְפָּה וּבֵין הַשָּׁן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ אֶבֶן הָעֶזֶר
וַיֹּאמֶר עַד־הֵנָּה עֲזָרְנוּ יְהוָה: ^{יג} וַיִּכְנְעוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים
וְלֹא־יָסְפוּ עוֹד לָבוֹא בְּגִבּוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתְּהִי יַד־יְהוָה

drew water and poured it out before Yahweh. They fasted that day and declared, “We have sinned against Yahweh.” It was at Mizpah that Samuel was judge over the Israelites. ⁷ When the Philistines came to hear that the children of Israel had mustered at Mizpah, the chiefs of the Philistines marched against Israel. The Israelites heard of this and grew afraid of the Philistines. ⁸ They said to Samuel, “Do not cease calling on Yahweh our God for us, and pray that he will save us from the power of the Philistines.” ⁹ Then, Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a high-offering to Yahweh, and Samuel called on Yahweh on behalf of Israel and Yahweh answered his prayer. ¹⁰ While Samuel was offering the holocaust, the Philistines approached to give Israel battle, but Yahweh thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion; and they were defeated before Israel. ¹¹ And the men of Israel then went out from Mizpah in pursuit of the Philistines and struck them down as far as beyond Beth-Car. ¹² Then Samuel took a stone and erected it between Mizpah and Jeshanah and gave it the name Ebenezer, for he said, “Thus far has Yahweh aided us.” ¹³ Thus, the Philistines were humbled and no longer came into Israelite

⁷ The NRSV has ‘lords’ in place of ‘chiefs’, here following the NJB.

⁸ The LXX has ‘your God’ (θεόν σου) in place of ‘our God’, here following the MT.

⁹ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁰ It is a characteristic of the Bible (and similar literary material) that battles are often won or lost by miraculous, divine intervention.

¹¹ ‘Beth-Car’ (בֵּית כָּר) is unknown; some texts emend the name to ‘Beth-Horon’.

¹² ‘Jeshanah’ follows the LXX (τῆς παλαιᾶς – literally ‘the old (city)’); the MT has ‘Shen’, translated as ‘the Tooth’ in the NJB.

¹³ In place of ‘no longer came into’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘did not again enter’.

בְּפִלְשְׁתִּים כָּל יְמֵי שְׁמוּאֵל: יָד וְתִשְׁבְּנָה הָעָרִים
 אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ-פִלְשְׁתִּים מֵאֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל | לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
 מֵעֶקְרוֹן וְעַד-גָּת וְאֶת-גְּבוּלֵן הֲצִיל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד
 פִּלְשְׁתִּים וַיְהִי שָׁלוֹם בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵין הָאֲמֹרִי:
 טו וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּו: טז וְהָלַךְ
 מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה וּסָבַב בֵּית-אֵל וְהַגְּלָל וְהַמִּצְפָּה
 וְשָׁפֹט אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת כָּל-הַמְּקוֹמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה:
 יז וְתִשְׁבְּתוּ הָרִמָּתָה כִּי-שָׁם בֵּיתוֹ וְשָׁם שָׁפֹט אֶת-
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְבַנֶּה מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה: {פ}

territory; the hand of Yahweh lay on the Philistines all Samuel's lifetime.

¹⁴ The towns the Philistines had taken from Israel were given back to Israel, from Ekron to Gath, and Israel freed their territory from the power of the Philistines. There was peace, too, between Israel and the Amorites. ¹⁵ Samuel was judge over Israel as long as he lived. ¹⁶ Each year, he went on circuit through Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah and judged Israel in all these places. ¹⁷ He would then return to Ramah; for, his home was there; there, too, he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to Yahweh.

¹⁴ Most of the other potential enemies of Israel besides the Philistines could be classified as 'Amorites'. The final sentence of this verse makes Samuel's success as a temporal ruler complete.

¹⁵ Samuel was not really a 'Judge' or military hero like those in the Book of Judges; he was more like a circuit judge in the ordinary sense of the word (compare vv. 16–17).

¹⁶ In place of 'each year', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* & *NETB* have 'year by year'.

¹⁷ An alternative reading for 'judged' (here following the *NJB*) is perhaps 'settled disputes for' (cf. *NLT* 'would hear cases there' & *NRSV* 'administered justice there').

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שמואל א פרק ח

^א וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר זָקֵן שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֵּשֶׁם אֶת־בָּנָיו שְׁפָטִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ב וַיְהִי שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ הַבְּכוֹר יוֹאֵל וְשֵׁם מִשְׁנֵהוּ אַבִּיָּה שְׁפָטִים בְּבֶאֱר שִׁבְעָה: ^ג וְלֹא־הָלְכוּ בָנָיו בְּדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּטּוּ אַחֲרֵי הַבָּצַע וּלְקַחוֹ־שֹׁחַד וַיִּטּוּ מִשְׁפָּט: {פ}

¹ When Samuel became old, he appointed his two sons as judges over Israel. ² The name of his first-born son was Joel, and the name of his second son, Abijah: they were judges in Beersheba. ³ Yet, his sons did not follow his ways; they wanted money, taking bribes and perverting justice.

^ד וַיִּתְקַבְּצוּ כָּל זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל הַרְמָתָה: ^ה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אַתָּה זָקֵן וְנָתַתְּ וּבָנֶיךָ לֹא הָלְכוּ בְּדַרְכֶּיךָ עֲתָה שִׁימָה־לָּנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשַׁפְּטֵנוּ כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם: ^ו וַיֹּרַע הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי שְׁמוּאֵל כִּאֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ תִּנָּה־לָּנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשַׁפְּטֵנוּ וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה: {פ}

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and approached Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ "Look," they said to him, "you are old, and your sons do not follow your ways. So, appoint for us a king to rule over us, just like all the other nations." ⁶ But this request displeased Samuel that they should say, "Let us have a king to govern us;" so, Samuel prayed to Yahweh.

^ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל שְׁמַע בְּקוֹל הָעָם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר־יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ כִּי לֹא אַתָּה מֵאֲסוּ כִּי־אֲתִי מֵאֲסוּ מִמֶּלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם: ^ח כְּכָל־הַמַּעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ מִיּוֹם הָעֵלְתִּי אוֹתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

⁷ But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for, it is not you that they have rejected but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ According to all that they have done to me, from the day I brought them out of Egypt until now –

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¹ The NJB opens with, "When Samuel grew old" and NETB with, "In his old age, Samuel;" here, we follow the NRSV.

² The NJB has 'younger' in place of 'second', here following the MT & NRSV.

³ Literally translated, this verse ends, "...and they turned aside after unjust gain and took bribes and perverted justice."

⁴ The NJB & NRSV have 'came to' in place of 'approached', here following NETB.

⁵ By following the example of other nations and rejecting its true king, Yahweh (v. 7 & 12:12), Israel plays false to its own peculiar vocation.

⁶ The NRSV opens this verse, here following the NJB/NETB, with, "But the thing displeased Samuel when they said..."

⁷ The NJB has 'ruling' in place of 'being king over', here following the NRSV.

⁸ The MT lacks 'to me', here following the LXX (μοι), NJB & NRSV.

וַיַּעֲזֹבֵנִי וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים בֶּן הַמָּה עֹשִׂים גַּם־
לָךְ: ^ט וְעַתָּה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִם אֲדָ כִּי־הָעַד תַּעֲיִד בָּהֶם
וְהִגַּדְתָּ לָּהֶם מִשְׁפַּט הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִמְלֹךְ
עֲלֵיהֶם: {ס}

י וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֵת כָּל־דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵם
הַשְׂאֵלִים מֵאֵתוֹ מֶלֶךְ: {ס}

יא וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה יִהְיֶה מִשְׁפַּט הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִמְלֹךְ
עֲלֵיכֶם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם יָקַח וְשָׂם לוֹ בְּמִרְכַּבְתּוֹ
וּבַפָּרָשָׁיו וְרָצוּ לִפְנֵי מִרְכַּבְתּוֹ: יב וְלָשׁוֹם לוֹ שָׂרֵי
אַלְפִים וְשָׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְלַחֲרָשׁ חֲרִישׁוֹ וְלַקָּצֵר קְצִירֹו
וְלַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל־יִמְלַחֲמָתוֹ וְכָלִי רֶכֶב: יג וְאֶת־
בָּנוֹתֵיכֶם יָקַח לְרִקְחוֹת וּלְטַבָּחוֹת וּלְאִפּוֹת:
יד וְאֶת־שְׂדֹותֵיכֶם וְאֶת־כַּרְמֵיכֶם וְזִיתֵיכֶם הַטּוֹבִים
יָקַח וְנָתַן לַעֲבָדָיו: טו וְזֶרְעֵיכֶם וְכַרְמֵיכֶם יַעֲשֶׂר וְנָתַן
לְסָרִיסָיו וְלַעֲבָדָיו: טז וְאֶת־עַבְדֵיכֶם וְאֶת־

they have deserted me and served other gods – so they are doing now to you. ⁹ Well then, obey their voice; only, you must solemnly warn them and instruct them in the rights of the king who is to reign over them.”

¹⁰ All that Yahweh had said, Samuel repeated to the people who were asking him for a king.

¹¹ He said, “These will be the rights of the king who is to reign over you. He will take your sons and assign them to his chariots and cavalry, and they will run in front of his chariot. ¹² He will use them as leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties; he will make them plough his ploughland and harvest his harvest and make his weapons of war and the gear for his chariots. ¹³ He will also take your daughters as perfumers, cooks, and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields, of your vineyards and olive groves and give them to his officials. ¹⁵ He will tithe your crops and vineyards to provide for his eunuchs and his officials. ¹⁶ He will

⁹ In the phrase translated ‘you must solemnly warn them’, the infinitive absolute appears before the imperative for emphasis.

¹⁰ A more literal translation of ‘all that Yahweh had said’ is ‘all the words of Yahweh’.

¹¹ The ‘royal rights’ have generally been considered to reflect abuses of royal power under Solomon and his successors; however, recently discovered texts show that this sort of thing went on in Canaanite kingdoms predating Israel.

¹² The numbers of this verse are confused in the LXX and Peshitta; for ‘leaders of fifties’, the LXX has ‘leaders of hundreds’ (ἑκατοντάρχους), and the Peshitta has ‘leaders of thousands and leaders of hundreds and leaders of fifties and leaders of tens’, perhaps reflecting influence from Dt 1:15.

¹³ In place of ‘perfumers’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘ointment makers’.

¹⁴ The NRSV has ‘courtiers’ in place of ‘officials’, here following the NJB.

¹⁵ In place of ‘eunuchs’, here following the NJB, the NIV has ‘officials’, the NRSV, KJV & NLT have ‘officers’ and NETB has ‘administrators’.

¹⁶ ‘Cattle’ follows the LXX (βουκόλια); the MT has ‘young men’.

שְׁפָחוֹתֵיכֶם וְאֶת־בְּחֹרֵיכֶם הַטּוֹבִים וְאֶת־
חֲמֹרֵיכֶם יִקַּח וְעָשָׂה לְמַלְאכָתּוֹ: ^י צֹאנְכֶם יַעֲשֶׂה
וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ־לּוֹ לְעֲבָדִים: ^י וְזַעֲקֶתְם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
מִלִּפְנֵי מַלְכְּכֶם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתֶּם לָכֶם וְלֹא־יַעֲנֶה יְהוָה
אֶתְכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא: ^{יט} וַיִּמָּאֲנוּ הָעָם לִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל
שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא כִּי אִם־מֶלֶךְ יִהְיֶה עָלֵינוּ:
^כ וְהִיָּינוּ גַם־אַנְחֵנוּ כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם וּשְׁפָטֵנוּ מֶלֶכְנוּ
וַיֵּצֵא לִפְנֵינוּ וְנִלְחָם אֶת־מֶלֶחֶמְתָּנוּ: ^{כא} וַיִּשְׁמַע
שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת כָּל־דְּבָרֵי הָעָם וַיְדַבֵּר בְּאָזְנוֹ
יְהוָה: {פ}

^{כב} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי וְהִמְלַכְתָּ
לָהֶם מֶלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכוּ
אִישׁ לְעִירוֹ: {פ}

take the best of your menservants and maidservants, as well as of your cattle and your donkeys, and make them work for him. ¹⁷ He will tithe your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out on account of the king you have chosen for yourselves, but on that day God will not answer you.” ¹⁹ The people refused to listen to the words of Samuel. They said, “No! There will be a king over us, ²⁰ so that we in our turn can be like other nations; our king shall rule us and be our leader and fight our battles.” ²¹ Samuel listened to all that the people had to say and repeated it in the ears of Yahweh.

²² Yahweh then said to Samuel, “Obey their voice and give them a king.” Samuel then said to the men of Israel, “Go back, each to your own town.”

¹⁷ Here and in v. 15, the NRSV has ‘take one tenth of’ in place of ‘tithe’, here following the NJB.

¹⁸ At the end of this verse, the LXX adds ‘because you have chosen for yourselves a king’ (ὅτι ὑμεῖς ἐξελέξασθε ἑαυτοῖς βασιλέα).

¹⁹ In place of ‘there will be a king over us’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘we want a king’ and the NRSV has ‘but we are determined to have a king over us’.

²⁰ The literal translation of ‘be our leader’ is ‘go out before us’.

²¹ God, of course, would already have known what the people said.

²² The last sentence of the verse is an editorial insertion to prepare for the anointing of Saul (9:1–10:16).

1 SAMUEL 9

שמואל א פרק ט

^א וַיְהִי־אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי־יִמִּין [מִבְּנֵי־יִמִּין] וְשֵׁמוֹ קִישׁ בֶּן־אֲבִיָּאל בֶּן־צֶרֶזֶר בֶּן־בְּכוֹרֶת בֶּן־אֶפְיָח בֶּן־אִישׁ יְמִינִי גִבּוֹר חָיִל: ^ב וְלֹא־הָיָה בֶן וְשֵׁמוֹ שָׁאוּל בַּחֹזֶק וְטוֹב וְאֵין אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל טוֹב מִמֶּנּוּ מִשְׁכָּמוֹ וּמַעַלָּה גְּבָהּ מִכָּל־הָעָם: ^ג וַתֵּאבְדְּנָה הָאֲתָנֹת לְקִישׁ אָבִי שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר קִישׁ אֶל־שָׁאוּל בְּנוֹ קַח־נָא אֶתְּךָ אֶת־אֶחָד מֵהַנְּעָרִים וְקוּם לֵךְ בִּקֵּשׁ אֶת־הָאֲתָנֹת: ^ד וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּהַר־אֶפְרַיִם וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּאֶרֶץ־שַׁלִּישָׁה וְלֹא מָצְאוּ וַיַּעֲבֹרוּ בְּאֶרֶץ־שַׁעֲלִים וְאֵין וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּאֶרֶץ־יְמִינִי וְלֹא מָצְאוּ: ^ה הִמָּה בָּאוּ בְּאֶרֶץ צוּף וְשָׁאוּל אָמַר לְנַעֲרוֹ אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ לָכֵה וְנִשׁוּבָה פֶּן־יַחְדָּל אָבִי מִן־הָאֲתָנֹת וְדָאֵג לָנוּ: ^ו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנֵּה־נָא אִישׁ־אֱלֹהִים בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת וְהָאִישׁ נִכְבָּד כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־יְדַבֵּר בּוֹא יָבוֹא עִתָּה נִלְכֶּה שָׁם אוּלַי יִגִּיד לָנוּ אֶת־דַּרְכָּנוּ אֲשֶׁר־הִלְכְּנוּ עָלֶיהָ: ^ז וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל לְנַעֲרוֹ וְהִנֵּה נִלְךָ וּמֵה־נִּבִּיא לְאִישׁ כִּי הִלַּחַם

¹ Among the men of Benjamin there was a man named Kish son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite and a man of rank. ² He had a son named Saul, a handsome man in the prime of life. Of all the Israelites, there was no one more handsome than he was; he stood head and shoulders above everyone else. ³ Now the donkeys of Saul's father Kish had strayed, so Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the boys with you; go and look for the donkeys." ⁴ He passed through the highlands of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but did not find them; they passed through the land of Shaalim, they were not there; he passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them. ⁵ When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to the boy who was with him, "Let us go back, or my father will stop worrying over the donkeys and worry about us." ⁶ He said, "Look, there is a man of God in this town, a man held in honour; everything he says comes true. Let us go there; perhaps he will be able to guide us on the journey we have undertaken." ⁷ Saul said to the boy, "But if we go, what can we bring the

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¹ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

² 'Saul' (שָׁאוּל) means 'asked for' (i.e. from God).

³ At the end of this verse, the *Peshitta* adds, "So Saul arose and went out. He took with him one of the boys and went out to look for his father's donkeys."

⁴ Note the confusion of pronouns between 'he passed' and 'they passed'.

⁵ The *NJB* & *NETB* have 'servant' in place of 'boy', here following the *NRSV* (as also in v. 3).

⁶ The 'town' is Ramah, Samuel's town (see 7:17).

⁷ People did not consult a prophet without giving him a present (Nb 22:7, 1K 14:3, 2K 4:42, 5:15, 8:8, and see Ezk 13:19, Am 7:12, Mi 3:11).

אֲזַל מִכֵּלֵינוּ וְתַשׁוּרָה אֵין־לְהִבִּיא לְאִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים
מָה אֲתֵנוּ: ^ח וַיֹּסֶף הַנֶּעֱר לַעֲנוֹת אֶת־שְׁאוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר
הִנֵּה נִמְצָא בְיָדִי רֶבַע שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף וְנָתַתִּי לְאִישׁ
הָאֱלֹהִים וְהֵגִיד לָנוּ אֶת־דִּרְכָּנוּ: ^ט לְפָנִים | בִּישְׂרָאֵל
כֹּה־אָמַר הָאִישׁ בְּלִכְתּוֹ לְדָרוֹשׁ אֱלֹהִים לָכֵן וְנִלְכָּה
עַד־הָרֶאָה כִּי לְנָבִיא הַיּוֹם יִקְרָא לְפָנִים הָרֶאָה:
^י וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאוֹל לְנַעֲרָו טוֹב דְּבַרְךָ לָכֵן | נִלְכָּה וְיִלְכוּ
אֶל־הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים: ^{יא} הֲמָה עֲלִים
בְּמַעַלְה הָעִיר וְהִמָּל מִצָּאוּ נַעֲרוֹת יִצְאוֹת לְשָׂאֵב
מַיִם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶן הֵישׁ בָּזָה הָרֶאָה: ^{יב} וְתַעֲנִינָה
אוֹתָם וְתֹאמַרְנָה יֵשׁ הִנֵּה לְפָנֶיךָ מִהֵרָ | עֲתָה כִּי
הַיּוֹם בָּא לָעִיר כִּי זָבַח הַיּוֹם לָעֵם בַּבִּמָּה:
^{יג} כִּבְאֲכֶם הָעִיר כֵּן תִּמְצָאוּן אֹתוֹ בְּטָרֶם יַעֲלֶה
הַבִּמְתָּה לֶאֱכֹל כִּי לֹא־יֹאכֵל הָעָם עַד־בָּאוּ כִּי־הוּא
יְבָרֶךְ הַזֹּבַח אַחֲרֵי־כֵן יֹאכְלוּ הַקֶּרָאִים וְעַתָּה עֲלוּ

man? The bread in our sacks has gone, and we have no present to offer the man of God. What do we have?" ⁸ Again, the boy answered Saul, "Look, I have a quarter of a silver shekel here; I will give it to the man of God and he shall tell us our road." ⁹ (Formerly in Israel when a man used to go to consult God he would say, "Come, let us go to the seer," for a man who is now called a 'prophet' was formerly called a 'seer'.) ¹⁰ Then Saul said to his boy, "Well said! Come, let us go." So, they went to the town where the man of God was. ¹¹ As they were going up the slope to the town, they met some girls going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer there?" ¹² The girls replied, "Yes, the seer is ahead of you. He has just come into the town, for the people are having a sacrifice today on the high place. ¹³ You will meet him as soon as you enter the town before he goes up to the high place for the meal. The people will not eat until he comes, since he must bless the sacrifice; then the people invited eat afterwards. Go up now, for you will soon find

⁸ There was no coinage in those days; a 'quarter of a silver shekel' was merely a piece of silver of a certain weight (about 3½ grams).

⁹ In the *NJB*, this verse is transposed to the end of v. 11, where it may seem more fluently placed. Here, however, the numerical order is maintained, as in the *NRSV*. The verse is a note by an editor, inserted after the word 'seer' had gone out of use.

¹⁰ The literal translation of 'well said' is 'your word is good'.

¹¹ The *NJB* has 'came across' in place of 'met', here following the *NRSV*.

¹² The 'high place' was a shrine set on a hilltop near a town. These sanctuaries were for many years tolerated by official Yahwism (1K 3:4ff), until their prohibition by the law imposing a single sanctuary (see #Dt 12:2).

¹³ In the last sentence, the *MT* has 'him' (אֹתוֹ) after 'for', in addition to the 'him' at the end of the verse; the ancient versions attest to only one occurrence of the pronoun, although it is possible that this is due to translation technique rather than to their having a Hebrew text with the pronoun used only once. The present translation assumes textual duplication in the *MT* and does not attempt to represent the pronoun twice.

כִּי־אָתוּ כֹהֵי־יָוֶם תִּמְצְאוּן אֹתוֹ: יְדַעְלוּ הָעִיר הַמָּה
בָּאִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר וְהִנֵּה שְׂמוּאֵל יֵצֵא לִקְרֹאתָם
לְעֹלֹת הַבָּמָה: {ס}

טו וַיְהִי־זֶה גָלָה אֶת־אֶזְנוֹ שְׂמוּאֵל יוֹם אֶחָד לִפְנֵי בּוֹא־
שָׁאוּל לֵאמֹר: טז כָּעֵת | מָחָר אֲשַׁלַּח אֵלֶיךָ אִישׁ
מֵאֶרֶץ בִּנְיָמִן וּמִשְׁחָתוֹ לְנָגִיד עַל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־עַמִּי מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי רָאִיתִי אֶת־עַמִּי
כִּי בָאָה צַעֲקָתוֹ אֵלַי: יז וְשְׂמוּאֵל רָאָה אֶת־שָׁאוּל
וַיְהִי־זֶה עָנָהוּ הִנֵּה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ זֶה
יַעֲצֹר בְּעַמִּי: יח וַיִּגַּשׁ שָׁאוּל אֶת־שְׂמוּאֵל בְּתוֹךְ
הַשָּׁעַר וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּיד־נָא לִי אֵיזָה בֵּית הָרֹאֶה:
יט וַיַּעַן שְׂמוּאֵל אֶת־שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי הָרֹאֶה עָלֶיךָ
לִפְנֵי הַבָּמָה וְאֶכְלֶתֶם עִמִּי הַיּוֹם וְשַׁלַּחְתִּיךָ בַּבֹּקֶר
וְכָל אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבְּךָ אֶגִּיד לָךְ: כ וְלֹאֲתַנּוֹת הָאֲבֹדוֹת
לָךְ הַיּוֹם שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַיָּמִים אֶל־תֶּשֶׁם אֶת־לִבְּךָ לָהֶם
כִּי נִמְצְאוּ וְלָמִי כָל־חֲמֻדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲלוֹא לָךְ וְלִכְלֹ
בֵּית אָבִיךָ: {ס}

him.” ¹⁴ Therefore, they went up to the town, and as they were going entering the town, Samuel came out in their direction on his way to the high place.

¹⁵ Now Yahweh had revealed to Samuel the day before Saul came, saying, ¹⁶ “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin; you are to anoint him as prince over my people Israel. He will save my people from the power of the Philistines; for I have seen my people and their outcry has come up to me.” ¹⁷ When Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh told him, “That is the man of whom I told you: He shall rule my people.” ¹⁸ Saul approached Samuel in the gateway and said, “Tell me, please, where the seer’s house is?” ¹⁹ Samuel replied to Saul, “I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place. You are to eat with me today. In the morning, I shall take leave of you and tell you all that is in your heart.” ²⁰ As regards your donkeys, however, which strayed three days ago, do not worry about them, for they have been found. Besides, for whom is all the wealth of Israel destined, if not for you and all your father’s House?”

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘going through the gate’ (a conjectural translation) in place of ‘entering the town’ (from the NRSV, following the MT).

¹⁵ The literal translation of ‘revealed to’ is ‘uncovered the ear of’.

¹⁶ Before ‘my people’, the NJB, following the LXX (τῆς ταπείνωσιν), adds ‘the misery of’ and the NRSV has ‘the suffering of’; here, we follow the MT.

¹⁷ The literal translation of ‘told him’ is ‘responded’.

¹⁸ The NJB has ‘accosted’ in place of ‘approached’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁹ Perhaps Saul had been brooding over the oppression by the Philistines.

²⁰ In this verse, Saul’s royal destiny is foretold for the first time.

כא וַיַּעַן שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלוֹא בֶן־יְמִינִי אֲנִכִּי מִקְטָנִי
 שְׁבִטִי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִשְׁפַּחְתִּי הַצְעֲרָה מְכַל־מִשְׁפָּחוֹת
 שְׁבִטִי בְנִימָן וְלָמָּה דְבַרְתָּ אֵלַי כַּדְבָר הַזֶּה: {ס}
 כב וַיִּקַּח שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־שָׁאוּל וְאֶת־נַעֲרָו וַיְבִיֵּאם
 לְשִׁכְתָּה וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם מְקוֹם בְּרֹאשׁ הַקְּרוּאִים וְהָמָּה
 כְּשִׁלְשָׁם אִישׁ: כג וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל לְטַבַּח תֵּנָּה אֶת־
 הַמִּנְחָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָךְ אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ שִׁים
 אֹתָהּ עִמָּךְ: כד וַיֵּרָם הַטַּבַּח אֶת־הַשּׁוֹק וְהָעֲלִיָּה
 וַיֵּשֶׁם | לִפְנֵי שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הַנֶּשֶׂאֶל שִׁים־
 לִפְנֶיךָ אֲכָל כִּי לְמוֹעֵד שְׁמוֹר־לָךְ לֵאמֹר הָעַם |
 קָרָאתִי וַיֹּאכַל שָׁאוּל עִם־שְׁמוּאֵל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא:
 כה וַיֵּרְדּוּ מֵהַבִּמָּה הָעִיר וַיְדַבֵּר עִם־שָׁאוּל עַל־הַגָּג:
 כו וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ וַיְהִי בַּעֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־
 שָׁאוּל הַגָּג הַגָּגָה לֵאמֹר קוּמָה וְאֶשְׁלַחְךָ וַיָּקָם
 שָׁאוּל וַיֵּצֵאוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם הוּא וּשְׁמוּאֵל הַחוּצָה: כז הָמָּה

²¹ Saul then replied, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from one of the smallest of Israel’s tribes, and is not my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such words to me?”

²² Samuel then took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those invited; there were about thirty of them. ²³ Samuel said to the cook, “Serve the portion I gave you, which I told you to put on one side.” ²⁴ The cook then took up the leg and the tail and set it in front of Saul. Samuel said, “There! The part that was left is set before you. Eat; for it is set before you at the appointed time, so that you might eat with the guests.” Thus, Saul ate that day with Samuel. ²⁵ From the high place, they came down to the town. On the housetop, they spread out coverlets for Saul and he lay down to sleep. ²⁶ At the break of day Samuel called to Saul on the housetop, “Get up; I must take leave of you.” Saul got up, and the two of them, he and Samuel, went out into the street. ²⁷ They had walked as far as the end of

²¹ The NJB lacks, ‘one of’; the MT has ‘of the tribes’ in place of ‘of the tribe of Benjamin’ here following the text of the ancient versions.

²² NETB lacks the verb ‘took’, reading, “Then Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the room.”

²³ After ‘portion’, NETB adds – for clarity – ‘of meat’.

²⁴ The NRSV opens with, “The cook then took up the thigh and what went with it ...” (the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain). The NJB lacks the sentence, “for it is set before you at the appointed time, so that you might eat with the guests”, using an ellipsis in its place.

²⁵ The NRSV uses ‘shrine’ instead of ‘high place’. The NJB lacks, ‘to sleep’, here following the NSRV & LXX. Roofs in that part of the world were flat, with protecting parapets, as they still are; hence, they were and are well adapted for sleeping during the summer months, when no rain fell.

²⁶ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁷ The NJB, following the LXX, has ‘but’ (*καὶ*) in place of ‘and when he has passed’ (as in the NRSV, following the MT).

יֹרְדִים בְּקֶצֶה הָעִיר וּשְׂמוֹאֵל אָמַר אֶל־שָׂאוֹל אָמַר
לְנֹעַר וַיַּעֲבֹר לִפְנֵינוּ וַיַּעֲבֹר וְאַתָּה עֹמֵד כִּיּוֹם
וְאֲשִׁמְעֶךָ אֶת־דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים: {פ}

the town when Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to go on ahead of
us, and when he has passed, you stand still for a moment and I shall
make known to you the word of God.”

שמואל א פרק י

^א וַיִּקַּח שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־כַּף הַשֶּׁמֶן וַיִּצַק עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּשְׁקֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלוֹא כִּי־מִשְׁחָךְ יְהוָה עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְנָגִיד: ^ב בְּלִכְתְּךָ הַיּוֹם מֵעַמָּדִי וּמִצְאָתָּ שְׁנֵי אַנְשִׁים עַם־קִבְרַת רָחֵל בְּגִבּוֹל בְּנִימִן בְּצֹלֶצַח וְאָמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ נִמְצְאוּ הָאֲתָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר הָלַכְתָּ לִבְקֹשׁ וְהִנֵּה נָטַשׁ אָבִיךָ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הָאֲתָנוֹת וְדָאָג לָכֶם לֵאמֹר מָה אַעֲשֶׂה לְבָנִי: ^ג וַחֲלַפְתָּ מִשֶּׁם וְהִלָּאָה וּבָאתָ עַד־אֵלּוֹן תְּבוֹר וּמִצְאֹדָשׁ שֵׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים עָלִים אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים בֵּית־אֵל אֶחָד נִשְׂאֵל שְׁלֹשָׁה גִדִּים וְאֶחָד נִשְׂאֵל שְׁלֹשֶׁת כִּכָּרוֹת לֶחֶם וְאֶחָד נִשְׂאֵל גִּבְלִיָּין: ^ד וְשָׂאוּ לָךְ לְשֹׁלֹם וְנָתַנוּ לָךְ שְׁתֵּי־לֶחֶם וְלִקְחָתָּ מִיָּדָם: ^ה אַחֵר כֵּן תָּבוֹא גִבְעַת הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם נִצְבִי פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיְהִי כַּבֹּאֲךָ שֵׁם הָעִיר וּפָגַעְתָּ חֹבֶל נְבָאִים יֹרְדִים מִהַבְּמָה וּלְפָנֶיהֶם גִּבֹּל וְתָף וְחִלָּל וּכְנֹזֹר וְהָמָה מִתְנַבְּאִים: ^ו וְצִלְחָה עֲלֶיךָ רוּחַ יְהוָה

1 SAMUEL 10

¹ Then Samuel took the vial of oil, poured it on his head, kissed him and said, "Is it not that Yahweh has anointed you over his inheritance for a leader? ² When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb, in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; they will say to you, "The donkeys you went looking for have been found and now your father has stopped worrying about the donkeys and is worrying about you, thinking: What am I to do about my son?" ³ Then you shall go on from there further and come to the Oak of Tabor, where three men will meet you, going up to God at Bethel; one will be carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread and another carrying a skin of wine. ⁴ They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you must accept from them. ⁵ After this, you will go to Gibeah of God (where the Philistine garrison is) and, as you come to the town, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place, headed by harp, tambourine, flute and lyre; they will be in a prophetic ecstasy. ⁶ Then

1 SAMUEL 10

¹ The NJB (& NRSV), following the LXX (καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις ἐν λαῷ κυρίου, καὶ σὺ σώσεις αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῦ κυκλόθεν. καὶ τοῦτο σοι τὸ σημεῖον ὅτι ἔχρισέν σε κύριος ἐπὶ κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἄρχοντα.), add, "You are the man who must rule Yahweh's people, and must save them from the power of the enemies surrounding them. The sign for you that Yahweh has appointed you ruler of his heritage is this."

² The NJB lacks 'at Zelzah', using an ellipsis in its place.

³ The NJB lacks the 2nd & 3rd instances of 'carrying', here following the MT & NRSV.

⁴ The literal translation of 'which you must accept from them' is 'you will accept them'.

⁵ The NRSV uses 'Gibeah Elohim' ('Hill of God') rather than 'Gibeah of God' (here following the NJB & NETB), and 'shrine' instead of 'high place'.

⁶ The NJB lacks the word 'prophetic' before 'ecstasy', as also in v. 5.

וְהַתְּנִבִּית עִמָּם וְנִהְפְּכָתָ לְאִישׁ אֲחֵר׃ ^ז וְהָיָה כִּי
 תִּבְאִינָה תִּבְאָנָה הָאֲתוֹת הָאֵלֹהִים לָךְ עֲשֵׂה לָךְ אֲשֶׁר
 תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ׃ ^ח וַיֵּרֶדְתָּ לִּפְנֵי הַגִּלְגָּל
 וְהָיָה אֲנֹכִי יֹרֵד אֵלֶיךָ לְהַעֲלוֹת עֲלוֹת לְזִבְחַ זִבְחֵי
 שְׁלָמִים שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּזְחַל עַד-בּוֹאִי אֵלֶיךָ
 וְהוֹדַעְתִּי לָךְ אֶת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה׃ ^ט וְהָיָה כִּהְפַנְתָּ
 שִׁכְמוֹ לָלֶכֶת מֵעַם שְׂמוּאֵל וַיִּהְפֹּךְ-לוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵב
 אֲחֵר וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל-הָאֲתוֹת הָאֵלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא׃ {ס}
 וַיָּבֹאוּ שָׁם הַגִּבְעָתָה וְהָיָה חֶבְל־נִבְאִים לִקְרֹאתוֹ
 וַתִּצְלַח עָלָיו רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְנַבֵּא בְּתוֹכָם׃ ^י וַיְהִי
 כָּל-יּוֹדְעוֹ מֵאֲתָמוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ וַיֵּרְאוּ וְהָיָה עִם-נִבְאִים
 נִבָּא {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ מִהֲזֶה הִיָּה
 לְבֶן-קִישׁ הֲגַם שְׂאוֹל בְּנִבְיָאִים׃ ^{יב} וַיַּעַן אִישׁ מִשָּׁם
 וַיֹּאמֶר וּמִי אֲבִיהֶם עַל-כֵּן הִיָּתָה לְמִשְׁלַל הֲגַם שְׂאוֹל
 בְּנִבְיָאִים׃ ^{יג} וַיְכַל מִהַתְּנִבּוֹת וַיָּבֹא הַבֹּמֶה׃ ^{יד} וַיֹּאמֶר
 דּוֹד שְׂאוֹל אֵלָיו וְאֶל-נַעֲרָו אֲנִי הִלַּכְתֶּם וַיֹּאמֶר
 לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת-הָאֲתָנּוֹת וְנִרְאָה כִּי-אֵין וְנִבּוֹא אֶל-

the spirit of Yahweh will seize on you, and you will go into a prophetic ecstasy with them; and you will be changed into a different man. ⁷ When these signs have occurred, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you. ⁸ And you must go down ahead of me to Gilgal; I will join you there to offer holocausts and communion sacrifices. You are to wait seven days for me to come to you, and then I will show you what you are to do.” ⁹ As soon as Saul had turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart and all these signs occurred that same day.

¹⁰ From there they came to Gibeah, and there was a group of prophets coming to meet him; the spirit of God seized on him and he fell into an ecstasy in their midst. ¹¹ When all who knew him before saw him prophesying with the prophets, the people said to each other, “What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul one of the prophets too?” ¹² A man from there said, “And who is their father?” So, it became a proverb: “Is Saul one of the prophets too?” ¹³ When Saul’s ecstasy had passed, he went into the shrine ¹⁴ and his uncle asked him and his boy, “Where have you been?” He replied, “In search of the donkeys; and when we

⁷ The *Kethib*/ *Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁸ ‘Gilgal’ (גִּלְגָּל) is near Jericho (see #Jos 4:19); this verse is an insertion preparing for 13:8–15, a passage from a different source.

⁹ The *NJB* ends this verse with an ellipsis; a footnote explains that the original narrative must have described the fulfilment of the first two signs.

¹⁰ Two medieval *Hebrew MSS*, the *LXX* (ἐρχεται), and the *Peshitta* have ‘he came’, in which case the referent would be Saul alone.

¹¹ The *Setumah* ({ס}) in the middle of this verse is represented by 2 Em Space characters in the English translation.

¹² The people are surprised that someone of Saul’s standing should mix with these enthusiasts, no doubt of lowly origin.

¹³ The *NJB* has ‘Gibeah’ in place of ‘the shrine’, here following the *MT*; the *NRSV*, translating conjecturally, has ‘he went home’.

¹⁴ The literal translation of ‘they were lost’ is ‘they were not’.

שְׁמוּאֵל: ^{טו} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד שְׁאוּל הִגִּידָהּ נָא לִי מָה־
אָמַר לָכֶם שְׁמוּאֵל: ^{טז} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאוּל אֶל־דָּוִד וְהִגִּיד
הִגִּיד לָנוּ כִּי נִמְצְאוּ הָאֲתָנוֹת וְאֶת־דָּבָר הַמְּלוּכָה
לֹא־הִגִּיד לָנוּ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: {פ}

^{יז} וַיִּצְעַק שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־הָעָם אֶל־יְהוָה הַמִּצְפָּה:
^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר | אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל {פ}

כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנֹכִי הֵעֲלִיתִי אֶת־
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם וְאֶצִּיל אֶתְכֶם מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וּמִיַּד
כָּל־הַמַּמְלָכוֹת הַלֹּחֲצִים אֶתְכֶם: ^{יט} וְאַתֶּם הַיּוֹם
מֵאֲסַתֶּם אֶת־אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוּא מוֹשִׁיעַ לָכֶם
מִכָּל־רָעוּתֵיכֶם וְצָרְתִּיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ כִּי־מֶלֶךְ
תִּשָּׂא עָלֵינוּ וְעַתָּה הִתִּיצְבוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם
וְלֹא־לְפִיכֶם: ^כ וַיִּקְרַב שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת כָּל־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּלְכַּד שִׁבְט בְּנִימִן: ^{כא} וַיִּקְרַב אֶת־שִׁבְט בְּנִימִן
לְמִשְׁפַּחָתוֹ וַתִּלְכַּד מִשְׁפַּחַת הַמָּטְרִי וַיִּלְכַּד שְׁאוּל
בֶּן־קִישׁ וַיִּבְקֹשׁוּהוּ וְלֹא נִמְצָא: ^{כב} וַיִּשְׁאַלּוּ־עוֹד

saw they were lost, we went to Samuel.” ¹⁵ Saul’s uncle then said, “Tell me what Samuel said to you?” ¹⁶ Saul said to his uncle, “He only told us that the donkeys were already found,” but he said nothing to him about the kingship of which Samuel had spoken.

¹⁷ Then Samuel called the people together to Yahweh at Mizpah ¹⁸ and said to the Israelites,

“Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel, “I brought Israel out of Egypt and delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.” ¹⁹ But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and distress; and you have said, “No, you must set a king over us.” Well then, take your positions before Yahweh according to your tribes and clans.” ²⁰ Samuel then made all the tribes of Israel come forward, and the lot fell to the tribe of Benjamin. ²¹ He then made the tribe of Benjamin come forward clan by clan, and the lot fell to the clan of Matri, and the lot fell to Saul son of Kish, but when they sought him, he was not found. ²² Once again, they consulted

¹⁵ In the LXX (σοι) and Vg the pronoun ‘you’ is singular, referring specifically to Saul; in the MT it is plural, including Saul’s servant as well.

¹⁶ NETB has ‘Saul said nothing’ in place of ‘he said nothing’, here following the MT & NJB.

¹⁷ The remainder of this chapter is a tradition deriving from the sanctuary at Mizpah (#7:5), parallel to the one about the anointing (9:26–10:16).

¹⁸ The NRSV has ‘them’ in place of ‘the Israelites’, here following the MT & NJB.

¹⁹ The NJB has the past tense, ‘saved’, in place of ‘saves’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

²⁰ On the drawing of lots, see Jos 7:14–18.

²¹ After ‘clan of Matri’, the NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (καὶ προσάγουσιν τὴν φυλὴν Μαρταρι εἰς ἄνδρας), add, “Finally, he made the clan of Matri come forward man by man;” the ‘clan of Matri’ is not mentioned elsewhere.

²² ‘Has the man come here’ follows the LXX (Εἰ ἔρχεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐνταῦθα); the MT has ‘is there yet a man to come here?’

בִּיהוָה הִבָּא עוֹד הַלֵּם אִישׁ {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הִנֵּה־
הוא נִחָא אֶל־הַכֹּהֲלִים: כג וַיִּרְצוּ וַיִּקַּחֵהוּ מִשֵּׁם
וַיִּתִּיצֵב בְּתוֹךְ הָעָם וַיִּגְבֶּה מִכָּל־הָעָם מִשְׁכָּמוֹ
וּמַעֲלָה: כד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂמוּאֵל אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם הִרְאִיתֶם
אֲשֶׁר בָּחֲרֻבוּ יְהוָה כִּי אֵין כָּמָהוּ בְּכָל־הָעָם וַיִּרְעוּ
כָּל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ: {ס}

כה וידבר שמואל אל־העם את משפט המלכה ויכתב בספר וינח לפני יהוה וישלח שמואל את כל־העם איש לביתו: ^{כו} וגם־שאול הלך לביתו גבעתה וילכו עמו החיל אשר־נגע אלהים בלבם: ^{כז} ובני בליעל אמרו מה־ישענו זה ויבזהו ולא־הביאו לו מנחה ויהי כמחריש: {פ}

... [וּנְ]חֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי עֲמוֹן הוּא לַחֵץ אֶת בְּנֵי גֹד
וְאֶת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן בַּחֲזָקָה וְנִקְרָא לָהֶם כֹּׁ[וּל] [עֵי]ן יָמִין
וְנִתְּן אֵינָן [מֹוֹשִׁי]ׁעַ לִי שְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא נִשְׁאָר אִישׁ
בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בְּעַׁ[בֵּר הַיַּרְדֵּן] [אֲשֶׁר] לִׁ[וּא]
נִקְרָא לֹו נַחׁ[שׁ מֶלֶךְ] בְּנֵי [עֵי]מֹון כֹּול עֵין יָמִין וְ[הַ]ן

²³ The *NJB* ends with '*they all were*' in place of '*any of them*', here following the *NRSV*.

²⁵ The mention of a 'book' shows Samuel as a man of letters, as well as priest, prophet, and judge; we know nothing more about this book.

²⁷ In place of the MT's 'but he held his peace' (literally, 'and it was like one being silent') the LXX has 'after about a month', taking the expression with the first part of the following chapter rather than with 10:27. Some support for this reading appears in 4QSam^a, which has here 'about a month'.

שבעת אלפים איש [נצלו מיד] בני עמון ויבאו thousand men had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered
אל [י]בש גלעד Jabesh-Gilead.

שמואל א פרק יא

^א וַיַּעַל נָחַשׁ הָעַמּוֹנִי וַיַּחֲזֵק עַל־יָבִישׁ גִּלְעָד וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל־אֲנָשֵׁי יָבִישׁ אֶל־נָחַשׁ כִּרְת־לָנוּ בְרִית וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ: ^ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם נָחַשׁ הָעַמּוֹנִי בְּזֹאת אֶכְרֹת לָכֶם בְּנִקְזֹר לָכֶם כָּל־עֵין יָמִין וְשִׁמְתִּיהָ חֲרָפָה עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו זָקְנֵי יָבִישׁ הֲרָף לָנוּ שְׁבַעַת יָמִים וְנִשְׁלַחְהָ מַלְאָכִים בְּכָל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִם־אֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ אֲתָנוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ אֵלָיָהּ: ^ד וַיָּבֹאוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים גִּבַּעַת שָׁאוּל וַיְדַבְּרוּ הַדְּבָרִים בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשְׁאוּ כָל־הָעָם אֶת־קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ: ^ה וְהָנָה שָׁאוּל בָּא אַחֲרֵי הַבָּקָר מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל מַה־לָּעָם כִּי יִבְכּוּ וַיִּסְפְּרוּ־לּוֹ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אֲנָשֵׁי יָבִישׁ: ^ו וַתִּצְלַח רוּחַ־אֱלֹהִים עַל־שָׁאוּל בִּשְׁמֵעוֹ כְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיַּחֲר אַפּוֹ מְאֹד: ^ז וַיִּקַּח צֶמֶד בָּקָר וַיִּנְתַּחֲהוּ וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּכָל־גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיַד הַמַּלְאָכִים לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר אֵינָנו יֵצֵא אַחֲרֵי שָׁאוּל וְאַחֲרֵי שְׁמוּאֵל כֹּה

1 SAMUEL 11

¹ Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-Gilead. All the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a treaty with us and we will serve you." ² But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "The only way I will make a treaty with you is if you let me gouge out everyone's right eye and in so doing humiliate all Israel!" ³ The elders of Jabesh said to him, "Give us seven days' grace while we send messengers throughout the territory of Israel, and if no one comes to our help, we will come out to you." ⁴ The messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, and reported this to the people, and all the people wept aloud. ⁵ Now Saul was coming in from the fields behind his oxen, and he said, "What is wrong? Why are the people weeping?" They explained to him what the men of Jabesh had said. ⁶ When he heard these words, the spirit of Yahweh seized on Saul, and he fell into a great fury. ⁷ He took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, which he sent by messengers throughout the territory of Israel with these words: "If anyone will not march with Saul and Samuel, this

1 SAMUEL 11

- ¹ The NRSV, following 4QSam^a, adds 'about a month later' at the beginning of this verse; here, we follow the MT & NETB.
- ² For the reply of Nahash, here following NETB, the NJB has, "I will make a treaty with you on this condition: that I put out all your right eyes; I shall inflict this disgrace on the whole of Israel."
- ³ The people of Jabesh give a deliberately ambiguous reply; 'come out' can mean either to surrender or to attack, as also in v. 10.
- ⁴ In place of 'of Saul', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'where Saul lived' (in parentheses).
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'his oxen' (as NJB) is 'the oxen' (as NRSV). The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.
- ⁶ In place of 'seized on', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'came upon ... in power' and NETB has 'rushed upon'.
- ⁷ The NJB lacks 'and Samuel' – a gloss in the spirit of Ch. 7. Sending round the 'pieces' of the sacrifice was a call to war (Jg 19:29).

יַעֲשֶׂה לְבַקְרוֹ וַיִּפֹּל פַּחַד־יְהוָה עַל־הָעָם וַיֵּצְאוּ
כָאִישׁ אֶחָד: ^ח וַיִּפְקְדֵם בְּבֶזֶק וַיְהִיו בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אָלֶף וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה שְׁלֹשִׁים אָלֶף:
^ט וַיֹּאמְרוּ לַמְּלָאכִים הַבָּאִים כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן לְאִישׁ
יָבִישׁ גִּלְעָד מָחָר תִּהְיֶה־לָכֶם תְּשׁוּעָה בַחֲסִי
הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וַיָּבֹאוּ הַמְּלָאכִים וַיַּגִּידוּ לְאֲנָשֵׁי יָבִישׁ
וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ: ^י וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲנָשֵׁי יָבִישׁ מָחָר נֵצַא אֲלֵיכֶם
וְעָשִׂיתֶם לָנוּ כְּכָל־הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם: {ס}

^{יא} וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרֶת וַיֵּשֶׁם שָׁאוּל אֶת־הָעָם שְׁלֹשָׁה
רָאשִׁים וַיָּבֹאוּ בְּתוֹךְ־הַמַּחֲנֶה בְּאַשְׁמֹרֶת הַבֹּקֶר
וַיָּכּוּ אֶת־עַמּוֹן עַד־חֹם הַיּוֹם וַיְהִי הַנִּשְׁאָרִים וַיִּפְּצוּ
וְלֹא נִשְׁאַרוּ־בָם שְׁנַיִם יָחַד: ^{יב} וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם אֶל־
שָׁמוּאֵל מִי הָאִמֵּר שָׁאוּל יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ תָּנוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים
וְנִמְיָתָם: ^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל לֹא־יוֹמֶת אִישׁ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה
כִּי הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה־יְהוָה תְּשׁוּעָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יד} וַיֹּאמֶר
שָׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם לָכוּ וְנִלְכֶה הַגִּלְגָּל וְנַחֲדֵשׁ שָׁם

shall be done with his oxen!" At this, a dread of Yahweh fell on the people and they marched out as one man. ⁸ He inspected them at Bezek; there were three hundred thousand Israelites and thirty thousand of Judah. ⁹ He then said to the messengers who had come, "This is what you must say to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, "Tomorrow by the time the sun is hot help will reach you."" The messengers went and reported this to the men of Jabesh who were overjoyed; ¹⁰ they said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you and you can do what you like to us."

¹¹ The next day, Saul disposed the army in three companies; they burst into the middle of the camp in the last watch of the night and struck down the Ammonites until high noon. The survivors were so scattered that not two of them remained together. ¹² The people then said to Samuel, "Who said, "Is Saul to reign over us?" Hand the men over for us to put them to death." ¹³ "No one is to be put to death today," Saul replied, "for today, Yahweh has brought victory to Israel." ¹⁴ Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and reaffirm the

⁸ The NRSV, following the LXX (ἐβδόμηκοντα χιλιάδας) and 4QSam^a, has 'seventy thousand' in place of 'thirty thousand'; here, we follow the MT.

⁹ NETB has 'fully up' in place of 'hot', here following the NJB & NRSV. The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁰ The NJB adds 'to Nahash' after 'they said'.

¹¹ The day began at sundown; hence, the 'next day' would mean 'that evening' in our reckoning.

¹² V. 15 originally followed v. 11; Saul was acclaimed king on the day after the victory. However, according to the parallel narrative, Saul had already been proclaimed at Mizpah (10:24). Vv. 12–14 harmonize the two narratives; Saul was not acknowledged by all (see 10:27) and his investiture had to be 'renewed'. Hosea, hostile to monarchical government, seems to condemn the proclamation as sinful (Ho 8:4, 9:15).

¹³ The NRSV has 'deliverance' in place of 'victory', here following the NJB.

¹⁴ The NJB has 'monarchy' in place of 'kingship', here following the NRSV & NETB.

הַמְּלוּכָה: ^{טו} וַיֵּלְכוּ כָּל־הָעָם הַגִּלְגָּל וַיִּמְלְכוּ שָׁם
 אֶת־שָׁאוּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בַּגִּלְגָּל וַיִּזְבְּחוּ־שָׁם זִבְחִים
 שְׁלָמִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׂמַח שָׁם שָׁאוּל וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־מְאֹד: {פ}

kingship there.” ¹⁵ So, all the people went to Gilgal and there they
 proclaimed Saul king before Yahweh at Gilgal. They offered
 communion sacrifices there before Yahweh; and Saul and all the men of
 Israel rejoiced greatly.

¹⁵ NETB omits the 2nd instance of the name ‘Gilgal’.

1 SAMUEL 12

שמואל א פרק יב

א וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי
בְּקוֹלְכֶם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר-אָמַרְתֶּם לִי וְאִמְלִיךְ עֲלֵיכֶם
מֶלֶךְ: ב וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ | מִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵיכֶם וְאֲנִי
זָקְנָתִי וְשִׁבְתִּי וּבְנֵי הַנֶּם אִתְּכֶם וְאֲנִי הִתְהַלֵּכְתִּי
לִפְנֵיכֶם מִנְעָרִי עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ג הֲנִנִי עָנּוּ בִי נֶגֶד
יְהוָה וְנֶגֶד מְשִׁיחוֹ אֶת-שׁוֹר | מִי לָקַחְתִּי וְחִמּוֹר מִי
לָקַחְתִּי וְאֶת-מִי עֲשָׂקְתִּי אֶת-מִי רָצוֹתִי וּמִי־מִי
לָקַחְתִּי כֹפֶר וְאֲעֵלִים עֵינֵי בּוֹ וְאָשִׁיב לָכֶם:
ד וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא עֲשָׂקְתָנוּ וְלֹא רָצוֹתָנוּ וְלֹא-לָקַחְתָּ
מִי־אִישׁ מֵאֻמָּה: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם עַד יְהוָה בָּכֶם
וְעַד מְשִׁיחוֹ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי לֹא מָצָאתֶם בְּיָדִי
מֵאֻמָּה וַיֹּאמֶר עַד: {פ}

ו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל-הָעָם יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת-
מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת-אַהֲרֹן וְאֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָה אֶת-אֲבֹתֵיכֶם
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ז וְעַתָּה הִתִּיצְבוּ וְאֲשַׁפְטָה אֶתְכֶם
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵת כָּל-צִדְקוֹת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה אֶתְכֶם

¹ And Samuel said to all Israel, "I have faithfully done all you asked of me, and I have appointed a king over you. ² Now look, it is the king who will lead you now. As for me, I am old and grey, and my sons are here among you. I have led you from my youth until today. ³ Here I am. Testify against me before Yahweh and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Have I ever wronged or oppressed anyone? Have I ever taken a bribe from anyone? If so, testify against me, and I will here and now requite you." ⁴ "You have neither wronged nor oppressed us," they said, "nor accepted a bribe from anyone." ⁵ He said to them, "Yahweh is witness against you and his anointed is witness today that you have found nothing in my hands?" "He is witness," they replied.

⁶ Samuel then said to the people, "Yahweh is witness, he who raised up Moses and Aaron and who brought your ancestors up out of the land of Egypt. ⁷ Now, therefore, stand here while I argue with you before Yahweh and remind you of all the saving works he performed for you

1 SAMUEL 12

¹ A more literal translation for 'appointed' is 'installed'.

² The misconduct of the sons is not mentioned here (compare 8:3).

³ The NJB lacks 'testify against me, and' in the last sentence, here following the LXX (ἀποκρίσθε κατ' ἐμοῦ) & NRSV.

⁴ For the people's reply, the NRSV reads, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from the hand of anyone."

⁵ The phrase 'you have found nothing in my hands' means that he has not been guilty of taking bribes.

⁶ The MT lacks 'is witness, he who', here following the LXX (Μάρτυς κύριος ὁ ποιήσας).

⁷ The MT lacks 'and remind you', here following the LXX (καὶ ἀπαγγελῶ ὑμῖν).

וְאֶת־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: ^ח כַּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא יַעֲקֹב מִצְרַיִם וַיִּזְעֲקוּ
 אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־
 אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּצִיאוּ אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁבּוּם
 בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה: ^ט וַיִּשְ�כְּחוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וַיִּמְכְּרוּ
 אֹתָם בְּיַד סִיסְרָא שַׂר־צָבָא חֲצֹר וּבִיד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים
 וּבִיד מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וַיִּלַּחֲמוּ בָם: ^י וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה
 וַיֹּאמֶר וַיֹּאמְרוּ חָטְאוּנוּ כִּי עֲזַבְנוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְנַעֲבֹד
 אֶת־הַבַּעַלִּים וְאֶת־הָעִשְׁתָּרוֹת וְעַתָּה הֲצִילֵנוּ מִיַּד
 אֹיְבֵינוּ וְנַעֲבֹדָךְ: ^{יא} וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־יִרְבֶּעֵל וְאֶת־
 בְּדָן וְאֶת־יִפְתָּח וְאֶת־שִׁמְוֵאל וַיֹּצִל אֶתְכֶם מִיַּד
 אֹיְבֵיכֶם מִסָּבִיב וַתֵּשְׁבוּ בְּטָח: ^{יב} וַתֵּרְאוּ כִּי־נִחַשׁ
 מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן בָּא עֲלֵיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ לִי לֹא כִי־מֶלֶךְ
 יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ וַיְהִי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִלְּכֶכֶם: ^{יג} וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה
 הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרִיתֶם אֲשֶׁר שְׁאַלְתֶּם וְהִנֵּה נָתַן
 יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם מֶלֶךְ: ^{יד} אִם־תִּירָאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
 וְעַבַּדְתֶּם אֹתוֹ וּשְׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקוֹלוֹ וְלֹא תִמְרוּ אֶת־פִּי
 יְהוָה וְהִיתֶם גַּם־אִתָּם וְגַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ

and for your ancestors. ⁸ When Jacob came to Egypt, the Egyptians oppressed them, and your ancestors cried to Yahweh who sent Moses and Aaron; they brought forth your ancestors out of Egypt and gave them a settled home here. ⁹ Then they forgot Yahweh their God and he sold them into the power of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin of Hazor, as also into the power of the Philistines and of the king of Moab who fought against them. ¹⁰ Then they cried to Yahweh, “We have sinned, for we have deserted Yahweh; we have served the Baals and the Astartes. Rescue us now from the power of our enemies, and we will serve you.” ¹¹ The Yahweh sent Jerubbaal and Barak, and Jephthah and Samuel. He rescued you from the power of the enemies surrounding you, and you lived in security. ¹² “But when you saw Nahash, king of the Ammonites, come to attack you, you said to me, “No, a king must rule over us” – although Yahweh your God himself is your king. ¹³ Here then is the king you have chosen; Yahweh has set a king over you. ¹⁴ If you fear and serve Yahweh and obey his voice and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who

⁸ The MT lacks ‘the Egyptians oppressed them’, here following the LXX (καὶ ἐταπείνωσεν αὐτοὺς Αἴγυπτος).

⁹ The NJB, following the MT, lacks, ‘King Jabin of’, here following the NRSV.

¹⁰ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹¹ The NRSV, following the LXX, names ‘Samson’ in place of ‘Samuel’. ‘Barak’ follows the LXX; the MT has ‘Bedan’.

¹² In place of ‘Nahash, king of the Ammonites’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘King Nahash of the Ammonites’.

¹³ A more literal translation of this verse, here following the NJB, is, “Now look! Here is the king you have chosen – the one that you asked for! Look, Yahweh has given you a king!”

¹⁴ The words ‘all will be well’, not present in the MT, are supplied for stylistic reasons.

עֲלֵיכֶם אַחֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ^{טו} וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ
בְּקוֹל יְהוָה וּמְרִיתֶם אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וְהִיתָה יַד־יְהוָה
בָּכֶם וּבְאַבְתֵּיכֶם: ^{טז} גַּם־עַתָּה הִתְיַצְבוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־
הַדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לְעֵינֵיכֶם:
^{יז} הֲלֹא קִצִּיר־חֹטִים הַיּוֹם אֶקְרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן
קָלוֹת וּמָטָר וְדָעוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־רַעַתְכֶם רַבָּה אֲשֶׁר
עָשִׂיתֶם בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְשָׂאוֹל לָכֶם מֶלֶךְ: {ס}
^{יח} וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה קָלֹת וּמָטָר
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּירָא כָּל־הָעָם מֵאֵד אֶת־יְהוָה וְאֶת־
שְׁמוּאֵל: ^{יט} וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל הֲתַפְּלֹל
בְּעַד־עַבְדִּיךָ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְאֶל־נַמּוֹת כִּי־יִסְפְּנוּ
עַל־כָּל־חַטֹּאתֵינוּ רָעָה לְשָׂאֵל לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ: ^כ וַיֹּאמֶר
שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם אֶל־תִּירָאוּ אֹתָם עֲשִׂיתֶם אֵת
כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת אֲךָ אֶל־תִּסּוּרוּ מֵאַחֲרֵי יְהוָה
וְעַבַּדְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם: ^{כא} וְלֹא תִסּוּרוּ
כִּי אַחֲרֵי הִתְּהוּ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִנְעִילוּ וְלֹא יִצִּילוּ כִּי־
תִהְיוּ הֶמָּה: ^{כב} כִּי לֹא־יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ בַּעֲבוּר

rules you follow Yahweh your God, all will be well; ¹⁵ but if you do not obey the voice of Yahweh, if you rebel against his order, his hand will be against you and against your king. ¹⁶ Stand here, then, and watch the great wonder Yahweh will do before your eyes. ¹⁷ It is now wheat harvest, is it not? I will call on Yahweh and he shall send thunder and rain. Consider then and see what a very wicked thing you have done in the sight of Yahweh by asking to have a king."

¹⁸ So, Samuel then called on Yahweh, and Yahweh sent thunder and rain the same day; and all the people held both Yahweh and Samuel in great awe. ¹⁹ And all the people said to Samuel, "Plead on behalf of your servants with Yahweh your God that we may not die; for, we have added to all our sins this evil of demanding a king for ourselves." ²⁰ And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid. You have indeed done all this evil; however, do not turn aside from following Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your hearts. ²¹ You must not turn aside and follow empty idols which, being empty, cannot profit you and cannot save you, ²² since, for the sake of his great name, Yahweh will not desert his

¹⁵ The MT has 'ancestors' in place of 'king' (LXX).

¹⁶ In vv. 16–19, the author wishes to show that Samuel was still in greater favour with God than was the idea of a king.

¹⁷ The 'wheat harvest' was the dry season, when it never rains in Palestine, thus it is a miracle, the thunder making it more impressive.

¹⁸ In place of 'held ... in great awe', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'greatly feared'.

¹⁹ The NJB lacks 'for ourselves', here following the NRSV.

²⁰ NETB has simply 'sinned' in place of 'done all this evil', here following the MT & NJB.

²¹ The NRSV has 'useless' in place of 'empty' and NETB repeats 'empty' in place of 'useless'; here, we follow the NJB.

²² NETB has 'reputation' in place of 'great name', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל כִּי הוֹאִיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אִתְּכֶם לֹ
 לָעַם: ^{כג} גַּם אֲנֹכִי חָלִילָה לִי מִחֲטָא לִיהוָה מִחֲדָל
 לְהַתְּפַלֵּל בְּעַדְכֶם וְהוֹרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ הַטּוֹבָה
 וְהִשְׁרָה: ^{כד} אֲדָן יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְעַבְדְּתֶם אֹתוֹ
 בְּאַמֶּת בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם כִּי רָאוּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־הִגְדֹּל
 עִמָּכֶם: ^{כה} וְאִם־הִרְעָ תִּרְעוּ גַם־אֹתָם גַּם־מַלְכְּכֶם
 תִּסָּפוּ: {פ}

people. For, it has pleased Yahweh to make you his own people.
²³ Moreover, for my part, far be it from me that I should sin against
 Yahweh by ceasing to plead for you. I will instruct you in the way that
 is good and right. ²⁴ Only reverence and serve Yahweh faithfully with
 all your heart, for you see the great wonder he has done among you.
²⁵ However, if you persist in wickedness, you and your king will be
 swept away.”

²³ The NJB includes the last sentences as part of the previous one.

²⁴ The NRSV has ‘consider’ in place of ‘you see’, here following the NJB.

²⁵ The NJB has ‘perish’ in place of ‘be swept away’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

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שמואל א פרק יג

א בֶּן־שָׁנָה שְׁאוּל בָּמַלְכוֹ וּשְׁתֵּי שָׁנִים מָלַךְ עַל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל: ב וַיִּבְחַר־לּוֹ שְׁאוּל שְׁלֹשָׁת אֲלָפִים
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִיו עִם־שְׁאוּל אֲלָפִים בְּמִכְמָשׁ וּבֵהָר
בֵּית־אֵל וְאֵלָף הָיוּ עִם־יוֹנָתָן בְּגִבְעַת בְּנִימִין וַיֹּתֵר
הָעָם שָׁלַח אִישׁ לְאֹהֲלָיו: ג וַיֵּךְ יוֹנָתָן אֶת נֹצִיב
פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֲשֶׁר בְּגִבְעָה וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וּשְׁאוּל
תָּקַע בַּשּׁוֹפָר בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ לֵאמֹר יִשְׁמְעוּ הָעִבְרִים:
ד וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁמְעוּ לֵאמֹר הִכָּה שְׁאוּל אֶת־נֹצִיב
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְגַם־נִבְאָשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּצְעְקוּ
הָעָם אַחֲרֵי שְׁאוּל הַגִּלְגָּל: ה וּפְלִשְׁתִּים נֶאֱסָפוּ
לְהִלָּחֵם עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלֹשִׁים אֲלָף רֶכֶב וְשֵׁשֶׁת
אֲלָפִים פָּרָשִׁים וְעָם כַּחֲזֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׂפַת־הַיָּם
לָרֹב וַיַּעֲלוּ וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִכְמָשׁ קִדְמַת בֵּית אֹז: ו וַאֲישׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאוּ כִּי צָר־לּוֹ כִּי נִגַּשׁ הָעָם וַיִּתְּחַבְּאוּ הָעָם

1 Saul was ... years old when he began to reign; and he reigned ... two years over Israel. 2 Saul chose three thousand men from Israel; two thousand were with Saul at Michmash and in the highlands of Bethel, and a thousand with Jonathan at Geba of Benjamin; the rest of the people Saul sent to their own tents. 3 Jonathan defeated the Philistine garrison that was at Gibeah and the Philistines heard of it. Saul sounded the trumpet throughout the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" 4 When all Israel heard that Saul has smashed the Philistine garrison and how Israel had incurred the enmity of the Philistines, the people rallied behind Saul at Gilgal. 5 The Philistines mustered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They came up and encamped at Michmash, to the east of Beth-Aven. 6 When the Israelites saw they were desperate, since they were hard pressed, they hid in caves, in bushes, in

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- ¹ This verse is not present in most MSS of the LXX; the MT reads, "Saul was *one* year old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel for *two* years," which is absurd. Saul's age at his accession was either not known or has fallen out of the text (hence the ellipses). The WEBBE has 'thirty' and 'forty' for the 2 ellipses, citing its source as a few MSS of the LXX.
- ² The NRSV, following the MT, has 'Gibeah' in place of 'Geba'. The confusion between Geba and Gibeah in Hebrew creates difficulties throughout Chs 13–14; the choices made here, following the NJB, are based on parallel texts and geographical considerations.
- ³ The NRSV has 'Geba' in place of 'Gibeah' (see #2). The NJB uses 'pillar' in place of 'garrison'.
- ⁴ In place of 'incurred the enmity of', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'became odious to'.
- ⁵ The NJB has 'three thousand' in place of 'thirty thousand'.
- ⁶ In place of 'bushes', both the NJB and NRSV use 'holes' (a conjectural translation).

בַּמַּעְרוֹת וּבַחֲוֹחִים וּבְסַלְעִים וּבְצִרְחִים וּבְבִרְוֹת:
 וְעִבְרִים עָבְרוּ אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶרֶץ גָּד וְגִלְעָד וְשָׂאוּל
 עֹדְדָנָם בְּגִלְגָּל וְכָל־הָעָם חָרְדוּ אַחֲרָיו: ^ח וַיִּיחַל
 וַיִּזְחַל שְׁבַעַת יָמִים לְמוֹעֵד אֲשֶׁר שָׁמוּאֵל וְלֹא־בָא
 שָׁמוּאֵל הַגִּלְגָּל וַיִּפֹּץ הָעָם מֵעָלָיו: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל
 הֲגִשּׁוּ אֵלַי הָעֹלָה וְהַשְּׁלָמִים וַיַּעַל הָעֹלָה: ^י וַיְהִי
 כְּכַלְתּוֹ לַהֲעֹלוֹת הָעֹלָה וְהִנֵּה שָׁמוּאֵל בָּא וַיֵּצֵא
 שָׂאוּל לִקְרֹאתוֹ לְבָרְכוֹ: ^{יא} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל מָה
 עָשִׂיתָ וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל כִּי־רָאִיתִי כִּי־נִפֹּץ הָעָם מֵעָלַי
 וְאַתָּה לֹא־בָאתָ לְמוֹעֵד הַיָּמִים וּפְלִשְׁתִּים נֹאסְפִים
 מִכֶּמֶשׁ: ^{יב} וַאֲמַר עָתָה יֵרְדוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֵלַי הַגִּלְגָּל
 וּפָנִי יִהְיֶה לֹא חֲלִיתִי וְאַתָּאֲפִק וְאַעֲלֶה הָעֹלָה: {ס}
^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמוּאֵל אֶל־שָׂאוּל נִסְכַּלְתָּ לֹא שִׁמְרַתָּ
 אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ כִּי עָתָה הֵכִין
 יְהוָה אֶת־מַמְלַכְתְּךָ אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־עוֹלָם:

crevices, in vaults, in wells. ⁷ Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan into the territory of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal and all the people followed him, trembling. ⁸ He waited seven days, the time Samuel fixed, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal and they began to slip away from him. ⁹ So, Saul said, “Bring me the high-offering and the peace offering;” and he made the high-offering. ¹⁰ When he finished offering the high-offering, Samuel came and Saul went out to meet and greet him. ¹¹ Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul replied, “I saw the army dispersing from me and you had not come at the time fixed, while the Philistines were mustering at Michmash; ¹² so, I said: Now the Philistines are going to fall on me at Gilgal and I have not implored the favour of Yahweh. So, I felt obliged to act and I offered the holocaust myself.” ¹³ Samuel answered Saul, “You have acted like a fool. If you had carried out the order Yahweh your God commanded you, Yahweh would have confirmed your sovereignty over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now your

⁷ In place of, “Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan,” (following the NRSV and MT), the NJB has, “Some also crossed the Jordan fords,” following the LXX (καὶ οἱ διαβαίνοντες διέβησαν τὸν Ιορδάνην).

⁸ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁹ In place of ‘peace offering’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘communion sacrifice’ and the NRSV has ‘offerings of well-being’.

¹⁰ The NJB opens with ‘just as he was finishing’; here, we follow NETB.

¹¹ In place of ‘were mustering’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘had assembled’.

¹² The NRSV has ‘forced myself’ in place of ‘felt obliged’, here following the NJB (& NETB); the NIV has ‘felt compelled’.

¹³ It is not easy to see what Saul’s fault was: he waited seven days, as instructed. That he himself should offer sacrifice would not be opposed to ancient custom (see 14:32–35). The reason for his rejection is put more clearly in Ch. 15.

¹⁴ This verse is a reference to David, Saul’s successor as king.

יָד וְעַתָּה מִמְּלִכְתְּךָ לֹא־תִקּוּם בְּקֶשׁ יְהוָה לֹא אִישׁ
כְּלָבְבוֹ וַיִּצְוֵהוּ יְהוָה לִנְגִיד עַל־עַמּוֹ כִּי לֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ
אֶת אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּךְ יְהוָה: {ס}

טו וַיָּקָם שָׁמוּאֵל וַיֵּעַל מִן־הַגִּלְגָּל גִּבְעַת בְּנִימִן
וַיִּפְקֹד שָׂאוּל אֶת־הָעָם הַנִּמְצָאִים עִמּוֹ כִּשְׁשׁ
מֵאוֹת אִישׁ: טז וְשָׂאוּל וַיּוֹנְתָן בָּנוֹ וְהָעָם הַנִּמְצָא
עִמָּם יֹשְׁבִים בְּגִבְעַת בְּנִימִן וּפְלִשְׁתִּים חָנוּ בְּמִכְמָשׁ:
יז וַיֵּצֵא הַמְּשַׁחִית מִמִּחְמָשׁ פְּלִשְׁתִּים שְׁלֹשָׁה
רֵאשִׁים הָרָאשׁ אֶחָד יִפְנֶה אֶל־דֶּרֶךְ עֶפְרָה אֶל־
אֶרֶץ שׁוּעַל: יח וְהָרָאשׁ אֶחָד יִפְנֶה דֶּרֶךְ בֵּית חֶרֶן
וְהָרָאשׁ אֶחָד יִפְנֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַגִּבּוֹל הַנִּשְׁקָף עַל־גִּי
הַצְּבָעִים הַמַּדְבָּרָה: {ס}

יט וַחֲרָשׁ לֹא יִמָּצֵא בְּכָל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־אָמְרוּ
אִמֵּר פְּלִשְׁתִּים פֶּן יַעֲשׂוּ הָעִבְרִים חֶרֶב אִו חֲנִית:
כ וַיֵּרְדּוּ כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים לְלָטֹשׁ אִישׁ אֶת־
מַחְרָשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־קֶרְדֵּמּוֹ וְאֶת מַחְרָשְׁתּוֹ:
כא וְהִיתָה הַפְּצִירָה פִּים לַמַּחְרָשׁ וְלֵאָתִים וְלִשְׁלֹשׁ

sovereignty will not last; Yahweh has searched out a man for himself after his own heart and designated him leader of his people, since you have not carried out what Yahweh ordered you.”

¹⁵ Samuel then rose and left Gilgal to continue his journey to Gibeah of Benjamin. Saul inspected the force that was with him; there were about six hundred men. ¹⁶ Saul, his son Jonathan, and the force that was with them took up their quarters in Geba of Benjamin, while the Philistines camped at Michmash. ¹⁷ The raiding contingent came out from the Philistine camp in three companies: one company turned toward Ophrah in the land of Shual; ¹⁸ another company turned toward Beth-Horon; and the third company for the high ground overlooking the Valley of Zeboim, towards the desert.

¹⁹ There was not a single smith in the whole land of Israel, because the Philistines had reasoned: We must prevent the Hebrews from forging swords or spears. ²⁰ Hence, all the Israelites were in the habit of going down to the Philistines to sharpen every ploughshare, axe, mattock, or goad. ²¹ The price was two-thirds of a shekel for ploughshares and axes,

¹⁵ After ‘journey’, the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ τὸ κατάλειμμα τοῦ λαοῦ ἀνέβη ὀπίσω Σαουλ εἰς ἀπάντησιν ὀπίσω τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ πολεμιστοῦ. αὐτῶν παραγενομένων ἐκ Γαλγαλῶν), adds, ‘Those of the people who remained followed Saul as he went to join the warriors, and went from Gilgal’.

¹⁶ With this verse, the ancient narrative of the battle of Michmash begins; Vv. 19–22 are parenthetical.

¹⁷ The NJB omits the word ‘company’, here following the NRSV.

¹⁸ The MT has ‘frontier’ in place of ‘high ground’ (LXX). ‘Zeboim’ means ‘the Hyenas’; the NJB uses the translation.

¹⁹ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁰ The NRSV uses ‘sickle’ in place of ‘goad’; the meaning of the Hebrew text is uncertain.

²¹ The price, ‘two-thirds of a shekel’, is a translation of פִּים; a shekel was about 11½ grams of silver.

קִלְשׁוֹן וְלִהְקַדְדָּמִים וְלִהְצִיב הַדֶּרֶבֶן: ^{כב} וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם
מִלְחָמָה וְלֹא נִמְצָא חֶרֶב וְחִנִּית בְּיַד כָּל־הָעָם
אֲשֶׁר אֶת־שָׁאוֹל וְאֶת־יוֹנָתָן וְתַמְצָא לְשָׁאוֹל
וְלִיוֹנָתָן בָּנוּ: ^{כג} וַיֵּצֵא מִצֵּב פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶל־מַעְבְּרַת
מִכְמָשׁ: {ס}

and one-third for sharpening mattocks or straightening goads. ²² Thus,
on the day of the battle of Michmash, no one in the whole army with
Saul and Jonathan had either sword or spear in his hand, except for Saul
and his son Jonathan. ²³ A Philistine outpost left for the Pass of
Michmash.

²² The NJB has 'except, however,' in place of 'except for'.

²³ NETB includes this verse as part of the 1st paragraph of Ch. 14.

1 SAMUEL 14

שמואל א פרק יד

^א וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹנָתָן בֶּן-שָׁאוּל אֶל-הַנָּעַר נָשָׂא כְלָיו לָכֶּה וְנַעֲבְרָה אֶל-מִצֵּב פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֲשֶׁר מֵעֵבֶר הַלְזוּ וּלְאָבִיו לֹא הִגִּיד: ^ב וּשְׁאוּל יוֹשֵׁב בִּקְצֵה הַגְּבֵעָה תַּחַת הָרִמּוֹן אֲשֶׁר בְּמִגְרוֹן וְהָעָם אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ כָּשָׁשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ: ^ג וְאַחִיהָ בֶן-אַחֲטוֹב אַחִי אִיכָבּוֹד בֶּן-פִּינְחָס בֶּן-עֵלִי כֹהֵן יְהוָה בְּשָׁלוֹ נָשָׂא אֶפֹד וְהָעָם לֹא יָדָע כִּי הֵלֵךְ יוֹנָתָן: ^ד וּבֵין הַמַּעֲבְרוֹת אֲשֶׁר בִּקְשׁ יוֹנָתָן לַעֲבֹר עַל-מִצֵּב פְּלִשְׁתִּים שְׁנֵי-הַסֵּלַע מֵהָעֵבֶר מִזֶּה וּשְׁנֵי-הַסֵּלַע מֵהָעֵבֶר מִזֶּה וְשֵׁם הָאֶחָד בּוֹזֵז וְשֵׁם הָאֶחָד סֵנֶה: ^ה הַשֵּׁן הָאֶחָד מִצּוֹק מִצָּפוֹן מוֹל מִכְמֶשׁ וְהָאֶחָד מִנֶּגֶב מוֹל גִּבְעָה: {ס}

^ו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶל-הַנָּעַר נָשָׂא כְלָיו לָכֶּה וְנַעֲבְרָה אֶל-מִצֵּב הָעֲרָלִים הָאֵלֶּה אוֹלֵי יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לָנוּ כִּי אֵין לִיהוָה מַעְצוֹר לְהוֹשִׁיעַ בָּרַב אוֹ בְּמִעוֹט:

¹ Then, one day, Jonathan son of Saul said to the servant who was carrying his armour, "Come on, let us go across to the Philistine outpost in the pass;" but he did not warn his father. ² Saul was on the outskirts of Geba, sitting under the pomegranate tree that is at Migron; the force with him numbered about six hundred men. ³ Ahijah son of Ahitub, brother of Ichabod son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, was carrying the ephod. The force did not know that Jonathan had left. ⁴ In the pass that Jonathan was trying to cross, to reach the Philistine outpost, there is a rocky spur on one side and a rocky spur on the other; the name of one was Bozez, the name of the other was Seneh. ⁵ The first spur stands to the north facing Michmash, the other to the south facing Geba.

⁶ Jonathan said to the servant carrying his armour, "Come, let us go over to the outpost of these uncircumcised men; perhaps Yahweh will do something for us, for nothing can prevent Yahweh from delivering,

1 SAMUEL 14

¹ In place of 'the servant who carried his armour', here following the MT & NETB, the NJB has simply 'his armour-bearer'.

² The NRSV, following the MT, has 'Gibeah' in place of 'Geba' (see #13:2). The NJB has, 'stands near the threshing-floor' in place of 'is at Migron'.

³ The 'ephod' here is not the linen garment of 2:18 but a box containing Urim and Thummim, the sacred objects for determining the divine will by lot (v. 41, see #Ex 28:30).

⁴ The literal translation of 'in the pass' is 'between the passes'.

⁵ In place of 'spur', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'crag' and NETB has 'cliff'.

⁶ 'Uncircumcised' and 'Hebrew' (v. 11) are terms of derision (see #4:6): the Israelites and other Semitic peoples to the east, such as the Amorites, Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites, practised circumcision (see Jr 9:25); the Philistines, coming from the west, has no such custom.

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ נָשָׂא כָלִיו עֲשֵׂה כָל־אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבְּךָ נָטָה
לִדְּ הַנְּנִי עִמָּךְ כְּלִבְבְּךָ: {ס}

ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן הִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ עֹבְרִים אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁים
וְנִגְלִינוּ אֲלֵיהֶם: ט אִם־כֹּה יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ דְּמוּ עַד־
הַגִּיעֵנוּ אֲלֵיכֶם וְעַמְדָנוּ תַּחְתֵּינוּ וְלֹא נַעֲלֶה אֲלֵיהֶם:
י וְאִם־כֹּה יֹאמְרוּ עָלֵינוּ וְעָלֵינוּ כִּי־נִתְּנָם יְהוָה
בְּיָדֵנוּ וְזֶה־לָּנוּ הָאוֹת: יא וַיִּגְלוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶל־מַצֵּב
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיֹּאמְרוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים הִנֵּה עֹבְרִים יֵצְאִים מִן־
הַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְחַבְּאוּ־שָׁם: יב וַיַּעֲנוּ אַנְשֵׁי
הַמַּצֵּבָה אֶת־יוֹנָתָן וְאֶת־נָשָׂא כָלִיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ עָלֵינוּ
אֵלֵינוּ וְנֹדִיעָה אֶתְכֶם דָּבָר {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹנָתָן אֶל־נָשָׂא כָלִיו עֲלֶה אַחֲרַי כִּי־נִתְּנָם
יְהוָה בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל: יג וַיַּעַל יוֹנָתָן עַל־יָדָיו וְעַל־רַגְלָיו
וְנָשָׂא כָלִיו אַחֲרָיו וַיִּפְּלוּ לִפְנֵי יוֹנָתָן וְנָשָׂא כָלִיו
מִמּוֹת אַחֲרָיו: יד וַתְּהִי הַמָּכָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה אֲשֶׁר

whether by many or by a few.” ⁷ His armour-bearer said to him, “Do just as your heart tells you; as for me, my heart is with you.”

⁸ Jonathan then said, “Look, we will go across to these people and let ourselves be seen. ⁹ If they say to us, “Do not move until we come to you,” we shall stay where we are and not go up to them. ¹⁰ But if they say, “Come up to us,” we will go up; for, that will be the sign for us that Yahweh has given them into our hands.” ¹¹ When they both showed themselves to the Philistine post, the Philistines said, “Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have been hiding.” ¹² The men of the post then hailed Jonathan and his armour-bearer, “Come up to us,” they said, “we have something to tell you.”

Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, “Follow me up; Yahweh has given them into the power of Israel.” ¹³ Jonathan climbed up, hands and feet, with his armour-bearer behind him. They fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer, coming behind, finished them off. ¹⁴ This first blow that

⁷ The NJB, following the LXX, ends the verse with ‘our hearts are one’ (ὡς ἡ καρδία σοῦ καρδία μου, literally, ‘my heart is as your heart’).

⁸ In place of ‘look’, here following the MT & NJB, the NJB has ‘now’ and NETB has ‘all right’.

⁹ The literal translation of ‘stay’ is ‘stand’.

¹⁰ A ‘sign’ was an event, imminent or remote, that will show God’s will.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘they both’ is ‘the two of them’; NETB omits ‘both’.

¹² The perfect verbal form, ‘has given’, is used rhetorically here to express Jonathan’s certitude: as far as he is concerned, the victory is as good as won and can be described as such.

¹³ The NJB, NRSV & NETB have ‘the Philistines fell’ in place of ‘they fell’, here following the MT.

¹⁴ The NJB lacks ‘within an area about ... in an acre of land’ (here following the NRSV), using an ellipsis in its place; a footnote adds that the remainder of the verse is very obscure. ‘Acre’ is a conjectural translation – the MT uses ‘yoke’.

הַכָּה יוֹנָתָן וְנָשָׂא כָּלִיו כְּעֹשִׂים אִישׁ כְּבַחְצֵי מַעֲנֶה
צֶמֶד שָׂדֶה: ^{טו} וְתָהִי חֲרָדָה בַּמַּחֲנֶה בַשָּׂדֶה וּבְכָל־
הָעָם הַמִּצֵּב וְהַמְשָׁחִית חֲרָדוֹ גִּם־הֵמָּה וְתִרְגְּזוּ
הָאָרֶץ וְתָהִי לְחֲרָדַת אֱלֹהִים: ^{טז} וַיֵּרְאוּ הַצָּפִים
לְשָׂאוֹל בְּגִבְעַת בְּנִימָן וְהִנֵּה הַהֶמְזֹן נִמּוֹג וַיִּלָּךְ
וְהָלָם: {פ}

^{יז} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוֹל לָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ פִּקְדוֹ־נָא וַרְאוּ מִי
הָלָךְ מֵעַמָּנוּ וַיִּפְקְדוּ וְהִנֵּה אֵין יוֹנָתָן וְנָשָׂא כָּלִיו:
^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוֹל לְאַחִיָּה הַגִּישָׁה אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי־
הִיא אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְהוּא וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
^{יט} וַיְהִי עַד דְּבַר שָׂאוֹל אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן וְהַהֶמְזֹן אֲשֶׁר
בַּמַּחֲנֶה פִּלְשְׁתִּים וַיִּלָּךְ הַלּוֹךְ וְרַב {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוֹל אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן אֶסֶף יָדָךְ: ^כ וַיִּזְעַק שָׂאוֹל
וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־הַמְּלָחְמָה וְהִנֵּה
הִיתָה חֲרָב אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ מִהוֹמָה גְּדוֹלָה מְאֹד:
^{כא} וְהָעִבְרִים הָיוּ לִפְלִשְׁתִּים כְּאֶתְמוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ
אֲשֶׁר עָלוּ עִמָּם בַּמַּחֲנֶה סָבִיב וְגִם־הֵמָּה לְהִיּוֹת

Jonathan and his armour-bearer struck accounted for about twenty men, within an area about half a furrow long in an acre of land. ¹⁵ There was panic in the camp and in the field; all the men in the outpost, and the raiding contingent too, were terrified; the earth shook; it was a very panic of God. ¹⁶ Saul's lookout men in Geba of Benjamin could see the multitude scattering in all directions.

¹⁷ Saul then said to the force that was with him, "Call the roll and see who has left us." When they had called the roll, Jonathan and his armour-bearer were missing. ¹⁸ Saul then said to Ahijah, "Bring the ephod." For, at that time, he carried the ephod in the presence of Israel. ¹⁹ While Saul was speaking to the priest, the turmoil in the Philistine camp grew worse and worse.

And Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." ²⁰ Then Saul, and the whole force with him, formed up and advanced to where the fighting was, where men were all drawing their swords on each other in wild confusion. ²¹ The Hebrews who had earlier taken service with the Philistines, and had accompanied them into the camp, themselves

¹⁵ The NJB has 'countryside' in place of 'field', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁶ The NRSV, following the MT, has 'Gibeah' in place of 'Geba' (see #13:2). The NJB, following the LXX, has 'camp' in place of 'multitude'.

¹⁷ Before 'Jonathan', the MT has the word 'look', but this is clumsy in modern English.

¹⁸ The NRSV, following the MT, uses 'Ark of God' in place of 'ephod' (LXX); a later scribe, thinking of Jg 8:27, where the ephod is an idolatrous object, has corrected 'ephod' here to 'Ark of God'.

¹⁹ The priest is about to draw lots; Saul stops him and goes out to battle without consulting the oracle.

²⁰ Literally translated, this verse ends, "...the sword of a man against his companion, a very great panic."

²¹ 'Hebrews' and 'Israelites' are not necessarily identical peoples here; perhaps we can say that not all Hebrews were Israelites.

עַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר עִם־שָׁאוֹל וַיִּזְנְתוּ: כִּבְּ וְכָל אִישׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמִּתְחַבְּאִים בְּהַר־אֶפְרַיִם שָׁמְעוּ כִּי־נָסוּ
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּדְבְּקוּ גַם־הֵמָּה אַחֲרֵיהֶם בַּמִּלְחָמָה:
כִּג וַיֹּשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַמִּלְחָמָה
עָבְרָה אֶת־בֵּית אֲנוֹן: כִּד וְאִישׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל נִגַּשׁ בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא וַיֹּאֲלֶה שָׁאוֹל אֶת־הָעָם לֵאמֹר אֲרוּר הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר־יֹאכֹל לֶחֶם עַד־הָעֶרֶב וְנִקְמַתִּי מֵאִיבֵי וְלֹא־
טַעַם כָּל־הָעָם לֶחֶם: {ס}

כִּה וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ בִיעֵר וַיְהִי דָבָשׁ עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה:
כִּו וַיָּבֹא הָעָם אֶל־הַיַּעַר וְהִנֵּה הַלֶּךְ דָּבָשׁ וַאֲיֵן־מִשְׁיָג
יָדוֹ אֶל־פִּיו כִּי־רָא הָעָם אֶת־הַשְּׂבַעָה: כִּז וַיִּזְנְתוּ
לֹא־שָׁמַע בַּהֲשָׁבִיעַ אֲבִיו אֶת־הָעָם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־
קָצֵה הַמֶּטֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּטְבֹּל אוֹתָהּ בַּיַּעַר
הַדָּבָשׁ וַיִּשָּׁב יָדוֹ אֶל־פִּיו וְתִרְאָנָה וְתִאֲרָנָה עֵינָיו:
כִּח וַיַּעַן אִישׁ מִהָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר הַשְּׂבַעַתְהֶם אֲבִיךָ

defected to the Israelites with Saul and Jonathan. ²² All the Israelites in
hiding in the highlands of Ephraim, hearing that the Philistines were
fleeing, chased after them and joined in the fight. ²³ That day Yahweh
gave Israel the victory, and the battle spread beyond Beth-Aven. ²⁴ Now
the Israelites were distressed that day, for Saul had imposed a great
feast, laying the people under an oath, "Cursed be the man who eats
food before evening, before I have had my revenge on my enemies!"
Therefore, no one so much as tasted food.

²⁵ All the troops came upon a honeycomb; and there was a honey on the
ground; ²⁶ When the troops came up to the honeycomb, the honey was
flowing but no one put a hand to his mouth for fear of the oath. ²⁷ But
Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath; so,
he put out the end of the stick he was holding, thrust it into the
honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth and his eyes brightened.
²⁸ Then one of the men said, "Your father has bound the people with a

²² For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "Likewise, when all the Israelites who had gone into hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed closely after them in the battle."

²³ At the end of this verse, the LXX adds, "and all the people were with Saul, about ten thousand men. And the battle extended to the entire city on mount Ephraim." (καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἦν μετὰ Σαουλ ὡς δέκα χιλιάδες ἀνδρῶν· καὶ ἦν ὁ πόλεμος διεσπαρμένους εἰς ὅλην τὴν πόλιν ἐν τῷ ὄρει Εφραιμ.)

²⁴ The NJB lacks the first sentence, here following the MT, and the NRSV, following the LXX (καὶ Σαουλ ἡγνόησεν ἄγνοιαν μεγάλην ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ) reads, "Now Saul had committed a very rash act on that day."

²⁵ The NJB omits 'All the troops came upon a honeycomb', dismissing it as an ill-conceived doublet of v. 26. The literal translation of 'troops' is 'land'.

²⁶ The NJB has 'the swarm had gone' in place of 'the honey was flowing'.

²⁷ For 'brightened', here following the Qere (וְתִרְאָנָה), the Ketiv has 'saw' (וְתִרְאָנָה); the difference is a simple transposition of 2 letters (רא to אר).

²⁸ The NJB lacks 'and so the troops are faint', regarding it as a gloss inspired by v. 31.

אֶת־הָעָם לֹא־מָר אֲדָוָר הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יֹאכֵל לֶחֶם
הַיּוֹם וַיַּעַף הָעָם: ^{כט} וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹנָתָן עֲבַר אָבִי אֶת־
הָאָרֶץ רְאוּ־נָא כִּי־אָרוּ עֵינַי כִּי טַעַמְתִּי מִעֵט דְּבַשׁ
הַזֶּה: ^ל אֵף כִּי לֹא אָכַל אֲכַל הַיּוֹם הָעָם מִשָּׁלַל
אִיבֵיו אֲשֶׁר מִצָּא כִּי עָתָה לֹא־רִבְתָּה מִכָּה
בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים: ^{לא} וַיָּכּוּ בַיּוֹם הַהוּא בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים
מִמִּכְמָשׁ אֵילָנָה וַיַּעַף הָעָם מֵאֵד: ^{לב} וַיַּעַשׂ וַיַּעַט
הָעָם אֶל־הַשָּׁלָל שָׁלַל וַיִּקְחוּ צֹאן וּבָקָר וּבְנֵי בָקָר
וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ־אֶרְצָה וַיֹּאכֵל הָעָם עַל־הַדָּם: ^{לג} וַיִּגִּידוּ
לְשָׂאוֹל לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה הָעָם חָטְאוּ לַיהוָה לֶאֱכֹל עַל־
הַדָּם וַיֹּאמֶר בְּגִדְתֶּם גְּלוּ־אֵלַי הַיּוֹם אֲבֹן גְּדוֹלָה:
^{לד} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוֹל פָּצוּ בָעֵם וְאִמְרִיתֶם לָהֶם הַגִּישׁוּ
אֵלַי אִישׁ שׁוֹרוֹ וְאִישׁ שִׁיָּהוּ וְשַׁחֲטֶתֶם בָּזָה
וְאָכַלְתֶּם וְלֹא־תַחֲטְאוּ לַיהוָה לֶאֱכֹל אֶל־הַדָּם
וַיִּגִּשׁוּ כָל־הָעָם אִישׁ שׁוֹרוֹ בִּידּוֹ הַלִּילָה וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ־
שָׁם: ^{לה} וַיָּבֶן שָׂאוֹל מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה אֹתוֹ הַחֵל לְבָנוֹת
מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה: {פ}

strict oath that anyone who eats food today will be accursed; and so, the troops are faint. ²⁹ Jonathan replied, "My father has troubled the nation. See how my eyes brightened when I tasted this mouthful of honey. ³⁰ By the same token, if the people had eaten their fill of the plunder they took from the enemy today, would not the defeat of the Philistines have been all the greater?" ³¹ They struck at the Philistines that day from Michmash as far as Aijalon until the people were utterly weary. ³² The people flung themselves on the booty and, taking sheep, oxen and calves, slaughtered them there on the ground and ate them with the blood. ³³ News of this came to Saul. "Look," they said, "the people are sinning against Yahweh, eating with the blood." At which he replied to those who brought the news, "Roll me a large stone here." ³⁴ Then he said, "Scatter through the people and say to them, "Let each man bring me his ox or his sheep; slaughter them here and eat, not sinning against Yahweh by eating with the blood."" So, all the troops brought their oxen with them that night and slaughtered them there. ³⁵ Saul built an altar to Yahweh; it was the first altar he had built to Yahweh.

²⁹ The LXX has 'saw' (εἶδον) in place of 'brightened' (see #27).

³⁰ In place of 'eaten their fill', the NRSV has 'eaten freely'.

³¹ This really was a great victory, liberating the highlands that were the very heart of the kingdom.

³² For 'the people flung themselves on the plunder', here following the Qere (וַיַּעַט הָעָם אֶל־הַשָּׁלָל), the Ketiv reads 'the people did not plunder' (וַיַּעַשׂ הָעָם) (אל־שָׁלַל).

³³ The 'large stone' was to serve as an altar (see 6:14, Jg 6:20; 13:19), thus making the slaughter a sacrificial rite (see #Lv 17:1).

³⁴ Saul, rather than the priests, seems to have taken charge of the religious rites (contrast the attitude expressed in 13:7-15).

³⁵ In place of 'the first altar he had built', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'the first time he had built an altar'.

לֹא וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל נִרְדָּה אַחֲרֵי פִלְשְׁתִּים | לַיְלָה וּנְבֹזָה
 בָּהֶם | עַד-אֹזֶר הַבֶּקֶר וְלֹא-נִשְׁאַר בָּהֶם אִישׁ
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל-הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה {ס}
 וַיֹּאמֶר הַכֹּהֵן נִקְרְבָה הֵלֶם אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים: לֹא וַיִּשְׁאַל
 שָׁאוּל בָּאֱלֹהִים הָאָרֶץ אַחֲרֵי פִלְשְׁתִּים הֲתִתֶנָּם
 בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא עָנָהוּ בַיּוֹם הַהוּא: לֹא וַיֹּאמֶר
 שָׁאוּל גִּזְשׁוּ הֵלֶם כָּל פְּנוֹת הָעָם וּדְעוּ וּרְאוּ בַמָּה
 הִיְתָה הַחֲטָאת הַזֹּאת הַיּוֹם: לֹט כִּי חִי-יְהוֹנָתָן
 הַמּוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי אִם-יֵשְׁנוּ בַּיּוֹנָתָן בְּנֵי כִּי
 מוֹת יָמוּת וְאֵין עֲנָהוּ מִכָּל-הָעָם: מ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-כָּל-
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לְעֵבֶר אֶחָד וְאֲנִי וַיּוֹנָתָן בְּנֵי
 נְהִיָה לְעֵבֶר אֶחָד וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָעָם אֶל-שָׁאוּל הַטּוֹב
 בְּעֵינֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה: {ס}

מא וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-יְהוֹנָתָן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ...

[... הבה ארים ואם ישנו בעמד ישראל ...]

... הבה תמים וילכד יונתן ושאוּל והעם יצאו:

³⁶ Saul said, "Let us go down under cover of darkness and pursue and plunder the Philistines until dawn; we shall not leave one of them alive."

"Do whatever you think right," they replied.

However, the priest said, "Let us approach God here." ³⁷ So, Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down and pursue the Philistines? Will you give them into Israel's power?" However, he gave him no reply that day. ³⁸ Then Saul said, "Come forward, all you leaders of the people; and let us find out how this sin has arisen today. ³⁹ For, as Yahweh lives who gives victory to Israel, even if it be in Jonathan my son, he shall be put to death." However, not one of the people answered him. ⁴⁰ Then to all Israel he said, "You shall stand on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will stand on the other." The people replied to Saul, "Do as you think right."

⁴¹ Then Saul said, "Yahweh, God of Israel, why did you not answer your servant today? If the fault lies on me or on my son Jonathan, O Yahweh, God of Israel, give Urim; if the fault lies on your people Israel, give Thummim." The lot indicated Jonathan and Saul, and the people went

³⁶ To 'approach' God was to consult him by means of the ephod, as in v. 18 (see 30:8). אִישׁ

³⁷ The literal translation of 'power' is 'hand'.

³⁸ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "...consider carefully where today's sin may lie."

³⁹ Literally translated, this verse ends, "and there was no one answering from all the army."

⁴⁰ NETB has 'army' in place of 'people', here following the NJB & NRSV.

⁴¹ The translation is here restored following the LXX (καὶ εἶπεν Σαουλ Κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, τί ὅτι οὐκ ἀπεκρίθης τῷ δούλῳ σου σήμερον; εἰ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἢ ἐν Ἰωναθαν τῷ υἱῷ μου ἡ ἀδικία, κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, δὸς δῆλους· καὶ ἐὰν τάδε εἴπῃς Ἐν τῷ λαῷ σου Ἰσραηλ, δὸς δὴ ὁσιότητα. καὶ κληροῦται Ἰωναθαν καὶ Σαουλ, καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐξῆλθεν) and other versions (the MT is corrupt and jumps from the 1st to 3rd 'Israel').

מב וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל הַפִּלּוּ בֵּינִי וּבֵין יוֹנָתָן בְּנִי וְיִלְכַּד יוֹנָתָן: ^{מג} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-יוֹנָתָן הַגִּידָה לִּי מָה עָשִׂיתָה וַיַּגִּד-לּוֹ יוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר טָעַם טַעַמְתִּי בִקְצֵה הַמֶּטֶה אֲשֶׁר-בְּיָדִי מֵעַט דָּבַשׁ הִנְנִי אִמּוֹת: {ס}

מד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל כֹּה-יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסֵף בִּי-מוֹת תָּמוּת יוֹנָתָן: ^{מה} וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם אֶל-שָׁאוּל הֲיִוָּנָתָן יָמוּת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַיְשׁוּעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חֲלִילָה חִי-יְהוָה אִם-יִפֹּל מִשַּׁעֲרַת רֹאשׁוֹ אֶרֶצָה כִּי-עַם-אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּפְדּוּ הָעָם אֶת-יוֹנָתָן וְלֹא-מָת: {ס}

מו וַיַּעַל שָׁאוּל מֵאַחֲרֵי פִלְשִׁתִּים וּפְלִשְׁתִּים הַלְכוּ לְמִקְוָמָם: ^{מז} וְשָׁאוּל לָכַד הַמְּלוּכָה עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלָּחֶם סָבִיב | בְּכָל-אֵיבָיו בְּמוֹאָב | וּבְבְנֵי-עַמּוֹן וּבְאֱדוֹם וּבַמֶּלֶכִּי צוּבָה וּבַפְּלִשְׁתִּים וּבְכָל אֲשֶׁר-

free. ⁴² Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan;” and Jonathan was indicated. ⁴³ Saul then said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” Jonathan said, “I only ate a mouthful of honey off the end of the stick I was holding. Here I am; I am ready to die.”

⁴⁴ Saul said, “May God do this to me and more if you do not die, Jonathan.” ⁴⁵ However, the people said to Saul, “Must Jonathan die after winning this great victory for Israel? We will never allow that! As Yahweh lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground; for, his deeds today have been done with the help of God.” Thus, the people ransomed Jonathan and he did not die.

⁴⁶ Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines and the Philistines returned to their own territory. ⁴⁷ Saul considered his rule over Israel and fought against all his enemies everywhere: against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, Beth-Rehob, the king of Zobah, the Philistines; wherever he

⁴² After ‘Jonathan’, the LXX adds, “Whomever the Lord will indicate by the lot, let him die! And the people said to Saul, ‘It is not this word.’ But Saul prevailed over the people, and they cast lots between him and between Jonathan his son.” (ὃν ἂν κατακληρώσῃται κύριος, ἀποθανέτω. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ λαὸς πρὸς Σαουλ Οὐκ ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο. καὶ κατεκράτησεν Σαουλ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ βάλλουσιν ἀνὰ μέσον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον Ιωναθαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ)

⁴³ Apparently, Jonathan is acquiescing to his anticipated fate of death; however, his words may be taken as sarcastic (‘here I am about to die’) or as a question, (‘Must I now die?’).

⁴⁴ Literally translated, Saul’s words are, “So God will do and so he will add, surely you will certainly die, Jonathan.”

⁴⁵ Jonathan was ‘ransomed’ like a victim dedicated to Yahweh (Ex 13:13–15, Lv 27:27).

⁴⁶ This verse shows that this point marked an end to a phase of the war.

⁴⁷ Vv. 47–52 form an editorial summary, like that of 7:13–15 (for Samuel) and 2S 8 (for David); see also 2S 3:2–5, 5:13–16, 20:23–26. Observe how favourably Saul is presented, especially in the first note (vv. 47–48).

יִפְנֶה יִרְשִׁיעַ: ^{מח} וַיַּעַשׂ חֵיל וַיִּדָּ אֶת־עַמְלֶק וַיִּצַּל
אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד שָׁסָהוּ: {פ}

^{מט} וַיְהִיו בְּנֵי שָׁאוּל יוֹנָתָן וַיִּשׁוּי וּמַלְכִּישׁוּעַ וְשֵׁם
שְׁתֵּי בָנָתָיו שֵׁם הַבְּכִירָה מֶרַב וְשֵׁם הַקְּטָנָה מִיכָל:
^נ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתׁ שָׁאוּל אַחִינוֹעַם בַּת־אַחִימֶעַץ וְשֵׁם
שֶׁר־עָבָא אֲבִינֶר בֶּן־נֶר דּוֹד שָׁאוּל: ^{נא} וְקִישׁ אֲבִי־
שָׁאוּל וְנֶר אֲבִי־אַבְנֶר בֶּן־אַבִּיאל: {ס}

^{נב} וַתְּהִי הַמְּלָחָמָה חֲזָקָה עַל־פְּלִשְׁתִּים כָּל יְמֵי
שָׁאוּל וַרְאָה שָׁאוּל כָּל־אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר וְכָל־בֶּן־חֵיל
וַיִּאֲסָפֵהוּ אֵלָיו: {פ}

turned he routed them. ⁴⁸ He fought bravely; he defeated the Amalekites and delivered Israel from the power of their plunderers.

⁴⁹ The sons of Saul were: Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua. The names of his two daughters were: the elder, Merab, the younger, Michal. ⁵⁰ The name of Saul's wife was Abinoam daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of his army commander was Abner son of Ner; he was Saul's uncle. ⁵¹ Kish the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner were the sons of Abiel.

⁵² There was fierce war against the Philistines throughout Saul's lifetime; and when Saul saw any strong or valiant man, he recruited him into his service.

⁴⁸ In place of 'he fought bravely', here following NETB, the NJB has 'he did great deeds of valour' and the NRSV has 'he did valiantly'.

⁴⁹ 'Ishvi' (יִשְׁוִי) means 'man of Yahweh'; the same person is called 'Ishbaal' ('the man of the Master') in 1Ch 8:33 and 'Ishbosheth' in the MT of 2S 2:8, etc., where 'shame' is substituted for 'Baal', the name of the Canaanite god.

⁵⁰ The word 'uncle' could apply to either Abner or Ner.

⁵¹ 1Ch 9:35-36 indicates that Jeiel (= Abiel?) had two sons (among others) named Ner and Kish (see also 1S 9:1 and 1Ch 8:30, where some LXX MSS include the name Ner, though it is absent in the MT). If this Kish was the father of Saul and Ner was the father of Abner, then Saul and Abner were cousins. However, according to 1Ch 8:33 & 9:39, Ner, not Abiel, was the father of Kish; in this case, Kish and Abner were brothers and Abner was Saul's uncle. A simple solution to the problem is to see two men named Kish in the genealogy: Abiel (Jeiel) was the father of Ner and Kish (1); Ner was the father of Abner and Kish (2). Kish (2) was the father of Saul. The Kish mentioned in 1S 9:1 was the father of Saul (v.2) and must be identified as Kish (2). In this case, the genealogy is 'gapped', with Ner being omitted; Abiel was the grandfather of Kish (2).

⁵² This verse recounts the beginnings of a professional army, as distinct from the national mass levy.

שמואל א פרק טו

א וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל-שָׁאוּל אֲתִי שְׁלַח יְהוָה
לְמַשְׁחֶךָ לְמִלְחָה עַל-עַמּוֹ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַתָּה שְׁמַע
לְקוֹל דְּבַר־יְהוָה: {ס}

ב כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת פָּקַדְתִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה
עַמְלֶק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-שָׂם לוֹ בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּעֵלְתּוֹ
מִמִּצְרַיִם: ג עַתָּה לְךָ וְהַכִּיתָה אֶת-עַמְלֶק
וְהַחֲרַמְתָּם אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לֹו וְלֹא תַחֲמַל עָלָיו
וְהַמָּתָה מֵאִישׁ עַד-אִשָּׁה מֵעַלְלִי וְעַד-יוֹנֵק מִשּׁוֹר
וְעַד-שֶׂה מִגָּמֶל וְעַד-חֲמוֹר: {ס}

ד וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׁאוּל אֶת-הָעָם וַיִּפְקְדֵם בְּטֵלַיִם
מֵאֲתָיִם אֶלֶף רִגְלֵי וַעֲשֶׂרֶת אֲלָפִים אֶת-אִישׁ
יְהוּדָה: ה וַיָּבֹא שָׁאוּל עַד-עִיר עַמְלֶק וַיִּרֶב בְּנַחֲלֵי:
ו וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל-הַקֵּינִי לָבוֹ סֵרוּ רְדּוֹ מִתּוֹךְ

1 SAMUEL 15

¹ Then Samuel said to Saul, "I am the man whom Yahweh sent to anoint you king over his people, over Israel, so now listen to the words of Yahweh.

² Thus speaks Yahweh Sabaoth, "I carefully observed what the Amalekites did to Israel, when they opposed them on the road by which they came up out of Egypt. ³ Now, go and strike down the Amalekites and put them under the ban with all that they possess. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel, and donkey."

⁴ Saul summoned the people and reviewed them at Telaim: two hundred thousand foot soldiers (and ten thousand men of Judah). ⁵ Saul went to the city of Amalek and lay ambush in the riverbed. ⁶ Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, leave your homes among the Amalekites or I may

1 SAMUEL 15

- ¹ This chapter makes no mention of Saul's first rejection (13:8–15); though condemning Saul personally, it does not condemn the monarchical system as such.
- ² The 'Amalekites' were traditionally descended from Esau (Gn 36:12). They were a wandering tribe from southern Canaan or northern Sinai that had been constantly troublesome to the Israelites (Dt 25:17–19, Ex 17:7–13, Jg 6:33).
- ³ The verse seems to pick up the curse recorded in Dt 25:19. Both the Israelites and their neighbours attempted at times this type of holy war, but usually without complete success.
- ⁴ Exaggerated numbers are characteristic of many ancient documents.
- ⁵ In place of 'city', here following the MT, the LXX has 'cities' (πόλεις).
- ⁶ The 'Kenites' were a clan partly with the Midianites and partly with the Amalekites. Moses' father-in-law seems to have belonged to this group (Jg 1:16, 4:11). The tradition of friendliness referred to here appears in Nb 10:29–32.

עַמְלֹקֵי פֶן-אֶסְפָּךְ עִמּוֹ וְאַתָּה עָשִׂיתָה חֶסֶד עִם-
כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֻלּוֹתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּסָּר קִינֵי מִתּוֹךְ
עַמְלֹקִ: ^ז וַיֵּד שָׂאוֹל אֶת-עַמְלֹק מִחוּלָה בּוֹאֵךְ שׁוֹר
אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם: ^ח וַיִּתְּפֹשׂ אֶת-אַגָּג מֶלֶךְ-
עַמְלֹק חַי וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעָם הַחֲרִים לְפִי-חֶרֶב:
^ט וַיַּחְמַל שָׂאוֹל וְהָעָם עַל-אַגָּג וְעַל-מִיטֵב הַצֹּאן
וְהַבָּקָר וְהַמְּשָׁנִים וְעַל-הַכְּרִים וְעַל-כָּל-הַטּוֹב וְלֹא
אָבוּ הַחֲרִימָם וְכָל-הַמְּלָאכָה נִמְבָּזָה וְנִמָּס אֶתָּה
הַחֲרִימוֹ: {פ}

י וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-שְׁמוּאֵל לֵאמֹר: ^א נִחַמְתִּי כִּי-
הַמְּלַכְתִּי אֶת-שָׂאוֹל לְמֶלֶךְ כִּי-שָׁב מֵאַחֲרִי וְאֶת-
דְּבָרִי לֹא הָקִים וַיִּחַר לְשְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּזְעַק אֶל-יְהוָה כָּל-
הַלַּיְלָה: ^ב וַיֵּשֶׁב שְׁמוּאֵל לְקִרְיַת שָׂאוֹל בַּבֹּקֶר
וַיֵּגֵד לְשְׁמוּאֵל לֵאמֹר בָּא-שָׂאוֹל הַכְּרַמְלָה וְהִנֵּה
מַצִּיב לוֹ יָד וַיִּסֵּב וַיַּעֲבֹר וַיֵּרֶד הַגִּלְגָּל: ^ג וַיָּבֹא
שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל-שָׂאוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ שָׂאוֹל בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה

destroy you with them, for you were friendly to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt;” so the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites. ⁷ Saul then defeated the Amalekites, starting from Havilah as far as Shur, which is to the east of Egypt. ⁸ He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive and, executing the ban, put all the people to the sword. ⁹ Saul and the army spared Agag with the best of the sheep and cattle, the fatlings and lambs, and all that was good. They did not want to put those under the ban; they only put under the ban what was despised and worthless.

¹⁰ Then the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, ¹¹ “I regret having made Saul king; for, he has turned away from me and has not carried out my orders.” Then Samuel was angry, and he cried out to Yahweh all night. ¹² In the morning, Samuel set off to find Saul; Samuel was told, “Saul has been to Carmel, to raise himself a monument there, but now has turned about, moved on and gone down to Gilgal.” ¹³ When Samuel reached Saul, Saul said to him, “Blessed may you be by Yahweh! I have

⁷ In place of ‘as far as’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘in the direction of’.

⁸ For clarity, NETB has ‘Agag’s people’ in place of ‘the people’, here following the MT & NJB.

⁹ The NJB has ‘poor’ in place of ‘despised’; the meaning of the MT is uncertain.

¹⁰ The NJB & NRSV lack the opening ‘then’ (literally, ‘and’), here following NETB.

¹¹ In place of ‘all night’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘all night long’ and NETB has ‘all that night’.

¹² ‘Carmel’ is a town to the south of Hebron (see 25:2ff), modern Kermel, lying on Saul’s way back from the Negeb to Gilgal. At the end of this verse, the LXX adds, “to Saul. And behold, he was offering as a burnt offering to the Lord the best of the spoils that he had brought from the Amalekites.” (πρὸς Σαουλ, καὶ ἰδοὺ αὐτὸς ἀνέφερεν ὀλοκαύτωσιν τῷ κυρίῳ τὰ πρῶτα τῶν σκύλων, ὧν ἤνεγκεν ἐξ Ἀμαληκ.)

¹³ NETB substitutes the 1st instance of ‘Saul’ for ‘him’; here, we follow the MT, NJB & NRSV.

לִיהוָה הַקִּימְתִּי אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה: ^ד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל
וּמָה קוֹל־הַצֹּאן הַזֶּה בְּאָזְנִי וְקוֹל הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי
שֹׁמֵעַ: ^{טו} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאֹל מֵעַמְלִקֵּי הַבִּיאוֹם אֲשֶׁר
חָמַל הָעָם עַל־מִיטֵב הַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר לְמַעַן זִבְחַ
לִיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְאֶת־הַיּוֹתֵר הַחֲרָמְנוּ: {פ}

^{טז} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־שְׁאֹל הַרְף וְאֶגִּידָה לְךָ אֵת
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֵלַי הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
דְּבַר: {ס}

^{יז} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל הֲלוֹא אִם־קִטְּנָה אֶתָּה בְּעֵינֶיךָ
רֹאשׁ שְׁבִטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתָּה וַיִּמְשַׁחֲךָ יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ
עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יח} וַיִּשְׁלַחֲךָ יְהוָה בְּדַרְךְ וַיֹּאמֶר לְךָ
וְהַחֲרַמְתָּה אֶת־הַחֲטָאִים אֶת־עַמְלֶק וְנִלְחַמְתָּ בּוֹ
עַד כָּלוֹתָם אַתָּם: ^{יט} וְלָמָּה לֹא־שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה
וַתַּעַט אֶל־הַשָּׁלָל וַתַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: {ס}

^כ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאֹל אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּקוֹל
יְהוָה וְאַלְךָ בְּדַרְךְ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַחְנִי יְהוָה וְאַבִּיא אֶת־

carried out Yahweh's orders;" ¹⁴ but Samuel replied, "Then what is the meaning of this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of oxen I hear?" ¹⁵ Saul said, "They have brought them from Amalek because the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice them to Yahweh, your God; the rest we put under the ban."

¹⁶ And then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait a minute! Let me tell you what Yahweh has said to me last night." He said to him, "Tell me."

¹⁷ Samuel said, "Small as you may be in your own eyes, are you not head of the tribes of Israel? Yahweh anointed you king over Israel. ¹⁸ Yahweh sent you on a mission and said, "Go, put these sinners, the Amalekites, under the ban and make war on them until they are destroyed." ¹⁹ Why then did you not obey the voice of Yahweh? Why did you fall on the booty and do what is displeasing to Yahweh?

²⁰ Saul replied to Samuel, "But I did obey the voice of Yahweh. I went on the mission that Yahweh gave me; I brought back Agag king of the

¹⁴ At the beginning of Samuel's reply, NETB adds 'if that is the case'.

¹⁵ For stylistic reasons, NETB changes 'they have brought them' to the passive, 'they were brought'.

¹⁶ The translation here follows the Qere in reading ('he said', וַיֹּאמֶר) rather than the ('they said', וַיֹּאמְרוּ) of the Ketiv (the latter seems to have accidentally added a trailing vav).

¹⁷ The NRSV opens Samuel's speech, here following the NJB, with, "Though you are little in your own eyes."

¹⁸ For 'until they are destroyed', here following the NRSV & NJB, the MT has 'until they have destroyed them'; the LXX (συντελέσης), Peshitta & Tg read 'you have destroyed'.

¹⁹ The literal translation of 'to Yahweh' is 'in Yahweh's eyes'.

²⁰ The literal translation of 'mission' (here following the NJB & NRSV) is 'journey'; NETB has 'campaign'.

אֶגַּג מִלֶּדֶךְ עַמְלֶק וְאֶת־עַמְלֶק הַחֲרַמְתִּי: ^{כא} וַיִּקַּח
הָעָם מֵהַשְּׁלָל צֹאן וּבָקָר רֵאשִׁית הַחֶרֶם לְזִבְחַ
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךְ בְּגִלְגָּל: {ס}

^{כב} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל הֲחִפֵּץ לַיהוָה בְּעֹלוֹת וּזְבָחִים
כְּשֹׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה הִנֵּה שְׁמַע מִזִּבְחַ טוֹב לְהַקְשִׁיב
מִחֻלָּב אֵילִים: ^{כג} כִּי חֲטֹאת־קֶסֶם מְרִי וְאָוֶן וְתַרְפִּים
הַפְּצָר יַעַן מָאֲסָתָּ אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה וַיִּמָּאֲסֶךְ
מִמֶּלֶךְ: {ס}

^{כד} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל חֲטֹאתִי כִּי־עֲבַרְתִּי
אֶת־פִּי־יְהוָה וְאֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ כִּי יֵרָאֵת אֶת־הָעָם
וְאֶשְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָם: ^{כה} וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא אֶת־חַטָּאתִי
וְשׁוּב עִמָּי וְאַשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַיהוָה: ^{כו} וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל
אֶל־שָׁאוּל לֹא אָשׁוּב עִמָּךְ כִּי מָאֲסָתָּ אֶת־דְּבַר
יְהוָה וַיִּמָּאֲסֶךְ יְהוָה מִהֵיכָל מֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: {ס}
^{כז} וַיִּסַּב שְׁמוּאֵל לָלֶכֶת וַיִּחַזַּק בְּכַנֶּף־מְעִילוֹ
וַיִּקְרַע: {ס}

Amalekites; I put the Amalekites under the ban. ²¹ From the booty, the people took the best sheep and oxen of what was under the ban to sacrifice them to Yahweh your God in Gilgal."

²² Samuel said: "Is Yahweh pleased by burnt offerings and sacrifices or by obedience to Yahweh's voice? Truly, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. ²³ Rebellion is no less a sin than sorcery and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry. Since you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he has rejected you as king."

²⁴ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the order of Yahweh and your directions, being afraid of the people and doing what they said. ²⁵ Now, I pray you, forgive my sin; come back with me so that I may worship Yahweh." ²⁶ Samuel answered Saul, "I will not come back with you, for you have rejected the word of Yahweh and he has rejected you from being king over Israel."

²⁷ As Samuel turned to go away, Saul caught at the hem of his garment and it tore.

²¹ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "But from the spoil the people took sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."

²² Samuel does not condemn sacrificial practice as a whole but obedience of the heart is what pleases God, not mere external ritual.

²³ On the sin of 'sorcery' (the NRSV uses 'divination'), see Dt 18:9-14. The WEBBE ends the 1st sentence with, "idolatry and teraphim."

²⁴ The literal translation of 'order' is 'mouth'.

²⁵ In place of 'so that I may worship', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'and I will worship'.

²⁶ The NJB has simply 'as king of' in place of 'from being king over', here following the MT & NRSV.

²⁷ For 'Saul', the MT has just 'he' but a Qumran Ms and the LXX include the name here.

כח וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו שְׁמוּאֵל קִרְעֵה יְהוָה אֶת־מַמְלְכוֹת
יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַלֶיךָ הַיּוֹם וּנְתָנָה לְרֵעֶךָ הַטּוֹב
מִמֶּךָ: {ס} כט וגם נצח יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִשְׁקֹר וְלֹא יִנָּחַם
כִּי לֹא אָדָם הוּא לְהִנָּחֵם: ל וַיֹּאמֶר חֲטָאתִי עָתָה
בְּבַדְנִי נָא נִגַּד זְקַנִּי־עַמִּי וְנִגַּד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשׁוּב עָמִי
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: לא ויָשָׁב שְׁמוּאֵל אַחֲרֵי
שָׁאוּל וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה שָׁאוּל לַיהוָה: {ס} לב וַיֹּאמֶר
שְׁמוּאֵל הִגִּישׁוּ אֵלַי אֶת־אַגַּג מֶלֶךְ עַמְלֵק וַיִּלְךְ אֵלָיו
אַגַּג מֵעֵדְנָת וַיֹּאמֶר אֲגַג אֲבֹן סָר מִרְהֲמוֹת: {ס} לד
וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל כְּאֲשֶׁר שִׁכַּלְה נָשִׁים חֲרָבָךְ בֶּן־
תִּשְׁכַּל מִנָּשִׁים אָמַךְ וַיִּשְׁסֹף שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־אַגַּג לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה בְּגִלְגָּל: {ס} לו וַיִּלְךְ שְׁמוּאֵל הֲרַמְתָּה וְשָׁאוּל
עָלָה אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ גִּבְעַת שָׁאוּל: לה וְלֹא־יִסֹּף שְׁמוּאֵל
לִרְאוֹת אֶת־שָׁאוּל עַד־יוֹם מוֹתוֹ כִּי־הִתְאַבֵּל
שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־שָׁאוּל וַיְהִי נָחָם בֵּית־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־
שָׁאוּל עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

²⁸ And Samuel said to him, “Today Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you and given it to a neighbour of yours who is better than you. ²⁹ The Glory of Israel does not lie or go back on his word, not

being human and liable to go back on his word.” ³⁰ Saul said, “I have sinned, but please still show me respect in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel, and come back with me, so that I can worship Yahweh your God.” ³¹ Samuel followed Saul back and Saul worshipped Yahweh. ³² Then Samuel said, “Bring me Agag the king of the Amalekites,” and Agag came to him unsteadily, saying,

“Surely this is the bitterness of death.” ³³ Samuel said: “As your sword has left women childless, so shall your mother be left childless among women.” Then Samuel butchered Agag before Yahweh at Gilgal. ³⁴ Samuel left for Ramah, and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Samuel did not see Saul again to the day of his death; Samuel was very sorry for Saul, but Yahweh regretted having made Saul king of Israel.

²⁸ The ‘neighbour’ is David.

²⁹ The NJB parenthesises this verse, dismissing it as a gloss (quoting Nb 23:19).

³⁰ Samuel agrees to support Saul’s authority by accompanying him to the sanctuary.

³¹ In place of ‘followed Saul back’, here following the NJB & NETB, the NRSV has ‘turned back after Saul’.

³² The NRSV uses ‘haltingly’ in place of ‘unsteadily’; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. ‘This is the bitterness of death’ follows the LXX (Εἰ οὕτως πικρὸς ὁ θάνατος) and 4QSam^a – the MT has ‘the bitterness of death is past’.

³³ The NRSV has ‘hewed Agag to pieces’ in place of ‘butchered Agag’; Samuel executes the curse of destruction himself.

³⁴ The NJB has simply ‘went home’ in place of ‘went up to his house’, here following the NRSV.

³⁵ This verse records a different tradition from that of 19:22-24.

1 SAMUEL 16

שמואל א פרק טז

א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל עַד־מָתַי אֶתָּה מֵתֹאבֵל
אֶל־שָׁאוּל וְאֲנִי מֵאַסְתִּיו מִמֶּלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלֵּא
קַרְנֶךָ שֶׁמֶן וְלֶךְ אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ אֶל־יֹשֵׁי בֵּית־הַלְחָמִי כִּי־
רָאִיתִי בְּבָנָיו לִי מֶלֶךְ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֵיךְ אֵלֶיךָ
וְשָׁמַע שָׁאוּל וְהָרְגָנִי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה עֲגֹלֶת בָּקָר תִּקַּח
בְּיָדְךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לְזֹבֵחַ לַיהוָה בָּאתִי: ג וְקִרְאתָ לְיֹשֵׁי
בִּזְבֹּחַ וְאָנֹכִי אוֹדִיעֶךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה וּמִשְׁחָתָ לִי
אֵת אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר אֵלֶיךָ: ד וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁמוּאֵל אֵת אֲשֶׁר
דִּבֶּר יְהוָה וַיָּבֹא בֵּית לָחֶם וַיַּחְרְדּוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר
לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁלֹם בּוֹאֲךָ: ה וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹם לְזֹבֵחַ
לַיהוָה בָּאתִי הִתְקַדְּשׁוּ וּבָאתֶם אִתִּי בִּזְבֹּחַ וַיְקַדְּשׁ
אֶת־יֹשֵׁי וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם לְזֹבֵחַ: ו וַיְהִי
בְּבוֹאָם וַיֵּרָא אֶת־אֱלִיָּאב וַיֹּאמֶר אָךְ נֶגֶד יְהוָה
מְשִׁיחוֹ: {ס}

ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁמוּאֵל אַל־תִּבֹּט אֶל־מְרֹאֵהוּ
וְאֶל־גִּבּוֹהַּ קוֹמָתוֹ כִּי מֵאַסְתִּיהוּ כִּי לֹא אֲשֶׁר יֵרָאֶה

1 Yahweh said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn over Saul? I have rejected him as king of Israel. Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse of Bethlehem; for, I have chosen myself a king among his sons." 2 Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And Yahweh said, "Take a heifer with you and say, "I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh." 3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice and then I will tell you what you must do; you must anoint to me the one I name to you." 4 Samuel did what Yahweh ordered and went to Bethlehem. The elders of the town came trembling; they said, "Have you come in peace?" 5 "Yes," he replied, "I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." He purified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. 6 When they arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, "Surely Yahweh's anointed one stands there before him."

7 But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks

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¹ Before 'fill your horn', the Lucianic recension of the Old Greek translation adds 'and the LORD said to Samuel'.

² The literal translation of 'with you' is 'in your hand'.

³ In place of 'name', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'point out'; literally translated, the MT reads 'say'.

⁴ In the MT, the verb translated 'they said' is singular ('he said'); here, we follow many medieval Hebrew MSS and the LXX in reading the plural.

⁵ Consecration perhaps involved the ceremony of ritual washing.

⁶ In place of 'before him', here following the MT & NJB, the NRSV & NETB have 'before the LORD'.

⁷ 'God does not see as man sees' follows the LXX (ὅτι οὐχ ὡς ἐμβλέπεται ἄνθρωπος, ὁψεται ὁ θεός); the MT reads 'for not that which the man sees'.

הָאָדָם כִּי הָאָדָם יִרְאֶה לְעֵינָיִם וַיהוָה יִרְאֶה לִּלְבָב׃
 ח וַיִּקְרָא יִשִׁי אֶל־אֲבִינָדָב וַיַּעֲבֵרְהוּ לִפְנֵי שְׁמוּאֵל
 וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־בִּזָּה לֹא־בָחַר יְהוָה׃ ט וַיַּעֲבֵר יִשִׁי שֵׁמָה
 וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־בִּזָּה לֹא־בָחַר יְהוָה׃ י וַיַּעֲבֵר יִשִׁי שִׁבְעַת
 בָּנָיו לִפְנֵי שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יִשִׁי לֹא־
 בָּחַר יְהוָה בָּאֵלֶּה׃ יא וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יִשִׁי הֲתִמּוּ
 הַנְּעָרִים׃ וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד שָׂאֵר הַקֶּטָן וְהִנֵּה רֹעֶה בַּצֹּאן
 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יִשִׁי שְׁלַחָה וְקָחְנוּ כִּי לֹא־נִסָּב
 עַד־בָּאוּ פֹה׃ יב וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיְבִיֵּאֵהוּ וְהוּא אֲדָמוּנִי עֵם־
 יִפֶּה עֵינָיִם וטוֹב רֹאִי {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה קוּם מִשְׁחֵהוּ כִּי־זֶה הוּא׃ יג וַיִּקַּח
 שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־קֶרֶן הַשֶּׁמֶן וַיִּמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב אֶחָיו
 וַתִּצְלַח רוּחַ־יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד מִהַיּוֹם הַהוּא וּמִמְעַלָּה
 וַיָּקָם שְׁמוּאֵל וַיֵּלֶךְ הַרְמָתָה׃ יד ורוּחַ יְהוָה סָרָה
 מֵעַם שָׂאוֹל וּבָעִתָּתוּ רוּחַ־רָעָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה׃
 טו וַיֹּאמְרוּ עַבְדֵי־שָׂאוֹל אֵלָיו הִנֵּה־נָא רוּחַ־אֱלֹהִים

at appearances but Yahweh looks at the heart.”⁸ Jesse then called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel, who said, “Yahweh has not chosen this one either.”⁹ Jesse then presented Shammah, but he said, “Yahweh has not chosen this one either.”¹⁰ Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “Yahweh has not chosen these.”¹¹ He then asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” He answered, “There is still one left, the youngest; he is taking care of the flock.” Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.”¹² Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing.

Yahweh said, “Come, anoint him; for, this is the one.”¹³ At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of Yahweh seized on David and stayed with him from that day on. As for Samuel, he rose and went to Ramah.¹⁴ Now the spirit of Yahweh had left Saul and an evil spirit from Yahweh filled him with terror.¹⁵ Saul’s servants said to him, “Look, an evil spirit of God is the

⁸ The literal translation of ‘presented him to’ is ‘caused him to pass before’.

⁹ The NJB has ‘Samuel said’ in place of ‘he said’, here following the MT & NRSV.

¹⁰ The ‘seven sons’ could be in addition to the three mentioned before this, but 17:12 says Jesse had eight sons, not eleven; also, 1Ch 2:13–15 lists only seven sons, including David, but 1Ch 27:18 mentions an additional son, named Elihu.

¹¹ In place of ‘taking care of the flock’, here following NETB, the NJB reads ‘out looking after the sheep’ and the NRSV has ‘keeping the sheep’.

¹² The NRSV & NETB have ‘ruddy’ in place of ‘fresh’, here following the NJB.

¹³ Without exterior manifestation and in association with the anointing, the ‘spirit of Yahweh’, here, is the grace imparted to a consecrated person.

¹⁴ The word translated ‘evil’ may refer to the character of the spirit or to its effect; if the latter, another option might be ‘a mischief-making spirit’.

¹⁵ Aware of having been rejected by God and deserted by Samuel, the excitable king suffers attacks of madness (18:10ff, 19:9ff).

רָעָה מִבַּעֲתָדָךְ: טוֹ יֹאמַרְנָא אֲדִנְנוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ
יִבְקְשׁוּ אִישׁ יָדַע מִנְּגִן בִּכְנֹר וְהָיָה בַּהֲיוֹת עָלֶיךָ
רוּחַ־אֱלֹהִים רָעָה וְנִגַּן בִּידּוֹ וְטוֹב לָךְ: {פ}

יֹאמַר שָׁאוּל אֶל־עֲבָדָיו רְאוּ־נָא לִי אִישׁ מִיִּטִּיב
לְנִגֵּן וְהִבִּיאוּתָם אֵלַי: יי וַיַּעַן אֶחָד מֵהַנְּעָרִים וַיֹּאמֶר
הִנֵּה רָאִיתִי בֶן לְיִשַׁי בֵּית הַלְחָמִי יָדַע נִגֵּן וְגִבּוֹר
חֵלִל וְאִישׁ מִלְחָמָה וְנָבוֹן דָּבָר וְאִישׁ תָּאֵר וְיִהְיֶה
עִמּוֹ: יט וַיִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוּל מַלְאָכִים אֶל־יִשַׁי וַיֹּאמֶר
שְׁלַחָה אֵלַי אֶת־דָּוִד בְּנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בַּצֹּאֵן: כ וַיִּקַּח יִשַׁי
חֲמֹר לֶחֶם וְנָאֵד יוֹן וְגִדֵי עֲזִים אֶחָד וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּיַד־
דָּוִד בְּנוֹ אֶל־שָׁאוּל: כא וַיָּבֹא דָוִד אֶל־שָׁאוּל וַיַּעֲמֵד
לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאחֲזֵהוּ מְאֹד וַיְהִי־לּוֹ נִשְׂא כָלִים: כב וַיִּשְׁלַח
שָׁאוּל אֶל־יִשַׁי לֵאמֹר יַעֲמַד־נָא דָוִד לְפָנַי כִּי־מִצָּא
חֵן בְּעֵינָי: כג וְהָיָה בַּהֲיוֹת רוּחַ־אֱלֹהִים אֶל־שָׁאוּל
וְלִקַּח דָּוִד אֶת־הַכְּנֹר וְנִגַּן בִּידּוֹ וְרוּחַ לְשָׁאוּל וְטוֹב
לּוֹ וְסָרָה מֵעָלָיו רוּחַ הָרָעָה: {פ}

cause of your terror. ¹⁶ Let our lord give the order, and your servants who wait on you will look for a skilled harpist; when the evil spirit of God troubles you, the harpist will play and you will recover."

¹⁷ So, Saul said to his servants, "Find me a man who plays well and bring him to me." ¹⁸ One of the soldiers then spoke up, saying "I have seen one of the sons of Jesse the Bethlehemite; he is a skilled player, a man of valour, and a man of war, prudent in speech, a man of good presence, and Yahweh is with him." ¹⁹ At this, Saul sent messengers to Jesse, saying, "Send me David your son who is out with the sheep." ²⁰ So, Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a kid, and sent them to Saul by David his son. ²¹ Thus, David came to Saul and entered his service; Saul loved him greatly and David became his armour-bearer. ²² Then Saul sent to Jesse saying, "Let David remain in my service; for, he has found favour in my sight;" ²³ and, whenever the spirit from God troubled Saul, David took the harp and played; then Saul grew calm, and recovered, and the evil spirit would leave him.

¹⁶ The ancients commonly used music either to stimulate the good spirit (see 10:5) or to expel the evil spirits.

¹⁷ The NJB & NETB have 'find' in place of 'provide for', here following the NRSV; the literal translation is 'see'.

¹⁸ The literal translation of 'good presence' is 'form'.

¹⁹ The NJB & NRSV lack 'out', here following NETB.

²⁰ The NJB opens with 'Jesse took five loaves', is a conjectural translation of חֲמֹר ('donkey') as חֲמִשָּׁה ('five').

²¹ In place of 'entered his service', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB, translating more literally, has 'stood before him'.

²² The NJB has 'won my favour' in place of 'found favour in my sight', here following the MT & NRSV.

²³ The literal translation of 'leave' is 'turn aside from'.

1 SAMUEL 17

שמואל א פרק יז

^א וַיֵּאסְפוּ פִּלְשְׁתִּים אֶת־מַחְנֵיהֶם לַמִּלְחָמָה וַיֵּאסְפוּ שָׁכָה אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בֵּין־שׁוֹכָה וּבֵין־עֶזְקָה בְּאֶפֶס דָּמִים: ^ב וְשָׁאוּל וְאִישׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל נֵאֶסְפוּ וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּעֵמֶק הָאֵלָה וַיַּעֲרְכוּ מַלְחָמָה לִקְרֹאת פִּלְשְׁתִּים: ^ג וּפִלְשְׁתִּים עֹמְדִים אֶל־הָהָר מִזֶּה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֹמְדִים אֶל־הָהָר מִזֶּה וְהָיָא בֵּינֵיהֶם: ^ד וַיֵּצֵא אִישׁ־הַבָּנִים מִמַּחֲנֹת פִּלְשְׁתִּים גִּלְיָת שְׁמוֹ מִגַּת גִּבְהוֹ שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת וְזֶרֶת: ^ה וְכֹבֵעַ נְחֹשֶׁת עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וְשָׁרִיֹּן קֶשֶׁשִׁים הוּא לְבוּשׁ וּמִשְׁקַל הַשָּׁרִיֹּן חֲמִשָּׁת־אַלְפִּים שְׁקָלִים נְחֹשֶׁת: ^ו וּמִצַּחַת נְחֹשֶׁת עַל־רַגְלָיו וּכְדֹן נְחֹשֶׁת בֵּין כַּתְּפָיו: ^ז וְחָץ וַעַץ חֲנִיתוֹ כַּמְנֹרֶה אֲרָגִים וְלַהֲבַת חֲנִיתוֹ שֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת שְׁקָלִים בְּרָזָל וְנִשָּׂא הַצֶּנֶה הַלֵּךְ לִפְנָיו: ^ח וַיַּעֲמֵד וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־

¹ The Philistines mustered their troops for war; they assembled at Socoh, which is a town of Judah, and pitched camp between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-Dammin. ² Saul and the Israelites also mustered, pitching camp in the Valley of Elah, and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. ³ The Philistines took their stand on the hills one side and the Israelites on the hills the other side, with the valley between them. ⁴ A champion stepped out from the Philistine camp; his name was Goliath, from Gath; he was six cubits and one span tall. ⁵ On his head was a bronze helmet and he wore a breastplate of scale-armour; the breastplate weighed five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶ He had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin across his shoulders. ⁷ The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron. A shield-bearer walked in front of him. ⁸ He

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¹ The literal translation of 'troops' is 'camps'.

² The NJB translates the name 'Elah' (אֵלָה) as 'the Terebinth'; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

³ In place of 'the Philistines', here following the MT, NRSV & NETB, the NJB opens with 'these'.

⁴ 2S 21:19 assigns the defeat of Goliath to one of David's warriors – the more ancient tradition, as it seems. The original tradition behind this chapter spoke only of David's victory over an unnamed opponent, 'the Philistine'. Goliath's name has been added in this verse and v. 23 – the name of David's victim was probably unknown. The LXX and 4QSam^a give Goliath's height as *four* cubits and a span. The NJB, following the LXX (παράταξις), has 'ranks' in place of 'camp'.

⁵ 'Five thousand shekels' was about 67 Kg; although the exact weight of Goliath's body armour is difficult to estimate, it was clearly very heavy.

⁶ The 'greaves' were coverings that extended from about the knee to the ankle, affording protection for the shins of a warrior.

⁷ The translation, 'shaft', here follows the Qere (וַעֲץ, literally, 'wood') rather than the Ketiv, which has 'arrow' (וַחֵץ).

⁸ 'Choose' follows the LXX (ἐκλέξατο); the MT is uncertain, literally reading 'eat food'.

מַעֲרַכַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לָמָּה תֵצְאוּ לַעֲרֹךְ
מִלְחָמָה הַלּוֹא אֲנֹכִי הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וְאַתֶּם עֲבָדִים
לְשָׂאוֹל בְּרוּ-לָכֶם אִישׁ וַיֵּרֶד אֵלָיו: ^ט אִם-יּוֹכַל
לְהִלָּחֵם אִתִּי וְהִכָּנִי וְהִיִּינוּ לָכֶם לַעֲבָדִים וְאִם-אֲנִי
אֹכַל-לּוֹ וְהִכִּיתִיו וְהִיִּיתֶם לָנוּ לַעֲבָדִים וְעַבְדְּתֶם
אֹתָנוּ: ^י וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֲנִי חֲרַפְתִּי אֶת-מַעֲרָכוֹת
יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה תִּנּוּ-לִי אִישׁ וְנִלְחָמָה יַחַד:
^{יא} וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׂאוֹל וְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-דִּבְרֵי הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי
הָאֵלֶּה וַיַּחֲתוּ וַיִּרְאוּ מְאֹד: {פ}

^{יב} וַדּוֹד בֶּן-אִישׁ אֶפְרַתִּי הָיָה מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה
וּשְׁמוֹ יֵשׁי וְלוֹ שְׁמֹנֶה בָנִים וְהָאִישׁ בִּימֵי שָׂאוֹל זָקֵן
בָּא בְּאֲנָשִׁים: ^{יג} וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁלֹשָׁת בְּנֵי-יֵשׁי הַגְּדֹלִים
הָלְכוּ אַחֲרֵי-שָׂאוֹל לַמִּלְחָמָה וְשֵׁם שְׁלֹשָׁת בָּנָיו
אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ בַּמִּלְחָמָה אֱלִיאָב הַבְּכוֹר וּמִשְׁנֵהוּ
אַבִּינָדָב וְהַשְּׁלִישִׁי שָׁמָּה: ^{יד} וַדּוֹד הוּא הַקָּטָן
וּשְׁלֹשָׁה הַגְּדֹלִים הָלְכוּ אַחֲרֵי שָׂאוֹל: {ס}

^{טו} וַדּוֹד הִלֵּךְ וַיָּשָׁב מֵעַל שָׂאוֹל לְרַעוּת אֶת-צֶאֱן אָבִיו

took his stand in front of the ranks of Israel and shouted, “Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the slaves of Saul? Choose a man and let him come down to me. ⁹ If he wins in a fight with me and kills me, we will be your slaves; but if I prevail against him and kill him, you shall become our slaves and be servants to us.” ¹⁰ The Philistine then said, “I challenge the ranks of Israel today. Give me a man and we will fight in single combat.” ¹¹ When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and terrified.

¹² Now, David was the son of an Ephraimite from Bethlehem of Judah whose name was Jesse; Jesse had eight sons and, by Saul’s time, the man was already old and well on in years. ¹³ The three eldest sons of Jesse followed Saul to the battle. The names of the three sons, who went to the battle, were: the first-born Eliab and, next to him, Abinadab and the third Shammah. ¹⁴ Now, David was the youngest; the three eldest followed Saul.

¹⁵ David alternated between serving Saul and looking after his father’s

⁹ In place of ‘prevail against’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘beat’.

¹⁰ Following the imperative, the cohortative verbal form here translated ‘fight’ indicates purpose/result.

¹¹ NETB has ‘the Israelites’ in place of ‘Israel’, here following the MT (כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל), NJB & NRSV.

¹² The phrase ‘and well on in years’ follows the Peshitta; the MT has ‘among men’. The LXX omits vv. 12–31.

¹³ In place of ‘next to him’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘the second’.

¹⁴ The NRSV & NETB include the second part of this verse in the same sentence as v. 15; here, we follow the NJB.

¹⁵ This verse is an editorial gloss, inserted to harmonise the two traditions.

בֵּית לָחֶם: טז וַיֵּגֶשׁ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הַשָּׂכֶם וְהָעֶרֶב וַיִּתְּצֵב
אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם: {פ}

יז וַיֹּאמֶר יֵשׁוּ לְדָוִד בְּנוֹ קַח-נָא לְאַחִיךָ אִיפֹת
הַקֶּלִיא הַזֶּה וְעֲשֵׂהָ לֶחֶם הַזֶּה וְהָרֵץ הַמַּחֲנֶה
לְאַחִיךָ: יח וְאַתָּה עֲשֵׂת חֲרָצִי הַחֶלֶב הָאֵלֶּה תָּבִיא
לְשֶׁר־הָאֵלֶף וְאַתָּה-אַחִיךָ תִּפְקֹד לְשָׁלוֹם וְאַתָּה-
עֲרַבְתָּם תִּקָּח: ט וְשָׂאוֹל וְהָמָה וְכָל-אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּעֵמֶק הָאֵלֶּה נִלְחָמִים עִם-פְּלִשְׁתִּים: {ס}

כ וַיֵּשֶׁכֶם דָּוִד בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּטֵּשׁ אֶת-הַצֹּאֵן עַל-שֹׁמֶר
וַיֵּשָׂא וַיֵּלֶךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ יֵשׁוּ וַיָּבֹא הַמַּעְגָּלָה וְהַחִיל
הַיֵּצֵא אֶל-הַמַּעְרָכָה וְהָרָעוּ בַּמִּלְחָמָה: כא וַתַּעֲרֹךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפְלִשְׁתִּים מַעְרָכָה לִקְרֹאת מַעְרָכָה:
כב וַיִּטֵּשׁ דָּוִד אֶת-הַכֵּלִים מֵעָלָיו עַל-יַד שׁוֹמֵר
הַכֵּלִים וַיֵּרֶץ הַמַּעְרָכָה וַיָּבֹא וַיִּשְׂאֵל לְאַחִיו לְשָׁלוֹם:
כג וְהוּא | מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְהִנֵּה אִישׁ הַבְּנִים עוֹלָה גָלִית
הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי שְׁמוֹ מִגֵּת מַמְעָרוֹת מִמַּעְרְכוֹת פְּלִשְׁתִּים
וַיְדַבֵּר כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד: כד וְכָל אִישׁ

sheep at Bethlehem. ¹⁶ For forty days, the Philistine advanced and took his stand, morning and evening.

¹⁷ And Jesse said to David his son, “Take for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves and carry them quickly to the camp, to your brothers. ¹⁸ And take these ten cheeses to their commanding officer; ask after your brothers’ health and bring some token of them; ¹⁹ they are with Saul and all the Israelites in the Valley of Elah, fighting the Philistines.”

²⁰ David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with someone to guard them, took up his load, and went off as Jesse had commanded him; he came to the encampment just as the troops were leaving to take up their battle stations, shouting the war cry. ²¹ Israel and the Philistine drew up their battle lines opposite one another. ²² David left the bundle in the charge of the baggage guard and ran to the battle line. When he arrived, he asked his brothers how they were. ²³ While he was talking to them, the shock-trooper (his name was Goliath, the Philistine from Gath) came up from the Philistine ranks and made his usual speech, and David

¹⁶ The NJB has the phrase ‘morning and evening’ at the beginning of the verse; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

¹⁷ In place of ‘carry them quickly’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘hurry’. 1 ephah is about 22L or 2/3 of a bushel.

¹⁸ The literal translation of ‘commanding officer’ is ‘officer of the thousand’.

¹⁹ The NJB translates the name ‘Elah’ (אֵלֶּה) as ‘the Terebinth’; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

²⁰ In place of ‘someone to guard them’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘a keeper’ and the NIV has ‘a shepherd’.

²¹ The NJB lacks ‘battle’ and has ‘facing’ in place of ‘opposite’, here following NETB.

²² The NRSV has ‘keeper of the baggage’ in place of ‘baggage guard’, here following the NJB.

²³ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרֹאוֹתָם אֶת־הָאִישׁ וַיִּנָּסוּ מִפָּנָיו וַיִּירָאוּ
מְאֹד׃ כה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲרֵאִיתָם הָאִישׁ
הַעֹלֶה הַזֶּה כִּי לַחֲרֹף אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלָה וְהִנֵּה הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר־יִכְנֹנוּ יַעֲשֶׂרְנוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ׃ עֹשֶׂר גָּדוֹל וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ
יִתְּנוּ־לּוֹ וְאֶת בֵּית אָבִיו יַעֲשֶׂה חֶפְשִׁי בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל׃ {פ}
כו וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הָעֹמְדִים עִמּוֹ לֵאמֹר
מִה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִכֶּה אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הַלֹּז
וְהַסִּיר חֲרָפָה מֵעַל יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי מִי הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הָעֶרְלִי
הַזֶּה כִּי חָרַף מַעֲרָכוֹת אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים׃ כז וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ
הָעָם כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה לֵאמֹר כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה לָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר
יִכְנֹנוּ׃ כח וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלִיאֵב אָחִיו הַגָּדוֹל בַּדָּבָר וְאֶל־
הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף אֱלִיאֵב בְּדָוִד וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַה־זֶּה
יֵרֵדְתָּ וְעַל־מִי נָטַשְׁתָּ מִעֹט הַצֹּאן הַהֵנָּה בַּמִּדְבָּר
אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־זִדְדוֹךָ וְאֶת רָע לִבְבֹּךָ כִּי לִמְעַן רֹאוֹת
הַמִּלְחָמָה יֵרֵדְתָּ׃ כט וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד מֶה עָשִׂיתִי עִתָּה
הַלּוֹא דָּבָר הוּא׃ ל וַיֵּסֶב מֵאֲצִלוֹ אֶל־מוֹל אַחֵר
וַיֹּאמֶר כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה וַיֵּשְׁבֵהוּ הָעָם דֹּבֵר כַּדָּבָר

heard it.²⁴ As soon as the Israelites saw this man, they all retreated from him and were terrified.²⁵ The Israelites said, “Have you seen this man coming up now? He is coming up to challenge Israel. The king will lavish riches on the man who kills him and give him his daughter in marriage and grant his father’s House the freedom of Israel.”

²⁶ Then David spoke to the men who were standing near him, saying, “What reward will the man have who kills this Philistine and takes away the disgrace from Israel? For, who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should have insulted the armies of the living God?”²⁷ The people answered him in the same way, saying “That is how the man will be rewarded who strikes him down.”²⁸ Now Eliab his elder brother heard him talking to the men and Eliab’s anger flared up against David. “Why have you come down here?” he said. “Whom have you left in charge of those few sheep in the desert? I know your insolence and your wicked heart; you have come to watch the battle.”²⁹ David retorted, “What have I done? Must I not even speak?”³⁰ He turned away from him to address another person and asked the same question; and the

²⁴ Other possible translations of ‘retreated’ (as NETB) are ‘ran away’ (NJB) and ‘fled’ (NRSV).

²⁵ In place of ‘challenge’, here following the NJB, the NRSV & NETB have ‘defy’. Note the unusual/unexpected dagesh on the *resh* in הֲרֵאִיתָם.

²⁶ The literal translation of ‘takes away the disgrace’ is ‘turns aside humiliation’.

²⁷ In place of ‘strikes him down’, here following NETB, the NJB & NRSV have ‘kills him’.

²⁸ The NJB & NETB have a pronoun in place of ‘Eliab’s’, here following the MT & NRSV.

²⁹ The literal translation of ‘must I not even speak’ (here following the NJB) is ‘is it not just a word’; the NRSV has ‘it was only a question’.

³⁰ The literal translation of ‘asked the same question’ is ‘spoke according to this word’.

הָרֹאשׁוֹן: ^לאֵל וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר דָּוִד וַיִּגְדּוּ
לְפָנֵי-שָׂאוּל וַיִּקְחֵהוּ: ^לב וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-שָׂאוּל אֶל-
יִפֹּל לִב-אָדָם עָלָיו עַבְדְּךָ יֵלֵךְ וְנִלָּחֵם עִם-הַפִּלִּשְׁתִּי
הַזֶּה: ^לג וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל אֶל-דָּוִד לֹא תוּכַל לָלֶכֶת אֶל-
הַפִּלִּשְׁתִּי הַזֶּה לְהִלָּחֵם עִמּוֹ כִּי-נָעַר אַתָּה וְהוּא
אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה מִנְעָרָיו: {ס}

^לד וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-שָׂאוּל רַעָה הִיָּה עַבְדְּךָ לְאָבִי
בַצֹּאֵן וּבֶאֱרֵי וְאֶת-הַדּוֹב וְנָשָׂא שָׂה מִהָעֵדֶר:
^לה וַיִּצְאָתִי אַחֲרָיו וְהִכְתִּיו וְהִצַּלְתִּי מִפְּיוֹ וַיִּקֶּם עָלַי
וְהַחֲזִקְתִּי בְזִקְנוֹ וְהִכְתִּיו וְהִמִּיתִיו: ^לו גַּם אֶת-הָאֲרִי
גַם-הַדָּב הִכָּה עַבְדְּךָ וְהִיָּה הַפִּלִּשְׁתִּי הָעָרֵל הַזֶּה
כְּאֶחָד מֵהֶם כִּי חָרַף מַעֲרֻכַת אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים: {ס}
^לז וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הִצַּלְנִי מִיַּד הָאֲרִי וּמִיַּד
הַדָּב הוּא יִצִּילְנִי מִיַּד הַפִּלִּשְׁתִּי הַזֶּה: {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר
שָׂאוּל אֶל-דָּוִד לֵךְ וַיהוָה יְהִיָּה עִמָּךְ: ^לח וַיִּלְבַּשׁ
שָׂאוּל אֶת-דָּוִד מִדָּוִד וְנָתַן קֹוֶבַע נְחֹשֶׁת עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ

people answered him again as before. ³¹ When they heard the words that David spoke, they repeated them before Saul; and he sent for him.

³² David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on his account; your servant will go and fight this Philistine." ³³ Saul answered David, "You cannot go and fight the Philistine, for you are only a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

³⁴ David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father and whenever a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I would follow it, strike it down and rescue it from its mouth. If it turned on me, I would seize it by the beard and batter it to death. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both lion and bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he defied the armies of the living God.

³⁷ David said, "Yahweh, who rescued me from lion's paw and bear's paw, will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Then Saul said to David, "Go, and Yahweh be with you!" ³⁸ Saul made David put on his own armour and put a bronze helmet on his head and gave him

³¹ The literal translation of 'sent for' is 'took'.

³² This verse marks the resumption of the 1st tradition, following on from v. 11; the traditions are then fused.

³³ Saul here sets the scene for the classic 'David versus Goliath' encounter,

³⁴ NETB opens David's reply with, "Your servant used to be a shepherd for his father's flock."

³⁵ Throughout this verse, the NJB uses masculine pronouns for the lion/bear; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

³⁶ After 'like one of them', the LXX adds the following: "Should I not go and smite him, and remove today reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised one?" (οὐχὶ πορεύσομαι καὶ πατάξω αὐτὸν καὶ ἀφελῶ σήμερον ὄνειδος ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ; διότι τίς ὁ ἀπερίτμητος οὗτος)

³⁷ In place of 'lion's paw' and 'bear's paw', here following the NRSV, the NJB & NETB have simply 'lion' and 'bear'.

³⁸ The NRSV has 'coat of mail' in place of 'breastplate' (here following the NJB) and NETB has 'body armour'.

וַיִּלְבַּשׁ אֹתוֹ שְׁרִיּוֹן: ^{לט} וַיַּחְגֹּר דָּוִד אֶת־חֶרְבּוֹ מֵעַל לִמְדָּיו וַיֵּאָל לִלְכֹת כִּי לֹא־נִסָּה וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־שָׂאוּל לֹא אוֹכַל לִלְכֹת בְּאַלֶּה כִּי לֹא נִסִּיתִי וַיִּסְרֶם דָּוִד מֵעָלָיו: ^מ וַיִּקַּח מִקְלֹ בְיָדוֹ וַיִּבְחַר־לּוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה חֲלָקֵי־אַבְנִים | מִן־הַנָּחַל וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָם בְּכִלֵּי הָרַעִים אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ וּבִילָקוּט וּקְלָעוֹ בְיָדוֹ וַיִּגֶשׁ אֶל־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי: ^{מא} וַיֵּלֶךְ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הַלֵּךְ וְקָרַב אֶל־דָּוִד וְהָאִישׁ נִשְׂא הַצֶּנֶה לִפְנָיו: ^{מב} וַיִּבֹט הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּרְאֶה אֶת־דָּוִד וַיִּבְזֶהוּ כִּי־הָיָה נָעַר וְאֲדָמָנִי עֵם־יִפֶּה מִרְאָה: ^{מג} וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד הַכֹּלֵב אֲנִכִּי כִי־אַתָּה בֶּא־אֵלִי בַּמִּקְלֹת וַיִּקְלַל הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶת־דָּוִד בְּאַלֹהָיו: ^{מד} וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד לָכֵה אֵלַי וְאַתָּנָה אֶת־בְּשָׂרְךָ לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְבִהֶמַת הַשָּׂדֶה: {ס}

^{מה} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אַתָּה בָּא אֵלַי בַּחֶרֶב וּבַחֲנִית וּבִכְיֹדֹן וְאֲנִכִּי בֶּא־אֵלַיךְ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

a breastplate to wear. ³⁹ David strapped Saul's sword over the armour but, not being used to these things, found he could not walk. "I cannot walk with these," David said to Saul, "I am not used to them;" so David removed them. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, picked five smooth stones from the riverbed, put them in his shepherd's bag, in his pouch, and with his sling in his hand, he went to meet the Philistine. ⁴¹ The Philistine came nearer and nearer to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him; ⁴² and the Philistine looked at David, and what he saw filled him with scorn, because David was only a youth, a boy of fresh complexion and pleasant bearing. ⁴³ The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog for you to come against me with sticks?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, "Come over here and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the wild animals of the field."

⁴⁵ But David answered the Philistine, "You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of Yahweh Sabaoth, the

³⁹ This verse follows the MT & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ ἔζωσεν τὸν Δαυὶδ τὴν ὀμοφαίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπάνω τοῦ μανδύου αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἐκοπίασεν περιπατήσας ἅπαξ καὶ δῖς· καὶ εἶπεν Δαυὶδ πρὸς Σαουλ Οὐ μὴ δύναμαι πορευθῆναι ἐν τούτοις, ὅτι οὐ πεπείραμαι. καὶ ἀφαιροῦσιν αὐτὰ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ), reads: "and buckled his sword over David's armour. David tried to walk ... so they took them off again."

⁴⁰ VV. 40–58 describe a duel between two champions, to end the war and decide the fate of the two peoples.

⁴¹ The NJB rearranges this verse, placing 'his shield bearer in front of him' after 'the Philistine'.

⁴² The NRSV & NETB have 'ruddy' in place of 'fresh', here following the NJB.

⁴³ 'Sticks' is a pejorative reference to David's staff (v. 40); the same Hebrew word (מִקְלָה) is used for both.

⁴⁴ Many medieval Hebrew MSS have 'the earth' here instead of the MT's 'the field'.

⁴⁵ The NJB has 'come against' in place of 'come to' (twice in this verse), here following the NRSV.

צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי מִעְרָכוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר חָרַפְתָּ:
 מִן הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִסְגְּרֶךָ יְהוָה בְּיָדִי וְהִפִּיתִךָ וְהִסְרֹתִי
 אֶת־רֹאשְׁךָ מֵעַלֶּיךָ וְנָתַתִּי פָגֶר מַחֲנֶה פְּלִשְׁתִּים
 הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְחַיֵּית הָאָרֶץ וַיֵּדְעוּ כָּל־
 הָאָרֶץ כִּי יֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{מז} וַיֵּדְעוּ כָּל־הַקָּהָל
 הַזֶּה כִּי־לֹא בַחֲרֹב וּבַחֲנִית יְהוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה כִּי לַיהוָה
 הַמִּלְחָמָה וְנָתַן אֶתְכֶם בְּיָדֵנוּ: {ס}

מח והיה כִּי־קָם הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרַב לִקְרַאת דָּוִד
 וַיִּמָּהֵר דָּוִד וַיָּרֶץ הַמַּעְרָכָה לִקְרַאת הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי:
 מט וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶת־יָדוֹ אֶל־הַכְּלִי וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁם אֶבֶן
 וַיִּקְלַע וַיִּךְ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־מִצְחוֹ וַתִּטְבַּע הָאֵבֶן
 בְּמִצְחוֹ וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו אֶרֶצָה: ^נ וַיַּחֲזֹק דָּוִד מִן־
 הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי בַקֶּלַע וּבָאֵבֶן וַיִּךְ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּמָּתֶהוּ
 וַחֲרַב אֵין בְּיַד־דָּוִד: ^{נא} וַיָּרֶץ דָּוִד וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶל־
 הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּקַּח אֶת־חַרְבּוֹ וַיִּשְׁלֹפָה מִתַּעֲרָה
 וַיִּמָּתֶהוּ וַיִּכְרַת־בָּהּ אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּרְאוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים
 כִּי־מָת גִּבּוֹרָם וַיִּנָּסוּ: ^{נב} וַיָּקָמוּ אַנְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל

God of the armies of Israel that you have defied. ⁴⁶ Today Yahweh will deliver you into my hand and I shall kill you and cut off your head, and this very day I will give the bodies of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and that all this assembly may know that Yahweh does not save by sword or by spear, for Yahweh is lord of the battle and he will deliver you into our power.”

⁴⁸ When the Philistine drew near to meet David, David left the line of battle and ran to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on the forehead; the stone penetrated his forehead and he fell on his face to the ground. ⁵⁰ So, David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him. David had no sword in his hand. ⁵¹ Then David ran and, standing over the Philistine, seized his sword and drew it from the scabbard, and with this, he killed him, cutting off his head. The Philistines saw that their champion was dead and took to flight. ⁵² The men of Israel and of Judah started forward, shouting their

⁴⁶ Before ‘bodies’, the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ τὰ σώματα σου καὶ), adds ‘your dead body and’.

⁴⁷ The NJB has ‘give victory’ in place of ‘save’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

⁴⁸ Most LXX MSS lack the 2nd half of this verse.

⁴⁹ The NJB does not name ‘David’ in this verse, opening with, ‘putting his hand in his bag, he took out a stone’; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

⁵⁰ Most LXX MSS lack this verse.

⁵¹ V. 50 is a summary statement; this verse gives a more detailed account of how David killed the Philistine.

⁵² The 1st instance of ‘Gath’ follows the LXX (Γαθ); the MT has ‘valley’.

וַיְהוּדָה וַיִּרְעוּ וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים עַד־בּוֹאֲךָ
 גִּיאָ וְעַד שַׁעְרֵי עֶקְרוֹן וַיִּפְּלוּ חֲלָלִי פְּלִשְׁתִּים בְּדֶרֶךְ
 שַׁעֲרִים וְעַד־גֹּת וְעַד־עֶקְרוֹן: ⁵³ וַיָּשְׁבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 מִדָּלֶק אַחֲרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּשְׁסוּ אֶת־מַחֲנֵיהֶם:
⁵⁴ וַיִּקַּח דָּוִד אֶת־רֹאשׁ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיָּבֵאֵהוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם
 וְאֶת־כְּלָיו שָׁם בְּאֹהֶלָּו: {ס}

⁵⁵ וְכִרְאוֹת שְׂאוֹל אֶת־דָּוִד יָצָא לִקְרֹאת הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי
 אָמַר אֶל־אַבְנֵר שֶׁר הַצָּבָא בֶן־מִיזָה הַנָּעַר אַבְנֵר
 וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְנֵר חֲי־נַפְשֶׁךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲסִידַעְתִּי:
⁵⁶ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׂאֵל אֹתָהּ בֶן־מִיזָה הָעָלָם: {ס}
⁵⁷ וַיָּשׁוּב דָּוִד מֵהַכּוֹת אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּקַּח אֹתוֹ
 אַבְנֵר וַיָּבֵאֵהוּ לִפְנֵי שְׂאוֹל וְרֹאשׁ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי בְיָדוֹ:
⁵⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו שְׂאוֹל בֶּן־מִי אַתָּה הַנָּעַר וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד
 בֶּן־עֲבִדְךָ יֵשׁוּ בֵּית הַלְחָמִי:

war cry, and pursued the Philistines as far as the approaches of Gath and the gates of Ekron. The Philistine wounded lay all along the road from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³ From their determined pursuit of the Philistines, the Israelites returned and plundered their camp. ⁵⁴ David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem; the man's armour he kept in his own tent.

⁵⁵ When Saul saw David going to engage the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of his, "Abner, whose son is that boy?" "On your life, O king," Abner replied, "I do not know." ⁵⁶ So, the king said, "Find out whose son the stripling is."

⁵⁷ So, when David came back after killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

⁵⁸ Saul asked him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David replied, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."

⁵³ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "The Israelites came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp."

⁵⁴ This verse is an addition: Jerusalem was captured somewhat later (2S 5:6-9) and David had no tent of his own.

⁵⁵ 17:55-18:5 are from the same tradition as 17:12-30, where David is still unknown to Saul. This is at variance with 16:14-23, and the verses are therefore omitted, like vv. 12-30, from the LXX.

⁵⁶ In place of 'stripling', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'lad'.

⁵⁷ The NJB & NRSV lack the opening 'so', here following NETB; this conjunction links the verse to the command of v. 56.

⁵⁸ The NJB has simply 'the son' in place of 'I am the son', here following the NRSV & NETB.

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- א וַיְהִי כְּכֹלְתּוֹ לְדַבֵּר אֶל-שָׁאוּל וְנַפְשׁ יְהוֹנָתָן נִקְשְׁרָה בְּנַפְשׁ דָּוִד וַיֵּאָהֲבוּ וַיֵּאָהֲבֵהוּ יְהוֹנָתָן כְּנַפְשׁוֹ: ב וַיִּקַּחְהוּ שָׁאוּל בְּיוֹם הַהוּא וְלֹא נָתַן לָשׁוּב בֵּית אָבִיו: ג וַיִּכְרַת יְהוֹנָתָן וְדָוִד בְּרִית בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֹתוֹ כְּנַפְשׁוֹ: ד וַיִּתְּפֹשֶׁט יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-הַמַּעִיל אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ לְדָוִד וּמַדְיָו וְעַד-חֲרָבּוֹ וְעַד-קֶשֶׁתוֹ וְעַד-חֲגָרוֹ: ה וַיֵּצֵא דָוִד בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלַחְנוּ שָׁאוּל יִשְׁכִּיל וַיִּשְׁמָהוּ שָׁאוּל עַל אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיֵּיטֵב בְּעֵינָי כָּל-הָעָם וְגַם בְּעֵינֵי עַבְדֵי שָׁאוּל: {פ}
- ו וַיְהִי בְּבֹאֲם בְּשׁוּב דָּוִד מֵהַכּוֹת אֶת-הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַתֵּצְאָנָה הַנְּשִׁים מִכָּל-עָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשׁוֹר לְשִׁיר וְהַמְחִלּוֹת לִקְרֹאת שָׁאוּל הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּתְּפִים בְּשִׁמְחָה
- 1 When David had finished talking to Saul, Jonathan's soul was closely bound to David's soul and Jonathan came to love him as his own soul.
2 Saul retained him from that day and would not allow him to go back to his father's house. 3 And Jonathan made a covenant with David to love him as his own soul; 4 and Jonathan took off the cloak he was wearing and gave it to David, and his armour too, even his sword, his bow, and his belt. 5 Whenever David went out, on whatever mission Saul sent him, he was successful, and Saul put him in command of the fighting men; he stood well in the people's eyes and in the eyes of Saul's officers too.
6 When they arrived, after David returned from striking down the Philistines, the women came out to meet King Saul from all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing to the sound of tambourine and lyre and

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- ¹ The MT opens with 'When he' rather than 'When David', here following the NJB, NRSV & NETB. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation. Vv. 1-5 are missing from most MSS of the LXX.
- ² In place of 'retained him', here following NETB, the NJB has 'kept him by him' and the NRSV has 'took him'.
- ³ The friendship of David and Jonathan is an attractive feature of the subsequent bitter episodes; it lasts until Jonathan's death.
- ⁴ The accoutrement is part of the man (see 24:5-6, Rt 3:9, 2K 2:13); Jonathan's gesture thus expresses his devotion to David (v. 1).
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'he stood well' is 'it was good'.
- ⁶ The text of this chapter is overloaded; this verse is unnecessary, as also vv. 10-11 (first attempt on David's life), vv. 17-19 (thwarted marriage with Merab), v. 30 (David's triumph, repeating vv. 14-16). The LXX omits these doublets. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

וּבְשִׁלְשִׁים: ^ז וַתַּעֲנִינָה הַנָּשִׁים הַמִּשְׁחָקוֹת וַתֹּאמְרוּ
הִכָּה שָׁאוּל בְּאַלְפֵי וְדָוִד בְּרִבְבֵּיתָיו: ^ח וַיַּחַר לְשָׁאוּל
מְאֹד וַיֵּרַע בְּעֵינָיו הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר נָתַנּוּ לְדָוִד
רִבְבוֹת וְלִי נָתַנּוּ הָאֲלָפִים וְעוֹד לוֹ אֶךְ הַמְּלוּכָה:
^ט וַיְהִי שָׁאוּל עֹן עֲוִין אֶת־דָּוִד מֵהַיּוֹם הַהוּא
וְהַלָּאָה: {ס}

^י וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרָת וַתֵּצֵלַח רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים | רָעָה | אֶל־
שָׁאוּל וַיִּתְנַבֵּא בַתּוֹךְ־הַבַּיִת וְדָוִד מִנְּגֵן בִּידּוֹ כַּיּוֹם |
בַּיּוֹם וְהַחֲנִית בַּיַּד־שָׁאוּל: ^{יא} וַיִּטֵּל שָׁאוּל אֶת־
הַחֲנִית וַיֹּאמֶר אֶכָּה בְּדָוִד וּבִקְרִי וַיִּסֹּב דָּוִד מִפָּנָיו
פַּעַמַּיִם: ^{יב} וַיֵּרָא שָׁאוּל מִלִּפְנֵי דָוִד כִּי־הָיָה יְהוָה
עִמּוֹ וּמֵעַם שָׁאוּל סָר: ^{יג} וַיִּסְרְהוּ שָׁאוּל מִעַמּוֹ
וַיִּשְׁמְהוּ לוֹ שַׁר־אַלְף וַיֵּצֵא וַיָּבֹא לִפְנֵי הָעָם: {ס}

^{יד} וַיְהִי דָוִד לְכָל־דֶּרֶכוֹ מִשְׁכִּיל וַיְהוֶה עִמּוֹ: ^{טו} וַיֵּרָא
שָׁאוּל אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה מִשְׁכִּיל מְאֹד וַיִּגַּר מִפָּנָיו: ^{טז} וְכָל־

cries of joy; ⁷ and as they danced the women sang: "Saul has killed his thousands and David his tens of thousands." ⁸ Saul was very angry; the incident was not to his liking. "They have given David the tens of thousands," he said, "but me only the thousands; he has all but the kingship now." ⁹ Saul turned a jealous eye on David from that day forward.

¹⁰ The next day, an evil spirit from God seized on Saul and he raved within his house. David was playing his harp as on other days and Saul had his spear in his hand. ¹¹ Saul threw the spear; "I am going to pin David to the wall," he said; but David twice evaded him. ¹² So, Saul feared David, for Yahweh was with him but had turned away from Saul. ¹³ So, Saul dismissed him from his presence, making him commander of a thousand. David led the army out to battle and back.

¹⁴ In all his enterprises, David was successful, and Yahweh was with him. ¹⁵ Seeing how well he succeeded, Saul was frightened of him; ¹⁶ but

⁷ Most English translations format the doublet at the end of the verse as a poem.

⁸ NETB has 'thought' in place of 'said', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV.

⁹ The Kethib/Qere difference here (adding a *yod*) would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁰ Vv. 10-11, belonging to the same tradition as 16:14-23, anticipate the episode of 19:8-10 and here interrupt the narrative.

¹¹ The NJB has 'brandished' in place of 'threw', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹² The NJB & NRSV lacks the opening 'so', here following NETB.

¹³ For the last sentence, here following NETB, the NJB reads, "He marched at the head of the people."

¹⁴ The literal translation of 'enterprises' (here following the NJB - the NRSV has 'undertakings' and NETB has 'achieved success in all he did') is 'ways'.

¹⁵ In place of 'frightened', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'in awe'.

¹⁶ This is an anachronistic mention of 'Israel and Judah', as the Kingdom was not split until after Solomon's death.

יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה אָהָב אֶת־דָּוִד כִּי־הוּא יוֹצֵא וּבֹא
לִפְנֵיהֶם: {פ}

י' וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־דָּוִד הִנֵּה בְּתִי הַגְּדוֹלָה מְרָב
אֶתָּה אֶתְּנֶנְךָ לָאִשָּׁה אֲךָ הִיא־לִי לְבִן־חַיִל וְהִלָּחֵם
מִלַּחְמֹת יְהוָה וְשָׁאוּל אָמַר אֶל־תְּהִי יָדִי בּוֹ וְתִהְיֶי-
בּוֹ יַד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים: {ס}

י"ח וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־שָׁאוּל מִי אֲנֹכִי וּמִי חַיִּי מִשְׁפַּחַת
אָבִי בְיִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־אֶהְיָ חֹתֵן לְמֶלֶךְ: י"ט וַיְהִי בַעַת
תֵּת אֶת־מְרָב בַּת־שָׁאוּל לְדָוִד וְהִיא נָתְנָה
לְעַדְרִיאֵל הַמַּחֲלָתִי לָאִשָּׁה: כ' וַתֹּאֲהָב מִיכָל בַּת־
שָׁאוּל אֶת־דָּוִד וַיִּגְדּוּ לְשָׁאוּל וַיִּשֶׁר הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינָיו:
כ"א וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶתְנֶנָּה לוֹ וְתִהְיֶה־לוֹ לְמוֹקֵשׁ וְתִהְיֶי-
בּוֹ יַד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־דָּוִד בְּשָׂתִים
תִּתַּחֲתֶן בִּי הַיּוֹם: כ"ב וַיְצֵו שָׁאוּל אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ דָּבָר
אֶל־דָּוִד בַּלֵּט לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה חֶפֶץ בְּךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל־
עַבְדָּיו אֶהְיֶה וְעַתָּה הִתַּחֲתֶן בַּמֶּלֶךְ: כ"ג וַיִּדְבְּרוּ

all Israel and Judah loved David, because he was their leader in all their exploits.

¹⁷ Saul said to David, "Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you in marriage; but you must serve me bravely and fight the battles of Yahweh" – for Saul had made up his mind, "Let it not be my hand that strikes him down, but the hand of the Philistines!"

¹⁸ David said to Saul, "Who am I and my kinsfolk, my father's family, in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?" ¹⁹ But when the time came for Merab the daughter of Saul to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel of Meholah. ²⁰ Now Michal Saul's daughter fell in love with David; when Saul heard this, the matter pleased him. ²¹ Saul thought, "Let me give her to him: she will prove a snare for him and the hand of the Philistines will strike him." (Twice, Saul said to David, "You shall be my son-in-law.") ²² Saul commanded his servants, "Tell David secretly, "Look, the king is pleased with you and all his servants love you; so, become the king's son-in-law."" ²³ The king's servants repeated

¹⁷ Vv. 17–19 (missing from most LXX MSS) are ill-matched with what follows; with the exception of the gloss in v. 21, there is no allusion in vv. 20–27 to any previous broken engagement; the verses are missing from some LXX texts.

¹⁸ The term, חַיִּי, traditionally understood as 'my life', is here a rare word meaning 'kinsfolk'; the NJB conjecturally translates it as 'my lineage'.

¹⁹ The NRSV has 'the Meholathite' in place of 'of Meholah', here following the NJB.

²⁰ The NJB ends with 'he was pleased' in place of 'the matter pleased him', here following the MT.

²¹ The parenthesised sentence is a gloss, absent from most LXX MSS (see #17).

²² The NRSV has 'in private' in place of 'secretly', here following the NJB & NETB.

²³ The NRSV ends this verse, here following the NJB, with, "seeing that I am a poor man and of no repute."

עבְדֵי שָׁאוֹל בְּאָזְנֵי דָוִד אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר
דָּוִד הִנֵּקְלָה בְּעֵינֶיכֶם הַתַּחֲתָן בַּמֶּלֶךְ וְאַנְכִי אִישׁ־
רֶשַׁע וְנִקְלָה: ^{כד} וַיֹּגְדוּ עַבְדֵי שָׁאוֹל לוֹ לֵאמֹר כַּדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה דִּבֶּר דָּוִד: ^{כה} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוֹל כֹּה־תֹאמְרוּ
לְדָוִד אֵין־חֶפֶץ לַמֶּלֶךְ בַּמָּהָר כִּי בַמָּאָה עַרְלוֹת
פְּלִשְׁתִּים לַהֲנָקָם בְּאֵיבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּשְׁאוֹל חָשַׁב
לְהַפִּיל אֶת־דָּוִד בְּיַד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים: ^{כו} וַיֹּגְדוּ עַבְדָּיו
לְדָוִד אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֵּשֶׁר הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי דָוִד
לְהַתַּחֲתָן בַּמֶּלֶךְ וְלֹא מָלְאוּ הַיָּמִים: ^{כז} וַיָּקָם דָּוִד
וַיֵּלֶךְ הוּא וְאַנְשָׁיו וַיִּךְ בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים מֵאַתִּים אִישׁ
וַיָּבֵא דָוִד אֶת־עַרְלֹתֵיהֶם וַיִּמְלֵאֻם לַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַתַּחֲתָן
בַּמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ שָׁאוֹל אֶת־מִיכָל בָּתּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: {ס}
^{כח} וַיֵּרָא שָׁאוֹל וַיֵּדַע כִּי יְהוָה עִם־דָּוִד וּמִיכָל בַּת־
שָׁאוֹל אֶהְבֶּתָהּ: ^{כט} וַיֹּאסֶף שָׁאוֹל לִרְאֹת מִפְּנֵי דָוִד
עוֹד וַיְהִי שָׁאוֹל אֵיב אֶת־דָּוִד כָּל־הַיָּמִים: {פ}
^ל וַיֵּצְאוּ שְׂרֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיְהִי מִדֵּי צֹאתָם שָׁכַל דָּוִד
מִכָּל עַבְדֵי שָׁאוֹל וַיִּיקָר שְׁמוֹ מְאֹד: {ס}

these words in David's ear, and David replied, "Does it strike you as an easy thing for me to become the king's son-in-law, poor and of humble position as I am?" ²⁴ Saul's servants then reported what David had said. ²⁵ Saul replied, "Tell David this, "The king desires no marriage present except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, for vengeance on the king's enemies."" Saul was planning that David should fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶ His servants brought this message to David and he was delighted at the thought of becoming the king's son-in-law. The time had not yet expired ²⁷ when David rose and set off, he and his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. David brought their foreskins and counted them out before the king so that he could be the king's son-in-law. Saul then gave him his daughter Michal in marriage. ²⁸ And Saul now saw and realised that Yahweh was with David, and that Saul's daughter Michal loved him; ²⁹ then Saul became more afraid of David than ever and became his inveterate enemy. ³⁰ The Philistine leaders went out to battle and, when they did, David succeeded more than all Saul's officers, so his fame became great.

²⁴ For this verse, here following the NJB & NETB, the NRSV reads, "The servants of Saul told him, 'This is what David said'."

²⁵ 'Marriage present' (the NJB has 'bride-price') is a translation of מָהָר, the sum paid by the bridegroom to the father of his future bride.

²⁶ Literally translated, 'the time had not yet expired' reads 'the days were not yet fulfilled'.

²⁷ The NRSV, following the LXX (ἐκατόν, and cf. 2S 3:14), specifies that David killed one hundred, not two hundred, Philistines.

²⁸ 'Saul's daughter Michal' follows the MT & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX (πᾶς Ἰσραηλ), has, 'the whole House of Israel'.

²⁹ The final sentence is absent from most LXX MSS.

³⁰ This verse is absent from most LXX MSS.

1 SAMUEL 19

שמואל א פרק יט

א וַיֹּדֶבֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־יוֹנָתָן בְּנוֹ וְאֶל־כָּל־עֲבָדָיו
לְהַמִּית אֶת־דָּוִד וַיהוֹנָתָן בֶּן־שָׁאוּל חָפֵץ בְּדָוִד
מְאֹד: ב וַיִּגַּד יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵאמֹר מִבְּקֵשׁ שָׁאוּל אֲבִי
לְהַמִּיתָךְ וְעַתָּה הִשְׁמַר־נָא בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֵּשְׁבֶת בַּסֶּתֶר
וַנַּחֲבֵאתָ: ג וְאֲנִי אֵצֶא וְעִמַּדְתִּי לַיַּד־אֲבִי בַשָּׂדֶה
אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שָׁם וְאֲנִי אֹדְבֶר בְּךָ אֶל־אֲבִי וְרָאִיתִי
מָה וְהִגַּדְתִּי לָךְ: {ס}

ד וַיֹּדֶבֶר יְהוֹנָתָן בְּדָוִד טוֹב אֶל־שָׁאוּל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר
אֵלָיו אֶל־יַחֲטֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּעַבְדּוֹ בְּדָוִד כִּי לֹא חָטָא
לָךְ וְכִי מַעֲשָׂיו טוֹב־לָךְ מְאֹד: ה וַיֵּשֶׁם אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ
בַּכֶּפֶז וַיִּךְ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה תְּשׁוּעָה גְדוֹלָה
לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאִיתָ וַתִּשְׁמַח וְלָמָּה תַּחֲטֹא בְדָם נָקִי
לְהַמִּית אֶת־דָּוִד חֲנָם: ו וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׁאוּל בְּקוֹל יְהוֹנָתָן
וַיִּשְׁבַּע שָׁאוּל חַי־יְהוָה אִם־יוּמָת: ז וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן
לְדָוִד וַיִּגְדֵּלוּ יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיָּבֹא

1 Saul told Jonathan his son and all his servants of his intention to kill David. Now Jonathan, Saul's son, held David in great affection; 2 and so Jonathan warned David; "My father Saul is trying to kill you," he said, "so be on your guard tomorrow morning; hide away in some secret place. 3 Then I will go out and keep my father company in the fields where you are hiding, and will talk to my father about you; if I learn anything, I will tell you."

4 So, Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father; he said, "Let not the king sin against his servant David, for he has not sinned against you, and what he has done has been greatly to your advantage. 5 He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine, and Yahweh brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw it yourself and rejoiced; why then sin against innocent blood in killing David without cause?" 6 Saul heeded Jonathan's words and took an oath, "As Yahweh lives, he will not be put to death." 7 Jonathan called David and told him all these

1 SAMUEL 19

1 The episode of vv. 1–7 does not square with the narrative of Ch. 20, where Jonathan as yet knows nothing (v. 2) of his father's vicious intentions. These are two different traditions about Jonathan's intervention on behalf of David.

2 The literal translation of 'trying' (here following the NRSV & NETB) is 'seeking'; the NJB has 'looking for a way'.

3 The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "I will find out what the situation is and let you know."

4 The NRSV ends this verse, here following the NJB, with, "and because his deeds have been of good service to you."

5 For 'hands', the MT has a singular noun; here, we follow the style of modern English.

6 The NJB has 'I will not kill him' in place of 'he will not be put to death', here following the NRSV & NETB.

7 The literal translation of 'served' is 'was before'.

יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־דָּוִד אֶל־שָׁאוֹל וַיְהִי לִפְנָיו כְּאֶת־מֹדֶל
שְׁלֹשׁוֹם: {ס}

ח וַתִּבְרַח מִלְחָמָה לַהֲיוֹת וַיֵּצֵא דָוִד וַיִּלָּחֶם
בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיֵּד בָּהֶם מַכָּה גְדוֹלָה וַיִּנָּסוּ מִפְּנָיו:
ט וַתְּהִי רוּחַ יְהוָה רָעָה אֶל־שָׁאוֹל וְהוּא בְּבֵיתוֹ
יֹשֵׁב וַחֲנִיתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וְדֹד מְגַגֵּן בְּיָד: י וַיִּבְקֹשׁ שָׁאוֹל
לְהַכּוֹת בַּחֲנִית בְּדָוִד וַיִּפְּטֹר מִפְּנֵי שָׁאוֹל וַיֵּד
אֶת־הַחֲנִית בַּקִּיר וְדָוִד נָס וַיִּמָּלֵט בַּלַּיְלָה הוּא: {פ}
יא וַיִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוֹל מַלְאָכִים אֶל־בֵּית דָּוִד לְשַׁמְרוֹ
וְלִהְיוֹתוֹ בַּבֹּקֶר וַתֵּגֵד לְדָוִד מִכָּל אֲשֶׁתּוֹ לֵאמֹר
אִם־אֵינִי מְמַלֵּט אֶת־נַפְשִׁי הַלַּיְלָה מֵחַר אֶתָּה
מוֹמֶת: יב וַתֵּרֶד מִכָּל אֶת־דָּוִד בַּעַד הַחֲלוֹן וַיֵּלֶךְ
וַיִּבְרַח וַיִּמָּלֵט: יג וַתִּקַּח מִכָּל אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים וַתִּשֶׂם
אֶל־הַמֶּטֶה וְאֵת כְּבִיר הָעֲזִים שָׂמָּה מִרְאֲשֵׁתוֹ
וַתִּכְס בַּבֶּגֶד: {ס}

יד וַיִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוֹל מַלְאָכִים לִקְחַת אֶת־דָּוִד וַתֹּאמֶר
חַלָּה הוּא: {ס}

things. Then Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he served him as before.

⁸ War broke out again and David went out to fight the Philistines; he inflicted a great defeat on them and they fled before him. ⁹ An evil spirit from Yahweh came on Saul while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand; David was playing the harp. ¹⁰ Saul tried to pin David to the wall with his spear, but he avoided Saul's thrust and the spear stuck in the wall. David fled and made good his escape that same night.

¹¹ And Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch it, intending to kill him in the morning; but Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you do not save your life tonight, you will be a dead man tomorrow."

¹² Then Michal lowered David down through the window and he made off, took flight, and so escaped. ¹³ Michal then took the teraphim, laid it on the bed, put a tress of goats' hair on its head and covered it with a garment.

¹⁴ And, when Saul sent the messengers to arrest David, she said, "He is sick."

⁸ Compare vv. 8–10 with 18:10–11. The literal translation of 'inflicted a great defeat' is 'struck a heavy blow'.

⁹ After 'playing the harp', the MT adds 'with his hand'.

¹⁰ The phrase, 'that same night', refers to David's wedding night rather than with what immediately precedes it.

¹¹ In place of 'save your life', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'escape'.

¹² The NRSV ends this verse, here following the NJB, with, "he fled away and escaped."

¹³ The NRSV uses 'idol' in place of 'teraphim' (household gods associated with inheritance right), here following the MT (תְּרָפִים) & NJB.

¹⁴ The NJB has 'agents' in place of 'messengers', here following the NRSV.

טו וַיִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוּל אֶת־הַמַּלְאָכִים לִרְאוֹת אֶת־דָּוִד
לֵאמֹר הֲעָלוּ אֹתוֹ בַּמָּטָה אֵלַי לְהַמָּתוֹ: טז וַיָּבֹאוּ
הַמַּלְאָכִים וְהִנֵּה הַתְּרָפִים אֶל־הַמָּטָה וְכִבְיֹר
הָעֵזִים מֵרָאשֵׁיתוֹ: {ס}

יז וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־מִיכָל לְמָה כָּכָה רָמִיתָנִי
וּתְשַׁלְּחִי אֶת־אִיבִי וַיִּמָּלֵט וְתֹאמַר מִיכָל אֶל־שָׁאוּל
הוּא־אָמַר אֵלַי שְׁלַחְנִי לְמָה אָמִיתָד: יח וְדָוִד בָּרַח
וַיִּמָּלֵט וַיָּבֹא אֶל־שִׁמְוֹאֵל הַרְמָתָה וַיַּגֵּד־לּוֹ אֵת כָּל־
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה־לּוֹ שָׁאוּל וַיִּלְךָ הוּא וּשְׁמֹוֹאֵל וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
בְּנוֹת בְּנֵי־זֵבֻל: יט וַיַּגֵּד לְשָׁאוּל לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה דָוִד בְּנוֹת
בְּנֵי־זֵבֻל בְּרָמָה: כ וַיִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוּל מַלְאָכִים לְקַחַת אֶת־
דָּוִד וַיֵּרָא אֶת־לִהְקֵת הַנְּבִיאִים נְבָאִים וּשְׁמֹוֹאֵל
עֹמֵד נֹצֵב עָלֵיהֶם וְתָהִי עַל־מַלְאָכֵי שָׁאוּל רוּחַ
אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ גַם־הֵמָּה: כא וַיַּגִּדוּ לְשָׁאוּל וַיִּשְׁלַח
מַלְאָכִים אֲחֵרִים וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ גַם־הֵמָּה {ס} וַיִּסָּף
שָׁאוּל וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים שְׁלִשִׁים וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ גַם־הֵמָּה:

¹⁵ Saul, however, sent the messengers back to see David, saying, “Bring him up to me on his bed so that I can kill him.” ¹⁶ When the messengers went in, there on the bed was the image with the tress of goats’ hair on its head!

¹⁷ Then Saul said to Michal, “Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, and so make his escape?” Michal answered Saul, “He said to me, “Let me go; why should I kill you.”” ¹⁸ Now David fled and made his escape, and he went to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him; he and Samuel went and lived at Naioth. ¹⁹ Word was brought to Saul, “David is at Naioth in Ramah.” ²⁰ Saul accordingly sent messengers to capture David; when they saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel in charge, the spirit of God came on Saul’s messengers, and they too fell into an ecstasy. ²¹ Word of this was brought to Saul and he sent other messengers, and they, too, fell into an ecstasy; Saul then sent a third group of messengers, and they fell into an ecstasy too. ²² He then went to Ramah himself and, coming to the large

¹⁵ The NJB ends this verse with ‘for me to kill him’ & the NRSV has ‘that I may kill him’.

¹⁶ In place of ‘the messengers’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘they’.

¹⁷ David’s alleged question has the force of a threat in this context – the NJB has ‘let me go or I will kill you’.

¹⁸ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁹ On the Kethib/Qere difference here, see #18.

²⁰ The meaning of the Hebrew here translated as ‘in charge’ (here following the NRSV – the NJB & NETB have ‘as their leader’) is uncertain.

²¹ Throughout this paragraph, the NJB has ‘agents’ in place of ‘messengers’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

²² On the Kethib/Qere difference here, see #18. In place of ‘to the large storage-well’, here following the MT, the LXX has ‘to the well of the threshing floor’ (ἔως τοῦ φρεάτος τοῦ ἄλω), and some MSS have ‘on the bare height’ in place of ‘in Seku’.

כב וַיֵּלֶךְ גַּם־הוּא הַרְמָתָה וַיָּבֹא עַד־בּוֹר הַגָּדוֹל
 אֲשֶׁר בְּשֶׁכוֹ וַיִּשְׁאַל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיפָה שְׂמוּאֵל וְדָוִד
 וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְנוֹת בְּנֵי־רָמָה: כג וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם אֶל־
 נָיֹוֹת נָוִית בְּרָמָה וַתְּהִי עָלָיו גַּם־הוּא רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים
 וַיֵּלֶךְ הַלּוֹךְ וַיִּתְּנָבֵא עַד־בָּאוּ בְנוֹת בְּנֵי־רָמָה:
 כד וַיִּפְּשֹׁט גַּם־הוּא בְּגָדָיו וַיִּתְּנָבֵא גַם־הוּא לִפְנֵי
 שְׂמוּאֵל וַיִּפֹּל עַרְס כָּל־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה עַל־
 כֵּן יֹאמְרוּ הַגָּם שְׂאוּל בְּנָבִיאִם: {פ}

storage-well at Seku, asked, “Where are Samuel and David?” Someone answered, “Why, they are in the huts at Naioth in Ramah.” ²³ He went on from there to the huts at Naioth in Ramah and the spirit of God came on him too, and he went on his way in an ecstasy until he came to the huts at Naioth in Ramah. ²⁴ He too stripped off his clothes and he too fell into an ecstasy in the presence of Samuel and, falling down, lay there naked all that day and night. Hence, the saying: Is Saul one of the prophets too?

²³ The *Kethib*/*Qere* differences here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁴ *NETB* parenthesises the last sentence, which many English translations format as poetry.

1 SAMUEL 20

שמואל א פרק ב

א וַיִּבְרַח דָּוִד מִנַּיֹּת בְּרָמָה וַיָּבֹא וַיֹּאמֶר
לִפְנֵי יְהוֹנָתָן מָה עָשִׂיתִי מִה־עוֹנִי וּמִה־חַטָּאתִי
לִפְנֵי אָבִיךָ כִּי מִבְּקֶשׁ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
חֲלִילָה לֹא תָמוּת הַנֶּה לוֹ עֲשֵׂה [לֹא־עֲשֵׂה] אָבִי
דָּבָר גָּדוֹל אִם דָּבָר קָטָן וְלֹא יִגְלֶה אֶת־אָזְנִי וּמִדְּוַע
יִסְתִּיר אָבִי מִמֶּנִּי אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֵין זֹאת:
ג וַיִּשָּׁבַע עוֹד דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר יָדַע אָבִיךָ כִּי־מִצָּאתִי
חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יָדְעָזְאת יְהוֹנָתָן פֶּן־יַעֲצֹב
וְאוֹלָם חִי־יִהְיֶה וְחִי נַפְשֶׁךָ כִּי כִפְשָׁע בֵּינִי וּבֵין
הַמּוֹת: ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד מִה־תֹּאמַר נַפְשֶׁךָ
וְאַעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ: {פ}

ה וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן הִנֵּה־חֹדֶשׁ מָחָר וְאַנֹכִי
יֹשֵׁב־אֵשֶׁב עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ לֶאֱכֹל וּשְׁלַחְתָּנִי וְנִסְתַּרְתִּי
בַּשָּׂדֶה עַד הָעֶרֶב הַשְּׁלִישִׁית: ו אִם־פָּקַד יִפְקְדֵנִי
אָבִיךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ נִשְׁאֵל נִשְׁאֵל מִמֶּנִּי דָוִד לָרוּץ בֵּית־
לָחֶם עִירוֹ כִּי זָבַח הַיָּמִים שָׁם לְכָל־הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה:

¹ David then fled from Naioth in Ramah; he went and asked Jonathan, "What have I done, what is my guilt, and what is my sin against your father that he is seeking my life?" ² He said, "You must not think that. He will not kill you. Look, my father does nothing, great or small, without confiding it to me; why should he hide this from me? It is not true." ³ But David swore this oath again, "Your father knows very well that I enjoy your favour, and thinks, "Jonathan must not come to know of this or he will be grieved." But as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, there is only a step between me and death." ⁴ Then Jonathan said to David, "What do you want me to do for you?"

⁵ David said to Jonathan, "Look, tomorrow is New Moon and I should be sitting at the table with the king, but you must let me go and hide in the fields until evening of the third day. ⁶ If your father notices my absence, you must say, "David asked urgent leave of me to hurry off to Bethlehem, his own town, because they are holding the annual sacrifice

1 SAMUEL 20

¹ The opening clause, "David then fled from Naioth in Ramah," (the NJB reads, "Fleeing from the huts at Ramah," see #19:18) is an editorial link; in the narrative that follows, David has not yet left Saul. On the *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here, see #19:18.

² The *Ketiv* has 'do to him' (לֹא־עֲשֵׂה) in place of 'does nothing' (לֹא־יַעֲשֶׂה – literally, 'he will not do'), here following the *Qere*.

³ The LXX and the *Peshitta* lack the word 'again'.

⁴ Literally translated, Jonathan's reply is, "Whatever your soul says, I will do for you."

⁵ The NJB, following the LXX, omits, 'of the third day'.

⁶ The NJB has 'clan' in place of 'family', here following the NRSV.

ז' אִם־כֹּה יֹאמֶר טוֹב שְׁלוֹם לְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִם־חָרָה
יִחְרָה לוֹ דַּע בִּי־כִלְתָּה הָרָעָה מֵעַמּוֹ: ^ח וְעֲשִׂיתָ
חֶסֶד עַל־עַבְדְּךָ כִּי בְּבְרִית יְהוָה הִבַּאתָ אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ
עִמָּךְ וְאִם־יִשְׁכַּח עוֹן הַמִּיתָנִי אֹתָהּ וְעַד־אָבִיךָ
לְמַה־זֶּה תִּבְיָאֲנִי: {פ}

ט' וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן חֲלִילָה לָּךְ כִּי | אִם־יֵדַע אִדַּע כִּי־
כִלְתָּה הָרָעָה מֵעַם אָבִי לָבוֹא עָלֶיךָ וְלֹא אֶתָּה
אֲגִיד לָּךְ: {ס}

י' וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן מִי יֵגִיד לִי אֹו מִה־יַּעֲנֶךָ
אָבִיךָ קָשָׁה: {ס}

יא' וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד לָכֵה וְנִצַּא הַשָּׂדֶה וַיֵּצְאוּ
שְׁנֵיהֶם הַשָּׂדֶה: {ס}

יב' וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶל־דָּוִד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־
אֶחָדְךָ אֶת־אָבִי כָעַתָּה | מִחֹל הַשְּׁלֵשִׁית וְהַנֶּה־טוֹב
אֶל־דָּוִד וְלֹא־אֶזְכֹּר אֶשְׁלַח אֵלֶיךָ וְגִלִּיתִי אֶת־אֲזָנֶיךָ:
יג' כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִיהוֹנָתָן וְכֹה יִסִּיף כִּי־יִיטֵב אֶל־
אָבִי אֶת־הָרָעָה עָלֶיךָ וְגִלִּיתִי אֶת־אֲזָנֶךָ וְשִׁלַּחְתִּיךָ

there for all the family.” ⁷ If he says, “Very well,” your servant is safe, but if he is angry, you may be sure he is set on evil. ⁸ Do this favour for your servant, since you have united yourself with him by a pact in Yahweh’s name. But if I am guilty, then kill me yourself – why take me to your father?”

⁹ Jonathan replied, “Far be it from you to suggest this. If I had certain knowledge that my father was set on bringing evil upon you, would I not tell you?”

¹⁰ David then said to Jonathan, “Who will let me know if your father answers you harshly?”

¹¹ “Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out into the field.” So, they both went out into the field.

¹² Then Jonathan said to David, “May Yahweh the God of Israel be witness! When I have sounded out my father, about this time the day after tomorrow; if all is well as concerns David and I do not then inform him, ¹³ then may Yahweh do this to Jonathan and more! If my father intends to do you some harm, I will inform you and send you away, and

⁷ Literally translated, this verse ends, “...know that the evil is completed from with him.”

⁸ The NRSV uses the phrase ‘a sacred covenant’ in place of ‘a pact in Yahweh’s name’.

⁹ For the 1st sentence of Jonathan’s reply, here following NETB (and the NRSV), the NJB reads, “You must not think that.”

¹⁰ In place of ‘answers you harshly’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘gives you a harsh answer’.

¹¹ NETB links the 2nd sentence temporally with v. 12, reading, “When the two of them had gone out into the field, ¹² Jonathan said to David....

¹² The NJB has ‘tomorrow’ in place of ‘the day after tomorrow’, here following NETB; the NRSV has ‘tomorrow or the third day’.

¹³ Jonathan’s question presupposes that a meeting would be dangerous.

וְהִלַּכְתָּ לְשָׁלוֹם וַיְהִי יְהוָה עִמָּךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־
אָבִי: ^ד וְלֹא אֶסְעֻדָנִי חַי וְלֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד
יְהוָה וְלֹא אָמוּת: ^ט וְלֹא־תִכְרִית אֶת־חֶסֶדְךָ מֵעַם
בֵּיתִי עַד־עוֹלָם וְלֹא בִהְכַרְתָּ יְהוָה אֶת־אֵיבֵי דָוִד
אִישׁ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: ^{טז} וַיִּכְרַת יְהוֹנָתָן עִם־בֵּית
דָּוִד וּבִקֵּשׁ יְהוָה מִיַּד אֵיבֵי דָוִד: ^{יז} וַיֹּסֶף יְהוֹנָתָן
לְהִשָּׁבֵיעַ אֶת־דָּוִד בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֹתוֹ כִּי־אַהֲבַת נַפְשׁוֹ
אָהָבוּ: {ס}

^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר־לּוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפְקַד
מוֹשָׁבְךָ: ^{יט} וְשִׁלַּשְׁתָּ תֵּיֶדֶד מָאָד וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־נִסְתַּרְתָּ שָׁם בַּיּוֹם הַמַּעֲשֶׂה וּשְׁבַתָּ אֶצֶל
הָאֲבֵן הָאֵזוֹל: ^כ וְאָנִי שִׁלַּשְׁתִּי הַחֲצִים צֹדֵה אוֹרָה

you will go unharmed; and may Yahweh be with you as he used to be with my father. ¹⁴ If I am still alive, show me Yahweh's own kindness; if I die, ¹⁵ never withdraw your own kindness from my House. When Yahweh cuts off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth, ¹⁶ let not the name of Jonathan be cut off with the House of Saul, or Yahweh will demand a reckoning of David." ¹⁷ Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him; for he loved him as he loved his own life.

¹⁸ Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is New Moon; you will be missed, for your seat will be empty. ¹⁹ The day after tomorrow you shall go a long way down; go to the place where you hid on the day of the deed and stay beside the heap of stones there. ²⁰ I shall shoot three arrows

¹⁴ The text of vv. 14–16 is uncertain; the translation used here has been restored following the LXX (transcribed individually in the footnotes for each verse). For this verse, here following the NJB & LXX (καὶ μὲν ἔτι μου ζῶντος καὶ ποιήσεις ἔλεος μετ' ἐμοῦ, καὶ ἐὰν θανάτῳ ἀποθάνω), NETB reads, "While I am still alive, extend to me the loyalty of the LORD, or else I will die!"

¹⁵ The NRSV ends Jonathan's speech with this verse; here, we follow the LXX (οὐκ ἐξαρεῖς ἔλεός σου ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου μου ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος· καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ ἐξαίρειν κύριον τοὺς ἐχθρούς Δαυὶδ ἕκαστον ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς γῆς) & NJB.

¹⁶ For this verse, the NRSV reads, "Thus Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, 'May the LORD seek out the enemies of David.'" Here, we follow the LXX (ἐξαρχῆναι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ἰωνάθαν ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου Δαυὶδ, καὶ ἐκζητῆσαι κύριος ἐχθρούς τοῦ Δαυὶδ) & NJB.

¹⁷ This verse here follows the MT & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ προσέθετο ἔτι Ἰωνάθαν ὁμόσαι τῷ Δαυὶδ, ὅτι ἠγάπησεν ψυχὴν ἀγαπῶντος αὐτόν), reads, "Jonathan then renewed his oath to David, since he loved him like his very soul."

¹⁸ The NJB has 'your absence will be noticed' in place of 'you will be missed', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁹ What 'deed' is not clear, whether the spear-throwing incident (18:10–11) or some other adventure not preserved: perhaps merely an editorial reference to 19:1–7. In place of 'you shall go a long way down', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'your absence will be very marked'; the reason for such a difference in translation is unclear.

²⁰ At the beginning of this verse, the NJB adds, "For my part, the day after tomorrow."

לְשַׁלַּח־לִי לַמִּטְרָה: כֹּא וְהִנֵּה אֲשַׁלַּח אֶת־הַנֹּעַר לְךָ
מֵצֵא אֶת־הַחֲצִים אִם־אָמַר אָמַר לְנֹעַר הִנֵּה
הַחֲצִים | מִמֶּךָ וְהִנֵּה קָחְנוּ | וּבֹאָה כִּי־שְׁלוֹם לְךָ וְאִין
דְּבַר חֵי־יְהוָה: כִּב וְאִם־כֹּה אָמַר לְעֹלָם הִנֵּה הַחֲצִים
מִמֶּךָ וְהִלָּאָה לְךָ כִּי שְׁלַחְךָ יְהוָה: כִּב וְהַדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר
דִּבַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וְאַתָּה הִנֵּה יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ עַד־
עוֹלָם: {ס}

כִּד וַיִּסְתֵּר דָּוִד בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיְהִי הַחֹדֶשׁ וַיָּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־
אֶל־הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכֹל: כִּה וַיָּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־מוֹשְׁבּוֹ
כַּפְּעָם | בַּפֶּעַם אֶל־מוֹשֵׁב הַקִּיר וַיִּקֶּם יְהוֹנָתָן וַיָּשֶׁב
אֲבִנָּר מֵצֵד שְׁאוּל וַיִּפְקֹד מְקוֹם דָּוִד: כִּו וְלֹא־דִבֶּר
שְׁאוּל מֵאוֹמָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי אָמַר מְקַרָּה הוּא
בְּלִתִּי טְהוֹר הוּא כִּי־לֹא טְהוֹר: {ס}

כִּז וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרַת הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי וַיִּפְקֹד מְקוֹם
דָּוִד: {פ}

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאוּל אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן בְּנוֹ מַדּוּעַ לֹא־בָא בֶן־יִשָּׁי
גַם־תָּמוּל גַּם־הַיּוֹם אֶל־הַלֶּחֶם: כִּח וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־

towards it as though at a target.²¹ Then I shall send a servant to say, “Go and find the arrows.” If I say to the servant, “The arrows are this side of you, get it,” come by all means, because it will be safe for you and there will be nothing to fear as sure as Yahweh lives.²² But if I say to the youth, “The arrows are ahead of you,” then be off, for Yahweh himself sends you away.²³ And as regards the agreement we made, you and I, why, Yahweh is witness between us forever.”

²⁴ So, David hid himself in the fields; when the New Moon came, the king sat down to his meal.²⁵ The king sat upon his seat, as at other times, upon the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood while Abner sat next to Saul; but David’s place was empty.²⁶ Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to him; he is unclean, surely he is not clean.”

²⁷ On the day after New Moon, the second day, David’s place was still empty.

Saul said to his son Jonathan, “Why did not the son of Jesse come to the meal either yesterday or today?”²⁸ Jonathan answered Saul: “David

²¹ Throughout this verse and v. 22, the NJB has the singular, ‘arrow’, in place of ‘arrows’.

²² The literal translation of ‘ahead of you’ is ‘from you and onward’.

²³ The word ‘witness’ is from the LXX (μαρτυς); the MT omits it, as also in v. 42.

²⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁵ The NJB, following the LXX (καὶ προσέφθασεν τὸν Ἰωναθάν), reads, ‘Jonathan sat facing him’.

²⁶ The NJB omits the dittography at the end of the verse.

²⁷ The NJB has the last part of this verse (“Saul said ... or today”) as a separate verse (v. 28); here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

²⁸ The NJB includes this verse as part of v. 29 (see #27); here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

שָׁאוּל נִשְׁאַל נִשְׁאַל דָּוִד מֵעַמְדֵי עַד-בֵּית לָחֶם:
כֹּס וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחְנִי נָא כִּי זָבַח מִשְׁפָּחָה לָּנוּ בְּעִיר
וְהוּא צֹוֶה-לִּי אָחִי וְעֵתָה אִם-מִצָּאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ
אֶמְלֹטָהּ נָא וְאַרְאֶה אֶת-אָחִי עַל-כֵּן לֹא-בָא אֵלַי
שְׁלַחֵן הַמֶּלֶךְ: {ס} לְוַיַּחֲרֹאף שָׁאוּל בִּיהוֹנָתָן
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בִּן-נָעוֹת הַמְּרִדּוֹת הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי-בָחַר
אַתָּה לְבֶן-יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָשְׁתָּךְ וּלְבָשֶׁת עֲרוֹת אִמֶּךָ: לֹא כִּי
כָל-הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר בֶּן-יִשְׂרָאֵל חָי עַל-הָאָדָמָה לֹא תָכּוֹן
אַתָּה וּמַלְכוּתְךָ וְעֵתָה שְׁלַח וְקַח אֹתוֹ אֵלַי כִּי בֶן
מָוֶת הוּא: {ס} לֵב וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-שָׁאוּל אָבִיו
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָמָּה יוֹמַת מֶה עָשָׂה: לֵב וַיִּטֹּל שָׁאוּל
אֶת-הַחֲנִית עָלָיו לְהַכָּתוֹ וַיֵּדַע יְהוֹנָתָן כִּי-כָלָה הִיא
מֵעַם אָבִיו לְהָמִית אֶת-דָּוִד: {ס} לֵב וַיִּקֶּם יְהוֹנָתָן
מֵעַם הַשְּׁלַחֵן בַּחֲרִי-אָף וּלֹא-אָכַל בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא
הַשְּׁנִי לֶחֶם כִּי נִעְצַב אֶל-דָּוִד כִּי הִכְלִמוֹ אָבִיו: {ס}
לֵב וַיְהִי בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשָּׂדֶה לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וְנָעַר
קָטָן עִמּוֹ: לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לְנָעְרוֹ רֵץ מֵצֵא נָא אֶת-הַחֲצִיצִים

asked urgent leave of me to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹ “Please let me go,” he said, “for we are holding the family sacrifice in the town and my brothers have ordered me to attend. So now if you approve of this, let me take my leave and see my brothers.” That is why he has not come to the king’s table.” ³⁰ Then Saul’s anger burnt against Jonathan and he said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Don’t I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and the shame of your mother’s nakedness? ³¹ As long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your kingdom are secure. So, send and bring him to me; he is as good as dead.” ³² Jonathan answered Saul his father, saying, “Why should he die? What has he done?” ³³ But Saul threw his spear at him to strike him down, and Jonathan knew that his father was determined that David should die. ³⁴ In fierce anger, Jonathan rose from the table and took no food that second day of the month, being upset about David – and because his father had insulted him. ³⁵ In the morning, Jonathan went out to the field for the agreed meeting with David, taking a young lad with him. ³⁶ He said to his lad, “Run and find

²⁹ In place of ‘take my leave’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘get away’.

³⁰ Many medieval Hebrew MSS add ‘his son’ after ‘Jonathan’.

³¹ The literal translation of ‘he is as good as dead’ is ‘he is a son of death’.

³² In place of ‘die’, here following the NJB, the NRSV & NETB have ‘be put to death’.

³³ Compare the similar treatment of David, 18:11 and 19:10.

³⁴ The LXX omits ‘being upset about David’ (probably a gloss inspired by v. 3). The end of the verse refers to v. 30.

³⁵ In place of ‘young servant’, here following the NJB & NETB, the NRSV has ‘little boy’.

³⁶ The NRSV & NETB have ‘beyond’ in place of ‘ahead of’, here following the NJB.

אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מֹרֶה הַנֶּעַר רָץ וְהוּא־יָרָה הַחֲצִי
 לְהַעֲבֹרוֹ: ^{לז} וַיָּבֹא הַנֶּעַר עַד־מְקוֹם הַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר יָרָה
 יְהוֹנָתָן וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלוֹא
 הַחֲצִי מִמֶּךָ וְהִלָּאָה: ^{לח} וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר
 מְהֵרָה חֹשֶׁה אֶל־תַּעֲמֹד וַיִּלְקֹט נֶעַר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־
 הַחֲצִים הַחֲצִי וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו: ^{לט} וְהַנֶּעַר לֹא־יָדַע
 מֵאוּמָה אֲךָ יְהוֹנָתָן וְדָוִד יָדְעוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר: {ס}
^מ וַיֵּתֶן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־כִּלָּיו אֶל־הַנֶּעַר אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
 לוֹ לֶךְ הִבֵּיָה הָעִיר: ^{מא} הַנֶּעַר בָּא וְדָוִד קָם מֵאֲצֵל
 הַנָּגֶב וַיִּפֹּל לְאַפָּיו אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ שְׁלֹשׁ פַּעֲמִים
 וַיִּשְׁקּוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּבְכוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ עַד־
 דָּוִד הִגְדִּיל: ^{מב} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֶךְ לְשָׁלוֹם
 אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנִיחָנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה
 יִהְיֶה| בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זֵרְעִי וּבֵין זֵרְעֶךָ עַד־
 עוֹלָם: {פ}

the arrows I am going to shoot,” and the lad ran while Jonathan shot an arrow ahead of him. ³⁷ When the lad reached the place where Jonathan had shot the arrow, Jonathan shouted after him, “Is not the arrow ahead of you?” ³⁸ Again, Jonathan shouted after the lad, “Be quick, hurry, and do not stand about.” Jonathan’s lad picked up the arrow and brought it back to his master. ³⁹ But the lad suspected nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement. ⁴⁰ Jonathan then gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, “Go and carry them to the town.” ⁴¹ And, as soon as the lad had gone away, David arose from beside the hillock and fell with his face to the ground. He bowed down three times, then they kissed each other and they both shed many tears; and David wept the more. ⁴² Then Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace! For, as much as both of us have sworn an oath in the name of Yahweh, may Yahweh be witness between you and me, and between your descendants and mine forever.”

³⁷ Jonathan here gives David the ‘negative’ signal agreed in v. 22.

³⁸ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

³⁹ *NETB* places this entire verse in parentheses.

⁴⁰ Vv. 40–43 have been added; there is no point in the arrow stratagem (vv. 20–21) unless David and Jonathan cannot meet.

⁴¹ The *NJB* has ‘*David wept copiously*’ in place of ‘*David wept the more*’; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. The translation, ‘*the hillock*’, follows the *LXX* (τοῦ ἐρηγᾶς), where the *MT* has ‘*the south*’. It is hard to see what meaning the *MT* reading ‘*from beside the south*’ would have: the *NIV* treats it as an elliptical expression, rendering the phrase as ‘*from the south side of the stone*’.

⁴² The word ‘*witness*’ is not present in the *NRSV* (see #23).

שמואל א פרק כא

^א וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיהוֹנָתָן בָּא הָעִיר: ^ב וַיָּבֹא דָוִד נֹבָה
אֶל־אֲחִימֶלֶךְ הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּחֲרֹד אֲחִימֶלֶךְ לִקְרֹאת דָּוִד
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָדוּעַ אַתָּה לְבִדְךָ וְאִישׁ אֵין אִתְּךָ:
^ג וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאֲחִימֶלֶךְ הַכֹּהֵן הַמֶּלֶךְ צִוָּנִי דְבַר
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי אִישׁ אֶל־יָדַע מְאוּמָה אֶת־הַדְּבָר
אֲשֶׁר־אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלְחָךְ וְאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָךְ וְאֶת־הַנְּעָרִים
יֹדְעֵתִי אֶל־מְקוֹם פְּלָנִי אֶלְמוּנִי: ^ד וְעַתָּה מִה־יֵּשׁ
תַּחַת־יָדְךָ חֲמִשָּׁה־לֶחֶם תִּנֶּה בְיָדִי אֹו הַנִּמְצָא:
^ה וַיַּעַן הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר אֵין־לֶחֶם חֵל אֶל־
תַּחַת יָדִי כִּי־אִם־לֶחֶם קֹדֶשׁ יֵשׁ אִם־נִשְׁמְרוּ
הַנְּעָרִים אַךְ מֵאִשָּׁה: {פ}

^ו וַיֹּעַן דָּוִד אֶת־הַכֹּהֵן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כִּי אִם־אִשָּׁה
עֲצָרָה־לָנוּ כְּתָמוּל שְׁלֹשׁ בְּצִאתִי וַיְהִי כִלְי־

1 SAMUEL 21

¹ He then rose and left, and Jonathan went to the town. ² David went to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech came out trembling to meet David and said, "Why are you alone and no one with you?" ³ David replied to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has given me an order and said to me, "Let no one know anything of the mission I am sending you on, nor of the order I am giving you." As regards my soldiers, I have arranged to meet them at such and such a place. ⁴ Meanwhile, if you have five loaves of bread to hand, give them to me, or whatever there is." ⁵ The priest replied to David, "I have no ordinary bread to hand; there are only consecrated loaves of permanent offering – provided your soldiers have kept themselves from women?"

⁶ David said to the priest, "Certainly, women are forbidden us, as whenever I set off on a campaign. The soldiers' things are clean. Though this

1 SAMUEL 21

- ¹ The NRSV includes this verse as part of 20:42; verse numbers therein (and in many other English translations) are, accordingly decremented.
- ² 'Nob' is on the eastern slope of Mount Scopus, east of Jerusalem, then still in Canaanite hands; a traveller from Benjamin to Judah had to pass by that way.
- ³ The expression '*such and such a place*' here refers to a particular, but unnamed, place; it occurs in the OT only here, 2K 6:8 and Rt 4:1, where Boaz uses it to refer to Naomi's unnamed kinsman-redeemer. A contracted form of the expression appears in Dn 8:13.
- ⁴ The literal translation of '*to hand*' is '*under your hand*'.
- ⁵ The '*loaves of permanent offering*' were reserved for the priests (Lv 24:5-9). Exception to this law was admitted in the time of David, but ritual purity was essential. On the use of this passage in the New Testament, see Mk 2:23-28.
- ⁶ This is a difficult verse. A footnote to the NJB interprets it thus: although the journey had no religious purpose, David and his companions behaved as on a military expedition, for which continence was a religious obligation; their '*things*' (a euphemism) were ritually pure.

הַנְּעָרִים קָדָשׁ וְהוּא דֶּרֶךְ חָל וְאֵף כִּי הַיּוֹם יִקְדָּשׁ
בְּכָלִי: ^ז וַיִּתֵּן-לּוֹ הַכֹּהֵן קָדָשׁ כִּי לֹא-הָיָה שָׁם לֶחֶם
כִּי-אִם-לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים הַמּוֹסְרִים מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה לְשׁוֹם
לֶחֶם חֹם בַּיּוֹם הַלֵּקֶחַ: ^ח וְשָׁם אִישׁ מַעֲבָדֵי שְׂאוֹל
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נִעְצָר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וּשְׁמוֹ דֹּאֵג הָאֲדָמִי
אֲבִיר הָרָעִים אֲשֶׁר לְשְׂאוֹל: ^ט וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד
לְאַחִימֶלֶךְ וְאֵין יֵשׁ-פָּה תַּחַת-יָדְךָ חֲנִית אוֹ-חֶרֶב כִּי
גַם-חֶרֶבִי וְגַם-כִּלִּי לֹא-לָקַחְתִּי בְיָדִי כִי-הָיָה דְּבַר-
הַמֶּלֶךְ נֶחֱוָץ: {ס}

^י וַיֹּאמֶר הַכֹּהֵן חֶרֶב גִּלְיָת הַפִּלִשְׁתִּי אֲשֶׁר-הָכִיתָ |
בְּעֵמֶק הָאֵלָה הַנִּה-הִיא לוֹטָה בְּשִׁמְלָה אַחֲרֵי
הָאֶפֹד אִם-אַתָּה תִּקַּח-לָךְ קָח כִּי אֵין אַחֶרֶת
זוֹלָתָה בָּזָה {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֵין כָּמוֹהָ תִּנָּנָה לִי:
^{יא} וַיָּקָם דָּוִד וַיִּבְרַח בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא מִפְּנֵי שְׂאוֹל וַיָּבֹא
אֶל-אֲכִישׁ מֶלֶךְ גֹּת: ^{יב} וַיֹּאמְרוּ עֲבָדָי אֲכִישׁ אֵלָיו
הֲלוֹא-זֶה דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ הָאָרֶץ הֲלוֹא לָזָה יַעֲנֶנּוּ בַּמַּחְלֹות

is a profane journey, they are certainly clean today, as are their things.”

⁷ So, priests gave him the holy bread; for, there was no bread there except the loaves of the Presence, which is taken away from before Yahweh to be replaced by warm bread when it is removed. ⁸ Now one of Saul’s servants happened to be there that day, detained in the presence of Yahweh; his name was Doeg the Edomite and he was the chief of Saul’s guardsmen. ⁹ David then said to Ahimelech, “have you no spear or sword here to hand? I did not bring either my sword or my weapons with me, because the king’s business was pressing.”

¹⁰ The priest replied, “Look! The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of the Terebinth, is over there wrapped up in a cloth behind the ephod; if you wish to take it, do so; for, there is no other here.” David said, “There is none like it; give it to me.” ¹¹ That day David left, fleeing from Saul, and went to King Achish of Gath. ¹² The servants of Achish said, “Is not this David, the king of the land? Was it not of him they sang in the dance: “Saul has killed his thousands and

⁷ In place of ‘bread of the Presence’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘bread of permanent offering’.

⁸ ‘Doeg’ (דֹּאֵג) appears later as David’s betrayer (22:9). He was ‘detained’ to perform some sort of religious ceremony.

⁹ David was not only alone but unarmed, a fact testifying to the hastiness of his flight (contrast the story of the leisurely departure in Ch. 20).

¹⁰ The NRSV has ‘Valley of Elah’ in place of ‘Valley of the Terebinth’. The ‘ephod’ of Nob reappears at 23:6, 9 and determines David’s decisions from 23:10. This was the oracular ephod and, if the same sort of object as the one mentioned in Jg 8:27, must have been quite large. Goliath’s sword was kept behind the ephod as a trophy.

¹¹ Vv. 10–15 derive from an independent tradition of David’s flight.

¹² The purpose of this version of the story may have been to show that David and Achish has nothing to do with one another, in contrast to Ch. 27, where they get along very well.

לֵאמֹר הֲכָה שְׂאוֹל בְּאַלְפֹו וְדָוִד בְּרַבְבָּתוֹ: י^ג וַיֵּשֶׁם
דָּוִד אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּלִבּוֹ וַיֵּרָא מְאֹד מִפְּנֵי
אֲכִישׁ מֶלֶךְ־גֹּת: י^ד וַיִּשְׁנֶנּוּ אֶת־טַעְמוֹ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם
וַיִּתְהַלֵּל בִּידָם וַיִּתּוּ עַל־דַּלְתוֹת הַשַּׁעַר וַיּוֹרֵד רִירוֹ
אֶל־זָקְנוֹ: {ס}

טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכִישׁ אֶל־עֲבָדָיו הִנֵּה תִרְאוּ אִישׁ
מְשִׁתְּגֵעַ לְמָה תָּבִיאוּ אֹתוֹ אֵלַי: טז חֲסֹר מְשֻׁגָּעִים
אֲנִי כִי־הִבֵּאתֶם אֶת־זֶה לְהַשְׁתַּגֵּעַ עָלַי הֲזֶה יָבוֹא
אֶל־בֵּיתִי: {פ}

David his ten thousands?"”¹³ David pondered these words and became very afraid of King Achish of Gath.¹⁴ When their eyes were on him, he played the madman and, when they held him, feigned lunacy. He drummed his feet on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard.

¹⁵ Achish said to his servants, “You can see this man is insane. Why did you bring him to me? ¹⁶ Have I not enough madmen without your bringing me this one to weary me with his antics? Is he to join my household?

¹³ The literal translation of ‘pondered these words’ is ‘placed these matters in his heart’.

¹⁴ The NRSV has ‘scratched marks’ in place of ‘drummed his feet’, and ‘when in their presence’ in place of ‘when they held him’.

¹⁵ The NJB lacks the words ‘did you’, here following NETB.

¹⁶ For the final question, here following the NJB, NETB reads, “Should this man enter my house?”

1 SAMUEL 22

שמואל א פרק כב

^א וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד מִשָּׁם וַיִּמְלֹט אֶל-מְעֵרַת עַדְלָם וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ
אָחָיו וְכָל-בֵּית אָבִיו וַיֵּרְדּוּ אֵלָיו שָׁמָּה: ^ב וַיִּתְקַבְּצוּ
אֵלָיו כָּל-אִישׁ מִצֹּק וְכָל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-לּוֹ נִשְׂא וְכָל-
אִישׁ מֵרֶנֶּפֶשׁ וַיְהִי עֲלֵיהֶם לֶשֶׁר וַיְהִיו עִמּוֹ כְּאַרְבַּע
מֵאוֹת אִישׁ: ^ג וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד מִשָּׁם מִצְפָּה מוֹאָב וַיֹּאמֶר
אֶל-מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב יֵצֵא-נָא אָבִי וְאִמִּי אִתְּכֶם עַד אֲשֶׁר
אֲדַע מַה-יַּעֲשֶׂה-לִּי אֱלֹהִים: ^ד וַיִּנָּחֶם אֶת-פָּנָיו מֶלֶךְ
מוֹאָב וַיֵּשְׁבוּ עִמּוֹ כָּל-יְמֵי הַיּוֹם-דָּוִד בַּמְּצוּדָה: {ס}
^ה וַיֹּאמֶר גָּד הַנָּבִיא אֶל-דָּוִד לֹא תֵשֵׁב בַּמְּצוּדָה לָךְ
וּבְאֶת-לֶךְ אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיָּבֹא יַעֲר
חֶרֶת: {ס} ^ו וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׁאוּל כִּי נֹדַע דָּוִד וְאֲנָשִׁים
אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וְשָׁאוּל יוֹשֵׁב בַּגְּבֵעָה תַּחַת-הָאֶשׁל
בְּרָמָה וַחֲנִיתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וְכָל-עַבְדָּיו נֹצְצִים עָלָיו:
^ז וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל לְעַבְדָּיו הַנֹּצְצִים עָלָיו שְׁמְעוּנָא בְּנֵי
יְמִינִי גַם-לְכַלְכֶּם יִתֵּן בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׂדוֹת וְכַרְמִים

¹ David left there and escaped to the Cave of Adullam; his brothers and all his father's family heard of it and joined him there. ² All those in distress, all those in debt, anyone who had a grievance, gathered round him and he became their leader. There were about four hundred men with him. ³ David went from there to Mizpeh in Moab and said to the king of Moab, "Please allow my father and mother to stay with you until I know what God intends to do for me." ⁴ He left them with the king of Moab and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. ⁵ And the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; leave, and go to the land of Judah." So, David left and came to the forest of Hereth. ⁶ Saul heard that David and the men with him were located. Saul was sitting at Gibeah, under the tamarisk on the height, spear in hand, and all his officers were standing round him. ⁷ Saul said to his officers standing round him, "Listen, men of Benjamin, will the son of Jesse give you all fields and vineyards and to

1 SAMUEL 22

¹ 'Adullam' was a town in the Shephelah, or 'lowlands', southwest of Bethlehem, in David's home territory, so to speak.

² At the beginning of this verse, the NJ adds 'all the oppressed'.

³ The NJB lacks the word, 'please'.

⁴ The literal translation of 'all the time' is 'all the days'.

⁵ 'Gad' (גָּד) was to remain as David's 'seer' (2S 24:11ff).

⁶ The NJB uses 'discovered' in place of 'located'.

⁷ For 'all of you' before 'captains', the MT has 'to all of you'; if this reading is correct, we have a prepositional phrase functioning as the equivalent of a dative of advantage; however, the LXX, Peshitta and Vg all have 'and'.

לְכָלְכֶם יְשִׁים שָׂרֵי אֲלָפִים וְשָׂרֵי מֵאוֹת: ^ח כִּי קִשְׁרָתְכֶם כָּלְכֶם עָלַי וְאִין־גִּלָּה אֶת־אֲזָנִי בְכֶרֶת־בְּנֵי עַם־בֶּן־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִין־חִלָּה מִכֶּם עָלַי וְגִלָּה אֶת־אֲזָנִי כִי הִקִּים בְּנֵי אֶת־עַבְדִּי עָלַי לְאַרְבַּ כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {ס}

^ט וַיַּעַן דֹּעַג הָאֶדְוִמִּי וְהוּא נָצַב עַל־עַבְדֵי־שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר רֹאִיתִי אֶת־בֶּן־יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא נָבָה אֶל־אֲחִימֶלֶךְ בֶּן־אֲחִיטוּב: ^י וַיִּשְׁאַל־לּוֹ בַיהוָה וַצִּידָה נָתַן לוֹ וְאֵת חֶרֶב גָּלִית הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי נָתַן לוֹ: ^{יא} וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ לִקְרֹא אֶת־אֲחִימֶלֶךְ בֶּן־אֲחִיטוּב הַכֹּהֵן וְאֵת כָּל־בֵּית אָבִיו הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר בָּנָב וַיָּבֹאוּ כָלָם אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ: {ס} ^{יב} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל שְׁמַע־נָא בֶּן־אֲחִיטוּב וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּגִי אֲדֹנָי: ^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלּוֹ שָׁאוּל לָמָּה קִשְׁרָתְכֶם עָלַי אַתָּה וּבֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתַתֶּךָ לּוֹ לֶחֶם וְחֶרֶב וְשָׁאוּל לוֹ בְּאַלֹהִים לָקוּם אֵלַי לְאַרְבַּ כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {ס} ^{יד} וַיַּעַן אֲחִימֶלֶךְ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר וּמִי בְכָל־עַבְדֶּיךָ כְּדוֹד נֶאֱמָן וְחֵתֵן הַמֶּלֶךְ וְסָר אֶל־מִשְׁמַעְתְּךָ וְנִכְבַּד בְּבֵיתְךָ: ^{טו} הַיּוֹם הַחֲלַתִּי לְשָׁאוּל

make all of you captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, ⁸ that you all conspire against me? No one told me when my son made a pact with the son of Jesse; none of you felt sorry for me or told me when my son incited my servant to become my enemy, as is now the case.

⁹ But Doeg the Edomite then spoke up – he was standing near Saul’s officers: “I saw the son of Jesse come to Nob,” he said, “to Ahimelech son of Ahitub. ¹⁰ This man consulted Yahweh for him and gave him provisions. He also gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.” ¹¹ Then the king sent and summoned the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and his whole family, the priests of Nob; they all came to the king. ¹² Saul said, “Now listen, son of Ahitub.” He answered, “I am here, my lord!” ¹³ “Why have you conspired against me,” Saul said, “you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and consulting God for him, for him to rebel against me and lie in wait, as is now the case?” ¹⁴ Ahimelech answered the king, “Of all your servants, who is more loyal than David, son-in-law to the king, quick to do your bidding, honoured in your house? ¹⁵ Was today the first time I ever

⁸ ‘Felt sorry’ (πονῶν, literally ‘toiling’) and ‘enemy’ (ἐχθρὸν) follow the LXX; the MT has ‘was sick’ and ‘spy’.

⁹ ‘Doeg the Edomite’, a foreigner who had attached himself to Saul, held a good position under him (21:7).

¹⁰ The NJB merges the 2 sentences, reading, “...provisions, and also the sword of Goliath.”

¹¹ In place of ‘sent and summoned’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has simply ‘sent for’ and NETB has ‘arranged a meeting with’.

¹² Saul’s manner of address and Ahimelech’s answer follow the protocol required of a meeting with a king.

¹³ The NJB omits ‘and lie in wait’, here following the NRSV.

¹⁴ After ‘son-in-law to the king’, the NJB adds ‘captain of your bodyguard’, following the LXX (καὶ ἄρχων παντὸς παραγγέλματος σου).

¹⁵ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

לְשֹׂאֲלֹוּ בָּאלֹהִים חֲלִילָה לִי אֱלֹהִים הַמֶּלֶךְ
 בְּעִבְדּוֹ דָּבָר בְּכָל־בֵּית אָבִי כִּי לֹא־יָדַע עֲבָדְךָ בְּכָל־
 זֹאת דָּבָר קִטָּן אֹו גָדוֹל: ^{טז} וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מוֹת
 תָּמוּת אַחִימֶלֶךְ אֶתָּה וְכָל־בֵּית אָבִיךָ: ^{יז} וַיֹּאמֶר
 הַמֶּלֶךְ לַרְצִים הַנֹּצְבִים עָלָיו סִבּוּ וְהַמִּיתוּ| כֹּהֲנֵי
 יְהוָה כִּי גִס־יָדָם עִם־דָּוִד וְכִי יָדְעוּ כִּי־בִרְחָ הוּא
 וְלֹא גָלוּ אֶת־אֲזָנֵי אָזְנוֹ וְלֹא־אָבּוּ עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
 לְשַׁלַּח אֶת־יָדָם לִפְגֹּעַ בְּכֹהֲנֵי יְהוָה: {ס}

^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְדוֹעַג לְדוֹעַג סִבּ אֶתָּה וּפָגַע
 בְּכֹהֲנִים וַיִּסָּב דוֹעַג הָאֲדָמִי וַיִּפְגַּע־הוּא
 בְּכֹהֲנִים וַיָּמָת| בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא שְׁמָנִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה אִישׁ
 נָשָׂא אֶפֶסֶד בָּד: ^{יט} וְאֵת נָב עִיר־הַכֹּהֲנִים הִכָּה לְפִי־
 חֶרֶב מֵאִישׁ וְעַד־אִשָּׁה מֵעוֹלָל וְעַד־יוֹנֵק וְשׁוֹר
 וְחֲמֹר וְשֶׂה לְפִי־חֶרֶב: ^כ וַיִּמָּלֵט בֶּן־אֶחָד לְאֶחֱימֶלֶךְ
 בֶּן־אַחֲטָוֵב וְשֵׁמוֹ אֲבִיָּתָר וַיִּבְרַח אַחֲרֵי דָוִד: ^{כא} וַיִּגֵּד
 אֲבִיָּתָר לְדָוִד כִּי הָרַג שָׂאוּל אֶת כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה:
^{כב} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאֲבִיָּתָר יָדַעְתִּי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי־שָׂם

consulted God for him? By no means! Let not the king bring any charge against his servant or against his whole family, for your servant knew nothing of this whatever.” ¹⁶ The king said, “Most surely you shall die, Ahimelech, you and your whole family.” ¹⁷ The king said to the guards standing before him, “Step forward and put the priests of Yahweh to death, for they have supported David: they knew he fled yet did not tell me.” But the king’s servants would not lift a hand to strike the priests of Yahweh.

¹⁸ Therefore, the king then said to Doeg, “You, Doeg, step forward and strike down the priests.” And Doeg the Edomite stepped forward and he struck down the priests himself, that day killing eighty-five people who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ As for Nob, the town of the priests, Saul struck them down with the sword; men and women, children and infants, cattle, donkeys, and sheep, he put to the sword. ²⁰ One son only of Ahimelech son of Ahitub escaped. His name was Abiathar, and he fled away to join David. ²¹ Abiathar told David that Saul had slaughtered the priests of Yahweh. ²² David said to Abiathar, “I knew

¹⁶ The literal translation of ‘whole family’ is ‘father’s house’.

¹⁷ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹⁸ The number ‘eighty-five’ is confused in the Greek MSS tradition: the LXX, has the number 305 (τριακοσίους καὶ πέντε) and the Lucianic recension, along with two Old Latin MSS, has the number 350. On the *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here, see #22.

¹⁹ The NJB omits ‘he put to the sword’ at the end of the verse, here following the MT & NRSV.

²⁰ NETB moves the phrase ‘his name was Abiathar’ to the end of the verse; here, we follow the NJB & NRSV.

²¹ The NJB omits the names ‘Abiathar’ & ‘David’ from this verse, here following the MT (אֲבִיָּתָר & דָּוִד), NRSV & NETB.

²² The phrase, ‘responsible for’, here follows the LXX – εἰμι αἰτίος τῶν; the meaning of the MT is uncertain. For ‘Doeg’ (דֹּעַג), the *Ketiv* has דוֹעַג.

דוֹיֵג דּוֹאֵג הָאֶדְמִי כִּי־הֵגֵד יִגִּיד לְשֹׂאֹל אֲנֹכִי סִבְתִּי
בְּכָל־נֶפֶשׁ בֵּית אָבִיךָ: ²³ שִׁבָּה אֵתִי אֶל־תִּירָא כִּי
אֲשֶׁר־יִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי יִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ כִּי־
מִשְׁמֶרֶת אֶתָּה עִמָּדִי: {ס}

that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, he would be sure to inform Saul. I am responsible for the death of all your father's house. ²³ Stay with me, have no fear, for the one who seeks your life seeks mine too; you will be safe with me."

²³ Abiathar was to remain David's priest until the king's death. He was dismissed by Solomon (1K 2:26–27).

שמואל א פרק כג

^א וַיָּבִיאוּ הַנְּשִׂאִים הַנֵּה פִלְשְׁתִּים נִלְחָמִים
בְּקַעֲלָה וְהֵמָּה שָׁסִים אֶת־הַגִּרְנוֹת: ^ב וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד
בַּיהוָה לֵאמֹר הֲאֵלֶךְ וְהִכִּיתִי בַּפִּלְשְׁתִּים הָאֵלֶּה
{ס} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד לֵךְ וְהִכִּיתָ בַּפִּלְשְׁתִּים
וְהוֹשַׁעְתָּ אֶת־קַעֲלָה: ^ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי דָוִד אֵלָיו
הֲנֶה אֲנַחְנוּ פֹּה בִּיהוּדָה יֵרָאִים וְאֵף כִּי־נִלְכְּדָה קַעֲלָה
אֶל־מַעְרָכוֹת פִּלְשְׁתִּים: {ס} ^ד וַיֹּסֶף עוֹד דָּוִד
לִשְׁאוֹל בַּיהוָה וַיַּעֲנֵהוּ יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם רֵד קַעֲלָה
כִּי־אֲנִי נֹתֵן אֶת־פִּלְשְׁתִּים בְּיָדְךָ: ^ה וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו
קַעֲלָה וַיִּלָּחֶם בַּפִּלְשְׁתִּים וַיִּנְהֲגוּ אֶת־מִקְנֵיהֶם וַיִּדֹּף
בָּהֶם מִכָּה גְדוֹלָה וַיִּשַׁע דָּוִד אֶת יָשְׁבֵי
קַעֲלָה: {ס} ^ו וַיְהִי בְּבֹרַח אֲבִיתָר בֶּן־אֲחִימֵלֵךְ אֶל־
דָּוִד קַעֲלָה אַפֹּד יָרַד בְּיָדוֹ: ^ז וַיִּגַּד לִשְׁאוֹל כִּי־בָא
דָּוִד קַעֲלָה וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁאוֹל נָכַר אֶתֹּו אֱלֹהִים בְּיָדִי
כִּי נִסְגַּר לְבֹא בַּעִיר דָּלְתִים וּבְרִיחַ: ^ח וַיִּשְׁמַע

1 SAMUEL 23

¹ And they brought the news to David, saying, "The Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are plundering the threshing-floors." ² So, David inquired of Yahweh, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And Yahweh answered David, "Go and fight the Philistines and save Keilah." ³ But David's men said to him, "We go in fear here in Judah; how much more, then, if we go to Keilah to fight against the Philistines?" ⁴ Then David consulted Yahweh again and Yahweh replied, "Be on your way; go down to Keilah for I will give the Philistines into your power." ⁵ So, David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines and carried off their cattle and inflicted a great defeat on them. Thus, David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. ⁶ When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled to David in Keilah, he took the ephod in his hand. ⁷ When word was brought to Saul that David had gone to Keilah he said, "God has delivered him into my power, for he has walked into a trap by going into a town with gates

1 SAMUEL 23

¹ 'Keilah' (קַעֲלָה) was a few kilometres south of Adullam (22:1).

² In place of 'consulted Yahweh', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'inquired of the LORD'.

³ From this verse, it is clear that 'Keilah' belonged neither to Judah nor to the Philistines at this time.

⁴ The literal translation of 'power' (as NJB) is 'hand' (as NRSV).

⁵ The literal translation of 'inflicted a great defeat on them' (here following the NJB) is 'struck them down with a great blow'.

⁶ The text for this verse follows the LXX (*Kai' éγγενετο ἐν τῷ φυγεῖν Ἀβιαθαρ υἱὸν Ἀβιμελεχ πρὸς Δαυιδ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ Δαυιδ εἰς Κεῖλα κατέβη ἔχων εφοῦδ ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ*.); the word order in the MT is confused.

⁷ 'Delivered' follows the LXX (*Πέπρακεν*) & Tg; the MT has 'rejected' or 'made a stranger of'.

שָׂאוֹל אֶת-כָּל-הָעָם לְמַלְחָמָה לָרֶדֶת קַעִילָה לְצוֹר
 אֶל-דָּוִד וְאֶל-אֲנָשָׁיו: ^ט וַיֵּדַע דָּוִד כִּי עָלָיו שָׂאוֹל
 מִחֲרִישׁ הָרָעָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-אַבִּיָּתָר הַכֹּהֵן הַגִּישָׁה
 הָאֶפֹּד: {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁמַע
 שָׁמַע עֲבָדְךָ כִּי-מִבְקֵשׁ שָׂאוֹל לָבוֹא אֶל-קַעִילָה
 לְשַׁחַת לַעֲרִיר בְּעִבּוּרִי: ^{יא} הֲיִסְגְּרֵנִי בַעֲלִי קַעִילָה
 בִּידּוֹ הַיָּרֵד שָׂאוֹל כְּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע עֲבָדְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל הִגְדֵּנָא לְעֲבָדְךָ {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 יֵרֵד: {ס} ^{יב} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד הֲיִסְגְּרוּ בַעֲלִי קַעִילָה אֶתִּי
 וְאֶת-אֲנָשֵׁי בֵּית-שָׂאוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה יִסְגְּרוּ: {ס}
^{יג} וַיִּקָּם דָּוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו כְּשֵׁש־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיֵּצְאוּ
 מִקַּעִילָה וַיִּתְּהַלְכוּ בָּאֲשֶׁר יִתְּהַלְכוּ וּלְשָׂאוֹל הִגִּד כִּי-
 נִמְלָט דָּוִד מִקַּעִילָה וַיַּחְדֵּל לָצֵאת: ^{יד} וַיָּשָׁב דָּוִד
 בַּמִּדְבָּר בַּמִּצְדֹּת וַיָּשָׁב בְּהָר בַּמִּדְבָּר-זִיף וַיִּבְקֹשׁהוּ
 שָׂאוֹל כָּל-הַיָּמִים וְלֹא-נָתַן אֱלֹהִים בְּיָדוֹ: ^{טו} וַיֵּרָא

and bars.” ⁸ Saul called all the people to arms, to go down to Keilah and besiege David and his men. ⁹ But David was aware that Saul was plotting evil against him and said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod.” ¹⁰ David said, “Yahweh, God of Israel, your servant has heard that Saul is preparing to come to Keilah and destroy the town because of me. ¹¹ Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? Yahweh, God of Israel, I beg you, let your servant know.” Yahweh said, “He will come down.” ¹² And David said, “Will the townsmen of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?” Yahweh replied, “They will hand you over.” ¹³ Then David made off with his men, about six hundred; they left Keilah and went where they could. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the expedition. ¹⁴ David stayed in the strongholds, in the mountains and in the desert of Ziph; Saul sought him continually, but God did not deliver him into his power. ¹⁵ David was

⁸ Literally translated, this verse reads, “So Saul mustered all his army for battle to go down to Keilah to besiege against David and his men.”

⁹ The NRSV opens this verse, here following the NJB, with, “When David learned that Saul was plotting evil against him.”

¹⁰ The literal translation of ‘preparing’ is ‘seeking’.

¹¹ The NRSV and NJB, following the LXX, lack the first question; both include it in the footnotes.

¹² David has liberated the people of Keilah, but he makes them pay for it: he and his followers live at their expense (see #25:4–8).

¹³ After ‘six hundred’, the NJB adds ‘in number’.

¹⁴ The NRSV, following the Qumran MSS & LXX, uses ‘the LORD’ in place of ‘God’; the text here follows the MT & NJB. ‘Ziph’ (זִיף) is a rocky area to the south of Hebron; the verse links the Keilah episode (vv. 1–13) with that of Ziph (vv. 19–27).

¹⁵ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “David was afraid because Saul had mounted an expedition to take his life. At that time, he was at Horesh in the desert of Ziph.”

דָּוִד בִּי־יֵצֵא שָׁאוּל לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ וְדָוִד בַּמִּדְבָּר־
 זִיף בַּחֲרָשָׁה: {ס} וַיֵּקֶם יְהוֹנָתָן בֶּן־שָׁאוּל וַיֵּלֶךְ
 אֶל־דָּוִד חֲרָשָׁה וַיְחַזֵּק אֶת־יָדוֹ בְּאַלְהֵים: ז' וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֵלָיו אֶל־תִּירָא כִּי לֹא תִמָּצֵאךָ יַד שָׁאוּל אָבִי
 וְאַתָּה תִּמְלֹךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַנְכִי אֶהְיֶה־לְךָ לְמִשְׁנָה
 וְגַם־שָׁאוּל אָבִי יָדַע כֵּן: ח' וַיִּכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית
 לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיָּשֶׁב דָּוִד בַּחֲרָשָׁה וַיְהוֹנָתָן הֵלֶךְ
 לְבֵיתוֹ: {ס} יט וַיַּעֲלוּ זָפִים אֶל־שָׁאוּל הַגִּבְעָתָה
 לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא דָּוִד מְסֻתָּר עִמָּנוּ בַּמִּצְדֹּת בַּחֲרָשָׁה
 בַּגִּבְעָת הַחֲכִילָה אֲשֶׁר מִימִין הַיְּשִׁימוֹן: כ' וְעַתָּה
 לְכָל־אוֹת נַפְשֶׁךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ לָרֶדֶת רֹד וְלָנוּ הַסְּגִירוֹ בְּיַד
 הַמֶּלֶךְ: כא וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה כִּי
 חָמַלְתֶּם עָלַי: כב לְכוּ־נָא הַכִּינוּ עוֹד וּדְעוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־
 מְקוֹמוֹ אֲשֶׁר תִּהְיֶה רַגְלוֹ מִי רָאִהוּ שָׁם כִּי אָמַר
 אֵלַי עָרוֹם יַעֲרֵם הוּא: כג וּרְאוּ וּדְעוּ מְכָל
 הַמַּחְבְּאִים אֲשֶׁר יִתְחַבֵּא שָׁם וְשִׁבְתֶּם אֵלַי אֶל־

in the desert of Ziph at Horesh when he learned that Saul had come out to seek his life.¹⁶ Jonathan son of Saul set off and went to David at Horesh; there he encouraged him in the name of God.¹⁷ And he told him, “Have no fear! For, the hand of my father Saul will not find you; you are the one who is to reign over Israel, and I shall be second to you. Saul my father is aware of this.”¹⁸ Then the two of them made a pact in the presence of Yahweh. David stayed at Horesh and Jonathan went home.¹⁹ Now some Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, “David is hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the Hill of Hachilah to the south of Jeshimon?”²⁰ Whenever you wish to go down, O king, do so; it will be our task to deliver him into the king’s power.”²¹ Saul said, “May you be blessed by Yahweh, for coming to help me.²² Go and make surer still; find out find out exactly where he is and who has seen him there, for I am told he is very cunning.”²³ Locate precisely all the places where he hides and come back to me when you are certain. I will then come to you; and if he is in the country, I will track him down

¹⁶ The NRSV, following the Qumran MSS & LXX, uses ‘the LORD’ in place of ‘God’; the text here follows the MT & NJB.

¹⁷ The NJB has ‘reach’ in place of ‘find’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁸ The NRSV & NETB have ‘covenant’ in place of ‘pact’, here following the NJB.

¹⁹ The NJB translates the name ‘Jeshimon’ (יְשִׁימוֹן) as ‘the wastelands’; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

²⁰ The literal translation of ‘whenever you wish’ is ‘to all the desire of your soul’.

²¹ In place of ‘coming to help me’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘showing me compassion’.

²² The NJB has ‘find out and note the place his footsteps hurry to’ in place of ‘find out exactly where he is and who has seen him there’.

²³ The literal translation of ‘locate precisely’ is ‘look and learn’; the expression is a hendiadys.

נִכְזֹן וְהִלַּכְתִּי אֹתְכֶם וְהָיָה אִם־יִשְׁנֹוּ בָאָרֶץ
וְחִפְּשֹׁתִי אֹתוֹ בְּכָל אֶלְפֵי יְהוּדָה: כִּד וַיִּקְוֹמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ
זִיפָה לִפְנֵי שָׁאוּל וְדָוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו בְּמִדְבַּר מְעֹון
בְּעֶרְבָה אֶל יָמִין הַיְּשִׁימוֹן: כֵּה וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁאוּל וְאֲנָשָׁיו
לִבְקֹשׁ וַיֵּגְדוּ לְדָוִד וַיֵּרֶד הַסֵּלַע וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבַּר מְעֹון
וַיִּשְׁמַע שָׁאוּל וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרֵי־דָוִד מִדְבַּר מְעֹון:
כּו וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁאוּל מֵצֵד הָהָר מִזֶּה וְדָוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו מֵצֵד
הָהָר מִזֶּה וַיְהִי דָוִד נֹחֵץ לִלְכֹּת מִפְּנֵי שָׁאוּל וְשָׁאוּל
וְאֲנָשָׁיו עֹטְרִים אֶל־דָּוִד וְאֶל־אֲנָשָׁיו לְתַפְּשָׁם:
כִּז וּמִלֶּאֲדָּבָא אֶל־שָׁאוּל לֵאמֹר מִהֲרָה וּלְכָה כִּי־
פָּשְׁטוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים עַל־הָאָרֶץ: כִּח וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁאוּל מִרְדֵּי
אַחֲרֵי דָוִד וַיֵּלֶךְ לִקְרֹאת פְּלִשְׁתִּים עַל־כֵּן קָרְאוּ
לַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא סֵלַע הַמַּחְלָקוֹת: כִּט וַיַּעַל דָּוִד מִשָּׁם
וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִצְדֹת עֵין־גִּדִּי: {ס}

through all the clans of Judah.” ²⁴ Therefore, they set off and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Meanwhile, David and his men were in the desert of Maon, in the plain to the south of the wastelands. ²⁵ When Saul and his men set out in search of him, David was informed, and he went down to the gorge running through the desert of Maon. Saul heard of this and pursued David into the desert of Maon. ²⁶ Saul proceeded along one side of the mountain, David and his men along the other. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, while Saul with his men was trying to outflank David and his men and so capture them, ²⁷ when a messenger came to Saul and said, “Come at once, the Philistines have invaded the country.” ²⁸ Therefore, Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to fight the Philistines. This is why that place is called the Rock of Divisions. ²⁹ David went away from there, and stayed in the strongholds of En-Gedi

²⁴ ‘Maon’ (מְעֹון) was a little south of Hachilah and Ziph.

²⁵ Saul and his party are on one side of the gorge, David and his on the other. Saul’s aim is to cross this difficult obstacle and trap David but, before he can do this, he is obliged to deal with a sudden Philistine invasion elsewhere. For similar situations, see 26:13, 22, 2S 16:13.

²⁶ At the beginning of this verse, the NJB & NRSV, following the LXX (καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες αὐτοῦ), add ‘and his men’ after ‘Saul’; here, we follow the MT.

²⁷ In Ch. 26, there is no interruption by the Philistines, nor does the scene shift to En-Gedi (24:1), on the west shore of the Dead Sea.

²⁸ The NRSV uses the place name ‘Rock of Escape’; the name (סֵלַע הַמַּחְלָקוֹת) probably means ‘Rock of Divisions’ (following the NJB) in the sense that Saul and David parted company there.

²⁹ This verse is 24:1 in the NJB; all other verses in that chapter are therein incremented; the numbering scheme used herein follows that of the MT & NRSV. ‘En-Gedi’ means ‘Spring of the Kid’; it is on the shore of the Dead Sea at the same latitude as Ziph.

1 SAMUEL 24

שמואל א פרק כד

- ^א וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁב שָׁאוּל מֵאַחֲרֵי פִלְשְׁתִּים וַיֵּגְדוּ לוֹ
לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה דָוִד בַּמִּדְבָּר עֵין גֶּדִי: {ס}
- ^ב וַיִּקַּח שָׁאוּל שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים אִישׁ בַּחֹר מִכָּל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּלֶךְ לִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־דָּוִד וְאֶנְשָׁיו עַל־פְּנֵי צוּרֵי
הַיַּעֲלִים: ^ג וַיָּבֹא אֶל־גְּדֵרוֹת הַצֹּאן עַל־הַדֶּרֶךְ וְשָׁם
מָעְרָה וַיָּבֹא שָׁאוּל לְהִסָּךְ אֶת־רַגְלָיו וְדָוִד וְאֶנְשָׁיו
בִּירְכֹתֵי הַמָּעְרָה יֹשְׁבִים: ^ד וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲנָשָׁי דָּוִד אֵלָיו
הִנֵּה הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן
אֶת־אֵיבֶךָ אֵיבֶךָ בְּיָדְךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ לוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִטֵּב
בְּעֵינֶיךָ וַיִּקֶּם דָּוִד וַיַּכֶּת אֶת־כְּנָף־הַמָּעִיל אֲשֶׁר־
לְשָׁאוּל בַּלֵּט: ^ה וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי־כֵן וַיֵּךְ לִב־דָּוִד אֶתֹּו עַל
אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת אֶת־כְּנָף אֲשֶׁר לְשָׁאוּל: ^ו וַיֹּאמֶר
לְאֶנְשָׁיו חָלִילָה לִּי מִיהוָה אִם־אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת־הַדְּבָר
הַזֶּה לְאֹדְנִי לְמַשִּׁיחַ יְהוָה לְשַׁלַּח יָדִי בּוֹ כִּי־מְשִׁיחַ
יְהוָה הוּא: ^ז וַיִּשְׁפֹּעַ דָּוִד אֶת־אֲנָשָׁיו בַּדְּבָרִים וּלְאֹ
- ¹ When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is now in the desert of En-Gedi."
- ² Saul thereupon took three thousand men chosen from the whole of Israel and went in search of David and his men, and hid men east of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³ He came to the sheepfolds by the side of the road, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to cover his feet. Now, David and his men were sitting in the recesses of the cave; ⁴ And the men of David said to him, "Behold! Today is the day of which Yahweh said to you, "Look! I shall deliver your enemy into your power and you will do with him as seems good to you."" David stood up and, unobserved, cut off the border of Saul's cloak. ⁵ Afterwards, David reproached himself for having cut off the border of Saul's cloak. ⁶ He said to his men, "Yahweh preserve me from doing such a thing to my lord, Yahweh's anointed, and raising my hand against him; for, he is the anointed of Yahweh." ⁷ David gave his men strict instructions,

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- ¹ This verse is 2 in the NJB; all other verses in this chapter are therein incremented; the numbers here follow those of the MT & NRSV.
- ² 'Rocks of the Wild Goats' is most descriptive of the character of the terrain.
- ³ The 'sheepfolds' were dry stone enclosures to house the flocks at night. 'To cover his feet' was the common euphemism for 'to relieve himself'.
- ⁴ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.
- ⁵ David feels remorse (see 2S 24:10), since the garment is, as it were, the man himself (see 18:4), and to touch it is to lay hands on the person.
- ⁶ The NJB, following the LXX, omits, 'Yahweh's anointed' (probably a gloss).
- ⁷ In place of 'went on his way', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'started down the road'.

נִתְּנָם לָקוֹם אֶל־שָׂאוֹל וְשָׂאוֹל קָם מִהַמְּעָרָה וַיֵּלֶךְ
בְּדֶרֶךְ: {ס} וַיִּקָּם דָּוִד אַחֲרֵי־כֵן וַיֵּצֵא מִן הַמְּעָרָה
[מִהַמְּעָרָה] וַיִּקְרָא אַחֲרֵי־שָׂאוֹל לֵאמֹר אֲדֹנִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּבֶט שָׂאוֹל אַחֲרָיו וַיִּקַּד דָּוִד אַפָּיִם אֶרְצָה
וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ: {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְשָׂאוֹל לָמָּה תִּשְׁמַע
אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָדָם לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה דָוִד מִבְקֵשׁ רַעְתִּי:
' הִנֵּה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה רָאוּ עֵינַי אֶת אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן־יְהוָה
הַיּוֹם בְּיָדִי בַּמְּעָרָה וָאָמַר לְהִרְגֶּךָ וַתַּחֲסַם עָלַי
וָאָמַר לֹא־אֶשְׁלַח יָדִי בְּאֲדֹנִי כִּי־מֹשִׁיחַ יְהוָה הוּא:
' וָאָבִי רָאָה גַם רָאָה אֶת־כִּנְף מַעֲיִלְךָ בְּיָדִי כִּי
בְּכַרְתִּי אֶת־כִּנְף מַעֲיִלְךָ וְלֹא הִרְגָתִיךָ דַּע וּרְאֵה כִּי
אֵין בְּיָדִי רָעָה וּפָשַׁע וְלֹא־חָטָאתִי לָךְ וְאַתָּה צִדְדָה
אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ: ' יִשְׁפֹּט יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ
וְנִקְמֵנִי יְהוָה מִמֶּךָ וַיְדִי לֹא תִהְיֶה־בְּךָ: ' כַּאֲשֶׁר
יֹאמַר מֹשֶׁל הַקְּדָמָנִי מִרְשָׁעִים יֵצֵא רָשָׁע וַיְדִי לֹא
תִהְיֶה־בְּךָ: ' אַחֲרֵי מִי יֵצֵא מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרֵי מִי
אַתָּה רֹדֵף אַחֲרֵי כָלֵב מֵת אַחֲרֵי פֶרַעַשׁ אֶחָד:

forbidding them to attack Saul. Saul then left the cave and went on his way. ⁸ After this, David also rose up and went out of the cave and shouted after Saul, saying, “My lord the king!” And, when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. ⁹ David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to those who say, “David means harm to you”? ¹⁰ Why, your eyes have seen today how Yahweh put you into my power in the cave; some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, “I will not raise my hand against my lord, for he is the anointed of Yahweh.” ¹¹ See my father, the border of your cloak in my hand. Since I cut off the border of your cloak, yet did not kill you, you may know for sure there is no wrong or treason in my mind. I have not offended against you, yet you hunt me down to take my life. ¹² May Yahweh judge between me and you; may Yahweh avenge me on you; but my hand will not be against you. ¹³ As the old proverb says: “Wickedness goes out from the wicked,” but my hand will not be laid on you. ¹⁴ Who has the king of Israel set out after? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A single flea? ¹⁵ May Yahweh, therefore, be the judge and decide

⁸ The *Kethib*/ *Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁹ *NETB* opens David’s question, here following the *NJB* & *NRSV*, with, “Why do you pay attention when men say?”

¹⁰ The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, has ‘[and] I refused to kill you’ (*καὶ οὐκ ἠβουλήθημεν ἀποκτενεῖναι σε*) in place of ‘some urged me to kill you’.

¹¹ In place of ‘no wrong or treason’, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* has ‘neither malice nor treason’.

¹² The *NJB* has ‘never’ in place of ‘not’, here following the *NRSV* & *NETB*.

¹³ This verse is parenthesised in the *NJB*; a footnote describes it as a proverb inserted by a glossator – contact with the wicked brings misfortune.

¹⁴ Dogs were held in low esteem in those days; a ‘dead dog’ would be less than nothing (2S 9:8, 16:9).

¹⁵ The *NJB* ends this verse with, “...may he take up my cause and defend it, and give judgement for me, and free me from your power.”

^{טו} וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְדִין וְשֹׁפֵט בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ וְיֵרָא וְיִרְבֵּ אֶת־רִיבִי וְיִשְׁפֹּטֵנִי מִיַּדְּךָ: {פ}

^{טז} וַיְהִי כְּכֹלֹת דָּוִד לְדַבֵּר אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל־שָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל הַקֶּלֶךְ זֶה בְּנִי דָוִד וַיֵּשֶׁא שָׁאוּל קֶלֶו וַיִּבֶד: ^{יז} וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־דָּוִד צְדִיק אַתָּה מִמֶּנִּי כִּי אַתָּה גָּמַלְתָּנִי הַטּוֹבָה וָאֲנִי גָּמַלְתִּיךָ הָרָעָה: ^{יח} וְאֵת וְאֵתָה הִגַּדְתָּ הַיּוֹם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָה אֵתִי טוֹבָה אֵת אֲשֶׁר סָגַרְנִי יְהוָה בְּיָדְךָ וְלֹא הִרְגָתָנִי: ^{יט} וְכִי־יִמָּצָא אִישׁ אֶת־אִיְבּוֹ וְשִׁלְחוֹ בְּדֶרֶךְ טוֹבָה וַיְהוָה יִשְׁלַמְךָ טוֹבָה תַּחַת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָה לִּי: ^כ וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי מֶלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ וְקָמָה בְּיָדְךָ מַמְלַכַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{כא} וְעַתָּה הִשְׁבַּעָה לִּי בַיהוָה אֶסְתַּכְרִית אֶת־זִרְעִי אַחֲרַי וְאֶסְתַּשְׁמִיד אֶת־שְׁמִי מִבֵּית אָבִי: ^{כב} וַיִּשְׁבַּע דָּוִד לְשָׁאוּל וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁאוּל אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְדָוִד וָאֲנָשָׁיו עָלוּ עַל־הַמְּצֹדָה: {ס}

between me and you; may he see to it and plead my cause and vindicate me against you.”

¹⁶ And it came to pass, when David had finished saying these words to Saul, Saul said, “Is that your voice, my son David?” Saul lifted up his voice and wept. ¹⁷ “You are more righteous than I,” he said to David, “for you have repaid me with good while I have repaid you with evil.

¹⁸ Today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, since Yahweh had put me into your power yet you did not kill me. ¹⁹ For, who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? May Yahweh reward you well for the goodness you have shown to me today!

²⁰ Now I know you will surely be king, and that the sovereignty in Israel will be established in your hands. ²¹ Now swear to me by Yahweh, therefore, that you will not cut off my descendants after me, nor blot out my name from my family.” ²² This David swore on oath to Saul and Saul went home, while David and his men went with him back to the stronghold.

¹⁶ In place of ‘lifted his voice and wept’, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has ‘wept aloud’.

¹⁷ In place of ‘righteous’, here following the NRSV, NETB has ‘innocent’ and the NJB has ‘upright (man)’.

¹⁸ The Kethib opens this verse with וְאֵת in place of וְאֵתָה, here following the Qere.

¹⁹ For 1st sentence, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “When a man comes on his enemy, does he let him go unmolested?”

²⁰ Vv. 21–23a, foretelling David’s sovereignty, are an addition similar to those of 20:12–17, 41–42 and 23:15–18.

²¹ The NJB lacks ‘therefore’, here following the NRSV.

²² The NJB & NRSV lack ‘on oath’, here following NETB.

1 SAMUEL 25

שמואל א פרק כה

1 Samuel died and the whole of Israel assembled to mourn him. They buried him at his home in Ramah. David then set off and went down to the desert of Paran.

² There was a man in Maon whose business was at Carmel, a rich man who had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep at Carmel. ³ The man's name was Nabal and his wife's Abigail. She was a woman of intelligence and beauty, but the man was brutish and ill mannered. He was a Calebite.

ד וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי־גִזָּז נָבָל אֶת־צֹאנוֹ: 4 When David learned in the desert that Nabal was at his sheep shearing,
ה וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד עֲשָׂרָה נְעָרִים וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְנְעָרִים 5 he sent ten young men, saying to them, “Go up to Carmel, visit Nabal
וַעֲלּוּ כְרַמְלָה וּבְאַתֶּם אֶל־נָבָל וּשְׁאַלְתֶּם־לוֹ בְּשֵׁמי 6 This is what you are to say to my brother:

1 SAMUEL 25

¹ The first part of this verse is probably the notation of an editor, repeated in 28:3; the brevity of the obituary is surprising. The *NJB*, following the *LXX* (*Maav*), has 'Maon' in place of 'Paran'; here, we follow the *MT* (פֶּאֶרָן) and *NRSV*. However, Paran is so far to the south that it could hardly have had any connexion with the movements of David at this time, and cf. v. 2.

² This '*Carmel*' lay between Ziph and Maon; it must not be confused with the famous Mount Carmel to the north, near the seacoast.

³ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁴ The 'sheep shearing' is a festival (2S 13:23ff), on which the rich sheep-owner should display his generosity.

⁵ In place of 'young men', here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* has 'soldiers' and *NETB* has 'servants'.

⁶ The NRSV opens the verse with ‘*Thus you shall salute him*’. The text is difficult here: the MT and most early versions support the reading לְחַיֵּי (‘to life’, or ‘to the one who lives’) and older English versions (KJV, ASV & NKJV) took the expression to mean ‘to him who lives (in prosperity)’, but this translation requires reading a good deal into the words. While the expression could have the sense of ‘long life to you’ (NIV & NJPS) or perhaps ‘good luck to you’, this seems somewhat redundant in light of the salutation that follows in the context. The Vg has *fratribus meis* (‘to my brothers’), which suggests that Jerome understood the Hebrew word to have an ס that is absent in the MT (i.e., לְחַיֵּי); but Jerome’s plural remains a problem since, in context, David is addressing a single individual (Nabal) and not a group. However, it is likely that the Vg reflects

לְשָׁלוֹם: ^ווְאָמַרְתָּם כֹּה לְחֵי וְאַתָּה שָׁלוֹם וּבֵיתְךָ
שָׁלוֹם וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-לְךָ שָׁלוֹם: ^זוְעַתָּה שְׁמַעְתִּי כִּי
גִזְזִים לְךָ עֹתָה הָרָעִים אֲשֶׁר-לְךָ הָיוּ עִמָּנוּ לֹא
הִכְלַמְנוּם וְלֹא-נִפְקַד לָהֶם מְאוּמָה כָּל-יְמֵי הַיּוֹתָם
בְּכַרְמֶל: ^חשְׁאַל אֶת-נַעֲרֶיךָ וַיִּגִּידוּ לְךָ וַיִּמְצְאוּ
הַנַּעֲרִים חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ כִּי-עַל-יָזִים טוֹב בָּנוּ תִּנְהַנָּא
אֶת אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ לְעַבְדֶּיךָ וּלְבִנְךָ לְדָוִד:

^טוַיָּבֹאוּ נַעֲרֵי דָוִד וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֶל-נָבָל כְּכָל-הַדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה בְּשֵׁם דָּוִד וַיִּנּוּחוּ: ^יוַיַּעַן נָבָל אֶת-עַבְדֵי דָוִד
וַיֹּאמֶר מִי דָוִד וּמִי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם רַבּוּ עֲבָדִים
הַמֵּתְפָּרָצִים אִישׁ מִפָּנֵי אֲדֹנָיו: ^{יא}וְלִקְחָתִי אֶת-
לֶחְמִי וְאֶת-מִימִי וְאֶת טִבְחָתִי אֲשֶׁר טִבַּחְתִּי לַגִּזְזִי
וְנָתַתִּי לְאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אִי מִזֶּה הֵמָּה:
^{יב}וַיַּהֲפֹכוּ נַעֲרֵי-דָוִד לְדֶרֶכָם וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיִּגְדּוּ לוֹ
כְּכָל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: ^{יג}וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאֲנָשָׁיו חַגְרוּ
אִישׁ אֶת-חַרְבּוֹ וַיַּחְגְּרוּ אִישׁ אֶת-חַרְבּוֹ וַיַּחְגֵּר גַּם-

“Peace be to you, peace be to your House, and peace be to all that is yours! ⁷ I hear that you have the shearers; now your shepherds were with us and we did them no harm, nor did they find anything missing all the time they were at Carmel. ⁸ Ask your soldiers and they will tell you. Therefore, let these soldiers win your favour, for we have come on a day of feasting. Whatever you have to hand, please give to your servants and to David your son.”

⁹ When David’s servants came, they said all this to Nabal in David’s name, and waited. ¹⁰ Then Nabal answered David’s servants, “Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays breaking away from their masters. ¹¹ Am I to take my bread and my water and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where?” ¹² David’s servants turned away and went back the way they had come, and they told all this to him. ¹³ Then David said to his men, “Every man buckle on his sword!” Every one of them buckled on his sword, and David buckled on his too;

a consonantal text that is to be preferred here, especially if the word were to be pointed as a singular rather than a plural. While it is impossible to be certain about this reading, the present translation (as NJB & NETB) essentially follows the Vg in reading ‘my brother’.

⁷ In place of ‘did them no harm’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘did not molest them’.

⁸ The translation ‘we have come’ follows many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading בָּאֲנוּ rather than the MT’s בָּנוּ (‘we have built’).

⁹ The NJB has ‘soldiers’ in place of ‘servants’ (here following NETB) and the NRSV has ‘young men’.

¹⁰ The NJB has ‘who run away’ in place of ‘breaking away’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹¹ The NJB, following the LXX (οἶνόν), has ‘wine’ in place of ‘water’, here following the MT & NRSV (compare vv. 18 and 36).

¹² In place of ‘him’ at the end of the verse, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB & NETB have ‘David’.

¹³ The NRSV has ‘strap’ and ‘strapped’ in place of ‘buckle’ and ‘buckled’, here following the NJB.

דָּוִד אֶת־חֲרָבּוֹ וַיַּעֲלוּ אַחֲרֵי דָוִד כְּאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת
אִישׁ וּמֵאתִים יָשְׁבוּ עַל־הַכֵּלִים:

י' וְלֹא־בִיגִיל אִשֶּׁת נָבָל הִגִּיד נֶעֱר־אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים
לְאֹמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁלַח דָּוִד מַלְאָכִים מִהַמְדָּבָר לְבָרֵךְ
אֶת־אֲדֹנָינוּ וַיַּעַט בָּהֶם: ט' וְהָאֲנָשִׁים טָבִים לָנוּ
מְאֹד וְלֹא הִכְלַמְנוּ וְלֹא־פָקְדְנוּ מְאוּמָּה כָּל־יְמֵי
הַתְּהַלֵּכְנוּ אַתֶּם בַּהֲיֹותֵנוּ בַשָּׂדֶה: ט"ו חֹמָה הִיוּ
עָלֵינוּ גַם־לַיְלָה גַם־יוֹמָם כָּל־יְמֵי הַיּוֹתֵנוּ עִמָּם
רָעִים הֲצֹאן: י" וְעַתָּה דַּעִי וְרֹאִי מַה־תַּעֲשִׂי כִּי־
כָל־תָּה הָרָעָה אֶל־אֲדֹנָינוּ וְעַל כָּל־בֵּיתוֹ וְהוּא בֶן־
בְּלִיעַל מְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו: י"ח וְתַמְהָר אֲבוּגִיל אֲבִיגַיִל
וַתִּקַּח מֵאֲתֵים לֶחֶם וּשְׁנַיִם גְּבִיל־יִין וְחֲמֵשׁ צֹאן
עֲשׂוֹת עֲשׂוֹיֹת וְחֲמֵשׁ סָאִים קָלִי וּמֵאָה צִמְקִים
וּמֵאתִים דְּבָלִים וַתִּשֶׂם עַל־הַחֲמֹרִים: י"ט וַתֹּאמֶר
לְנַעֲרֶיהָ עֲבְרוּ לִפְנֵי הַנָּגִי אַחֲרֵיכֶם בָּאָה וְלֹאִישָׁהּ
נָבָל לֹא הִגִּידָה: כ' וְהִיא הָיָה רֹכֶבֶת עַל־הַחֲמֹר
וַיִּרְדּוּ בְּסֶתֶר הָהָר וְהִנֵּה דָוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו יֹרְדִים

about four hundred men followed David while two hundred remained with the baggage.

¹⁴ Now one of the servants told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "David sent messengers out from the desert to greet our master, but he flared out at them. ¹⁵ Yet the men were very good to us; they did not harm us and we did not find anything missing all the time we were out in the fields while we were in their neighbourhood. ¹⁶ They were a protection to us both by night and by day, all the time we were in their neighbourhood minding the sheep. ¹⁷ Now bear this in mind and see what you can do, for the ruin of our master and of his whole house is planned, and he is so ill-tempered no one can speak to him." ¹⁸ Abigail hastily took two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready prepared, five seahim of roasted grain, a hundred bunches of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹ She said to her servants, "Go on ahead of me, I will follow you," but she did not tell her husband. ²⁰ As she was riding her donkey down under cover of the mountain, David and his men happened to be coming down in her

¹⁴ The literal translation of 'greet' is 'bless'.

¹⁵ In place of 'they did not harm us', the NJB has 'they did not molest us', the NRSV has 'we suffered no harm' and NETB has 'they did not insult us'.

¹⁶ David and his men were outlaws, but of the 'Robin Hood' type, even acting as a police force at times (compare v. 21). In place of 'protection', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'wall' and NETB has 'protective wall'.

¹⁷ The literal translation of 'he is so ill-tempered' is 'he is a son of worthlessness'.

¹⁸ The Kethib/Qere differences here would benefit from explanations. 1 seah is about 7 litres.

¹⁹ A more literal translation of 'follow' (here following the NJB) is 'come after' (as NRSV & NETB).

²⁰ In place of 'under cover', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'behind a spur'.

לְקִרְאָתָהּ וּתִפְגַּשׁ אֹתָם: ^{כא} וְדָוִד אָמַר אֶף לִשְׁקֹר
שְׁמִרְתִּי אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לִזֶּה בַּמִּדְבָּר וְלֹא־נִפְקַד
מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ מֵאוֹמָהּ וַיֵּשֶׁב־לִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה:
^{כב} כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים לְאִיבֵי דָוִד וְכֹה יִסִּיף אִם־
אֲשָׁאִיר מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ עַד־הַבֹּקֶר מִשְׁתִּין בְּקִיר:
^{כג} וַתֵּרָא אֲבִיגַיִל אֶת־דָּוִד וַתִּמְהָר וַתִּרְדּוּ מֵעַל
הַחֲמֹר וַתִּפֹּל לְאַפֵּי דָוִד עַל־פָּנָיָהּ וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ אָרָץ:
^{כד} וַתִּפֹּל עַל־רַגְלָיו וַתֹּאמֶר בִּי־אֲנִי אֲדֹנִי הָעוֹן
וַתְּדַבֵּר־נָא אִמְתָּךְ בְּאָזְנֶיךָ וּשְׁמַע אֵת דְּבָרִי
אִמְתָּךְ: ^{כה} אֶל־נָא יֵשִׁים אֲדֹנִי אֶת־לְבָבוֹ אֶל־אִישׁ
הַבְּלִיעַל הַזֶּה עַל־נָבֹל כִּי כִשְׁמוֹ כִּן־הוּא נָבֹל שְׁמוֹ
וְנָבֹלָה עִמּוֹ וְאֲנִי אִמְתָּךְ לֹא רָאִיתִי אֶת־נַעֲרֵי אֲדֹנִי
אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתָּ: ^{כו} וְעַתָּה אֲדֹנִי חִי־יְהוָה וַחֲיִי־נַפְשְׁךָ
אֲשֶׁר מִנְעָךְ יְהוָה מִבּוֹא בְּדָמַי וְהוֹשַׁע יָדְךָ לִּי
וְעַתָּה יְהִיו כְּנָבֹל אִיבֶיךָ וְהַמְּבַקְשִׁים אֶל־אֲדֹנִי
רָעָה: ^{כז} וְעַתָּה הַבְּרָכָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר־הֵבִיא

direction; and she met them. ²¹ Now David had decided, "It was a waste of time guarding all this man's property in the desert. Nothing was missing of all he had, and yet he returned evil for good. ²² May God to this to David and more if by morning I leave one who urinates on a wall alive of all those who belong to him!" ²³ When Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted from the Donkey and, falling on her face before David, bowed down to the ground. ²⁴ She fell at his feet and said, "Let me take the blame, my lord. Let your servant speak in your ear; listen to the words of your servant. ²⁵ Pay no attention to this ill-tempered man Nabal for his nature is like his name; 'Fool' is his name and brutish his character; but I your servant did not see the soldiers my lord had sent. ²⁶ Now, my lord, as Yahweh lives and as your soul lives, by Yahweh who kept you from the crime of bloodshed and from taking vengeance with your own hand, may your enemies, and all those who plan evil against my lord, become like Nabal. ²⁷ As for the present your servant brings my lord, I should like this to be given to those in your service. ²⁸ I

²¹ The literal translation of 'decided' (here following the NJB) is 'said'.

²² The text here follows the LXX; the MT has 'David's enemies' in place of 'David'.

²³ The NJB opens with 'as soon as' in place of 'when', here following the NRSV & NETB.

²⁴ The NRSV opens Abigail's plea, here following the NJB, with, "Upon me alone, my lord, be the guilt."

²⁵ The NJB translates 'Nabal' as 'Brute' rather than 'Fool', here following the NRSV & NETB; in Hebrew, the name indicates the fool whose conduct displeases both God and people, at once stupid, godless, and malicious.

²⁶ The common oath, "as Yahweh lives and as your soul lives," may be translated more simply: "by the life of Yahweh and by your own life."

²⁷ The literal translation of 'present' is 'blessing'.

²⁸ The NJB ends this verse, here following the NRSV, with, "and in all your life there is no wickedness to be found in you."

שִׁפְחַתְךָ לְאֹדְנִי וְנָתַנָּה לְנַעֲרִים הַמִּתְהַלְכִּים בְּרִגְלֵי
 אֹדְנִי: ^{כח} שֶׁאֵין נֹא לְפֶשַׁע אֲמַתְךָ כִּי עֲשֵׂה־יַעֲשֶׂה
 יְהוָה לְאֹדְנִי בֵּית נֶאֱמֹן כִּי־מִלְחָמוֹת יְהוָה אֹדְנִי
 נִלְחָם וְרַעָה לֹא־תִמָּצֵא בְּךָ מִיָּמֶיךָ: ^{כט} וַיִּקָּם אָדָם
 לְרַדְפְּךָ וּלְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ וְהִיתָה נֶפֶשׁ אֹדְנִי
 צְרוּרָה | בְּצִרּוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְאֵת נַפְשׁ
 אִיבֶיךָ יִקְלַעְנָה בְּתוֹךְ כֶּף הַקַּלֶּעַ: ^ל וְהָיָה כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה
 יְהוָה לְאֹדְנִי כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֶת־הַטּוֹבָה עֲלֶיךָ
 וְצוּךְ לְנִגִּיד עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{לא} וְלֹא תִהְיֶה זֹאת לְךָ
 לְפֹקֶה וּלְמַכְשׁוֹל לִב לְאֹדְנִי וּלְשִׁפְךָ־דָם חַנּוּם
 וּלְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֹדְנִי לוֹ וְהִיטֵב יְהוָה לְאֹדְנִי וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת־
 אֲמַתְךָ: {ס}

^{לב} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְאַבִּיגַיִל בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְךָ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְקִרְאָתִי: ^{לג} וּבְרוּךְ טַעֲמֶךָ
 וּבְרוּכָה אַתְּ אֲשֶׁר כָּלַתְנִי הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה מִבּוֹא בְּדָמַיִם
 וְהִשַּׁע יָדַי לִי: ^{לד} וְאוֹלָם חִי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 אֲשֶׁר מִנְעָנִי מִהֲרַע אֶתְךָ כִּין לְוֹלִי מִהֲרַת וּתְבִאָתִי
 וּתְבִאָתָא לְקִרְאָתִי כִּי אִם־נֹתֵר לְנָבָל עַד־אִוֹר

ask you, please, to forgive your servant's fault, for then Yahweh will grant my lord a lasting dynasty, for my lord is fighting the battles of Yahweh; and in all your life no evil shall be found in you. ²⁹ Should men set out to hunt you down and try to take your life, my lord's life shall be bound close in the wallet of life with Yahweh your God, while as for the lives of your enemies he will fling them away, as from a sling. ³⁰ When Yahweh has done for my lord according to all the good he has promised you, when he has made you prince over Israel, ³¹ my lord shall have no reason to grieve, or feel remorse, for having shed blood needlessly and avenged yourself with your own hand. And when Yahweh has shown his goodness to my lord, then remember your servant."

³² Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today! ³³ Blessed be your good sense and blessed be you yourself for restraining me today from the crime of bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand! ³⁴ For, as surely as Yahweh the God of Israel lives, he who kept me from harming you, had you not hurried out to meet me, I swear that Nabal would not

²⁹ The NRSV uses 'bundle of the living' in place of 'wallet of life'; God takes care of his friends' lives as human beings would of a treasure.

³⁰ The writer anticipates the future events by crediting Abigail with knowing that David was going to be king of Israel.

³¹ Literally translated, this verse opens, "And this will not be for you for staggering and for stumbling of the heart of my lord."

³² NETB has 'praised' in place of 'blessed', here following the NJB & NRSV.

³³ In place of 'good sense', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'wisdom' and NETB has 'good judgment'.

³⁴ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

הַבֶּקֶר מִשְׁתִּין בֶּקִיר: ^לוְיִקַּח דָּוִד מִיָּדָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר-
הֵבִיָּאָה לוֹ וְלָהּ אָמַר עָלַי לְשָׁלוֹם לְבֵיתְךָ רְאִי
שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּקוֹלְךָ וְאִשָּׁא פָנֶיךָ: ^{לו}וַתָּבֹא אַבִּיגַיִל אֶל-
נָבָל וְהִנֵּה-לוֹ מִשְׁתֶּה בְּבֵיתוֹ כַּמִּשְׁתֶּה הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלִב
נָבָל טוֹב עָלָיו וְהוּא שָׁכַר עַד-מָאֹד וְלֹא-הִגִּידָהּ לוֹ
דְּבַר קֶטֶן וְגָדוֹל עַד-אֹזֶר הַבֶּקֶר: ^{לז}וַיְהִי בַבֶּקֶר
בַּצָּאת הַיַּיִן מִנָּבָל וַתִּגְדֹּל אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה וַיָּמָת לָבוֹ בְּקֶרְבּוֹ וְהוּא הָיָה לְאַבֹן: ^{לח}וַיְהִי
כַּעֲשָׂרַת הַיָּמִים וַיָּגָף יְהוָה אֶת-נָבָל וַיָּמָת:
^{לט}וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד כִּי מָת נָבָל וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
רָב אֶת-רִיב חֲרָפְתִּי מִיַּד נָבָל וְאֶת-עַבְדּוֹ חֲשָׁךְ
מִרְעָה וְאֶת רַעַת נָבָל הִשִּׁיב יְהוָה בְּרָאשׁוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח
דָּוִד וַיְדַבֵּר בְּאַבִּיגַיִל לְקַחְתָּהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ^מוַיָּבֹאוּ
עַבְדֵי דָוִד אֶל-אַבִּיגַיִל הַכַּרְמֶלָה וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלֶיהָ
לֵאמֹר דָּוִד שְׁלַחְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ לְקַחְתָּךְ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה:
^{מא}וַתֵּקֶם וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַפַּיִם אֶרֶצָה וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה

have one who urinates on a wall left by the morning.” ³⁵ David then accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, “Go back to your house in peace; see, I have listened to you and have granted your request.” ³⁶ Abigail returned to Nabal. He was holding a feast, like the feast of a king, in his house; Nabal’s heart was merry within him, for as he was very drunk; she told him nothing at all until it was daylight. ³⁷ In the morning then, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him all that had happened, and his heart died inside him and he became like a stone. ³⁸ About ten days later Yahweh struck Nabal, and he died. ³⁹ When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, “Blessed be Yahweh who has avenged the insult I received at Nabal’s hands and has restrained his servant from doing evil; Yahweh has brought the wickedness of Nabal down on his own head.” Then David sent word to Abigail and asked her to become his wife. ⁴⁰ When David’s servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they said, “David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife.” ⁴¹ She rose and bowed down her face to the

³⁵ The literal translation of ‘granted your request’ is ‘lifted up your face’.

³⁶ In place of ‘Nabal’s heart was merry within him’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘Nabal was in high spirits’; literally translated, the MT reads ‘the heart of Nabal was good upon him’.

³⁷ The symptoms described here could be those of a stroke or heart attack.

³⁸ In Biblical theology, life and death are in the hands of God.

³⁹ The literal translation of ‘who has avenged the insult I received at Nabal’s hands’ (here following the NJB) is ‘who has argued the case of my insult from the hand of Nabal’.

⁴⁰ NETB has ‘take you back’ in place of ‘take you to him’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

⁴¹ Note the formal obsequiousness of Abigail’s words.

אִמְתָּךְ לְשַׁפְּחָה לְרֹחֵץ רַגְלֵי עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָי: ^{מב} וְתַמְהִיר
וְתִקֶּם אֲבִיגַיִל וְתִרְכַּב עַל־הַחֲמֹר וְחָמֵשׁ נַעֲרֹתֶיהָ
הֵלְכוֹת לְרִגְלָהּ וְתִלְךְ אַחֲרֶיהָ מִלֶּאכֶי דָּוִד וְתִהְיֶה־לּוֹ
לְאִשָּׁה: ^{מג} וְאֶת־אֲחִינוֹעַם לָקַח דָּוִד מִיִּזְרְעֶאֱל
וְתִהְיֶיןָ גַּם־שְׂתֵיָהֶן לוֹ לְנָשִׁים: {ס}

^{מד} וְשָׂאוּל נָתַן אֶת־מִיכָל בָּתּוֹ אִשָּׁת דָּוִד לְפָלְטִי בֶן־
לִישׁ אֲשֶׁר מִגָּלִים:

ground. "Consider your servant a slave," she said, "to wash the feet of my lord's servants." ⁴² Quickly Abigail stood up again and mounted a donkey, with five of her maidservants attending her. She followed David's messengers and became his wife. ⁴³ David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel and he kept them both as wives.

⁴⁴ Saul had given Michal his daughter, the wife of David, to Palti son of Laish, from Gallim.

⁴² The literal translation of 'attending her' is 'going at her feet'.

⁴³ David lost one wife (cf. v. 44) and gained two more. By marrying Abigail, David consolidated his position with the powerful Calebite clan. 'Ahinoam' was also a woman of the southern area; compare Jos 15:56 for the location of this 'Jezreel' (not to be confused with the Plain of Esdraelon). These marriages were a great help to David politically.

⁴⁴ NETB places this entire verse in parentheses.

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שמואל א פרק כו

^א וַיָּבֹאוּ הַזָּפִים אֶל־שָׁאוֹל הַגִּבְעָתָה לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא דָּוִד מְסֻתָּתָר בַּגִּבְעָת הַחֲכִילָה עַל פְּנֵי הַיְשִׁימֹן: ^ב וַיָּקָם שָׁאוֹל וַיֵּרֶד אֶל־מִדְבַּר־זִיף וְאִתּוֹ שְׁלֹשֶׁת־אַלְפִים אִישׁ בַּחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־דָּוִד בְּמִדְבַּר־זִיף: ^ג וַיַּחֲן שָׁאוֹל בַּגִּבְעָת הַחֲכִילָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הַיְשִׁימֹן עַל־הַדֶּרֶךְ וְדָוִד יָשָׁב בְּמִדְבָּר וַיֵּרָא כִּי בָּא שָׁאוֹל אַחֲרָיו הַמִּדְבָּרָה: ^ד וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד מְרַגְלִים וַיֵּדַע כִּי־בָּא שָׁאוֹל אֶל־נָכוֹן: ^ה וַיָּקָם דָּוִד וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר חָנָה־שָׁם שָׁאוֹל וַיֵּרָא דָּוִד אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר שָׁכַב־שָׁם שָׁאוֹל וְאַבְנֵר בֶּן־נֵר שָׂר־צָבָאוּ וְשָׁאוֹל שָׁכַב בַּמַּעֲגָל וְהָעָם חָנִים סָבִיבָתּוּ: ^ו וַיַּעַן דָּוִד וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־אַחִימֶלֶךְ הַחֲתִי וְאֶל־אַבִּישַׁי בֶּן־צְרוּיָה אַחִי יוֹאֵב לֵאמֹר מִי־יֵרֵד אִתִּי אֶל־שָׁאוֹל אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּישַׁי אֲנִי

¹ Now the men of Ziph came to Saul at Gibeah. "Is not David in hiding," they said, "on the Hill of Hachilah, opposite Jeshimon?" ² Therefore, Saul rose and went down to the desert of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand chosen men from Israel, to search for David in the desert of Ziph. ³ Saul pitched camp on the Hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon, by the roadside, but David was then living in the desert. When he learned that Saul was coming after him in the desert, ⁴ David sent out scouts and learned that Saul had indeed arrived. ⁵ Then David set off and came to the place where Saul had pitched camp; and David saw the place where Saul was lying, with Abner son of Ner, the commander. Saul was lying inside the camp with the troops bivouacking round him. ⁶ Speaking to Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah and brother of Joab, David said, "Who will come down with me into the camp of Saul?" Abishai answered, "I will go down with

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- ¹ The NJB reads 'on the edge of the wasteland' in place of 'opposite Jeshimon', here following the NRSV (as also in v. 3); the literal translation is 'upon the face of Jeshimon'.
- ² The NJB lacks 'chosen', here following the NRSV; NETB has 'select'.
- ³ In place of 'in the desert', the NJB has simply 'there'.
- ⁴ Literally translated, this verse reads, "And David sent scouts and he knew that Saul had certainly come."
- ⁵ The NJB has 'he saw' in place of 'David saw', here following the MT & NRSV.
- ⁶ 'Abner' (v. 5), 'Abishai' and 'Joab' were destined to play important roles in the story of David's reign in 2S. 'Ahimelech the Hittite' should not be confused with Ahimelech the priest in Ch. 21. Hittites had settled in the country in earlier times (Gn 23:7, Jos 1:4), coming from the north. The few who remained in the time of David joined with the Israelites, adopting Hebrew names (as Uriah the Hittite, 2S 11:3).

אֶרֶד עִמָּךְ: ^זוַיֵּבֹא דָוִד וְאַבִּיִּשַׁי | אֶל־הָעֵם לַיְלָה
וְהִנֵּה שָׁאוּל שֹׁכֵב יָשֵׁן בַּמַּעְגָּל וְחֲנִיתוֹ מְעוּכָה-
בָּאָרֶץ מִרְאֲשֹׁתוֹ וְאַבְנֵר וְהָעָם שֹׁכְבִים
סְבִיבָתוֹ: {ס}

^חוַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּיִּשַׁי אֶל־דָּוִד סֹגֵר אֱלֹהִים הַיּוֹם אֶת־
אוֹיְבֶךָ בַּיָּדָךְ וְעַתָּה אֶפְנֶנּוּ נָא בַּחֲנִית וּבָאָרֶץ פֶּעַם
אַחַת וְלֹא אֶשְׁנֶה לוֹ: ^טוַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־אַבִּיִּשַׁי אֶל־
תִּשְׁחִיתֵהוּ כִּי מִי שֶׁלַח יָדוֹ בַּמָּשִׁיחַ יְהוָה
וְנִקָּה: {פ}

^יוַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד חֲיֵי־יְהוָה כִּי אִם־יְהוָה יִגְפֹּנֵנִי אוֹ־יִמּוֹ
יָבוֹא וְנָמַת אוֹ בַּמִּלְחָמָה יָרֵד וְנִסְפָּה: ^{יא}חֲלִילָה לִּי
מִיְהוָה מִשְׁלַח יָדִי בַּמָּשִׁיחַ יְהוָה וְעַתָּה קַח־נָא
אֶת־הַחֲנִית אֲשֶׁר מִרְאֲשֹׁתוֹ וְאֶת־צַפְחַת הַמַּיִם
וְנִלְכֶּה־לָּנוּ: ^{יב}וַיִּקַּח דָּוִד אֶת־הַחֲנִית וְאֶת־צַפְחַת
הַמַּיִם מִרְאֲשֹׁתַי שָׁאוּל וַיִּלְכּוּ לָהֶם וְאֵין רֹאֶה וְאֵין

you.” ⁷ So, in the dark, David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul lying asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

⁸ Then Abishai said to David, “Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with the spear: just one stroke; I will not need to strike him twice.” ⁹ David answered Abishai, “Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against Yahweh’s anointed and be without guilt?

¹⁰ David said, “As Yahweh lives, Yahweh himself will strike him down, whether his time to die comes, or he goes out to battle and perishes then.

¹¹ Yahweh forbid that I should raise my hand against Yahweh’s anointed! But now take the spear beside his head and the pitcher of water and let us go away.” ¹² David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul’s head, and they made off. No one saw, no one

⁷ In place of ‘camp’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘encampment’ and NETB has ‘entrenchment’.

⁸ Here, ‘the spear’ almost certainly refers to Saul’s own spear, which according to the previous verse was stuck into the ground beside him as he slept; this is reflected in a number of English versions: NJB, TEV, CEV, ‘his own spear’; NLT, ‘that spear’. However, the NIV & NCV have ‘my spear’, in which case Abishai refers to his own spear rather than Saul’s, but this is unlikely since **1** Abishai would probably not have carried a spear along since such a weapon would be unwieldy when sneaking into the enemy camp and **2** this would not explain the mention of Saul’s own spear stuck in the ground beside him in the previous verse.

⁹ David here shows his respect for the sacred character of the king, ‘Yahweh’s anointed’.

¹⁰ In place of ‘perishes’, here following the NJB (and NRSV), NETB has ‘is swept away’.

¹¹ Once again, David takes evidence that he has had the opportunity to kill Saul.

¹² NETB ends this verse, here following the NJB & NRSV, with, “for the LORD had caused a deep sleep to fall on them.”

יִזְדַּע וְאִין מְקִיץ כִּי כָלָם יִשְׁנִים כִּי תִרְדָּמַת יְהוָה
נִפְלָה עֲלֵיהֶם: ^{יג} וַיַּעֲבֹר דָּוִד הָעֵבֶר וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל-
רֹאש־הָהָר מֵרָחֵק רַב הַמָּקוֹם בֵּינֵיהֶם: ^{יד} וַיִּקְרָא
דָּוִד אֶל-הָעָם וְאֶל-אַבְנֵר בֶּן-נֵר לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא תַעֲנֶה
אַבְנֵר וַיַּעַן אַבְנֵר וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אַתָּה קֹרֵאת אֶל-
הַמֶּלֶךְ: {פ}

^{טו} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אַבְנֵר הֲלוֹא-אִישׁ אַתָּה וּמִי
כְמוֹךָ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְלָמָּה לֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶל-אֲדֹנֶיךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ
כִּי-בָא אֶחָד הָעָם לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת-הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲדֹנֶיךָ:
^{טז} לֹא-טוֹב הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ חִי-יְהוָה כִּי
בְּנִי-מֹת אַתָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-שָׁמַרְתֶּם עַל-אֲדֹנֵיכֶם עַל-
מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה וְעַתָּה רְאֵה אֵי-חֲנִית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶת-
צַפְחַת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵרָאשָׁתוֹ: ^{יז} וַיִּכֹּר שָׂאוֹל אֶת-
קוֹל דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר הַקּוֹלֶךָ זֶה בְּנִי דָוִד וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד קוֹלִי
אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה אֲדֹנִי רָדִף אַחֲרֵי
עַבְדּוֹ כִּי מָה עָשִׂיתִי וּמַה-בִּידִי רָעָה: ^{יט} וְעַתָּה
יִשְׁמַע-נָא אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת דְּבָרֵי עַבְדּוֹ אִם-יְהוָה

knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from Yahweh had fallen on them. ¹³ David crossed to the other side and halted on top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. ¹⁴ David then called out to the troops and to Abner son of Ner, “Abner, will you not answer?” Abner replied, “Who is that calling the king?”

¹⁵ David said to Abner, “Are you not a man? Who is your like in Israel? Why did you not guard your lord king then? Some man of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. ¹⁶ What you have done is not good. As Yahweh lives, you all deserve to die since you did not guard your lord, Yahweh’s anointed. Look where the king’s spear is now, and the pitcher of water that was beside his head.” ¹⁷ Then Saul recognised David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, my son David?” David answered, “It is my voice, my lord king. ¹⁸ Why does my lord pursue his servant?” he said, “What have I done? What guilt is on my hands? ¹⁹ May my lord king now listen to the words of his servant: if Yahweh himself has incited you against me, let him smell an offering; but if men

¹³ The opening means David crossed to the other side of the valley.

¹⁴ The NJB, following the LXX, omits ‘the king’. Even today, the Arabs in the wild country shout across great distances in this manner.

¹⁵ In place of ‘destroy’, here following the NRSV, the NJB & NETB have ‘kill’.

¹⁶ The literal translation of ‘you all deserve to die’ is ‘you are all sons of death’.

¹⁷ NETB restructures the opening of this verse (here following the NJB), reading, “When Saul ... he said.”

¹⁸ For the final question, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “Of what evil am I guilty?”

¹⁹ For ‘smell’, the NJB has ‘take delight in’.

הַסִּיתָהּ בִּלְיָ רַחַם מִנְחָהּ וְאִם בְּנֵי הָאָדָם אֲרוּרִים
הֵם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כִּי־גִרְשׁוֹנֵי הַיּוֹם מִהִסְתַּפַּח בְּנַחֲלַת
יְהוָה לֵאמֹר לֵךְ עֲבַד אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים: ^כ וְעַתָּה אֶל־
יִפֹּל דָּמִי אֶרֶצָה מִנֶּגֶד פְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי־יֵצֵא מִלֶּךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל לִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־פֶּרֶעַשׁ אֶחָד כַּאֲשֶׁר יִרְדֹּף
הַקָּרָא בְּהָרִים: ^{כא} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל חֲטָאתִי שׁוּב בְּנִי־
דָּוִד כִּי לֹא־אֶרְעֶ לְךָ עוֹד תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָה נַפְשִׁי
בְּעֵינֶיךָ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הִנֵּה הַסַּכְלֹתִי וְאֲשַׁגָּה הַרְבֵּה
מְאֹד: ^{כב} וַיַּעַן דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הַחֲנִית חֲנִית הַמֶּלֶךְ
וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶחָד מִהַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקַּחֶהָ: ^{כג} וַיְהִי־וְהָיָה יוֹשִׁיב לֹאִישׁ
אֶת־צִדְקָתוֹ וְאֶת־אֲמֻנָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה הַיּוֹם
בְּיָד וְלֹא אָבִיתִי לְשַׁלַּח יָדִי בְּמִשְׁיַח יְהוָה: ^{כד} וְהִזְהָה
כַּאֲשֶׁר גָּדְלָה נַפְשׁוֹ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בְּעֵינַי בֵּן תַּגְדֹּל
נַפְשִׁי בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה וַיַּצֵּלֵנִי מִכָּל־צָרָה: {פ}

^{כה} וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל אֶל־דָּוִד בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּנִי דָוִד גַּם
עָשָׂה תַעֲשֶׂה וְגַם יָכֹל תִּוְכַל וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד לְדַרְכּוֹ
וּשְׂאוּל שָׁב לְמִקְוָמוֹ: {פ}

have done it, that they be accursed before Yahweh, for now they have driven me out so that I have no share in the heritage of Yahweh. They have said, "Go and serve other gods." ²⁰ So now, therefore, do not let my blood fall to the ground out of the presence of Yahweh; for the king of Israel has gone out in quest of a single flea as a man hunts a partridge on the mountains." ²¹ Saul replied, "I have sinned. Come back, my son David; I will never harm you again since you have shown such respect for my life today. Yes, my course has been folly and my error grave." ²² David answered, "Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. ²³ Yahweh repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today Yahweh put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against Yahweh's anointed. ²⁴ Just as today your life counted for much in my sight, so shall my life count for much in the sight of Yahweh and he will deliver me from all distress."

²⁵ Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, my son David! You will do great things and will succeed." Then David went on his way and Saul returned home.

²⁰ The NJB, following the LXX (τῆς ψυχῆς μου), has 'my life' in place of 'a single flea' (influenced by 24:15).

²¹ In place of 'you have shown respect for my life', here following the NJB, the NRSV, has the more literal 'my life was precious in your sight'.

²² In place of חֲנִית, here following the Qere, the Kethib has החנית.

²³ In place of 'his uprightness and loyalty', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'his righteousness and his faithfulness'.

²⁴ The NRSV has 'tribulation' in place of 'distress', here following the NJB, and NETB has 'danger'.

²⁵ The literal translation of Saul's 2nd sentence is, "You will certainly do and also you will certainly be able;" the infinitive absolutes placed before the finite verbal forms lend emphasis to the statement.

1 SAMUEL 27

שמואל א פרק כז

^א וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-לְבָבוֹ עֲתָה אֶסְפָּה יוֹם-אֶחָד בְּיַד-שָׂאוּל אֵין-לִי טוֹב כִּי הַמָּלֵט אֲמַלְטָא אֶל-אַרְץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְנוֹאֵשׁ מִמֶּנִּי שָׂאוּל לְבַקְשָׁנִי עוֹד בְּכָל-גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִמְלֹטְתִי מִיָּדוֹ: ^ב וַיֵּקֶם דָּוִד וַיַּעֲבֹר הוּא וְשֵׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ אֶל-אַכִישׁ בֶּן-מַעֲוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ גֹּת: ^ג וַיָּשֶׁב דָּוִד עִם-אַכִישׁ בְּגֹת הוּא וְאֲנָשָׁיו אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ דָּוִד וּשְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו אַחִינוֹעַם הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִית וְאַבִּיגַיִל אִשְׁת־נָבָל הַכַּרְמֶלִית: ^ד וַיָּגֵד לְשָׂאוּל כִּי-בָרַח דָּוִד גֹּת וְלֹא-יָסָף יוֹסֵף עוֹד לְבַקְשׁוֹ: {ס}

^ה וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אַכִישׁ אִם-נָא מַצְאֵתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ יִתְּנוּ-לִי מָקוֹם בְּאַחַת עָרֵי הַשְּׂדֵה וְאֶשְׁבָּה שָׁם וְלִמָּה יֵשֵׁב עַבְדְּךָ בְּעִיר הַמַּמְלָכָה עִמָּךְ: ^ו וַיִּתֵּן-לוֹ אַכִישׁ בֵּירוֹם הַהוּא אֶת-צִקְלָג לָכֵן הִיְתָה צִקְלָג לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {פ}

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- ¹ Fleeing to Philistine territory was a sure way of eluding Saul but a seeming desertion to the enemy, putting David in a false position from which circumstances (Ch. 29) and his own cunning (vv. 8-12) extricate him. The literal translation of 'thought' is 'said to his heart'.
- ² David went to 'Gath', the very place from which Goliath was reputed to have come (17:4).
- ³ Hope for better conditions for their wives and children was one of the reasons why David and his men took this step.
- ⁴ In place of יָסָף, here following the *Qere*, the *Kethib* has יוֹסֵף.
- ⁵ The NJB opens David's speech, here following the NRSV, with, "If you will grant me a favour."
- ⁶ 'Ziklag' (צִקְלָג) was on the borders of Philistia, to the northeast of Beersheba.

וַיְהִי מִסְפַּר הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר־יָשָׁב דָּוִד בְּשָׂדֵה
 פְּלִשְׁתִּים יָמִים וָאַרְבַּעַה חֳדָשִׁים: ^ח וַיֵּעַל דָּוִד
 וְאֲנָשָׁיו וַיִּפְשְׁטוּ אֶל־הַגִּזְרִי וְהַגִּרְזִי וְהַגִּזְרִי
 וְהַעֲמֻלִּי כִּי הִנֵּה יֹשְׁבוֹת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר מֵעוֹלָם
 בּוֹאֵךְ שׂוֹרָה וְעַד־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ^ט וְהָכָה דָּוִד אֶת־
 הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא יָחִיָּה אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה וְלֶקֶחַ צֹאן וּבָקָר
 וְחֲמֹרִים וְגַמְלִים וּבְגָדִים וַיָּשָׁב וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אֲכִישׁ:
 'וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכִישׁ אֶל־פְּשֻׁטָתָם הַיּוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד עַל־
 גִּבַּב יְהוּדָה וְעַל־גִּבַּב הִרְחֻמָּאֵלִי וְאֶל־גִּבַּב הַקִּינִי:
 'וְאִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה לֹא־יָחִיָּה דָּוִד לְהָבִיא גִּת לְאִמֶּר פֶּן־
 יִגְדּוּ עָלֵינוּ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־עָשָׂה דָּוִד וְכֹה מִשְׁפָּטוֹ כָּל־
 הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר יָשָׁב בְּשָׂדֵה פְּלִשְׁתִּים: ^{יב} וַיֹּאמֶן אֲכִישׁ
 בְּדָוִד לֵאמֹר הַבָּאֵשׁ הַבָּאִישׁ בָּעֵמֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִיָּה
 לִי לַעֲבָד עוֹלָם: {פ}

⁷ The length of time that David stayed in Philistine territory was a year and four months. ⁸ David and his men went out on raids against the Geshurites, Girzites and Amalekites, for these are the tribes inhabiting the region that goes from Telam towards Shur and as far as the land of Egypt. ⁹ David laid the land waste and left neither man nor woman alive but took the sheep and oxen, donkeys, camels and garments, and came back, bringing them to Achish. ¹⁰ Achish would ask, "Where did you raid today?" David would reply, "Against the Negeb of Judah," or, "the Negeb of Jerahmeel," or, "the Negeb of the Kenites." ¹¹ David never brought a man or woman back alive, "in case," as he thought, "they inform against us and say, "David did such and such."" This was David's practice all the time he stayed in Philistine territory. ¹² Achish trusted David. "He has made himself hated by his own people Israel," he thought, "and so will be my servant forever."

⁷ The literal translation of 'year' is 'days'; the plural of the word 'day' is sometimes used idiomatically to refer specifically to a year; in addition to this occurrence, see also 1:3, 21, 2:19, 20:6, Lv 25:29 & Jg 17:10.

⁸ 'From Telam' follows the LXX (ἀπὸ Γελαμψουρ); the MT has 'from of old'. The Kethib has וְהַגִּזְרִי in place of וְהַגִּזְרִי, here following the Qere.

⁹ The NJB has 'countryside' in place of 'land', here following the NRSV, and NETB has 'districts'.

¹⁰ The translation, 'Where', follows the LXX (Ἐπὶ τίνα) and Vg (*In quem*), which assume מִי אֵל ('To whom') rather than the MT's אֵל ('Not'), which makes no sense here; another possibility is that the text originally had אֵן ('Where'), which has been distorted; the Peshitta & Tg have 'Where'.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'all the time' is 'all the days'.

¹² The literal translation of 'he has made himself hated' is 'he really stinks'; the expression is used figuratively here to describe the rejection and ostracism that David had experienced as a result of Saul's hatred of him.

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שמואל א פרק כח

^א וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָהֵם וַיִּקְבְּצוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־מַחֲנֵיהֶם לְצַבָּא לְהִלָּחֵם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אַכִּישׁ אֶל־דָּוִד יָדַע תִּדַּע כִּי אֲתִלְ תַּצָּא בַּמַּחֲנֶה אִתָּהּ וְאַנְשֶׁיךָ: ^ב וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־אַכִּישׁ לֵכֶן אִתָּהּ תִּדַּע אֶת אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה עִבְדְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אַכִּישׁ אֶל־דָּוִד לֵכֶן שְׁמֵר לְרָאשֵׁי אֲשִׁימָךְ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: {פ}

^ג וְשָׁמוּאֵל מָתָּ וַיִּסְפְּדוּ־לּוֹ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְבְּרֵהוּ בְּרָמָה וּבְעִירוֹ וְשָׂאוּל הֵסִיר הָאֲבֹת וְאֶת־הַיִּדְּעָנִים מֵהָאָרֶץ: ^ד וַיִּקְבְּצוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּשׁוֹנֵם וַיִּקְבֹּץ שָׂאוּל אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּגִלְבֹּעַ: ^ה וַיִּירָא שָׂאוּל אֶת־מַחֲנֶה פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּירָא וַיַּחֲרֹד לְבֹו מְאֹד: ^ו וַיִּשְׁאַל שָׂאוּל בִּיהוָה וְלֹא עָנָהוּ יְהוָה גַּם בַּחֲלֻמוֹת גַּם בְּאוּרִים גַּם בַּנְּבִיאִים: ^ז וַיֹּאמֶר

¹ At that time, the Philistines mustered their forces for war to fight Israel, and Achish said to David, "You should fully understand that you and your men must go with me into the battle." ² David answered Achish, "That being the case, you will soon see what your servant can do." Achish replied to David, "Right, I shall appoint you as my permanent bodyguard."

³ Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned him and buried him at Ramah, his own town. Saul had expelled the necromancers and wizards from the country. ⁴ Meanwhile the Philistines had mustered and pitched camp at Shunem. Saul mustered all Israel and they encamped at Gilboa. ⁵ When Saul saw the Philistine camp, he was afraid and there was a great trembling in his heart. ⁶ When Saul consulted Yahweh, Yahweh gave him no answer, not by dreams, nor by

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- ¹ The literal translation of 'forces' is 'camps'. The translation 'into the battle' follows the LXX (εἰς πόλεμον) and a 4QSam^a (מלחמה במלחמה, 'in the battle') rather than the MT's בַּמַּחֲנֶה ('in the camp', cf. NASB); while the MT reading is not impossible here, the variant fits the context better: the MT can be explained as a scribal error caused in part by the earlier occurrence of 'camp' in this verse.
- ² David gives an ambiguous answer, which Achish takes for a promise of valour in war; he is hoping that circumstances will excuse him for fighting against Israel, as in fact they did (Ch. 29).
- ³ Necromancy was practised in Israel (2K 21:6, Is 8:19), though forbidden by the Law (Lv 19:31, 20:6, 27; Dt 18:11). Saul himself is said to have banished practitioners of the black arts (v. 9) and, although not been mentioned elsewhere, it may be implied by the last part of 14:47.
- ⁴ 'Shunem' (שׁוֹנֵם) is in the plain of Jezreel. South of Shunem, the Gilboa range borders this plain.
- ⁵ Literally translated, this verse ends, "...he was afraid, and his heart was very terrified."
- ⁶ The NRSV & NETB use 'Urim' in place of 'divination', here following the NJB.

שָׂאוֹל לַעֲבָדָיו בִּקְשׁוֹ-לִי אִשָּׁת בַּעֲלַת-אָזֹב וְאִלְכָה
 אֵלֶיהָ וְאֶדְרָשָׁה-בָּהּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ עֲבָדָיו אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אִשָּׁת
 בַּעֲלַת-אָזֹב בְּעֵין דֹּזֵר: ^ח וַיִּתְחַפֵּשׂ שָׂאוֹל וַיִּלְבַּשׁ
 בְּגָדִים אַחֲרִים וַיֵּלֶךְ הוּא וּשְׁנֵי אַנְשֵׁים עִמּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ
 אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר קְסוּמִי-נָא לִי בָאֹזֹב
 וְהָעֲלִי לִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר אֵלַיךְ: ^ט וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה
 אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אַתָּה יֹדֵעַת אֵת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה שָׂאוֹל אֲשֶׁר
 הִכְרִית אֶת-הָאֲבֹת וְאֶת-הַיִּדְעָנִי מִן-הָאָרֶץ וְלָמָּה
 אַתָּה מִתְנַקֵּשׁ בְּנַפְשִׁי לְהַמִּיתָנִי: ^י וַיִּשְׁבַּע לָהּ שָׂאוֹל
 בַּיהוָה לֵאמֹר חַי־יְהוָה אֲסִיּוּקְךָ עוֹן בְּדַבַּר הַזֶּה:
^{יא} וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶת-מִי אַעֲלֶה-לְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת-
 שָׁמוּאֵל הָעֲלִי-לִי: ^{יב} וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה אֶת-שָׁמוּאֵל
 וַתִּזְעַק בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל-שָׂאוֹל
 לֵאמֹר לָמָּה רָמִיתָנִי וְאַתָּה שָׂאוֹל: ^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ
 הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-תִּירָאִי כִּי מָה רָאִית וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה
 אֶל-שָׂאוֹל אֱלֹהִים רָאִיתִי עֲלִים מִן-הָאָרֶץ:

divination, nor by the prophets. ⁷ Then Saul said to his servants, “Find a woman who is a necromancer for me to go and consult her.” His servants replied, “There is a necromancer at En-Dor.” ⁸ Therefore, Saul, disguising himself and changing his clothes, set out accompanied by two men. Their visit to the woman took place at night. “Disclose the future to me,” he said, “by means of a ghost. Conjure up the one I shall name to you.” ⁹ The woman answered, “Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has swept the necromancers and wizards out of the country; why are you setting a trap for my life, then, to have me killed?” ¹⁰ However, Saul swore to her by Yahweh, “As Yahweh lives,” he said, “no blame shall attach to you for this business.” ¹¹ Then the woman asked, “Whom shall I conjure up for you?” He replied, “Conjure up Samuel.” ¹² Then the woman saw Samuel and, giving a great cry, she said to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? You are Saul.” ¹³ The king said, “Do not be afraid! What do you see?” The woman answered Saul, “I see a ghost rising up from the earth.” ¹⁴ “What is he like?” he asked.

⁷ ‘En-Dor’ (עֵין דֹּזֵר) lies at the foot of Tabor and north of Shunem; to reach it, therefore, Saul had to pass round the Philistine encampment.

⁸ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

⁹ Necromancy continued to be practised from time to time (Is 8:19, 2K 21:6) although forbidden by written law (Dt 18:10–11, Lv 19:31, 20:6, 27). It was already considered evil in Saul’s time and he had tried to stamp it out; but he himself, under pressure, relapsed into former practice.

¹⁰ The NRSV has ‘punishment’ in place of ‘blame’, here following the NJB.

¹¹ The NRSV & NETB have ‘bring up’ in place of ‘conjure up’ (twice in this verse), here following the NJB.

¹² The woman knows of the relations between Samuel and Saul; that the dead prophet appears, she concludes, means that her client is Saul.

¹³ The NRSV, following the MT (אֱלֹהִים), uses ‘divine being’ in place of ‘ghost’; a footnote gives ‘god’ or ‘gods’ (plural of majesty) as alternatives.

¹⁴ In place of ‘what is he like’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘what is his appearance’.

י' וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מִה־תָּאֲרֹו וַתֹּאמֶר אִישׁ זָקֵן עָלֶיהָ
וְהוּא עֵטָה מְעִיל וַיֵּדַע שָׂאוּל כִּי־שְׂמוּאֵל הוּא וַיִּקְדּוּ
אֲפָיִם אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ: {ס}

טו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂמוּאֵל אֶל־שָׂאוּל לָמָּה הִרְגַּזְתָּנִי
לְהַעֲלוֹת אֹתִי וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂאוּל צֶר־לִי מְאֹד וּפְלִשְׁתִּים
נִלְחָמִים בִּי וְאֱלֹהִים סָר מֵעָלַי וְלֹא־עֲנָנִי עוֹד גַּם
בְּיַד־הַנְּבִיאִים גַּם־בְּחִלְמוֹת וְאֶקְרָאָה לָךְ לְהוֹדִיעָנִי
מָה אַעֲשֶׂה: {ס}

טז וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂמוּאֵל וְלָמָּה תִּשְׁאַלֵנִי וַיְהִי עַרְף: י' וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה לֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיָדִי וַיִּקְלַע
יְהוָה אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה מִיָּדָךְ וַיִּתְּנָה לְרַעְךָ לְדָוִד:
י" כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה וְלֹא־עָשִׂיתָ חֲרוֹן־
אָפוֹ בַּעֲמַלְק עַל־כֵּן הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה עָשָׂה־לָּךְ יְהוָה
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: י" וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה גַּם אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ בְּיַד־
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וּמָחָר אֶתָּה וּבְנֶיךָ עִמִּי גַם אֶת־מַחֲנֶה
יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתֵּן יְהוָה בְּיַד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים: כ' וַיִּמָּהֲר שָׂאוּל
וַיִּפֹּל מִלֹּא־קוֹמָתוֹ אֶרְצָה וַיָּרָא מְאֹד מִדְּבַר־
שְׂמוּאֵל גַּם־כֹּחַ לֹא־הָיָה בּוֹ כִּי לֹא אָכַל לֶחֶם כָּל־

She answered, "It is an old man coming up; he is wrapped in a cloak."
Then Saul knew it was Samuel and he bowed down his face to the
ground and did homage.

¹⁵ Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed my rest,
conjuring me up?" Saul replied, "I am in great distress: the Philistines
are waging war against me, and God has abandoned me and no longer
answers me either by prophet or dream; and so, I have summoned you
to tell me what I must do."

¹⁶ Samuel said, "And why do you consult me, when Yahweh has
abandoned you and has become your enemy? ¹⁷ Yahweh has done to
you as he said through me; he has torn the kingdom from your hand
and given it to your neighbour, David. ¹⁸ Since you disobeyed the voice
of Yahweh and did not execute his fierce anger against Amalek, Yahweh
treats you like this now. ¹⁹ And Yahweh will deliver Israel and you into
the power of the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with
me. Yahweh will also give Israel's army into the hands of the
Philistines." ²⁰ Saul quickly fell full length on the ground, filled with fear
of Samuel's words; and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten

¹⁵ The NRSV & NETB have simply 'me' in place of 'my rest', here following the NJB.

¹⁶ In place of 'has become your enemy', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'is with your neighbour'.

¹⁷ In vv. 17-18, the writer, or perhaps an editor, has added the prediction of David's kingship and a reference to the Amalek incident (cf. Ch. 15).

¹⁸ In place of 'treats you like this', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'has done this thing to you'.

¹⁹ With the exception of the Lucianic recension, the LXX has 'will fall' (μετὰ σοῦ πεσοῦνται) in place of 'will be with me'.

²⁰ The NRSV & NJB have 'immediately' in place of 'quickly', here following NETB.

הַיּוֹם וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה: ^{כא} וַתָּבֹא הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־שָׁאוּל
וַתֵּרָא כִּי־נִבְהַל מְאֹד וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הֲנֵה שָׁמְעָה
שִׁפְחָתְךָ בְּקוֹלְךָ וְאֲשִׁים נַפְשִׁי בְכַפִּי וְאֲשַׁמַּע אֶת־
דְּבָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי: ^{כב} וְעַתָּה שָׁמַעְנָא גַם־
אֹתָהּ בְּקוֹל שִׁפְחָתְךָ וְאֲשַׁמָּה לְפָנֶיךָ פַת־לֶחֶם
וְאֶכֹּל וַיְהִי בֶּדֶךָ כִּי תֵלֵךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ: ^{כג} וַיִּמָּאֵן וַיֹּאמֶר
לֹא אֶכֹּל וַיִּפְרְצוּ־בּוֹ עֲבָדָיו וְגַם־הָאִשָּׁה וַיִּשְׁמַע
לְקֹלָם וַיָּקָם מִהָאָרֶץ וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶל־הַמֶּטָּה: ^{כד} וְלֹא־שָׁה
עֶגְל־מִרְבֵּק בַּבַּיִת וַתִּמְהַר וַתִּזְבַּחַהּ וַתִּקַּח־קֶמַח
וַתֵּלֶשׁ וַתִּפְּהוּ מִצּוֹת: ^{כה} וַתִּגֶּשׁ לְפָנֵי־שָׁאוּל וּלְפָנֵי
עֲבָדָיו וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּקְמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא: {פ}

nothing at all day and all night. ²¹ The woman came to Saul, and, seeing his terror, said, “Your servant has obeyed your voice; I took my life in my hands and obeyed the command you gave me. ²² Now it’s your turn to listen to your servant. Let me set a little food before you for you to eat and get some strength for your journey.” ²³ He refused, and said, “I will not eat.” But his servants and the woman pressed him; and he listened to their words. He rose from the ground and sat on the bed. ²⁴ The woman owned a fattened calf, which she quickly slaughtered, and she took some flour and kneaded it and with it baked cakes of unleavened bread; ²⁵ she put these before Saul and his servants; and after they had eaten, they set off and left the same night.

²¹ Literally translated, this verse ends, “*listened to your words that you spoke to me.*”

²² Note the human kindness of the medium towards Saul.

²³ The translation here follows many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading וַיִּפְרְצוּ (“and they pressed”) rather than the MT’s וַיִּפְרְצוּ (“and they broke forth”).

²⁴ Masoretic MSS mark the word ‘woman’ as the half-way point in the book of Samuel, treating 1S & 2S as a single book.

²⁵ For this verse, the NRSV reads, “*She put them before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.*”

שמואל א פרק כט

א וַיִּקְבְּצוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־כָּל־מַחְנֵיהֶם אַפֶּקָה וַיִּשְׂרְאֵל חָנִים בַּעֲזֵן אֲשֶׁר בִּיזְרְעֵאל: ב וְסָרְגִי פְּלִשְׁתִּים עֲבָרִים לְמֵאוֹת וּלְאַלְפִים וְדָוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו עֲבָרִים בְּאַחֲרָנָה עִם־אֲכִישׁ: ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׂרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים מָה הָעֲבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכִישׁ אֶל־שָׂרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים הֲלוֹא־זֶה דָּוִד עֶבֶד־יְהוָה שָׂאוֹל מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָיָה אִתִּי זֶה יָמִים אוֹזֶה שָׁנִים וְלֹא־מִצָּאתִי בּוֹ מֵאוֹמָה מִיּוֹם נָפְלוּ עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: {פ} ד וַיִּקְצְפוּ עָלָיו שָׂרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ שָׂרֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים הֲשֵׁב אֶת־הָאִישׁ וישב אל־מְקוֹמוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִפְקַדְתּוֹ שָׁם וְלֹא־יֵרֵד עִמָּנוּ בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה־לָּנוּ לְשָׁטָן בַּמִּלְחָמָה וּבַמָּה יִתְרַצֶּה זֶה אֶל־אֲדָנָיו הֲלוֹא בְּרָאשֵׁי הָאֲנָשִׁים הָהֵם: ה הֲלוֹא־זֶה דָּוִד אֲשֶׁר יַעֲנוּ־לּוֹ בַּמַּחְלֹת לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׂאוֹל בְּאַלְפָיו וְדָוִד בְּרַבְבָּתָּו: {ס} ו וַיִּקְרָא אֲכִישׁ אֶל־דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו חַיֵּיהוָה כִּי־יֵשֶׁר אַתָּה וטוב בְּעֵינַי צִאתְךָ וּבְאֵךְ

1 SAMUEL 29

¹ Now, the Philistines mustered all their forces at Aphek while the Israelites camped near the fountain that is in Jezreel. ² The Philistine lords paraded in their groups of a hundred and a thousand, with David and his men bringing up the rear with Achish. ³ The Philistine leaders asked, "Who are these Hebrews?" And Achish replied to the Philistine leaders, "Why, this is David the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, who has been with me for days and years. I have had no fault to find with him from the day he gave himself up to me to the present time."

⁴ Nevertheless, the Philistine leaders were angry with him. "Send the man back," they said, "let him return to the place you assigned him. He must not go down with us to battle, or else he may become an adversary to us in the battle. Would there be a better way for the man to regain his master's favour than with the heads of these men here? ⁵ Is this not the David of whom they sang in the dance: "Saul has killed his thousands, David his tens of thousands?" ⁶ So, Achish called David and said, "As Yahweh lives, you are loyal, and to me it seems only right that you

1 SAMUEL 29

¹ This chapter follows immediately on from 28:2. 'Aphek' was where the Philistines had captured the Ark at the beginning of the war.

² This verse apparently describes a mustering of troops for the purpose of inspection and readiness.

³ In place of 'days and years', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB, following the LXX (ἡμέρας τοῦτο δεύτερον ἔτος), has 'the last year or two'.

⁴ The MT & NRSV repeat 'the Philistine leaders' in place of the pronoun, 'they', here following the NJB.

⁵ In place of 'in the dance', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'in dances' and NETB has 'as they danced'.

⁶ According to the MT, Achish shows his respect for David by swearing by David's God (compare 'an Angel of God' in v. 9).

אֶתִּי בַּמַּחֲנֶה כִּי לֹא־מָצָאתִי בְּךָ רָעָה מִיּוֹם בָּאתִי
אֵלַי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וּבְעֵינַי הַסֵּרָנִים לֹא־טוֹב אֶתָּה:
וְעַתָּה שׁוּב וּלְךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם וְלֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה רָע בְּעֵינַי
סֵרְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים: {ס} וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־אֲכִישׁ כִּי מָה
עָשִׂיתִי וּמָה־מָצָאתָ בְּעַבְדְּךָ מִיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי
לְפָנֶיךָ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי לֹא אָבֹא וְנִלְחַמְתִּי בְּאֵיבֵי
אֲדֹנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ט וַיַּעַן אֲכִישׁ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־דָּוִד יָדַעְתִּי
כִּי טוֹב אֶתָּה בְּעֵינַי כַּמְּלֶאכֶת אֱלֹהִים אַךְ שָׂרֵי
פְּלִשְׁתִּים אָמְרוּ לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עִמָּנוּ בַּמִּלְחָמָה: י וְעַתָּה
הַשָּׁכֶם בִּבְקָר וְעַבְדֵי אֲדֹנֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ אִתְּךָ
וְהַשָּׁכֶמְתָּם בִּבְקָר וְאוֹר לָכֶם וְלָכֹ: יא וַיֵּשְׁכֶם דָּוִד
הוּא וְאֲנָשָׁיו לַלַּיְלָה בִּבְקָר לְשׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים
וּפְלִשְׁתִּים עָלוּ יִזְרְעֵאל: {ס}

should accompany me in the campaign, for I have found nothing wrong in you from the day you came to me to the present time. Nevertheless, you are not acceptable to the leaders. ⁷ So, go back, and go in peace, and do not antagonise the leaders of the Philistines.” ⁸ David asked Achish, “But what have I done? What have you found in your servant, from the day I was before you to now, for me not to go and fight the enemies of my lord the king?” ⁹ Achish said to David, “You know that in my sight you are as blameless as an Angel of God; but the Philistine leaders have said, “He must not go with us to battle.” ¹⁰ Now then, rise early tomorrow morning, with your master’s servants who came with you; get up early tomorrow morning and, as soon as it is light, be off.” ¹¹ So, David set out with his men early in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. The Philistines went up to Jezreel.

⁷ Literally translated, this verse ends, “and you must not do evil in the eyes of the leaders of the Philistines.”

⁸ Before ‘to go’, the NJB adds ‘to be allowed’.

⁹ The NJB lacks ‘David’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.

¹⁰ After ‘who came with you’, the NJB, following the LXX (καὶ πορεύεσθε εἰς τὸν τόπον, οὗ κατέστησα ὑμᾶς ἐκεῖ, καὶ λόγον λοιμὸν μὴ θῆς ἐν καρδίᾳ σου, ὅτι ἀγαθὸς σὺ ἐνώπιόν μου) and a few Old Latin MSS, adds, “and go to the place that I assigned to you. Do not harbour resentment, since personally I have no fault to find with you.”

¹¹ With the exception of Origen and the Lucianic recension, the Old Greek tradition lacks the phrase ‘in the morning’, as does the Peshitta.

שמואל א פרק ל

^א וַיְהִי בַבֹּא דָּוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו צָקְלָג בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי
וְעַמְלָקִי פָשְׁטוּ אֶל-נֶגֶב וְאֶל-צָקְלָג וַיִּכּוּ אֶת-צָקְלָג
וַיִּשְׂרְפוּ אֹתָהּ בָּאֵשׁ: ^ב וַיִּשְׁבּוּ אֶת-הַנְּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר-בָּהָּ
מִקָּטָן וְעַד-גָּדוֹל לֹא הָמִיתוּ אִישׁ וַיִּנְהָגוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ
לְדַרְכָּם: ^ג וַיָּבֹא דָּוִד וְאֲנָשָׁיו אֶל-הָעִיר וְהִנֵּה
שְׂרוּפָה בָּאֵשׁ וְנָשֵׁיהֶם וּבְנֵיהֶם וּבָנֹתֵיהֶם נִשְׁבּוּ:
^ד וַיֵּשָׂא דָּוִד וְהָעָם אֲשֶׁר-אִתּוֹ אֶת-קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ עַד
אֲשֶׁר אִין-בָּהֶם כֹּחַ לִבְכּוֹת: ^ה וַשְּׁתֵי נְשֵׁי-דָוִד נִשְׁבּוּ
אֲחִינוֹעַם הַיִּזְרְעֵלִית וְאַבִּיגַיִל אִשְׁתׁ נָבָל הַכַּרְמֶלִי:
^ו וַתִּצָּר לְדָוִד מְאֹד כִּי-אָמְרוּ הָעָם לְסַקְלֹו כִּי-מָרָה
נַפְשׁ כָּל-הָעָם אִישׁ עַל-בָּנוּ וְעַל-בְּנֹתָיו וַיִּתְחַזַּק דָּוִד
בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהָיו: {ס} ^ז וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל-אַבִּיָּתָר הַכֹּהֵן
בֶּן-אַחִימֶלֶךְ הַגִּישָׁה-נָּא לִי הָאֶפֹּד וַיֵּגֶשׁ אַבִּיָּתָר
אֶת-הָאֶפֹּד אֶל-דָּוִד: ^ח וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד בַּיהוָה לֵאמֹר
אֶרְדֹּף אַחֲרֵי הַגִּדּוּד־הַזֶּה הֲאֶשְׁגָּנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ רִדְּף

1 SAMUEL 30

¹ Now, when David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had raided the Negeb and Ziklag. They had stormed Ziklag, burnt it down ² and taken the women captive with all those who were there, both small and great. They killed none of them but carried them off and went their way. ³ When David and his men arrived, they found the town burnt down and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. ⁴ Then David and the people with him wept aloud until they were too weak to weep any more. ⁵ David's two wives had been taken captive, Abinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the wife of Nabal from Carmel. ⁶ David was in great trouble, for the people were talking of stoning him; all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters; but David took courage from Yahweh his God. ⁷ David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." Abiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸ Then David consulted Yahweh, "Am I to go in pursuit of these raiders? Shall I overtake them?" The answer was, "Pursue; you

1 SAMUEL 30

¹ 'Ziklag' (צָקְלָג) was about 130 km south of Aphek, a long two-day march through rough terrain.

² The MT lacks the words, 'and all', here following the LXX (καὶ πάντα).

³ The literal translation of 'burnt down' is 'burned with fire'.

⁴ Literally, this verse reads, "Then David and the people with him lifted up their voices and wept until there was no longer in them strength to weep."

⁵ The NRSV & NETB have 'widow' in place of 'wife', here following the NJB.

⁶ The men almost revolted, and David saved himself only by an appeal in the name of God.

⁷ The NJB rearranges the opening clause, putting 'David said' after 'Ahimelech'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

⁸ The NRSV ends this verse, here following the NJB, with 'you shall surely rescue', and NETB has 'carry out a rescue'.

כִּי־הִשָּׁג תִּשְׁיֹג וְהִצֵּל תִּצִּיל: ^ט וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד הוּא וְשֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־נַחַל הַבְּשׁוֹר וְהַנּוֹתָרִים עִמָּדוֹ: ^י וַיִּרְדֹּף דָּוִד הוּא וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ מֵאֲתֵימ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר פָּגְרוּ מֵעֲבֹר אֶת־נַחַל הַבְּשׁוֹר: ^{יא} וַיִּמְצְאוּ אִישׁ־מִצְרִי בַשָּׂדֶה וַיִּקְחוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־דָּוִד וַיִּתְּנוּ־לּוֹ לֶחֶם וַיֹּאכֵל וַיִּשְׁקֵהוּ מַיִם: ^{יב} וַיִּתְּנוּ־לּוֹ פֶּלֶח דְּבִלָּה וּשְׁנֵי צִמְקִים וַיֹּאכֵל וַתִּשָּׁב רֹחוֹ אֵלָיו כִּי לֹא־אָכַל לֶחֶם וְלֹא־שָׁתָה מַיִם שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה לַיְלוֹת: {ס} ^{יג} וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ דָּוִד לְמִי־אַתָּה וְאֵי מָזָה אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר נַעַר מִצְרִי אָנֹכִי עֲבַד לְאִישׁ עַמְלָקִי וַיַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֲדֹנִי כִּי חָלִיתִי הַיּוֹם שְׁלֹשָׁה: ^{יד} אֲנַחְנוּ פָּשְׁטָנוּ נֶגֶב הַכְּרָתִי וְעַל־אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וְעַל־נֶגֶב כָּלֵב וְאֶת־צִקְלָג שָׂרַפְנוּ בָּאֵשׁ: ^{טו} וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו דָּוִד הַתּוֹרְדָנִי אֶל־הַגְּדוּד הַזֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר הִשְׁבַּעָה לִּי בֵּאלֹהִים אֲסַתְּמִיתֵנִי וְאֲסַתְּסַגְרֵנִי בְּיַד־אֲדֹנִי וְאוֹרְדָךְ אֶל־הַגְּדוּד הַזֶּה: ^{טז} וַיִּרְדֵּהוּ וְהִנֵּה נְטָשִׁים עַל־פָּנָי כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲכָלִים

will certainly overtake them and rescue the captives.” ⁹ So, David set off with the six hundred men who were with him, and reached the Wadi Besor, where the rest stayed behind. ¹⁰ David then continued the pursuit with four hundred men, two hundred staying behind who were too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor. ¹¹ Out in the country they found an Egyptian and brought him to David. They gave him bread, which he ate, and water to drink; ¹² they also gave him a piece of fig cake and two bunches of raisins; he ate these and his spirits revived, for he had neither eaten bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. ¹³ David then said to him, “To whom do you belong and where do you come from?” He answered, “I am a young Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite; my master abandoned because I fell sick me three days ago. ¹⁴ We raided the Negeb of the Cherethites, and the Negeb of Judah, and the Negeb of Caleb too, and we burnt Ziklag down.” ¹⁵ David said, “Will you lead me down to these raiders?” He replied, “Swear to me by God not to kill me or hand me over to my master and I will lead you down to these raiders.” ¹⁶ When he led him down, there they were, scattered

⁹ The NJB omits ‘where the rest stayed behind’, a gloss based on v. 10.

¹⁰ The ‘Wadi Besor’ is south of Ziklag.

¹¹ In place of ‘out in the country’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘in the open country’ and NETB, following more literally, has ‘in the field’.

¹² The literal translation of ‘his spirits revived’ is ‘his spirit returned to him’.

¹³ In place of ‘to whom do you belong’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘whose man are you’.

¹⁴ The ‘Cherethites’ are kin to the Philistines (some interpret the word as meaning ‘Cretans’).

¹⁵ The NRSV ends with ‘to them’ in place of ‘to these raiders’, here following the MT, NJB & NETB.

¹⁶ The literal translation of ‘enormous booty’ (here following the NJB) is ‘large plunder’.

וּשְׁתִּים וְחֲגָגִים בְּכָל הַשָּׁלָל הַגָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ
מֵאֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וּמֵאֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה: ^{יז} וַיִּבְּסוּ דָּוִד
מִהַנֶּשֶׁף וְעַד-הָעֶרֶב לְמַחֲרָתָם וְלֹא-נִמְלֹט מֵהֶם
אִישׁ כִּי אִם-אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ-נָעַר אֲשֶׁר-רָכְבוּ
עַל-הַגָּמְלִים וַיָּנָסוּ: ^{יח} וַיֹּצֵל דָּוִד אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ
עִמָּלֶךְ וְאֶת-שְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו הַצֵּיל דָּוִד: ^{יט} וְלֹא נִעְדָּר-
לָהֶם מִן-הַקֶּטָן וְעַד-הַגָּדוֹל וְעַד-בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת
וּמִשָּׁלָל וְעַד כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ לָהֶם הַכֹּל הֵשִׁיב דָּוִד:
^כ וַיִּקַּח דָּוִד אֶת-כָּל-הָעֶצֶן וְהַבָּקָר נִהְגוּ לִפְנֵי
הַמִּקְנֶה הַהוּא וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֶה שָׁלַל דָּוִד: ^{כא} וַיָּבֹא דָּוִד
אֶל-מֵאֲתָיִם הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר-פָּגְרוּ מִלִּכְתּוֹ אַחֲרֵי
דָּוִד וַיֵּשִׁיבֵם בְּנַחַל הַבְּשׁוֹר וַיֵּצְאוּ לִקְרֹאת דָּוִד
וּלְקֹרֵאת הָעָם אֲשֶׁר-אִתּוֹ וַיִּגַּשׁ דָּוִד אֶת-הָעָם
וַיִּשְׁאַל לָהֶם לְשָׁלוֹם: {ס} ^{כב} וַיַּעַן כָּל-אִישׁ-דָּרַע
וּבְלִיעַל מִהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ עִם-דָּוִד וַיֹּאמְרוּ יֵעַן
אֲשֶׁר לֹא-הָלְכוּ עִמִּי לֹא-נָתַן לָהֶם מִהַשָּׁלָל אֲשֶׁר

over the whole countryside, eating, drinking, and rejoicing, because of the enormous booty they had taken from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. ¹⁷ David struck them down from dawn until the following evening, putting them under the ban. None escaped except for four hundred soldiers who mounted camels and fled. ¹⁸ David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken. David set his two wives free also. ¹⁹ Nothing was missing, whether small or great, booty or sons and daughters: everything that had been taken; David recovered everything. ²⁰ They captured the flocks and herds as well and drove them in front of the other cattle. “This is David’s booty,” they shouted. ²¹ Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him, those he had left at the Wadi Besor; they came out to meet David and the troops with him, and, approaching David and the troops, asked how they had fared. ²² But all the rogues and scoundrels among the men who had gone with David said, “They did not go with us so we will not give them any of the booty we have

¹⁷ The NJB lacks ‘the following’ before ‘evening’, here following NETB; the NRSV has ‘the evening of the next day’.

¹⁸ For the 1st sentence, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “David set free all whom the Amalekites had captured.”

¹⁹ Literally translated, this verse reads, “There was nothing missing to them, from the small even unto the great, and unto sons and daughters, and from loot even unto all which they had taken for themselves.”

²⁰ The NJB has ‘him’ in place of ‘the other cattle’.

²¹ The MT has ‘follow David’ in place of ‘follow him’; the pronoun has been substituted for the proper name in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²² The literal translation of ‘with us’ is ‘with me’ – the singular is used here as the group is being treated as an entity, in keeping with Hebrew idiom; it is not necessary to ‘correct’ the MT, although the plural can be found here in a few medieval Hebrew MSS, as also in the LXX (μεθ’ ἡμῶν), Peshitta and Vg (nobiscum); but these may simply reflect an understanding of the MT’s idiom rather than a different textual reading.

הַצִּלָּנוּ כִּי־אִם־אִישׁ אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיִּנָּהֲגוּ
וַיֵּלְכוּ: {ס} כִּי וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לֹא־תַעֲשׂוּ בֵּן אָחִי אֶת
אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן יְהוָה לָנוּ וַיִּשְׁמֶר אֶתָּנוּ וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַגְּדֹד
הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ בְּיָדָנוּ: כִּי וּמִי יִשְׁמַע לָכֶם לְדָבָר הַזֶּה
כִּי כַחֲלָק הֵיכַד בַּמִּלְחָמָה וּכְחָלָק הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־
הַפָּלִים יַחֲדוּ יַחֲלֹקוּ: {ס} כִּי וַיְהִי מֵהַיּוֹם הַהוּא
וּמַעַלָּה וַיִּשְׁמָה לַחֹק וּלְמִשְׁפָּט לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַד הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה: {פ}

כִּי וַיָּבֹא דָוִד אֶל־צִקְלָג וַיִּשְׁלַח מֵהַשָּׁלָל לְזִקְנֵי יְהוּדָה
לְרַעְיָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה לָכֶם {ר} בְּרָכָה מִשָּׁלָל אֲבִי
יְהוָה: {ס}

כִּי לְאִשָּׁר בְּבֵית־אֵל {ס}
וּלְאִשָּׁר {ר} בְּרָמֹת־נֶגֶב {ס}
וּלְאִשָּׁר בִּיתֵּר: {ס}
כִּי וּלְאִשָּׁר {ר} בְּעֶרְוֶר {ס}

rescued, though each can take his wife and children away and go.” ²³ David said, “Do not do so, my brothers. Look what Yahweh has given us: he has protected us, delivering into our hands the raiders who set on us. ²⁴ Who would agree with you on this? As the share is of him who goes down to the battle, so is the share of him who stays with the baggage. They must share alike.” ²⁵ From that day forward he made this a statute and an ordinance for Israel, which continues to the present day.

²⁶ When David came to Ziklag, he sent parts of the booty to his friends, the elders of Judah, with this message, “Here is a present for you from the booty taken from the enemies of Yahweh:”

²⁷ It was for those in Bethel,
and for those in Ramoth of the Negeb,
and for those in Jattir,
²⁸ and for those in Aroer,

²³ The clause ‘look what Yahweh has given us’ is difficult in the MT. The present translation, following NETB, accepts the text as found in the MT and understands this clause to be elliptical, with an understood verb such as ‘look’ or ‘consider’; on the other hand, the LXX seems to reflect a slightly different Hebrew text, reading ‘after’ where the MT has ‘my brothers’. The LXX text (Οὐ ποιήσετε οὕτως μετὰ τὸ παραδοῦναι τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν) yields the following translation (followed by the NJB) “You should not do this after the LORD has delivered us.” Although the Greek reading should be taken seriously, it seems better to follow the MT here.

²⁴ NETB has ‘portion’ in place of ‘share’ (thrice in this verse), here following the NJB & NRSV.

²⁵ This verse is editorial; David was not yet king of Judah, to say nothing of Israel (compare Nb 31:27).

²⁶ This verse follows the MT (and NRSV); the NJB has, “he sent parts of the booty to the elders of Judah, town by town,” a conjectural translation.

²⁷ All the places listed in vv. 27–31, including ‘Bethel’ (not the familiar one farther north) were in Judah.

²⁸ In vv. 28–31, the NRSV omits almost all instances of the phrase ‘and for those’, here following the MT (וּלְאִשָּׁר) & NJB.

וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁפְמוֹת {ס}
 וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר {ר} בְּאֶשְׁתֶּמֹּעַ: {ס}
 כט וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר בְּרָכָל {ס} וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר {ר}
 בְּעָרֵי הִירְחֵמֵלִי {ס}
 וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר בְּעָרֵי הַקִּינִי: {ס}
 ל וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר {ר} בְּחֶרְמָה {ס}
 וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר בְּבוֹר־עֲשָׁן {ס}
 וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר {ר} בְּעֶתְדָּ: {ס}
 לא וְלֹא־אֲשֶׁר בְּחֶבְרוֹן
 וְלִכְל־הַמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר- {ר}
 הִתְהַלְּדָ-שָׁם דָּוִד הוּא וְאֲנָשָׁיו:
 {פ}

and for those in Siphmoth,
 and for those in Eshtemoa,
 29 and for those in Carmel,
 and for those in the towns of the Jerahmeelites,
 and for those in the towns of the Kenites,
 30 and for those in Hormah,
 and for those in Borashan,
 and for those in Athach,
 31 and for those in Hebron,
 for all the places
 that David and his men had frequented.

²⁹ The NJB has 'Jerahmeel' in place 'Jerahmeelites', here following the MT & NRSV.

³⁰ For the three towns listed here, the LXX has *Ιεριμουθ, Βηρσαβεε* & *Noo*.

³¹ David's 'present' is to repay hospitality and, still more, to win friends who will put him on the throne (2S 2:4). The towns mentioned all lie to the south of Hebron.

1 SAMUEL 31

שמואל א פרק לא

א וּפְלִשְׁתִּים נִלְחָמִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּנֻסוּ אַנְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִפְּנֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּפְּלוּ חֲלָלִים בְּהַר הַגִּלְבּוֹעַ: ב וַיִּדְבְּקוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־שָׁאוּל וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיָּכּוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־יְהוֹנָתָן וְאֶת־אֲבִינָדָב וְאֶת־מַלְכִּישׁוּעַ בְּנֵי שָׁאוּל: ג וַתִּכְבַּד הַמֶּלֶכְמָה אֶל־שָׁאוּל וַיִּמְצָאֶהוּ הַמּוֹרִים אַנְשִׁים בִּקְשֵׁת וַיַּחַל מְאֹד מִהַמּוֹרִים: ד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל לְנִשָּׂא כִלְיוֹ שְׁלִי חֲרָבְךָ וְדַקְרָנִי בָּהּ פֶּן־יָבוֹאוּ הָעֲרָלִים הָאֵלֶּה וְדַקְרָנִי וְהִתְעַלְלוּ־בִּי וְלֹא אָבָה נִשָּׂא כִלְיוֹ כִּי יֵרָא מְאֹד וַיִּקַּח שָׁאוּל אֶת־הַחֶרֶב וַיִּפֹּל עָלֶיהָ: ה וַיֵּרָא נִשָּׂא־כִלְיוֹ כִּי מֵת שָׁאוּל וַיִּפֹּל גַּם־הוּא עַל־חֲרָבּוֹ וַיָּמָת עִמּוֹ: ו וַיָּמָת שָׁאוּל וְשְׁלֶשֶׁת בָּנָיו וְנִשָּׂא כִלְיוֹ גַּם כָּל־אַנְשָׁיו בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יַחְדָּו: ז וַיֵּרְאוּ אַנְשֵׁי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־בְּעֵבֶר הָעֵמֶק וְאֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן כִּי־נָסוּ אַנְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכִי־מָתוּ שָׁאוּל וּבָנָיו וַיַּעֲזְבוּ אֶת־הָעָרִים וַיָּנֻסוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בָהֶן: {פ}

¹ Now the Philistines made war on Israel; and the men of Israel fled from the Philistines and they fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons and killed Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. ³ The fighting grew heavy about Saul; the archers, men with bows, took him off his guard, and he was badly wounded by them. ⁴ Then Saul said to his armour-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through with it; I do not want these uncircumcised men to come and run me through." However, his armour-bearer was afraid and would not do it; so, Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵ When his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. ⁶ Thus died Saul, his three sons and his armour-bearer, and all his men, together on the same day. ⁷ When the Israelites who were on the other side of the valley, and those beyond the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had taken flight and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled. The Philistines then came and occupied them.

1 SAMUEL 31

¹ The NRSV has 'many fell' in place of 'they fell slain'; here, we follow the MT & NJB.

² The NJB has 'pressed ... hard' in place of 'overtook', here following the NRSV.

³ Both the NJB and the NRSV (following 1Ch 10:3) omit 'men with bows'.

⁴ The NJB, following the parallel version of 1Ch 10:4, has, 'make fun of me' in place of 'run me through'; here, we follow the MT and NRSV.

⁵ Biblical suicides are rare; compare 2S 17:23, 1L 16:18, Mt 27:5.

⁶ The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'and all his men'.

⁷ The NJB omits the clause, 'and those beyond the Jordan', here following the NRSV.

^ח וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרָת וַיָּבֹאוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים לַפֶּשֶׁט אֶת־
הַחֲלָלִים וַיִּמָּצְאוּ אֶת־שָׁאוֹל וְאֶת־שְׁלֹשַׁת בָּנָיו
נֹפְלִים בְּהַר הַגִּלְבּוֹעַ: ^ט וַיִּכְרְתוּ אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּפְשְׁטוּ
אֶת־כְּלָיו וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ בָאֶרֶץ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים סָבִיב לַבָּשָׁר
בֵּית עֲצִיבֵיהֶם וְאֶת־הָעֵם: ^י וַיִּשְׁיִמוּ אֶת־כְּלָיו בֵּית
עֲשָׁתָרוֹת וְאֶת־גּוֹיֹתוֹ תָּקְעוּ בְּחוֹמַת בֵּית שָׁן:
^{יא} וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלָיו יֹשְׁבֵי יַבֶּשׁ גִּלְעָד אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ
פְּלִשְׁתִּים לְשָׁאוֹל: ^{יב} וַיָּקֻמוּ כָּל־אִישׁ חֵיל וַיֵּלְכוּ
כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־גּוֹיֹת שָׁאוֹל וְאֵת גּוֹיֹת בָּנָיו
מִחוֹמַת בֵּית שָׁן וַיָּבֹאוּ יַבֶּשָׁה וַיִּשְׂרְפוּ אֹתָם שָׁם:
^{יג} וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־עֲצָמֹתֵיהֶם וַיִּקְבְּרוּ תַּחַת־הָאֶשָּׁל
בַּיַּבֶּשָׁה וַיִּצְמוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים: {פ}

⁸ And it came to pass on the following day that, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ They cut off his head and, stripping him of his armour, had it carried round the land of the Philistines to proclaim the good news to the temples of their idols and their people. ¹⁰ They placed his armour in the temple of Astarte; they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-Shean. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the warriors set out, marching throughout the night, and took the bodies of Saul and his sons off the wall of Beth-Shean, and coming back to Jabesh, they burned them there. ¹³ Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk of Jabesh, and fasted for seven days.

⁸ The NJB has 'lying' in place of 'fallen', here following the MT & NRSV, and NETB has 'lying dead'.

⁹ The NJB, following the LXX, lacks 'the temples of'.

¹⁰ Was this 'temple' in Beth-Shean, which the Philistines had occupied, or back in Philistia? The story is told somewhat differently in 1Ch 10:10.

¹¹ Saul had rescued the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead (Ch. 11), and they wished to pay him their last respects.

¹² The NJB, following the LXX (φέρουσιν αὐτούς), has 'bringing them' in place of 'coming back'; the burning of bodies was a practice alien in Israel.

¹³ On fasting for the dead, see 2S 1:12, 3:35, and contrast 2S 12:23. On the seven days' mourning, see Gn 50:10, Jdt 16:24, Si 22:12). With the burial in Jabesh, the story of Saul ends, except for the later return of his bones to his native territory (2S 21:12-14).